



THE RAVEN

BULLETIN OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY
PUBLISHED AT LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA
DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR

Vol. III

January, 1932

No. 1

EDITORIAL NOTES

The Virginia Society of Ornithology has completed two years of work. The organization meeting at Lynchburg in December, 1929, and the first Annual Meeting in Richmond in February, 1931, brought together considerable groups of interested bird students. Field activities of members have been greatly stimulated by the exchange of notes in THE RAVEN, and the amount of material published in THE RAVEN has been considerably larger in 1931 than in 1930. And something, at least, has been added to the knowledge of the birds of the state by the accumulation of this material. The Consolidated List, published in February, 1931, gives a fairly complete view of the commoner birds in all parts of the state. Our organization now begins its third year. It will possibly be a year of testing for the society, for the novelty has now worn off and it will take real interest in our work to make us stick together. But we hope and believe that the interest that has been aroused in bird study in Virginia is great enough and the fellowship in that study is pleasant and profitable enough to make all the members determine to continue the work and to enlarge it by bringing new members into the group.

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OUR SECOND ANNUAL MEETING

The second annual meeting of the V. S. O. will be held at the Monticello Hotel in Charlottesville on Saturday, February 13. The program committee, consisting of Dr. Murray and M. G. Lewis, of Lexington, is at work and we may be assured of an interesting series of papers.

While the Charlottesville members cannot offer anything to compete with Mr. Handley's trip to see the Canada Geese at Curle's Neck farm of a year ago, Charlottesville itself offers a number of alluring scenes for those who like to combine sight-seeing with convention trips. Then too, the central location of this city should put the convention within easy traveling distance for most of the membership.

The meeting will start at 2:30 P.M. on Saturday afternoon giving ample time for most of our members to reach Charlottesville Saturday forenoon. The afternoon session will be given over to papers presented by members. It is understood that members are expected to volunteer to present papers to these annual meetings, and the program committee welcomes them always. However, if you are planning to present a paper

please notify Dr. Murray at once. We shall endeavor to have invitation papers at the annual meetings as often as possible, but must depend in the main on papers voluntarily presented by our members.

The evening meeting will begin with a business session, including the annual election. If you are unable to attend the meeting, or can stay only for the afternoon meeting, please remember the provisions in the constitution for proxy voting, and send in your vote to a member who will be present. We hope also to have at the evening session one or more lectures illustrated with slides or moving pictures.

Members who are in arrears for the coming year should communicate with the treasurer. Following our practice of last year, THE RAVEN will be sent for three months to those in arrears, but we cannot afford to do it longer than that with the annual dues at the present rate.

Greetings from members who cannot attend will be appreciated and will be read at the meeting.

The Monticello Hotel management is making us a rate of \$2.50 for rooms for those who plan to stay over night either before or after the meeting.

It will be a favor to the Local Committee if members planning to attend will drop a card to the chairman, addressed to the Biological Laboratory, University, Va.

Local Committee: Ruskin S. Freer
Dr. Ivey F. Lewis
Martin Curtler

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CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS REPORTS

Henrico County, Va. (Curle's Neck Farm and Byrd Park), Dec. 23; 6:30 A.M. to 5:15 P.M. Clear to heavy clouds; ground bare; no wind at start; brisk wind during middle of day; Geese much on the wing all day; temperature 40° at start and 60° at return; distance 18 miles by automobile, 4 miles by boat, and 4 miles on foot.

Great Blue Heron, 2; Mallard, 800 (est.); Black Duck, 560 (est.); Green-Winged Teal, 92; Pintail, 2000 (est.); Wood Duck, 1; Ring-Necked Duck, 70 (est.); Canada Goose, 2300 (est.); Turkey Vulture, 6; Black Vulture 87; Marsh Hawk, 1; Cooper Hawk, 1; Red-Tailed Hawk, 3; Red-shouldered Hawk, 1; Golden Eagle, 1; Bald Eagle, 4; Sparrow Hawk, 2; Bobwhite, 14 (1 covey); Wilson's Snipe, 21; Herring Gull, 3; (Ring-billed?) Gull, 2; Mourning Dove, 1; Great Horned Owl, 1; Belted Kingfisher, 2; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 8; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 2; Pileated Woodpecker, 2; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 2; Flicker, 70; Crow, 19; Tufted Titmouse, 4; Carolina Chickadee, 23; Carolina Wren, 12; Mockingbird, 3; Hermit Thrush, 9; Bluebird, 7;

Golden-crowned Knight, 12; Ruby-crowned Knight, 5; Cedar Waxwing, 12; Migrant Shrike, 1; Starling, 140; Myrtle Warbler, 5; Cowbird, 200 (est.) Red-winged Blackbird, 2800 (est.); Meadowlark, 12; Purple Grackle, 2; Cardinal, 17; Savannah Sparrow, 2; White-throated Sparrow, 97 (11 flocks); Field Sparrow, 21; Slate-colored Junco, 14; Song Sparrow, 26; Swamp Sparrow, 1; Fox Sparrow, 4; Purple Finch, 22; Goldfinch, 24.

Total species, 57; individuals, 9554. The Golden Eagle was seen at close range with 6-power glasses in good light and was easily distinguished from an immature Bald Eagle with which it circled when first flushed.

-----Chas. O. Handley

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Richmond, Dec. 31; 11:45 A.M. to 3:00 P.M., Maymont Park: Open hillsides, thick woods with tall trees, dense clumps of deciduous shrubbery, bamboo hedges, conifers, and broad-leaved evergreens, such as rhodendron and magnolia.

Belted Kingfisher, 2; Downy Woodpecker, 2; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 2; Crow, 6; Starling 50; Meadowlark, 5; American Goldfinch, 5; White-throated Sparrow, 100; Song Sparrow, 10; Slate-colored Junco, 300; Cardinal, 10; Migrant Shrike, 2; Mocking Bird, 1; Carolina Wren, 1; Chickadee, 8; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 1. 16 species; 505 individuals.

-----Elizabeth H. Ryland

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Cape Henry, Dec. 6; 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Weather mild. Brown Creeper, 1; Flicker, 1; Chickadee, 3; Myrtle Warbler, 8; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Robin, 4; Marsh Hawk, 1; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 1; Bald Eagle, 1 (immature); Laughing Gull, 150 (est.); Herring Gull, 200 (est.); Fox Sparrow, 2; Song Sparrow, 3; Meadowlark, 5; White-throated Sparrow, 2; Starling, 15; Bluebird, 5.

-----A. O. English and
J. E. Gould

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Ocean View, Jan. 3; 4 miles on beach - going; returned through wood; started 10:00 A.M.; returned 3:30 P.M.; weather - 58°, strong north-west wind.

Bald Eagle, 2; Sandpiper, 1; Herring Gull, 30; Swan, 13 (flight, south); Myrtle Warbler, 12; Turkey Vulture, 2; Chickadee, 3; Song Sparrow, 5; Junco, 2; Downy Woodpecker, 1.

-----A. O. English

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Amelia. Amelia west to, and along Nibbs creek and return, Dec. 24; 8:00 A.M. to 12:15 P.M. Partly cloudy, light wind from southwest,

temperature at start 58°, at return 62°; about 8 miles on foot.

Turkey Buzzard, 4; Bob-White, 1; Mourning Dove, 10; Screech Owl, (found dead on highway), 1; Downy Woodpecker, 3; Pileated Woodpecker, 1; Flicker, 2; Blue Jay, 8; Crow, 6; Tufted Titmouse, 3; Chickadee, 7; White-Breasted Nuthatch, 2; Red-Breasted Nuthatch, 2; Brown Creeper, 1; Carolina Wren, 4; Winter Wren, 1; Mockingbird, 10; Hermit Thrush, 3; Bluebird, 9; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 6; Shrike, 3; Starling, 22; Red-Winged Blackbird, 1; Meadowlark, 32; Purple Finch, 3; Goldfinch, 19; House Sparrow, 32; White-Throated Sparrow, 60; Field Sparrow, 65; Junco, 90; Song Sparrow, 53; Towhee, 2; Cardinal, 6. 34 species, 472 individuals.

As usual, several species that are regular winter residents were not seen. Among these Killdeer, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, and Phoebe.

-----John B. Lewis

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Charlottesville, Dec. 21; 7:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.; ten or twelve miles of walking; dull, cold, raw day; low temperature; woodland, gardens, arable land and one small lake; two observers in the afternoon, one only (myself) in the morning.

American Merganser (?), 2; Turkey Vulture, 50 (est.); Sharp-shinned Hawk (?), 1; Red-shouldered Hawk, 1; Killdeer, 18; Mourning Dove, 20 (est.); Barred Owl (?), 1; Belted Kingfisher, 2; Northern Flicker, 2; Northern Pileated Woodpecker, 1; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 2; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1; Eastern Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Northern Downy Woodpecker, 5; Blue Jay, 3; Crow, 30 (est.); Carolina Chickadee, 10 (est.); Tufted Titmouse, 4; White-breasted Nuthatch, 4; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 40 (est.); Brown Creeper, 6; Carolina Wren, 2; Mockingbird, 3; Eastern Robin, 2; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 10; Migrant Shrike, 2; Starling, 20 (est.); Myrtle Warbler, 3; English Sparrow, 5; Cardinal, 20 (est.); Purple Finch, 4; Goldfinch, 8; Slate-colored Junco, 100 (est.); Field Sparrow, 10; White-throated Sparrow, 100 (est.); Song Sparrow, 20 (est.). Thirty-seven species; about 520 individuals. The two Ducks I saw flying, and believe they were American Mergansers. The Sharp-shinned Hawk record is fairly certain, for I caught a glimpse of a typical small "hawk". As to the Barred Owl, I heard an owl, that I took to be this species, at dusk. My reference to the Towhee in the November-December RAVEN should read: "No Towhees observed since the middle of October," instead of "Towhees observed, etc." Myrtle Warblers have occurred here at the beginning, middle and end of December.

-----Martin Curtler

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Amherst County, Buffalo Lick Farm, one mile west of C. & O. 9-mile bridge. This is not the result of a consecutive three-hour trip afield,

but a list of all species observed during the day about my home, along the river, and through the woods to the mail box.

Dec. 25: Dove, 1; Turkey Vulture, 20; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Screech Owl, 1; Owl (sp.?), 1; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Phoebe, 1; Crow, 30; Goldfinch, 100; English Sparrow, 30; White-throated Sparrow, 200; Song Sparrow, 15; Junco, 150; Fox Sparrow, 24; Cardinal, 5; Mockingbird, 1; Carolina Wren, 2; Winter Wren, 3; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Tufted Titmouse, 5; Carolina Chickadee, 5; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 2; Bluebird, 13; Field Sparrow, 12; Ducks (sp.?), 19; Black Vulture, 3. 26 species, 647 individuals.

To make a comprehensive list of winter residents, the following should be added: Dec. 26-30, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 1; Dec. 27, Meadowlark, 14; Dec. 28, Flicker, 1; Blue Jay, 7; Cedar Waxwing, 15; Dec. 30, White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Jan. 5, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1; Marsh Hawk, 1; Jan. 6, Towhee, 3; Bob-white, 20. -- making a total of 711 individuals.

-----Mrs. C. W. Harris

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Naruna, Dec. 23, 7:30 to 10:00 A.M. and 2:00 to 4:00 P.M. Home farm, forest, fields, along brook and tangled ravines. Temperature 50° at beginning, 55° at 4:00. White cirrus clouds in morning, cloudy afternoon with slight wind from southwest.

Flicker, 1; Mockingbird, 1; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 5; Carolina Chickadee, 2; Titmouse, 2; Hermit Thrush, 1; Carolina Wren, 2; Goldfinch, 7; Purple finch, 1; Field Sparrow, 15; Junco, 50; Song Sparrow, 3; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1; White-throated Sparrow, 6; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Starling, 2; Crow, 1; Turkey Vulture, 1; Prairie Horned Lark, 13; Cedar Waxwing, 20; Bluebird, 3; Species 21, individuals 138.

-----Bertha Daniel

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Lexington, Dec. 26, 10:00 A.M. to 2:30 P.M. South-east in the vicinity of Maury River and return, about 8 miles on foot. Clear, ground bare, light west wind; temperature at start 33°, at return 32°.

Turkey vulture, 6; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Kingfisher, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Flicker, 3; Pileated Woodpecker, 1 (heard a mile or more distant); Crow, 7; Tufted Titmouse, 5; Chickadee, 8; White-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Winter Wren, 1; Mockingbird, 2; Thrush (sp.?), 1; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 10; Starling, 50; White-throated Sparrow, 22; Field Sparrow, 6; Junco, 3; Song Sparrow, 18; Cardinal, 12. Total--20 species, 166 individuals. The relative number of White-throated Sparrows on this trip is unusual at this season as is also the small number of Juncos observed. Usually the latter is very abundant at this season, while White-throated Sparrow is usually rare after December 1.

-----Merriam G. Lewis

Bristol, Dec. 23, 4:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., Warm and rainy. Bob-white, 5; Ruffed Grouse, 14; Dove (est.), 400; Turkey Vulture, 13; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 2; Barred Owl, 3; Horned Owl, 4; Screech Owl, 1; Kingfisher, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1; Pileated Woodpecker, 4; Red-headed Woodpecker, 1; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1; Flicker, 2; Phoebe, 4; Blue Jay, 5; Crow, 32; Starling, 14; Meadowlark, 14; American Goldfinch, 33; Pine Siskin, 16; English Sparrow, 35; White-throated Sparrow, 26; Field Sparrow (est.), 100; Carolina Junco, 54; Song Sparrow, 17; Fox Sparrow, 31; Cardinal, 21; Cedar Waxwing (est.), 50; Migrant Shrike, 1; Mockingbird, 4; Carolina Wren, 6; Winter Wren, 2; Brown Creeper, 2; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 11; Tufted Titmouse, 2; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 14; Hermit Thrush, 10; Robin (est.), 85; Bluebird, 36. Species - 42; total - 1079.

-----F. M. Jones

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FIELD NOTES

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Amelia. I have now under observation a pair of Great Horned Owls that I believe have, or are preparing to have, a nest in a hole in a big oak. I may have something definite to report on this next time. Black Vultures seen Nov. 9 and 10, and Dec. 20; Woodcock seen frequently and reported unusually numerous by hunters who have killed many; Horned Larks seen Dec. 30; last Ruby-crowned Kinglet Nov. 10; Shrikes seen every few days; Red-bellied Nuthatch, two seen Dec. 24 and two Dec. 26; Cedar Waxwings seen eating mistletoe berries Dec. 30; Red-headed Woodpecker seen Dec. 29; Red-bellied Woodpeckers seen frequently; Towhees present through December.

-----John B. Lewis

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Naruna. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Dec. 2 to 27; Hermit Thrush, Dec. 4 to 23; Red-tailed Hawk, Dec. 9; Sparrow Hawk, Dec. 10; Cooper's Hawk, Dec. 14; Sharp-shinned Hawk, Dec. 17; Red-shouldered Hawk, 2, Dec. 18; Marsh Hawk, Dec. 20; Phoebe, Dec. 18, 19, and 29; Pine Warbler, Dec. 29; Towhee, Dec. 30; Flocks of Cedar Waxwings and Prairie Horned Larks common throughout month. Robins last seen Dec. 18; Meadowlarks, 25, Dec. 11; Pileated Woodpecker, Dec. 28; Songs: Robins, Dec. 6; Flicker, Dec. 10; Meadowlark, Dec. 11; Phoebe, Dec. 19; White-throated Sparrow, Dec. 30. I have found that the Phoebe, Towhee, Hermit Thrush, Brown Thrasher, and Pine Warbler winter here regularly in small numbers. I have found the Towhee here every month in the year.

-----Bertha Daniel

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Lynchburg, Buffalo Lick Farm. Species listed every day of December were: Goldfinch, English Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Cardinal, Carolina Wren, Junco, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted

Titmouse, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Bluebird, Crow, Turkey-Vulture, Dove, Downy Woodpecker. Kinglets were regular until Dec. 18; since then I have seen none. The Sparrow Hawk was seen on eleven different days. This tantalizing bird has become fearless enough to alight within identifying distance, with much spreading of feathers, revealing its pretty markings. Screech owls were heard six nights the latter part of the month, and a hoot owl (sp.?) off and on all month. The Kingfisher was listed nine days, the last date being Dec. 13. Phoebes were seen frequently - one day I saw four. They were sometimes heard to sing. Blue Jays were heard on ten different days. The last and only date for the Red-winged Blackbird this month was Dec. 8. All blackbirds are scarce. I saw five Starlings Jan. 2, 1932. They were singing. Meadowlarks were seen irregularly. Purple finch were listed six days. They are more common now (January), feeding on river weed seed, and can there be very closely approached. Winter Wrens have been found in a number of places, and were listed 14 times. White-breasted Nuthatches are difficult to find, though I have found the Red-breasted every time I have looked for it in a certain piney field, thus reversing the usual order as concerns nuthatches. There are many Golden-crowned Kinglets. Ruby-crowned Kinglets were seen on seven December days. Robin listings were Dec. 8, 11, 15, 18. On the last date there were hundreds of them in my woods. Bluebirds, which were scarce all summer, are wintering here and were either seen or heard by me every day of November and December. A Towhee was heard Dec. 9, and three were seen Jan. 6 by the river. The outstanding note of the month was a flock of fifteen nomads -- the Cedar Waxwings. I found them in a thicket on the false bank on Dec. 28. A Marsh Hawk was seen Jan. 5. A single Mockingbird was seen Christmas Day. Quail can be heard practically every morning or toward nightfall, if one listens for them, and about a half dozen doves are likely to be found in our corn field.

-----Mrs. C. W. Harris

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Lynchburg Region, Nov. 26, at Peavine Mountain, Snowden: 50 Robins, 1 Ruffed Grouse, 2 Red-breasted Nuthatches, 2 Fox Sparrows. Dec. 15, Lynchburg, 2 Hairy Woodpeckers. Dec. 30, Snowden, Winter Wren, 2; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Mallard, 4, on James River near Snowden Power Plant.

-----Mrs. C. L. Burgess.

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Blacksburg, Dec. 8, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, first seen this winter; Dec. 2, Robin, Pine Siskin; Dec. 6, Phoebe (only Montgomery County winter record), Kingfisher (only Montgomery County winter record), Meadowlarks (flocks).

-----Ralph M. Brown

Bristol. In addition to the census taken on Dec. 23, I noted the following birds on Dec. 30: Killdeer, 15; Savannah Sparrows, 13; Marsh Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 2; Towhee, 1. These are all common winter residents and I am merely listing them as it seems to be nearly impossible for one person to list all of the local birds in one day, which I tried to do in taking the census. Owing to the very unusually mild winter and an abundance of bird food of all kinds, the robins do not seem to have migrated south this season as they can be found most anywhere. Some of the other birds listed are not always found here at this time of year.

-----F. M. Jones



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DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR

Vol. III

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Nos. 2 & 3

LAST CALL FOR DUES FOR 1932

This is the last issue of THE RAVEN that can be sent to members who have not paid dues for 1932. A large number have sent in their 1932 payments, but many have yet to do so. If you wish to continue membership and your subscription, but do not find it convenient to send the money now, write to the undersigned and arrangements will be made to have THE RAVEN continued. Owing to the resignation of the Treasurer, Mr. Brown, checks should be sent to me, pending the election of Mr. Brown's successor by the Executive Committee.

Ruskin S. Freer
Biological Laboratory
University, Va.

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THE NESTING OF THE SYCAMORE WARBLER IN SOUTH-WEST VIRGINIA

For many reasons the warblers comprise the most interesting group of birds we have in South-west Virginia, a section of the state having many mountain ranges, some peaks of which are the highest in the state. My records show thirty two species of warblers as occurring here; thirty-nine being listed for the state as a whole. Only recently have I attempted to classify all of those which at times pass through, so I feel sure there are others which can be added to the list.

The majority of our warblers are summer residents. Some of the others during migrations are too numerous to estimate with any degree of accuracy. However, none remain here during the winter months due to the lack of insect food on which they feed almost exclusively.

In choosing the Sycamore Warbler (*Dendroica Dominica Albilora*) as the subject of a few remarks, I do so for the reason that this attractive warbler seems to occur in our state only in a restricted portion of this section. Of the many species of warblers listed in "Florida Bird Life" (Howell), the Sycamore Warbler is one of the few eastern warblers not reported from that state. Almost identical in appearance

to its near relative, the Yellow-throated Warbler, its breeding habits and winter home are distinctive.

They arrive during the last week in April or the first part of May, and may be found at that time already paired off along some favored sections of the sycamore-bordered rivers. There they may be found any time afterwards during the nesting period. As the name indicates, they favor the sycamore tree both as a nesting site and as a source of food supply, at times remaining suspended on wing like the hummers. The stay here is of short duration so soon after their arrival nest building begins and complete sets of eggs may be found during the latter part of May. My observations indicate that they nest only once during the season, although reported by Wayne from South Carolina as nesting twice.

As is customary in bird nesting as well as other pastimes, we get our greatest thrill from finding the first nest of various species. On May 24, 1923, in driving along a road close to and paralleling the Holston River, I noticed two warblers new to me in the road ahead. Realizing that they were getting nesting material I made an emergency stop, completely astonishing an old gentleman riding with me and demolishing his perfectly good corn cob pipe against the windshield. However, with all the excitement going on, the birds proved to be gentle and did not fly before securing the feather which they were after. Carefully noting their flight to a large sycamore tree, I soon located the nest, which was about sixty feet up near the extremity of a horizontal limb extending over the river. Closer investigation found the nest to be built against some twigs supporting it on the limb and was just about completed. Coming back a week later, I found the nest to contain four eggs with the female bird on the nest. She left it soon after I reached the limb on which the nest was built. The composition of the nest was of fine grasses and grayish plant fibres, held together and to the limb with spider silk and was lined entirely with chicken feathers. Much larger and more loosely constructed than the nests of the Redstart and Least Flycatcher, they are none the less substantial and will last from one season until the next unless some Cedar Waxwings happen to be nesting in the vicinity and use the old nest for building material. I have found quite a number of other nests since the first. As a rule they are situated about half way up the taller trees and are located on the limbs about two-thirds the way out from the body of the tree where they are very difficult to get to. In the smaller trees the nest is situated near or at the extreme top.

By the first of July we find the young grown but still in company with and being fed at times by both the parent birds. Like the young of many other warblers, they do not have the marking nor the bright colors of the old birds and do not attain their mature plumage before they leave here. As they are one of our earliest fall migrants, or rather summer migrants in this instance, by the middle of July they have all left for their winter home extending from the Rio Grande Valley through Mexico to Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

---F. M. Jones, Bristol, Tenn.

(Editor's Note: This paper by Mr. F. M. Jones, which was sent to the Annual Meeting of the V. S. O. to be read there, is of peculiar interest as it is apparently the first record not only of the meeting but even of the occurrence of the Sycamore Warbler in Virginia. Dr. Rives put it on the hypothetical list. I have been able to find no record of its occurrence in Virginia in any of the literature I have examined.)

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THE CHARLOTTESVILLE MEETING

It is difficult to convey the spirit of a meeting of congenial spirits through the medium of cold print, yet a few things may be said perhaps, which will give some impressions to those members who were not able to attend, as to just what sort of a meeting the second annual convention of the Virginia Society of Ornithology was.

The management of the Monticello Hotel provided a room which was entirely adequate for our purpose, and which was free from noise or other distractions. We greatly appreciate this courtesy. A second factor essential to a good meeting is the attendance of members. While this was not what it might have been, it was fair, judging by last year's standard. Only thirteen members were present, but visitors in attendance at both sessions brought the total to twenty-nine, just a little short of last year's attendance. The names of members attending the meeting are appended to this report.

A third factor contributing to a successful meeting, is the program. The committee, consisting of Dr. Murray and Mr. M. G. Lewis, got splendid results, as there were nine papers by members.

One enjoyable feature of the meeting was the presence of Mrs. Mary D. Dise, of Glen Rock, Pa., whose home was formerly in Amherst County, Va. Mrs. Dise has been very much interested in the progress of our Society, and it was due largely to her influence that those of us who took an active part in the organization of the Society in the fall of 1929, finally got busy, resulting in the meeting at Lynchburg, December 7th of that year. This was the first meeting of our group that Mrs. Dise has been able to attend. She brought along a very interesting paper on the nesting of warblers in the Alleghenies, which she read on the program.

The organization went on record as emphatically opposed to legislation providing for payment of bounties on hawks and owls, the opposition being based upon the inability of officials administering the bounty funds to distinguish harmful from beneficial species. Several members testified to the payment of bounties on the beneficial species, Dr. Murray stating that in one year bounties were paid on over three thousand heads of supposed Goshawks in Virginia, whereas Dr. Snythe observed this species only once in a period of thirty-five years' study of birds in Montgomery County.

Of special interest to the delegates was the exhibition by Dr. Murray of a Lark Bunting, taken by him near Lexington on February 11, 1932. This species is native to the states west of the Mississippi River, and has been reported only a few times previously from the eastern states. This is the first Virginia record for this species.

A reel of motion pictures loaned by the U. S. Department of Agriculture showed bird refuges maintained by the Biological Survey along the Gulf Coast, and a reel loaned by Herbert K. Job, of Richmond, showed extensive bird reservations along the west coast of Florida, and on Bird Key of the Tortugas Islands.

Of papers by members of the Society, the most outstanding was that by Dr. Murray on "Additions to the Virginia Avifauna since the Publication of Rives' Catalogue." From a careful survey of ornithological literature, Dr. Murray has added sixty species to the Virginia bird list as published by Dr. Wm. C. Rives of Washington, in his "Catalogue of the Birds of the Virginias" published in 1890. Action was taken by the Society to publish Dr. Murray's paper.

Our second year has been a very gratifying one. For a small group, with limited finances, the writer feels that splendid progress has been made. The publication of the Consolidated List last February marked an important forward step, culminating finally in Dr. Murray's paper read at the meeting. This paper will doubtless be an important contribution to the ornithological literature of the middle Atlantic coast states. When the appeal comes for your contribution toward the publication of this paper, you will be rendering a distinct service not only to our Society, but to the Ornithology of the middle Atlantic states, if you do your bit. A small amount from each member should provide sufficient funds to accomplish this purpose, and each member will receive a reprint of the paper.

The monthly contributions to THE RAVEN have shown a healthy growth. Our Christmas census was really impressive. The future usefulness of the bulletin will depend on maintaining this interest, and would also be greatly increased if a plan can be worked out by which it may be printed instead of mimeographed.

Since the meeting, considerable correspondence has been going on with the Executive Committee regarding plans for next year's meeting. The program this year was somewhat too condensed. Almost no opportunity for informal chatting was permitted by the short interval between sessions. It was thought that by thus condensing the program, a larger attendance would be attracted. The Committee seems to be in agreement on planning for an informal dinner and a field trip next year, which would allow for more expression of the social instincts in us all. It has been suggested that the time of the annual meeting be deferred to the middle or latter part of the spring, and that the place be in the Tidewater, probably at Norfolk, where the abundant water bird life of the coast could be seen on a field trip. Another interesting project for this present spring will doubtless be announced in an early issue of THE RAVEN.

On February 19, after the meeting, our Treasurer, Mr. Brown, tendered his resignation. The Executive Committee is acting on this, and also the selection of a successor. Mr. Brown did a very fine piece of work last year, and we greatly regret that he cannot continue through the coming year.

The report prepared by the Secretary, Miss Florence Hague, gives a more detailed account of the meeting.

---Ruskin S. Freer, President.

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SECOND ANNUAL MEETING
February 13, 1932

The second Annual Meeting of The Virginia Society of Ornithology opened at the Monticello Hotel at Charlottesville on Saturday, February 13 at 2:30 P.M. with the President, Prof. Freer, presiding. After an informal introduction of those present, Dr. Ivey Lewis welcomed the group to Charlottesville and Prof. Freer responded. The President then read letters of greeting from Mr. Barger and from Miss Daniel, neither of whom were able to attend the Meeting.

The greater portion of the afternoon session was devoted to the presentation of papers. During this time Dr. Murray, chairman of the program committee, presided.

Following the papers there was a brief business session. Prof. Freer appointed two committees: the Committee on Nominations and Resolutions, consisting of Mr. J. B. Lewis, chairman, Miss Lena Henderson and Mrs. A. O. James; Auditing Committee, consisting of Mr. C. O. Handley and Mr. Martin Curtler. Dr. Murray asked that the possibility of printing THE RAVEN be investigated by a committee. It was voted to appoint a committee to investigate and report at the evening session. Because of the briefness of the interval, it was impossible to find a Committee and the question was laid aside until the evening session. Discussion of the subject matter to be published in THE RAVEN brought out particularly the following opinions: that for the sake of increasing membership and general interest in birds, there should be some articles that would appeal to more people than do the lists of birds; and the contrary opinion, that the present practice of making THE RAVEN primarily for bird study should be continued. This topic was also left for further discussion.

The President stated that Mr. M. G. Lewis was absent because of being in the Naval Hospital at Portsmouth. It was voted unanimously to send greetings to Mr. Lewis.

Adjournment for dinner.

Business was continued at the opening of the evening session. Mr. J. B. Lewis presented the recommendations of the nominating committee, namely, that the present Officers and Executive Committee should be re-elected. Nominations from the floor were called for with no response. It was moved and seconded to accept the report and reelect the Officers and Executive Committee. Motion was carried.

Mr. Lewis then read the Resolutions which the Committee had drawn up. They were accepted and are on file.

Reports of the Treasurer and Secretary were read and accepted. They are on file.

The Editor of THE RAVEN gave an informal report stating that the cost of publishing THE RAVEN for 1931 was approximately \$75.00, and that the cost of printing rather than mimeographing would be considerably more, which he believed we would not be justified in undertaking at present. The questions of publishing Dr. Murray's paper and THE RAVEN (mimeographed or printed) was left to the Executive Committee.

Discussion of whether the subject matter of THE RAVEN should continue to be entirely statistical or should include some articles of general interest brought out more expressions favoring the latter. Dr. Murray asked members to send such articles occasionally.

The question of whether this organization should take some action in regard to the bill before the State Legislature needed only to be mentioned. It was promptly moved, seconded, and unanimously carried that "THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY go on record as being opposed to the bill providing for a bounty on hawks and owls."

Dr. Murray again presided during the evening program, after which THE SECOND ANNUAL MEETING was declared ended.

AFTERNOON PROGRAM

Mr. Martin Curtler, Charlottesville. - Birds of the Shetland Islands and of Jamaica. A vivid description of the isolation, vegetation, and temperature of the Shetland Islands; and of the water birds nesting on them. Mention was made of the contrast in vegetation and in birds of the Shetland Islands and of Jamaica.

Dr. Ivey F. Lewis, Charlottesville. - The spread of the Starling in Virginia. This paper was the occasion for the comparing of notes on the Starling in different localities.

Mrs. Mary Dise, Glen Rock, Pa. - The 1930 Fall Migration of Warblers in the Alleghanies.

Mr. J. E. Gould, Norfolk. - Reminiscences of a Field Ornithologist. Read by Dr. Murray.

Miss Katherine Claytor, Bedford. - Experiences in Bird Banding.
Read by Miss Henderson.

Dr. Murray - Additions to the Virginia Avifauna since the Publication of Rives' Catalogue, 1890.

EVENING PROGRAM

Mr. J. P. Andrews, Assistant Forester, Virginia Forest Service. - Forest Fires, illustrated by slides and a reel on Wild Life.

Mr. F. M. Jones, Bristol. - The Nesting of the Sycamore Warbler.
Read by Mr. J. B. Lewis.

Prof. Freer - Migratory Birds on an Artificial Body of Water, Timber Lake.

----- Reel from the Dept. of Agriculture depicting bird life on the Bird Refuges of the Gulf of Mexico.

Mr. Chas. O. Handley - Hatching dates of the Ruffed Grouse in Virginia, in 1931.

----- Reel from Mr. Herbert K. Job - Birds of the West Coast of Florida.

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---Miss Florence Hague, Secretary

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REGISTRATION

- Andrews, J. P., Asst. Forester, University, Va.
- Carroll, Alice R., Lexington
- *Carroll, Robert P., Lexington
- *Curtler, Martin, University, Va.
- *Dise, Mrs. Mary D., Glen Rock, Pa.
- *Freer, Ruskin S., University, Va.
- Gurley, Mrs. Webb B., Richmond
- *Hague, Florence, Sweet Briar, Va.
- *Handley, Chas. O., Ashland, Va.
- Hedges, H. S., Charlottesville
- *Henderson, Lena B., Randolph-Macon, Lynchburg
- *James, Mrs. A. O., Richmond.
- *Lewis, Ivey F., University, Va.
- *Lewis, John B., Amelia, Va.
- *Murray, J. J., Lexington
- *Shaw, Mrs. F. W., Richmond
- Sheppard, H. J., Chula, Va.
- Smith, Noble, Scottsville
- Smith, William Day, Scottsville

REGISTRATION (continued)

*Taylor, Grace H., Randolph-Macon, Lynchburg
 Walker, Lissa Bell, New York City
 Williams, W. Twyman III, Hampden-Sydney.
 and others

*Members

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ANNUAL REPORT OF RALPH M. BROWN, TREASURER

Receipts

2 Sustaining memberships	\$10.00
26 Active "	65.00
46 Associate "	69.00
1 Back dues for 1930	1.00
1 Contribution for club work	3.50
Cash from former Treasurer	41.90
Miscellaneous receipts	1.53
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Total	191.93

Expenditures

Typing, mimeographing, stencilling, mailing	\$74.88
Supplies	50.77
Refund	.68
Postage	15.89
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Total	142.22
Balance	49.71

---Ralph M. Brown, Treasurer

Audited and found correct, March 2, 1932

Ruskin S. Freer
 Martin Curtler

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FIELD NOTES

Amelia. Field sparrows have been here in numbers all winter, though none were seen in Dec., Jan., and Feb., of last winter. They were in full song from Feb. 26 until the storm came. Towhees all winter. Pine warblers began to sing Feb. 17, and were in full song Feb. 26. The first red-winged black bird, a single male, was seen at the old ice pond March 2, and is still there and singing. The first purple grackle was seen March 3. A flock of 6 or 8 purple finches were eating maple

FIELD NOTES (continued)

buds and singing in the Court House square, March 3, 4, 5. Robins and mockingbirds were in full song from Feb. 10 until the blizzard came March 6. First swamp tree frog heard Feb. 3. First Hyla spring peeper Feb. 12. First American toad Feb. 12. Cricket frogs active but silent Feb. 26.

---John B. Lewis.

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Shield's Lake, Byrd Park, Richmond. Nov. 25, About 100 Ring-necked Ducks; 2 Coots; 1 Pied-billed Grebe; 1 Bonaparte's Gull, winter plumage. Nov. 26, 60 Ring-necked Ducks; 2 Coots; 1 Golden-eye Duck, female. Dec. 25, 100 Ring-necked Ducks; 3 Golden-eye Ducks; 1 Bufflehead; 1 Pied-billed Grebe. Jan. 11, 100 Ring-necked Ducks; 3 Golden-eye Ducks (female); 1 Buffle-head; 1 Pied-billed Grebe; 1 Horned Grebe, immature. Jan. 17, 60 Ring-necked Ducks; 8 Golden-eye Ducks; 1 Buffle-head; 2 Lesser Scaups, female; 1 Pied-billed Grebe. Feb. 8, 50 Ring-necked Ducks; 3 Golden-eye Ducks; 1 Pied-billed Grebe. No Pintails, Redheads or male Golden-eyes have been observed in Byrd Park this winter, although these were present the previous winter. In the identifications I had the assistance of Mrs. A. O. James.

---Mrs. Frederick W. Shaw

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Naruna. The most unusual winter resident to be noted this season was the Pine Warbler, which has been seen almost daily around the house, always singing. Cedar Waxwings were common through Jan. and Feb. Prairie Horned Larks seen three times in Jan. and three times in Feb. Robin, Jan. 4th, becoming common after the middle of Jan. Towee, Jan. 11th. Phoebe, wintering. Cooper's Hawk, Feb. 1st and 9th. Red-shouldered Hawk, 3 on Feb. 5th. Purple Finch, 2 on Feb. 9th. Pileated Woodpecker, Feb. 27th. Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Feb. 28th. Songs: Jan. 10, Meadowlark; 12, Robin; 15, Field Sparrow; 19, Dove; Feb. 4, Cardinal; 7, Mockingbird; 12, Prairie Horned Lark.

---Bertha Daniel

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Norfolk. On Feb. 21st, while on a walk through the Desert, an area back of Cape Henry, I saw a Pileated Woodpecker. Fortunately, I got a good look at it through my glasses from a short distance, over a period of three or four minutes. I had plenty of time to note its color and markings and was particularly interested in the strange movement of its head and neck. It is a new bird on my list and both Mr. Gould and Mr. Davie say they have never seen it in this vicinity. The Desert is a large wooded area back of Cape Henry, with a number of cypress swamps in it. The state legislature recently voted to accept it as a State Park but did not appropriate the money.

---A. O. English

Back Bay. On January 21st I was privileged to take a trip down into the Back Bay country with Mr. J. E. Gould and Mr. A. O. English. The high spot of the trip was a sight of about 400 Whistling Swans feeding along the marsh at the southern end of Knott's Island, just over the line in North Carolina. With them were about as many Canada Geese. We also had a fine close view of two Bald Eagles in the air, one white-headed bird and the other in immature plumage. Later we saw another adult Eagle. A flock of about 40 Pipits were feeding in a plowed field. Along the shore we saw two small flocks of Boat-tailed Grackles. Herring Gulls were abundant, and while crossing Hampton Roads I noted a few Ring-billed Gulls.

---J. J. Murray

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Charlottesville. The following species missing on the Christmas census have been observed off and on throughout the winter so far, and were probably lying so low that they were not noticed, as Dec. 21 was a very bleak day: Winter Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, Cedar Waxwing, Prairie Horned Lark and Fox Sparrow. Specific observations follow chronologically. Jan. 3: On this day, which was very warm, I had the amazing luck to see a Swallow (I would have said a Bank or Rough-winged) flying over the University grounds. Jan. 10: Myrtle Warbler and Red-tailed Hawk; Jan. 12, Hermit Thrush, 8 Fox Sparrows and Red-bellied Woodpecker; Jan. 14, Belted Kingfisher and Flicker; song of White-breasted Nuthatch first heard. Jan. 17, Sharp-shinned Hawk, 3 Winter Wrens, 35 Robins (singing), Bluebird (singing), 5 Hermit Thrushes, 2 Ruby-crowned Kinglets (singing), 1 female Towhee (first Towhee since October). Jan. 24, Mourning Dove singing (RSF). Trip to two new localities, viz., (1) Rivanna River near Riverview Cemetery, Charlottesville, and (2) Meachum's River and adjoining farm lands eight miles west of Charlottesville. About 30 Black Vultures observed soaring at various heights over the Rivanna. Dr. B. D. Reynolds of the University of Virginia, who lives near this place, frequently sees numerous Black Vultures. Nowhere else in this district has either Mr. Freer or myself seen any Black Vultures since September except a single individual on Nov. 8. Jan. 24, 1 Killdeer, 5 male Towhees, 6 Fox Sparrows, 1 Migrant Shrike, 1 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1 Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1 Prairie Horned Lark, 1 Myrtle Warbler. First Purple Grackle, Feb. 14; numbers seen Feb. 28 (R.S.F.). Phoebe, singing on University campus Mar. 2 (R.S.F.). Feb. 5, first Meadowlark around the University. Feb. 11, flock of about 75 Cowbirds seen ten or fifteen miles north of Charlottesville.

---Martin Curtler

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Harrisonburg. "The Avian Society" of the Eastern Mennonite School has been recently organized, having as its objectives: (1) To study birds in their native habitats; (2) To stimulate interest in bird life; (3) To aid in the increase and protection of our local wild birds; (4) To encourage the establishment of bird sanctuaries; the erection of feeding stations, baths, nesting-sites, etc.; and the planting of shrubbery

attractive to birds. Saturday field trips and a regular monthly meeting of all members are a part of the Society's program. We are looking forward to an interesting and profitable study of the spring birds and hope to be able to report items of interest.

---Elizabeth A. Showalter, Sec.

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Augusta County. On January 23, Dr. Ivey F. Lewis and I saw a flock of from sixty to seventy-five Pine Siskins on top of Kennedy Mountain at the southeastern corner of Augusta County. They were feeding on the seeds of the sweet birch or "mountain mahogany" (*Betula lenta*). This species is an occasional but irregular visitor at Lynchburg, but this is by far the largest number I have seen at one time in Virginia. On February 28, with Dr. O. E. White, of the University, I saw a male and two female Red Crossbills, formerly called the American Crossbill. They were on the same mountain, very near to the place where the Pine Siskins were seen. The male seemed to be collecting nesting material, which would not be surprising, as they are reported to nest as far south as northern Georgia in the Alleghenies. They have been reported as nesting any time from mid-winter to July. Although normally a breeder in the coniferous forests of the Canadian highlands, this species has been frequently observed in more southern regions. It is very erratic in its wanderings. I have felt for some time that frequent visits to our Virginia mountains in the winter months might yield some interesting records. Weekly trips to this same region through the coming year in connection with certain field work should throw some light on this matter.

---Ruskin S. Freer

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Blacksburg. Jan. 14, Song Sparrow, singing; Robin. Jan. 10, Meadowlark, flock of 20, singing. Jan. 13, Yellow-bellied sapsucker, only Blacksburg record for January. Jan. 16, Golden-crowned kinglet, 6; Dr. Smyth has only two January records. Jan. 17, Bewick's Wren - 1; Dr. Smyth has only one January record; Purple finch, 6, only January record for Blacksburg; Fox Sparrow, only January record for Blacksburg. Jan. 24, Kingfisher, the second January record for Blacksburg. I saw one on Jan. 11 last year.

---Ralph M. Brown

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Lexington. The months of January and February have been unusually mild, but the coming of the early migrants has not been affected by this to any marked degree. White-throats, which are usually very scarce in mid-winter, have been present in fairly large numbers. Robins began to appear on the lawns on Jan. 9th. Though a few winter with us in sheltered mountain coves, these were probably migrants. Doves which winter in small bands in the corn-fields, began to appear in town on Feb. 11th. Purple Finches were seen on Feb. 15th. The only other migrants during this period were the Red-winged Blackbird (Feb. 22) and

the Purple Grackle (Feb. 28; and one seen in Augusta Co., Feb. 10). The most marked effect of the mild weather has been on the singing of birds. Some of the birds which have been singing throughout this period are as follows: Cardinal, Carolina Wren, Titmouse, Meadowlark, Song Sparrow, Bluebird, and White-throat. Also, Robin (since Feb. 10), Dove (since Feb. 11), Field Sparrow (since Feb. 15), Red-winged Blackbird (on arrival), Junco (at times), and even the queer song of the White-breasted Nuthatch as early as Jan. 29. The most remarkable record not only for this period but for the years of my bird study in this county was the capture of the Lark Bunting, a straggler from the west, at Cameron's Pond on Feb. 11th. It was exhibited at the Charlottesville meeting, and has since been deposited in the U. S. National Museum at Washington. Another record of interest was that of two Bonaparte's Gulls in adult winter plumage at the East Lexington Bridge on North River on Jan. 8th, the third record for this region and the first winter record. The Great Blue Heron has wintered again at Big Spring Pond. Red-breasted Nuthatches, which I have not seen here many times, were rather common in February, as also were Cedar Waxwings, which I had not before noted in that month. Ravens were seen frequently by a friend in the mountains in the western part of the county in January.

---J. J. Murray



THE RAVEN

BULLETIN OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY
PUBLISHED AT LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA
DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR

Vol. III

April, 1932

No. 4

Early April

Behold the robin's breast aglow
As on the lawn he seeks his game;
His cap a darker hue doth show,
His bill a yellow flame.

Now in the elm tops see the swarm
Of swelling buds like bees in May;
The maples, too, have tints blood warm,
And willows show a golden ray.

Forth from the hive go voyaging bees,
Cruising far each sunny hour;
Scenting sap mid maple trees,
Or sifting bread from sawdust flour.

Up from the marsh a chorus shrill
Of piping frogs swells in the night;
The meadowlark shows flashing quill
As o'er brown fields she takes her flight.

Now screaming hawks soar o'er the wood,
And sparrows red haunt bushy banks,
The starlings gossip, "Life is good,"
And grackles pass in sable ranks.

The rye fields show a tender hue
Of fresh'ning green amid the brown,
And pussy-willows clad anew
Along the brook in silver gown.

The purple finch hath found his tongue
From out the elm tree what a burst!
Now once again all things are young,
Renewed by love as at the first.

---By John Burroughs, in Our Dumb Animals.

Field Trip of the Virginia Academy of Science

A letter from Dr. Ivey F. Lewis, of the University of Virginia, has brought an invitation to the members of the V. S. O. to participate in the annual field trip of the Virginia Academy of Science in May. Our members will greatly appreciate the fraternal spirit of this invitation and will welcome such an opportunity. It is hoped that many can join in this trip. It would be well for all who are planning to go to write to Dr. Ivey F. Lewis, Miller School of Biology, University, Virginia, in case there might be a change in some of the plans for the trip. Dr. Lewis' letter follows:

"We are planning to hold the spring foray of the Virginia Academy of Science on the week-end of May 13th and 14th. The primary purpose is to study the distribution of plants, but we have found that these expeditions are worth while from the standpoint of bringing together a group interested in natural history, and we would like to have the ornithologists represented. I hope you can come, and would be glad to have you invite also members of the Ornithology Society to join us in what should be a very pleasant outing.

"Final details have not been worked out, but the program is approximately as follows, as worked out by Mr. John B. Lewis: Reach Amelia Friday evening, May 13th, spend night in or near Amelia. (Arrangements are being made for accommodations in a private home at a charge of not more than \$2.00 for room, breakfast, and supper - de luxe explorers may go to the hotel.) Saturday morning visit stations where Nelumbo and Sarracenia flava are found, and collect at other likely spots, spend night at Lawrenceville, or nearby, and Sunday morning visit Sarracenia purpurea and Smilax stations. There will be no formal adjournment. Some may wish to go home Saturday night.

"The country around Amelia is exceptionally interesting. The geologists have found many rare minerals there and the occurrence of such plants as Sarracenia flava, Nelumbo lutea and Smilax walteri indicates that characteristically southern plants have found their way north in this area. I hope very much that some of the ornithologists will find it convenient to join us. We have no funds to provide transportation or maintenance, but if a group will go together in a car the expenses will not be great."

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Dates of Hatching of the Ruffed Grouse in 1931

Of twenty Ruffed Grouse nests containing eggs reported to me in 1931, the exact dates of hatching of eight nests located in Augusta, Rockingham, Shenandoah and Page counties were determined. The average date of hatching for that season was found to be about May 22nd. The hatching dates were as follows: 1 set, May 20; 3, May 22; 1, May 23; 1, May 25; 1, May 28; and 1, June 2. A ninth nest reported to me from

Page County on May 8th had hatched before May 17th. The nine sets consisted of from 6 to 14 eggs, an average of 10.9 each. The average period of incubation was found to be about 25 days.

---Chas. O. Handley.

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Riding with a Ruffed Grouse

Dr. William P. Caton, of Accotink, Virginia, writes of a curious experience which he had with a Ruffed Grouse early in March. "I was driving slowly over a muddy road," he writes, "when a Ruffed Grouse flew on top of the hood, stopped momentarily, then jumped off and started away through the woods. It was the first Grouse I had seen for a long time, as they are scarcer than Wild Turkeys around here."

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Bluebird Behavior

Two early Bluebird nests were found near Lexington, Virginia, in late March. The difference in the behavior of these two pairs of Bluebirds at the nest bears testimony to the danger of dogmatizing about birds on the basis of too little evidence. The first pair resented in a marked way any approach to the nest and showed much courage in its defense. As long as I was trying to look into the nest hollow the male continued to fly at my head, almost striking me at each swoop and snapping his bill loudly. Sometimes he even followed me away from the tree for some distance. During incubation I could not at times make the female leave the nest, even by beating on the tree. Once I poked her with a small twig, but still she would not desert her eggs. At the other nest, the birds left at once when I approached and took up a position a hundred yards away. They showed no sign of resentment and little of distress. Nor would they come near the nest again until I was almost out of sight. This struck me as an interesting piece of habit variation. I have seen both types of behavior previously in Bluebirds.

---J. J. Murray.

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A Pair of Shovelers

Late in the afternoon of March 22, while a rather cold north wind was blowing, a pair of Shoveler Ducks, Spatula clypeata, were flushed

from a small woodland pond about three-fourths of a mile from an old ice pond near Amelia, Va. They circled out above the trees and flew swiftly in the direction of a larger pond.

A few minutes later I was delighted to find them near the upper end of the old ice pond, where the water was shallow, and the pond narrow. By keeping a tree between me and the ducks I managed to approach within less than 50 yards of them without frightening them.

They were "dabbling" for food in the shallow water, and twice the male stood straight up and flapped his wings, displaying his beautiful color markings. His head and neck are dark green, in which the yellow eyes show conspicuously. The front breast and back are pure white, the belly and sides reddish brown. The wing coverts are blue and the speculum green.

The female is less gaily colored, her general appearance giving a streaked brown effect, with the wings less strongly tinged with blue and green. They are handsome birds in spite of the very large spoon-shaped bills.

I watched them around my tree trunk, through the binoculars, until the light began to fail and then slipped away without disturbing them. I am hoping that they may safely reach their nesting ground and rear a brood in peace this summer.

---John B. Lewis.

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Editorial Note

Readers of THE RAVEN will see that an effort has been made in this issue to include more popular material. Such notes and short articles are requested from our members, but they should be brief unless the matter is of special interest or importance.

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Field Notes

Cameron's Pond, Gordonsville, Albemarle Co., March 24. 12 (8 male and 4 female) Ring-necked Ducks and 1 Coot.

R. F. & P. R. R. abandoned gravel pit south of Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania County, March 26 -- 10 (6 male and 4 female) Ring-necked Ducks.

Solomon's Store, Henrico Co., March 29 -- 5 Purple Martins flying about a house; first for season

Camp Lee Game Refuge, Prince George Co. -- Gordon R. Davis, Caretaker, heard the first wild quail whistle "Bob-white" on February 22nd.

Whistling was common and the coveys began to scatter from that date until the blizzard of March 6th, which stopped whistling and caused scattered birds to covey again. At the present time, March 31st, paired birds are common. Cocks in captivity have had to be watched closely for several weeks to prevent their killing one another. These cocks are also ardent nest builders. Compared with the season of 1930 the first quail to whistle "Bob-white" at Camp Lee was heard on March 15th and whistling was not common for several weeks. It will be recalled that the season was cold and backward as compared with the present and that the nesting of quail was considerably retarded thereby.

---Chas. O. Handley.

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Norfolk. The following birds seen by Mr. J. E. Gould and myself on April 3, 1932:

LYNHAVEN INLET

Black Skimmer	12
Laughing Gull	1
Herring Gull	200 est.
Osprey	3
Bank Swallow	1
P. B. Grebe	6

"DESERT"

Bald Eagle	4 im.
Brown Thrasher	-2
Myrtle Warbler	-Abundant
Towhee	2
Gt. Blue Heron	-2
Hermit Thrush	4
Kingfisher	1
Pine Warbler	common

This is the first year I have seen the Black Skimmer in the Spring - the flock was the largest I have ever seen, in Lynhaven Inlet. One Laughing Gull was seen among the Skimmers and the first one seen at the Inlet this year.

Mr. Gould saw four Cedar Waxwings feeding on holly berries in his yard April 4; this is his second record since coming to Norfolk. He also saw a large flock of Laughing Gulls in the harbor back of his house. Mr. Gould furnishes the following notes on the nest of a Carolina Wren, this being the earliest nesting record he has for the species in this region: First egg laid on March 2; one each day thereafter for four days; eggs hatched on March 23rd. The nest was built in a box back of a rose bush at the end of the porch.

---A. O. English.

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Amelia. Migratory flocks of Robins have been present most of the time from March 18 to date. Resident Purple Grackles became common March 20. Pipits were seen March 15 and March 20. First Chipping Sparrow March 22. A pair of Shoveler Ducks, Spatula clypeata, were seen at the old ice pond March 22. First Brown Thrasher's song March 29. Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker last seen March 29. First Black-and-white Warbler April 7. First Blue-gray Gnatcatcher April 7.

I have just returned from an early morning trip (April 8) to the old ice pond, and was lucky enough to find an immature male Black-Crowned Night Heron there. It arose from the water's edge as I approached, and lit in a tree near the head of the pond, where I studied it with the glasses at about 60 yards for some time. I do not think there is any doubt as to its identity. The breast is solid white, the lores very light, the top of the head black and the back ashy, or blueish. The bill and a line through eye is black, or very dark. This is the second record of the Black-crowned Night Heron for Amelia, as I saw a young bird on Deep Creek last July 16.

I am much interested just now in what seems to be the nesting of a pair of Brown-headed Nuthatches near here. Twice I have frightened one of these birds out of a small hole in a fence post, and at several other times have seen and heard them near the place. I will have time to settle this definitely before my next report for THE RAVEN.

---John B. Lewis.

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Charlottesville. March 3, First Red-winged Blackbirds; first Pine Warbler (singing). March 23, Pair of Rusty Blackbirds. March 25, three Black Vultures; first Chipping Sparrows (singing) (R.S. Freer). March 29, first Vesper Sparrow (singing). April 1st, two Louisiana Water-thrushes.

---Martin Curtler.

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Naruna. Prairie Horned Lark, March 10th and 16th. Cooper's Hawk seen three times in March. First dates: Fox Sparrow, March 10; Chipping Sparrow, 20; Bewick's Wren, Purple Martin, 24; Brown Thrasher, 27; Hermit Thrush, Cedar Waxwing, 28; Vesper Sparrow, 30.

---Bertha Daniel.

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Harrisonburg. Since January 20 the Society has made ten field trips. The following permanent and winter residents were noted: Bluebird, Bob-white, Cardinal, Carolina Chickadee, Brown Creeper, Crow, Flicker, Goldfinch, Ruffed Grouse, Red-tailed Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Prairie Horned Lark, Blue Jay, Junco, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Meadowlark, Mockingbird, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Robin, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Migrant, Shrike, Fox Sparrow, House Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, Starling, Tufted Titmouse, Turkey Vulture, Cedar Waxwing, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Carolina Wren, and Winter Wren.

The spring arrivals with the date of first observation are: White-throated Sparrow 1/23; Purple Grackle 2/13; Killdeer, Mourning Dove 2/27; Field Sparrow 3/7; Phoebe, Red-winged Blackbird 3/19; Bewick's Wren 3/26; Catbird, Cowbird, Woodcock, Vesper Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Towhee, Hermit Thrush, 4/2.

These trips have included open fields, highway, woodland and railway.

Cedar Waxwings have been very abundant in a dense woods nearby. Prairie Horned Larks are seen and heard almost daily on the campus. A nest, containing five eggs, has been found. Two Meadowlarks were found dead, apparently starved, although we have had an open winter. A Field Sparrow was banded March 7.

---The Avian Society,
Elizabeth Showalter, Sec.

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Blacksburg. The cold and snowy weather in the first two weeks of March made bird observations difficult. My most interesting records are as follows: a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker on March 25th, a very early date for this species here; a Towhee on 26th, which is the earliest record for Blacksburg; four Ruffed Grouse on 26th; an American Bittern on 26th, the fourth I have seen in seven years at Blacksburg; and a White-throated Sparrow on 30th, earliest record for Blacksburg. Purple Finches seen on 23rd and 30th, and a Winter Wren on 13th. Some first dates are: 19, Phoebe; 20, Field Sparrow; 24, Chipping Sparrow; 26, Red-winged Blackbird.

---Ralph M. Brown.

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Lexington. The most interesting feature of field work about Lexington during March was the number of ducks to be seen. After having been dry for nearly two years, Cameron's Pond is again full of water, and ducks in fair numbers have been stopping. The following records, mostly at this pond, were made; Mallard, 12th, 14th, 17th, and 18th, 8 individuals being seen; Black Duck, 5th, 17th, 21st, over 50 of them being seen on the 17th; Baldpate, 21st (6 males and 5 females), 23 (2 females), 28 (pair); Blue-winged Teal, 23rd and 28th; Ring-necked Duck, 24th (5 females), 28th (3 males and 5 females); Lesser Scaup (usually one of our most common ducks, but rather scarce this season), 10th to 28th, 7 individuals; Bufflehead (only recorded once previously), 23rd (female) and 28th (young male); Hooded Merganser, 17th to 28th, 14 individuals, mostly females or immatures. Two Woodcocks seen on 21st. Wilson's Snipes abundant after 21st. First arrivals: 14, Cowbird; 21, Rusty Blackbird; 22, Purple Martin (much the earliest date I have here); 28, Towhee, Chipping Sparrow. I did not see a single male Purple Finch during March. Unusually large flocks of migrating Robins passed through. Nesting Notes: A pair of Prairie Horned Larks, seen around Cameron's Pond until late March, gave indications of nesting, but I could not locate the nest. Two early Bluebird nests were found, one at Cameron's Pond, in which the first egg was laid on March 24, and the other at Big Spring, in which the first egg was laid on March 31. The first nest was later destroyed just as the eggs were due to hatch.

---J. J. Murray



THE RAVEN

BULLETIN OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY
PUBLISHED AT LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA
DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR

Vol. III

May, 1932

No. 5

OUR NEW TREASURER

Owing to the resignation of Mr. Ralph M. Brown as Treasurer, just after the annual meeting, the Executive Committee found it necessary for the first time to exercise its elective functions, under our constitution, with the result that Mr. John B. Lewis, of Amelia Court House, was chosen for the following year. Mr. Lewis has accepted the position, and funds and the Treasurer's books have been turned over to him.

Although we greatly regret losing Mr. Brown from our official family, we are glad to welcome Mr. Lewis. He is County Agent for Amelia County, and contributes nature articles to The Richmond NEWS-LEADER. These articles appear every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

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The Officers hope that all members and former members will send in their dues to the new Treasurer as quickly as possible, and that each member will try to secure additional members. So far this year, not enough dues have come in to take care of issuing THE RAVEN. The material submitted for publication has increased rapidly, while our funds have decreased. This cannot long continue without greatly reducing the size of THE RAVEN.

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OCCURRENCE OF THE RAZOR-BILLED AUK IN VIRGINIA

In view of the extreme rarity of the Razor-Billed Auk in Virginia, the following statement in Vol. 9, No. 2, of the Maryland Conservationist will be of interest. It was accompanied by a picture of the mounted specimen.

"In January, 1932, a fisherman at Wachapreague, Va., picked up along the coast a bird which no one seemed to be able to identify. Knowing that W. H. Collier, superintendent of the Wicomico State Game Farm at Salisbury, Md., was interested in mounted specimens, the bird was forwarded to him. Mr. Collier had the bird mounted by a taxidermist in Baltimore and upon looking up data regarding it, we found the bird to be in conformity with the following description: "Alca torda (Linn.)--Razor-billed Auk." (The description which followed

was copied from Frank M. Chapman's "Handbook of Birds of Eastern North America.")

---Chas. O. Handley.

(Editor's Note: This record is of great interest. So far as can be ascertained there is only one other record for Virginia since the publication of Rives' "Catalogue." That record was of a bird shot at Smith's island, March 29, 1912, and sent to the U. S. National Museum by Capt. Geo. D. Hitchens, Audubon Warden. It was reported in THE AUK, XXIX, 1912, July, p. 399.)

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NESTING OF THE PRAIRIE HORNED-LARK NEAR HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA

The Prairie Horned Larks are changing their range, probably due to the cutting away of the forests. The agricultural lands in the east are luring the birds into the Shenandoah Valley. During the winter and spring of the past five years these birds have been seen almost daily on the campus of Eastern Mennonite School, Harrisonburg, Va. Since 1930 three Prairie Horned Larks' nests have been found on the campus. The first, found June 9, 1930, contained two eggs. It was built deeply in the ground, lined with dried grass, and very well hidden. The following day, the nest contained only one egg. After that there was no evidence that the owners returned to the nest, so it was taken for the school museum.

This spring two nests were located on the baseball grounds, a very unsafe place, since the ground is traversed daily by public school children. The first nest containing five eggs was discovered March 7, by the public school children. Without my knowledge it was removed and taken to the public school. Upon investigation I identified the nest as belonging to this species, and was convinced by the teacher that the eggs were frozen and broken; otherwise they would not have molested them.

The second nest also containing five eggs was found March 30. On April 10 two of the eggs hatched. Being situated on the ball ground much anxiety was felt for the welfare of the nestlings. They grew and feathered nicely up until April 15. On April 16 a visit was made to the nest with the object of banding them. We found the nest empty, except for the unhatched eggs. Whether they left the nest during the night or early morning in the normal manner, or were destroyed in some way, still remains a mystery.

---D. Ralph Hostetter.

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NESTING OF THE RED-TAILED HAWK IN SOUTH-WEST VIRGINIA

This hawk nests earlier than any of our local hawks and is more generally distributed and quite common. It is known as the squirrel hawk by the folks in the country as the squirrels are an important item

of their food supply. I inspected six nests this season that were being used, three others unoccupied but both birds being close by. Two others in very large and tall shag-bark hickories which were being used I passed up. I also found several old nests which had been abandoned, but will only describe those that were found to be in use.

Nest No. 1, March 14th. Three eggs (inc. 5), south slope of Clinch Mountain. Nest in short-leaved pine, (*pinus echinata*), 55 ft. up near the top. Measured exterior 48"X22"; interior 10"X4". Composed of sticks and green pine twigs; lined with inner chestnut bark and green pine twigs. Had been used at least one season previous. This nest was about the same as all examined as far as the composition. The exterior measurements varied according to the age of the nest and the location in the tree. The interiors of all were the same, 10"X4". No leaves were used in any part of the nests and all used the green pine twigs of the short-leaved pine.

Nest No. 2, April 4th. Nest with three eggs (inc. 21), 82 ft. up in pignut hickory growing on edge of a back pasture field on steep ridge land. Old nest used for several seasons past 40"X23".

Nest No. 3, April 6th. Steep ridge at the head of a ravine. Nest 97 ft. up in a large red oak contained one young just hatched and one pipped egg. New nest 24"X24".

Nest No. 4, near center of heavily timbered tract of steep land. Nest in the top of a linden tree 99 ft. up contained two eggs about ready to hatch. New nest 27"X16". Climbing up the ridge a short ways from the nest tree the eggs could be seen in the nest without using the glasses. April 14th.

Nest No. 5, April 20th. Clinch Mountain at edge of pine belt. Nest with one egg apparently sterile, top of short-leaved pine 41 ft. up. When first investigated I was under the impression that the egg had just been laid and left the tree without further examination. Coming back a week later only one egg was in the nest and from the claw or beak marks on the egg caused from turning during incubation, this egg had been set on for a long time and the hawk finally giving it up as a bad job although she was still nearby the nest. New nest 30"X12" and in addition to the usual materials, part of the lining was of dead pine sticks 2"X6".

Nest No. 6, April 30th. Steep thinly wooded section of river knobs at the head of a ravine. Nest in top of a black birch 77 ft. up contained three young about a pound in weight each. Nest not measured but of considerable size and used for some time.

A summary of the data gathered shows that in the mountains the *pinus echinata* is used as a nesting tree in preference to any other, and is selected on the edge of the pine belt on the side of a ravine near the water. In other sections the kind of tree has nothing to do with the selection and only the situation and height of the tree is considered; nearly every nest found was in a different kind of tree

but the general situation was the same. While any of the natives coming within range of the red-tails will take a pot shot at them on general principles, they are not hunted as are the Cooper Hawks for of all the farmers questioned while I was carrying on my investigations none of them reported the hawk as bothering poultry.

---F. M. Jones

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BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCH NESTING IN AMELIA COUNTY

The pair of Brown-headed Nuthatches mentioned in my April report reared a brood of young in the old cedar post to the point where they met the old birds at the mouth of the nest hole to be fed, and I have no doubt, left the nest all right.

On visiting the nest April 14, I heard the faint chirping of the young for the first time.

April 18, just before sunset I watched the nest 20 minutes, in which time the old birds, coming singly, fed the young five times.

April 24, early in the morning, I again visited the nest and watched both birds feed the young in quick succession, one waiting to enter the nest hole as soon as the other had left.

April 25, at sunset I watched the old birds feed the young twice, both times coming together and feeding in quick succession as before. The interval between these double feedings in this instance was 24 minutes.

April 26, I visited the nest at 5:30 p.m. and saw the parent birds give the young two double feedings, both coming at once as before. The young birds put their heads out of the hole to be fed this time, and appeared about fully grown.

April 30, I visited the nest late in the afternoon and found it deserted, but heard the birds calling about 150 yards up the hill in the pines. I had no time to try to locate the young birds. Since that date I have not heard them when passing that way, which has happened but twice.

---John B. Lewis

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THE UNUSUAL BEHAVIOR OF A MALE ROBIN

For three days in succession when I have come down stairs between five and six in the morning, I have found on a window sill a male robin which seemed to be very much interested in what he saw within the window. When disturbed by my movements within the room he would fly to a nearby tree but would return to the window in a few moments. I could not tell whether he was admiring his reflection in the window pane or trying to make friends with the other robin he supposed he saw. This window has an inside screen while the other windows on this floor have outside screens.

The bird is one of a pair which nested near the house and which are now feeding a brood of young just out of the nest.

---J. Bowie Ferneyhough,
Richmond, Virginia

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Harrisonburg. Since our last report we have observed 50 new species, which brings our total since February to 98. The most interesting of these are: Upland Plover, 4/8; Belted Kingfisher, White-eyed Vireo, Myrtle Warbler, 4/23; Baltimore Oriole, 4/26; Horned Grebe, Lesser Yellow-Legs, Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Red-bellied Woodpecker, 4/27; Orchard Oriole, Nighthawk, 4/29; Black-throated Blue Warbler, Pine Warbler, 4/30; Blackburnian, Black-throated Green, Black and White, Golden-winged, Magnolia, and Chestnut-sided Warblers, Yellow-breasted Chat, Wood Pewee, Indigo Bunting, 5/6.

A Cedar woodland close by was the roosting place for hundreds of robins during migration. On April 6 some of our group, with flashlights, searched the lower branches for drowsy robins. Eight were caught and banded. One pair of robins with a taste for the unique built in the shelter of a large root on the bank of an old excavation.

---Avian Society,
Elizabeth A. Showalter, Sec.

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Charlottesville. First arrivals for April: 5th, Black and White Warbler, Yellow Palm Warbler; 7th, Rough-winged Swallow, Brown Thrasher; 10th, Marsh Hawk (RSF); 11th, Black-throated Green Warbler (RSF); 13th, Blue-headed Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Tree Swallow; 15th, House Wren (RSF); 16th, Whip-poor-will; 17th, Chimney Swift (Prof. R. P. Carroll); 21st, Yellow-throated Vireo (RSF), Spotted Sandpiper, Maryland Yellowthroat; 22nd, Baltimore Oriole; 23rd, Yellow and Hooded Warblers; 24th, Warbling Vireo and Wood Thrush (RSF), Kingbird, Catbird, Yellow-throated Warbler; 25th, Crested Flycatcher; 26th, eighty-one species observed on this date, including following firsts: Loon, Solitary Sandpiper, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, White-eyed Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo (RSF), Nashville Warbler (RSF, new for Charlottesville list), Chestnut-sided Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Ovenbird, Yellow-breasted Chat (RSF), Scarlet and Summer Tanagers, Rose-breasted Grosbeak (RSF), Grasshopper Sparrow. 28th, Wilson's Snipe, Indigo Bunting (RSF); 29th, Red-headed Woodpecker (RSF). Last Dates: 14th, Winter Wren; 19th, Brown Creeper, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Golden-crowned Kinglet; White-throated Sparrow and Purple Finch still here May 5.

---Martin Curtler.

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Augusta County. Green Pond, on Kennedy Mountain, five miles south of Stuart's Draft: A Pine Siskin was listed on April 10 and again on May 8. On April 17 a Pied-billed Grebe was on the Pond, and four Tree Swallows were flying over the water during our brief stay. The Pond is at an altitude of about 3200 feet. At another point on the mountain,

Ruffed Grouse were heard drumming and were seen several times early in April. Bobolinks seen at Crozet, Albemarle Co., May 1, and at Lovington, Nelson Co., May 7.

---Ruskin S. Freer.

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Lexington. Lesser Scaups have been common throughout April; Blue-winged Teals common from 1st to 25th; a male Green-winged Teal on 15th and 18th; Hooded Mergansers on 16th. Wilson's Snipes have been more common throughout April than I have ever seen them here. On April 24th I found 37. Lesser Yellowlegs were seen four times, from 7th to 29th, 20 in one flock on 25th. Greater Yellowlegs, 6 individuals, from 15th to 26th. Coot on 16th, 18th, 25th. An Osprey was noted several times. I made an extensive search for a Raven's nest on Dale Mountain, where I feel sure they are nesting, but without results. I saw the pair of Ravens on April 18th. First Dates: March 26, Towhee (M.G. Lewis); April 2, Vesper Sparrow; 4, Barn, Tree, and Rough-winged Swallows, Red-headed Woodpecker, House Wren (M.G.L.), Pine Warbler (M.G.L.); 7, Brown Thrasher; 9, Upland Plover; 11, Great Blue Heron, Blue-headed Vireo; 15, Gnatcatcher (M.G.L.); 16, Green Heron, Swift (unusually late); 18, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Black and White Warbler, Maryland Yellow-throat; 22, Yellow Warbler (M.G.L.), 23, Swamp Sparrow; 25, Catbird, Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Warbling Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Palm Warbler (western form), Prairie Warbler, Chat, Grasshopper Sparrow (M.G.L.); 26, Baltimore Oriole, Ovenbird (M.G.L.), Parula Warbler (M.G.L.); 27, Indigo Bunting, Wood Thrush, Hooded, Cerulean and Black-throated Green Warblers; 28, Cliff Swallow, Least Sandpiper, White-crowned Sparrow; 29, Orchard Oriole; 30, Hummingbird (M.G.L.). Last Dates: April 4, Tree Sparrow; 18, Sapsucker, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Rusty Blackbird, Slate-colored Junco. Nests: Blue Jay, 1st egg on April 8, 5th egg on 12th, hatched on 28th, left nest May 16th. Rough-winged Swallow, working on nesting holes on 16th. Crow, nest built in deciduous tree before the leaves came out; 30 feet up; nest well made and thickly lined with rope ravellings; four young with bodies naked and wing and tail feathers encased. Carolina Chickadee, nest completed, 18th. but no eggs.

---J. J. Murray

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Blacksburg. Robins were laying eggs on April 2. A smashed Robin egg was found on one of the college sidewalks on that date. This is unusually early for Robins to be laying. Dr. Smyth has them building on April 11th, and most of the Robins were building later than that this year. I saw more Brown Creepers than I ordinarily do. My prize entries are Ring-billed Gulls (3) and Bonaparte's Gulls (7) on the college ice pond, April 10, the first I have seen here. Dr. Smyth had six records for the Ring-billed Gull and three records for the Bonaparte's Gull, 1891-1925. The Greater Yellow-legs also was present April 14, my first record. Dr. Smyth has four spring records for this bird. I also saw a Barn Owl, my second record. Dr. Smyth has seven records. The Blue-headed Vireo showed up right on time.

There is a certain section where I usually see one or two every year, so I started out to keep my appointment with the B.H.V's. I did not get off the care where I intended to, but after walking one hundred yards along the road, up pipes a Blue-headed Vireo. I believe that they nest here, although their nests have never been found. A pair of Crested Flycatchers have appeared on the campus every April and have stayed nearly all summer. They probably nest but, to date, I have not located their home. It is out of the ordinary for the great crest to nest in our grove, in the central part of the campus. I found a Field Sparrow's eggs on April 24. Young Grackles appeared on the 26th of April. A Pied-billed Grebe made his debut (for me) on April 24th.

Other Notes: April 3, Vesper Sparrow; 10, American Coot, Wilson Snipe, Cowbird, Brown Thrasher; 11, Ring-billed Gull, (1), American Coot; 14, Blue-winged teal (3), Hermit Thrush; 17, Blue-grey Gnatcatcher; 19, Barn Owl; 18, Lesser Yellow-legs (3); 21, Black and White Warbler, House Wren; 23, Blue-headed Vireo, Pine Warbler, Wood Thrush; 24, Parula Warbler, Field Sparrow, (eggs), Killdeer (nesting), (eggs); 25, Olive-backed Thrush; 26, Crested Flycatcher, Pied-billed Grebe, Scaup Duck, White-crowned Sparrow (I have seen very few of the white crowns since I have been here). The White-throats and Ruby-crowned Kinglets still here on the 30th. Last Dates: Junco, 12th; Savannah Sparrow, 3rd; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 10th; Brown Creeper, 5th.
---Ralph M. Brown.

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Bristol. Sparrow Hawks, April 10th. Nest near top hollow of dead chestnut contained four eggs apparently just laid. Passing by four days later and seeing both birds flying around the tree I found that the eggs had been destroyed by grackles. Fourteen days later four more eggs were laid in the same cavity. Nests inspected on the 19th and 27th contained five eggs each which were newly laid. Eight other nests found during April all of which were in dead chestnuts standing in fields.

Black Vulture, March 2nd, two eggs, (inc. 6), in cave on side of Clinch Mountain. Eggs removed to check second nesting which was exactly three weeks in the same cave. This procedure is customary with these birds. Another nest found on April 8th, incubation not checked. The Black Vulture moves the eggs to different parts of the cave several times during the incubation period.

The Cooper and Broad-winged Hawks will be reported during May as they are still nesting, although two nests of each were examined on which the birds were incubating.

Other nesting as follows: April 1st, Screech Owl, top hollow of black oak, three eggs, inc. 6; April 4th, Barred Owls, three young as large as Screech Owls; April 11th, White-breasted Nuthatch, seven fresh eggs, 32 ft. up, going in small knot hole to center of a sound chestnut tree 36" in diameter at nesting hole. Another nest found on the 27th contained the same number of eggs. April 20th, Pileated Woodpecker, top of beech tree, 64 ft. up, three fresh eggs, nest hole elliptical, ver. $5\frac{1}{2}$ ", hor. 3", depth 15", interior 6"X7". Five other nests of this woodpecker found. Turkey Vultures, beginning of

nesting April 20th; several nests found. April 26th, Hairy Woodpecker, 42 ft. up in sycamore leaning over the river. Nesting cavity excavated in a limb with an angle of 30°, three eggs showing signs of incubation. Nest hole exactly 2", depth 12", interior 4½X3. One other nest found. April 27th, Louisiana Water Thrush, one nest with four fresh eggs, and another newly built. Coming back a week later, both nests were found to be abandoned, although I did not touch the nest nor the surroundings. Horned Owl's nest on above date with three young sitting outside and large enough to fly.

For lack of space will not list the first arrivals but they are coming a little earlier than usual. New records are Black-crowned Night Herons, (7), and American Rough-legged Hawk.

---F. M. Jones.

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Norfolk. May 2nd, Yellow Warbler, Orchard Oriole. May 3rd, Chimney Swift, Crested Flycatcher. May 5th, Maryland Yellow-throat. May 6th, Spotted Sandpiper, Kingbird.

---J. E. Gould.

Norfolk. Following birds found on May 8th: Great Blue Heron, Red-tailed Hawk, Laughing Gull, Hummingbird, Crested Flycatcher, Barn Swallow, Crow, Tufted Titmouse, Marsh Wren, Wood Thrush, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, White-eyed Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Pine Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Ovenbird, Kentucky Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, Field Sparrow.

---J. E. Gould and A. O. English.

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Amelia. Solitary Sandpiper, April 15 and 18; Spotted Sandpiper, common, May 5; Y. B. Cuckoo, first, May 4; Whip-poor-will, May 11; Chimney Swift, April 24; Kingbird, April 24; Crested Flycatcher, April 26; Wood Pewee, May 4; Acadian Flycatcher, May 5; Bobolink, flocks of males, May 1 and 4; Orchard Oriole, April 26; Grasshopper Sparrow, May 9; Blue Grosbeak, May 6; Indigo Bunting, April 28; Scarlet Tanager, May 5; Summer Tanager, April 26; Tree Swallow, large flock, April 29; Red-eyed Vireo, April 25; Yellow-throated Vireo, April 21; White-eyed Vireo, April 21; Black and White Warbler, April 7; Parula Warbler, April 26; Yellow Warbler, April 28; Black-throated Blue Warbler, May 5; Myrtle Warbler, migrant flocks, April 18 to May 6; Black-poll Warbler, first, May 6; Prairie Warbler, April 21; Yellow Palm Warbler, April 20; Oven-bird, April 25; Louisiana Water Thrush, April 8; Kentucky Warbler, May 5; Maryland Yellow-throat, April 8; Y. B. Chat, May 3; Hooded Warbler, April 28; Redstart, April 26; Catbird, April 25, House Wren, April 21; Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, April 7; Wood Thrush, April 30.

Last Seen: Junco, April 17; Song Sparrow, April 17; Golden-Crowned Kinglet, April 8; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, April 24; Purple Finch, May 3; Horned Lark, April 29; White-throated Sparrows still here May 9.

First Dates: American Toad, April 22; Fowlers Toad, May 4; Bullfrog song, April 30.

---John B. Lewis.

Naruna. Last Dates: March 16, Prairie Horned Lark; April 10, Golden-crowned Kinglet; 21, Song Sparrow; 24, Junco. First Dates: 1-24, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 10-16, Yellow Palm Warbler; 5-28, Purple Finch; April 3, Black and White Warbler; 6, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher; 7, Whip-poor-will; 12, Canada Goose; 14, Yellow-throated Vireo; 18, Swift, Barn Swallow, Louisiana Water Thrush; 20, Green Heron (6), Ovenbird, Kingbird, White-eyed Vireo; 22, Wood-Thrush, Maryland Yellow-throat, Grasshopper Sparrow; 23, Yellow Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Summer Tanager; 24, Catbird; 25, Red-eyed Vireo; 26, Chat, Yellow-billed Cuckoo; 27, Blackburnian Warbler, Crested Flycatcher; 28, Hooded Warbler, Acadian Flycatcher; 30, Black-throated Green Warbler, May 2, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Hermit Thrush. The last week in April a pair of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were building their nest (in the same woods and same place where a pair built April 2, 1929). On May 2, they were jealously guarding their nest from inquisitive Myrtle Warblers. The nest was too high up to see how many eggs it contained.

---Bertha Daniel.

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Ashland, Hanover County. Cool weather which characterized early April delayed the arrival of the Chimney Swift several days. First seen April 16, when a flock of between 85 and 100 were circling over the High School chimney at dusk; common over town the following day. Other first dates: April 18, House Wren, 1 singing; April 21, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, 1; April 22, Whip-poor-will, 1 heard; April 27, Robin, newly hatched egg shell found. Chipping Sparrows became common during the week of April 17. Both Chipping Sparrows and Myrtle Warblers were abundant along the highway from Richmond to Danville via South Hill and South Boston on the morning of April 25. The birds were feeding on the pavement and had a very exasperating way of remaining too long, even though warned by a sharp honk when seen, to avoid the danger of a speeding automobile. The Myrtle Warblers were especially sluggish. One was unavoidably knocked down by my wind shield and another was seen dead on the pavement.

Pittsylvania County in the vicinity of Danville. April 25, Catbird, 1; Kingbird, 7. Morning of April 26, Wood Thrush heard singing; also, 1 picked up dead in Halifax.

Scottsburg, Halifax County. April 26, Indigo Bunting, 2 males.

Richmond, Henrico County. April 18, Bluebird, nest with young fully a week old.

---Chas. O. Handley.

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Lynchburg. Jan. 24, Mallards (4) on James River near Snowden Bridge. Jan. 28, Pileated Woodpecker. Feb. 28, Cedar Waxwings (32). April 2, Mockingbird sang all through night. April 3, Starling eggs on ground; 4th, Towhee (singing); 6th, Brown Thrasher; 14th, House Wren.

---Mrs. C. L. Burgess.



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DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR

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No. 6

A TRIP TO THE DISMAL SWAMP

To a student of birds there is always a keen interest in visiting a region in which the bird-life is different from that of the region in which he lives. It was my pleasure late in May to be able to make a trip of several days into the heart of the Dismal Swamp of Virginia. The other members of the party were Dr. William B. McIlwaine, of Alexandria; Mr. Graham Martin, Boy Scout Executive of the Suffolk region; and Mr. Caulton Bell, of Suffolk. We spent three nights camping in a cabin on the shore of Lake Drummond, and three days exploring the northern end of the swamp in Virginia. We were there from May 23 to 26.

One could scarcely imagine a greater contrast than that between the Valley of Virginia about Lexington, with its rolling pastures and high mountains, and the Dismal Swamp region, flat, densely wooded and almost entirely under water. The Dismal Swamp covers an area almost as large as Rockbridge county. Most of this area is an impassable jungle. In the northern part of the swamp the only method of travel is by boat along the narrow canals. These canals form tunnels through a forest so dense that at many places there is twilight gloom even at mid-day. The straight ribbons of dark water with the trees arched low overhead form entrancing vistas. In the center of the swamp is Lake Drummond, a fitting setting for the stories of mystery and romance that have gathered about it. Its water is about the color of tea, and while somewhat warm and flat is perfectly pure for drinking. Around the lake is an unbroken ring of forest, with great cypresses draped in Spanish moss standing here and there out from the shore. The fires did great damage in the swamp two years ago, in some places burning away the forest for miles and leaving desolate stretches, called "the lights," which are now growing up in impenetrable thickets of low bushes. The only high spot we saw was at the Government Reservation, a half mile up the Feeder Ditch from the lake. Here a few acres of land have been artificially built up and a caretaker lives to manage the locks and regulate the flow of water from the lake into the Inland Water-way Canal.

The Dismal Swamp is a paradise for wild life. Tremendous flocks of water-fowl, ducks and geese and swans, come in to Lake Drummond in the winter to rest. They are not often hunted, for as there is little food for them in the lake their coming and going is uncertain. The fishing in the lake and in the canals is good at the proper seasons. Deer are abundant. As we came out along the Washington Ditch we saw a doe which had been killed by dogs. Several times our guide thought that noises which we heard near at hand were made by bears, but we were

not fortunate enough to see one. They are said to be increasing in the swamp, the old woodsman from whom we secured our boats telling us that he killed seven last winter. Wildcats, of course, are common and sometimes can be heard screaming and fighting near the cabins. The wildest of all the creatures of the swamp are the wild cattle. They were supposed to have been killed out a few years ago but we thought we heard some. They are the only creatures of the swamp that man need fear.

Bird life is abundant. This was our main interest, and the trip was eminently successful. My chief objective was to try and discover the Wayne's Warbler nesting. This is a southern and lowland variety of the Blackthroated Green Warbler, the latter being a common summer resident on our mountains. The Wayne's Warbler had never been found in Virginia, its known range heretofore being limited to the swamps of coastal South Carolina and south-eastern North Carolina, although there was reason to think it might breed in the Dismal Swamp. We found it rather common, hearing at least a dozen males singing. We did not find a nest but did discover two pairs feeding young birds that had not long before left the nest. By this we added a new bird to the Virginia list. On May 25, on the lake, we saw two Northern Phalaropes, a species which migrates mainly at sea and is consequently quite rare inland in this section. This is the third time it has ever been seen in Virginia. It is related to the sandpipers and other shore-birds, and is a brightly colored little bird. We saw two double-crested cormorants on May 25 and three on the 26th.

In addition to these rarities we were interested in the opportunities for close range study of some more common birds. We listed 61 species within the boundaries of the Swamp. The most characteristic and probably the most beautiful bird of the swamp is the Prothonotary Warbler. Most of its body is a brilliant yellow, so brilliant that on the head of the male it shades into a bright orange. It flies with quick movements, the white in its tail flashing out as the tail is spread. Sometimes a pair will chase each other in and out of the stumps and bushes with the most intricate maneuvers and with incredible speed. It nests in the holes of stumps close to the water. We found a nest with four eggs and another with four young. A very interesting nest is that of the Parula Warbler which is simply a hole worked out in a swaying bunch of Spanish moss and lined with soft materials. It is usually to be found over the water on a clump of cypress. We found several, but none with eggs. Redstarts, Louisiana Water-thrushes, Hooded Warblers, and many others of the brilliant and beautiful little warblers abounded. We found the worm-eating warbler twice, but were not fortunate enough to see a Swainson's Warbler. Nor, strange to say, did we see a single Yellow-throated Warbler. Acadian Flycatchers were nesting along all the canals. Great Blue and Little Blue Herons were plentiful, the former feeding along the Lake shore, the latter flying in groups to some feeding place far up the Portsmouth Ditch. Wood Ducks were not uncommon. We saw at least three pairs, and one female Wood Duck led her five ducklings along the Lake edge in front of our cabin. Ospreys occasionally crossed the Lake. The great Pileated Woodpeckers, as large as Crows and vividly splashed in black and white

and red, were to be seen and heard everywhere. And even in broad daylight the wierd screams and chuckles of the Barred Owls were heard. For any nature lover, but particularly for the lover of birds, the Dismal Swamp is an enchanted place.

---J. J. Murray

(This account is taken, with some alterations and additions, from The Rockbridge County News. In view of our experience of the abundance of bird and animal life in the Dismal Swamp, the following quotation from one of the earliest accounts of a trip into the Swamp is of interest. It is from Colonel William Byrd's "History of the Dividing Line betwixt Virginia and North Carolina." William Byrd was one of the Virginia members of a Commission appointed by the two states to survey the boundary between the states in 1728. The difficulties encountered in running the line through the Dismal Swamp evidently made it impossible for him to see much beauty in this wild place or to remember what he had seen. He says: "Since the Surveyors had enter'd the Dismal they had laid Eyes on no living Creature: neither Bird nor Beast, Insect nor Reptile came in View. Doubtless, the Eternal Shade that broods over this mighty Bog, and hinders the sun-beams from blessing the Ground, makes it an uncomfortable Habitation for any thing that has life. Not so much as a Zealand Frog cou'd endure so Anguish a Situation ... Not even a Turkey-Buzzard will venture to fly over it, no more than the Italian Vultures will over the filthy Lake Avernus, or the Birds in the Holy-Land over the Salt Sea, where Sodom and Gomorrah formerly stood." Editor.)

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THE SPRING FORAY OF THE VIRGINIA ACADEMY

Five members of the V. S. O. accompanied the Spring Botany Foray of the Virginia Academy of Science thru Southside Virginia, May 14th and 15th. The Foray is planned and arranged by Dr. Ivey F. Lewis, Biologist at the University of Virginia. This spring Mr. John B. Lewis planned the itinerary and arranged accomodations for the trip. The group met at Amelia on Friday evening and made an early start Saturday morning. Several stops were made during the day, Lawrenceville being reached that evening. The first half of the day Sunday was spent in visiting places of interest in Brunswick county, returning to Amelia in the afternoon.

Members of the group who kept notes on birds were Mrs. A. O. James and Mrs. F. W. Shaw of Richmond, Prof. Ruskin S. Freer, Prof. R. P. Carroll of V. M. I., and M. G. Lewis of Lexington. The combined list of birds observed during the two days by all observers includes 73 species. Reference is made in this account only to the species which are of most interest. Those which commonly occur thruout Southside Virginia and are familiar to all observers are not mentioned.

Among the warblers listed were Myrtle Warbler, which was found in considerable numbers and observed by several of the group around Smith's mill pond in Dinwiddie county, Black-poll Warbler, Kentucky Warbler and

Canada Warbler. The latter breeds commonly in the western part of the state, in the mountain sections, but has not been frequently recorded in Southside Virginia. The Yellow-throated Warbler was not recorded on this trip, tho is of rather common occurrence in Brunswick county,

Additional notes were made by the writer on the song phases of the Maryland Yellow-throat. In each locality of the state the prevailing song of this species varies noticeably from that heard in any other locality. Noticeable variation has been observed in distances of 30 or 40 miles. The variations are largely in change of syllables or in the place of intermission between syllables. In Southwest Virginia (Scott county), for example, the prevailing song is clearly "witchety-witchery-witchety-wich." At Burgess in Dinwiddie county the notes sound to the writer like "white-e-eteo, white-e-e-teo, white-e-e-teo," the last sometimes being incomplete. In Norfolk county it is "wip-e-chi-chy," repeated two, three or sometimes four times, often ending as in other phases with the series of syllables being incomplete. Many other variations have been recorded in other localities.

In a swamp near Lawrenceville known to the botanists as Saracenia Swamp because of the occurrence of *Saracenia purpurea*, a Vulture was found in natal plumage. The young bird attracted much interest and attention due to his rather grotesque appearance and strange repulsive antics. Judging by the black skin of the head and neck as well as a distinct buffy tinge to the down, the bird was undoubtedly a Black Vulture, the natal down of the Turkey Vulture being nearly white.

Several nests were found on the trip. Nests with eggs of Maryland Yellow-throat near Burgess in Dinwiddie county, White-eyed Vireo near Lawrenceville in Saracenia Swamp, Wood Thrush in Amelia county with full set of eggs, and of Mocking-bird at Lawrenceville. Young Blue-birds in juvenile plumage were also seen near Lawrenceville.

---Merriam G. Lewis.

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One of our former members, Mr. George C. Mason, of Newport News, has returned to Virginia after a year's absence in which he was studying at the North Carolina State College and has renewed his membership in the V. S. O. He lectured before the Garden Club at Williamsburg on May 16 on "Our Native Trees," and will probably be giving similar lectures on birds and other nature subjects. He will be doing some work for the Mariners' Museum at Newport News.

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Those who are interested in Virginia birds should always watch for Dr. H. C. Oberholser's section in "The Season" in each issue of Bird-Lore. This section on the "Washington (D. C.) Region" always contains some interesting Virginia data. In the March-April issue Dr. Oberholser notes that "a single Snow Bunting, reported at Four-Mile Run, Va., by W. J. Whiting, on November 25, 1931, was apparently the earliest autumn record for this species in this region, as the previous earliest record

we have is November 29, 1928." His regular census of ducks on the Potomac is of particular interest.

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NESTING OF THE COOPER HAWK

This hawk, the most attractively marked of any of our local hawks, is found throughout this section of the state but is not as plentiful as some of the other hawks we have. More than all other hawks they are responsible for the ill feeling the farmers and hunters have for the hawks in general. As few are able to distinguish between the beneficial and destructive hawks, all are killed as a matter of principle. Consequently the soaring hawks which are beneficial are the ones most usually killed for the misdeeds of the Cooper. From past experience I have learned that the hawk under discussion is not an easy one to kill compared with some of the other hawks. It does no soaring and its presence is generally unsuspected where it spends most of the time. For the protection of our sadly depleted quail crop and the creation of a better feeling among the farmers for our Red-tailed and Broad-winged Hawks, I made a special effort this season to kill all of the Coopers I could but only killed six. Personally I would hate to see this hawk exterminated altho I do think they should not be allowed to get very numerous in any particular locality.

As a nesting site this hawk chooses some shady strip of woods or hillside close to farm houses, and is never found in the mountains away from civilization, at least not in this section of our state. They do not nest as high as the Red-tailed Hawks, but higher than the Broad-wings. Except in beech trees where they build near the top, they nest about three-fourths of the way up, placing their nests either in crotches or where several limbs extend out from the tree. The nest is distinctive and can be told from other hawks at a glance. It is substantially but airily constructed of small hard twigs, no rotten sticks being used, and presents a very neat appearance. With the exception of a few wafer-thin pieces of bark, usually pine, placed in the bottom of the nest, on which the eggs rest, no lining is used in the nest. The exterior measurements vary according to the way it is situated in the tree and will average 25" width by 15" depth. Interior nearly always 9"X 4". The nest is used for one season only.

Six new nests were examined this spring besides a number of old ones which were often not far from the new nests, sometimes in adjacent trees. They were located on North hillsides in shady woods. As my object was to get the hawks as well as the nesting data, I learned considerable more than if I had just carried on my investigations with the nests. Unlike the hawks of the Buteo family which before going on the nest alight in the nesting tree or one nearby, the Cooper flies directly on the nest coming in from uphill very swiftly. I wanted to get a good specimen to mount but found that owing to their methods of flying it was a hard matter to kill one without spoiling some of their wing or tail feathers, and only succeeded in getting a good one on the sixth hawk killed, which was the last.

Nest No. 1, April 21st. Nest built in the top of a beech tree growing along a small stream and was 63' up. Contained four eggs, inc. 4, which were warm altho the hawk was not seen to leave the nest. Built a blind in the laurel bushes and waited exactly $2\frac{1}{2}$ hrs. before the hawk returned to the nest. At irregular intervals I could hear the hawk some distance away. Their notes are short and of one syllable and sound like a bicycle horn. This nest was known to other parties who had been shooting at the hawk which made her very wary. When she finally did come in, I was unprepared for the method of flying on the nest. I nearly missed a second shot as she flew away close to the ground, their usual method of leaving the nest.

Nest No. 2, April 28th. Nest in the top forks of a large beech tree, 74' up, and contained four eggs incubated eight days. Twelve minutes after completing the blind the hawk returned and was on the nest before I could shoot. Killed her but ruined her tail feathers. Building a blind further uphill, I got the male hawk also.

Nest No. 3, May 13th. Top of a large beech tree. Four fresh eggs collected and hawk killed as she left the nest. Rainy day which made it possible to reach the nest before the hawk left which they nearly always do.

Nest No. 4, May 19th. New nest completed but no eggs. Built against the body of a large chestnut oak, 52' up. About two miles further on a farmer told me of a nest close by where he had gotten four eggs about three weeks previous. I decided to climb the tree and measure the nest before leaving and found to my surprise that the hawk was setting on another set of four eggs. Tried to kill the hawk but on account of some air compressors starting up not far away I thought that the unusual noise would keep the hawk away longer than I had time to spare.

Nest No. 6, May 20th. Nest found on the 13th, containing one egg, was built on the side of a large tall hickory, 86' up, and left until the 20th, when a set of four eggs were found. Just a few minutes after getting in the blind the hawk came in and not looking for her this soon I tore out several of her tail feathers when I killed her. I then decided that if I was going to get a good specimen I would have to use different methods so I climbed in the top of a large bushy-top white pine tree further uphill from the nest and after waiting an hour and 45 minutes killed the male and got a good specimen.

While all of the nests referred to contained four eggs as a complete set, I have often found sets of three, five and six.

---F. M. Jones

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FIELD NOTES

Amelia. The following are a few records of "last seen" that will wind up my reports on spring migration:

Cedar Waxwing, May 24
Black-poll Warbler, May 26
Bobolink, May 21
White-throated Sparrow, May 9

Nest Records. Early in the morning of May 7 a hummingbird was seen gathering down from a last year's cat-tail head at the old ice pond. Her line of flight was followed to a nest 50 yards distant. The nest was being built on a dead branch a yard long and about the size of a man's finger under the nest which lay across two slender branches of a small sweet gum. May 13, the nest was visited in company with a party of Forayists. The bird was on the nest, apparently incubating. May 19, the bird was incubating. After this the nest was not visited for nearly a week, when the bird was not seen. June 1, there were two tiny birds, with black skins and tufts of gray down. June 8, young birds still in the nest, about filling it. May 12, found Dove's nest with two half-grown young. May 13, Brown Thrasher's nest containing 1 egg. May 30, nest contained one young bird and one pipped egg. This gives a period of 17 days from first egg to first bird hatched. There were only 3 eggs laid, only one of which produced a living bird. The one bird is still in the nest. May 13, members of the Foray party found a nest of the Tufted Titmouse in a hole in the top of an old cedar fence post, containing young nestlings. May 16, a Red-winged Blackbird's nest at the old ice pond contained one egg. A set of 4 was laid. June 1, this nest contained 4 young that may have been a few days old. June 8, two young were in the cat-tails near the nest when I approached it and the other two left when I neared them. This gives a period of 23 days from first egg to birds leaving the nest, with the incubation period uncertain, but probably about 14 days. This would leave a nest feeding period of about 9 days. April 30, a nest of the Pileated Woodpecker in a dead tulip poplar about 40 feet from the ground. The tree stands out above low brush on the bank of a small stream with scattering woods on the north side and an open field on the south. About an hour before sunset I watched one of the birds fly to the nest tree, calling loudly, lighting about 10 feet below the nest. As he did so his mate put her head out of the nest hole and they "talked" in low tones for a half minute. Then the occupant of the nest hole flew away and the incoming bird jerked itself up the trunk and entered the hole. I was not close enough to be sure of the sex of the birds, but believe the male came and the female went. A single bird was seen to enter the nest hole again on May 12. It remained about 5 minutes and left silently.

---John B. Lewis

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Newport News. Mr. George C. Mason reports seeing a pair of Lark Sparrows on the grounds of the Mariners' Museum near Newport News on August 1, 1931. He writes: "I am positive about the identification, as I was able to study the birds at close range with a 40 power telescope. I do not recall having heard of their being previously reported so near the coast. Its head and tail markings are unmistakable.

Charlottesville. May 4th, Least Flycatcher; 5th, Parula, Black-poll Warblers, and Wood Pewee; 6th, Cape May Warbler; 9th, Cerulean Warbler.
---R. S. Freer.

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Snowden (Amherst County). April 17, Hooded Mergansers at Snowden Power Plant; 20, Ruffed Grouse, a week later nest with one egg found; May 1, Hooded Mergansers, two males and 7 females (?).
---Mrs. C. L. Burgess.

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Sweet Briar. April 29 to May 6, 20 to 25 Bobolinks, only a few females; About May 10, 40 to 50 Bobolinks, at least half females; May 22, Carolina Chickadee with 3 young flying from tree to tree.
---Florence Hague.

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Naruna. First dates: May 3, Hummingbird; 5, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Nighthawk; 6, Redstart, Canada and Black-poll Warbler; 4, Blue Grosbeak, Wood Pewee; 7, Indigo Bunting. May 17, last date for White-throated Sparrow. Nest notes: May 3, Vesper Sparrow's nest with 4 eggs, which hatched on 15th, the birds leavin the nest on 23d; Yellow-breasted Chat's nest in berry canes near stream with 4 eggs, which hatched on 28th; June 2, Wood Thrush's nest with 4 young, and Yellow-billed Cuckoo's nest with 2 young; Red-eyed Vireo's nest with 3 fresh eggs, Carolina Wren's nest in burlap sack in garage with 1 egg. May 22, Brown Thrasher's nest, one egg laid on 23d and one each day until four were laid, when incubation began.

---Bertha Daniel.

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Harrisonburg. The number of new species observed during month of May is 18 which makes the total number of species since January 116. We have been pleased to observe an unusual abundance of warblers - sixteen different species - and of Cedar Waxwings. We were disappointed in seeing no Purple Finches or Bobolinks, which were heretofore seen yearly. The first Rose-breasted Grosbeaks ever reported in this locality were seen May 3. They were here for about ten days. Turkey Vultures are nesting in a large hollow stump, about three feet high, for the second time in three years.

---Avian Society,
Elizabeth A. Showalter.

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Lexington. American Bittern seen at Cameron's Pond, 11th, 12th, 14th. Lesser Scaup, common first week, a male on 23d. Ring-neck, 1 female, 2d. Redhead, 1 female, 2d. Osprey, 3d. Florida Gallinule at Big Spring. 3d. and Coot, 3d. Semi-palmated Plover, 13th (6), 14th (3), 17th.

Sora, 17th, 19th. Lesser Yellowlegs, common to 19th. Greater Yellowlegs, 4 times between 2d and 14th. Semi-palmated Sandpiper, 11th (2), 13th, specimen taken. Least Sandpiper, common 5th to 21st, specimen taken; Barn Owl, 1st; Barred and Great Horned, 6th. Wild Turkeys reported on 25th. Northern Water-thrush, 3d; Palm Warbler, 6th; Warbling Vireo and Cerulean Warbler, 30th. On a trip up Thunder Hill on the 16th, Mountain Vireo, Worm-eating Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Mr. Jake Hostetter, a good observer who lives in a rough mountain section, reports seeing seven Ravens on the 20th, probably a pair with five young. First dates: 1, Yellow-billed Cuckoo (M.G.L.). 2, Crested Flycatcher. 3, Kingbird. 4, Scarlet Tanager, Black-throated Blue. 6, Bobolink, Black-poll. 7, Pewee, Acadian Flycatcher. 12, Cape May Warbler. Last dates: 7, White-throated Sparrow. 4, Swamp Sparrow, Winter Wren. 1, Savannah Sparrow, Tree and Cliff Swallow. 14, Wilson's Snipe, Myrtle Warbler, 21, Solitary Sandpiper. Nest notes: 16, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, nest on Thunder Hill just begun. 19, Killdeer, 4 eggs, which had hatched before 23d except for one infertile egg. 30, Pileated Woodpecker; Black-billed Cuckoo, one well grown young and one egg; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, carrying food; Black & White Warbler, 5 eggs, apparently about ready to hatch; Yellow-breasted Chat, 3 eggs; Redstart, carrying food.

---J. J. Murray

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Blacksburg. As usual the best month of the year for birds. My outstanding records were finding a Green Heron's nest, with 5 eggs, on May 14, on the North Fork of the Roanoke River, 7 miles out of Blacksburg, the 5 young being in the downy stage on May 28. These birds have been nesting here for at least 6 years. May 8, a Mountain Vireo's nest, with 3 eggs, at Camp Johnson (Roanoke "Y" camp) near Olaf, Virginia, 11 miles from Roanoke, 1500 feet altitude. Bailey says about this last bird that "they are a rare breeding bird with us." The nest was in an oak sapling, 15 feet tall, beside a woodland path. I also saw a loggerhead shrike for the first time. The warblers were not as numerous as usual and I did not see any Wilson Warblers which have been appearing regularly for the last two years in the spring. First Dates: May 1, Myrtle Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Ovenbird, Bank Swallow, Red-eyed Vireo, Indigo Bunting. May 2, Baltimore Oriole. May 3, Black-throated Green Warbler, Kingbird. May 4, Least Flycatcher, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Warbling Vireo. May 5, Pewee, Magnolia Warbler. May 7, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Redstart. May 9, Cape May Warbler, Orchard Oriole. May 11, Bay-breasted Warbler, Black Poll Warbler. May 14, Yellow-throated Vireo, Hummingbird. May 18, Canada Warbler. May 21, Tennessee Warbler. Last Dates: 10, Ruby-crowned Kinglet. 14, White-throated Sparrow. Nest Notes: 1, Catbird building; Field Sparrow fledglings. 5, young Robins. 15, Parula building; Hummingbird building, first nest seen by me here. 25, Robins incubating second brood. Other notes. 1, Canvasback. 4, Solitary Sandpiper, Scaup (pair). 7, Gray-cheeked Thrush, singing, also seen on 12th. 13, Pied-billed Grebe. 15, Black-billed Cuckoo. 23, Scaup, 3 males & 2 females. 27, Coot, Blue-winged Teal.

---Ralph M. Brown.

Bristol. Additional data on the Red-tailed Hawk shows that the young are sufficiently developed to leave the nest 42 days after being hatched; also the nesting period in which eggs can be found in the nest extends through May.

Not having much time to devote to the migrating warblers, I noted only two species new to this section: Wilson's Warbler, May 6th; and Golden-winged Warbler, May 23d. Prairie Warblers, not common to this section, were noted on several occasions and may be nesting here. Other new additions include the Long-eared Owl as a resident, their nest having been found. For lack of space will only add a few of the nesting records I have. May nesting: 7th, Louisiana Water Thrush, six fresh eggs of which four hatched. Usually an egg or two in this bird's nest which will not be hatched. 13th, Black and White Warbler, five eggs, just beginning to incubate. 19th, three nests of the Black-billed Cuckoo, one, two, and three eggs. These birds begin incubation after the first egg is laid. 17th, Phoebe's nest containing four of her own eggs slightly incubated and three Carolina Wren eggs, one egg each of the birds on the ground below, the seven eggs completely filling the nest and the eggs impartially thrown out as the wren continued laying. Five nests of the Scarlet Tanager found. The first bird began to incubate on completion of her eggs on the 23d, two on the 25th, one on the 27th, and the last on the 30th. Five nests of the Ruffed Grouse found during this month containing from four to fifteen eggs and three broods of young.

---F. M. Jones.



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Members who at the Charlottesville meeting asked for fewer statistics and more articles of a popular nature have probably noticed the large amount of this kind of material in recent issues. The editor will be glad of comments from members, and would also like to call for additional suitable material of this type.

There will be no August issue of THE RAVEN. Notes for July and August should be combined and sent to the editor before September 10th.

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NESTING OF THE BROAD-WINGED HAWK IN SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA

This hawk is a common summer resident and is the one that gets killed when the Cooper and Sharp-shinned variety make too frequent visits to the farmers' chicken lots. They are very tame and will remain on the nest while you walk around the nesting tree; so killing them is very easy. During the beginning of the nesting season they do a lot of soaring, usually in pairs, but when the eggs are all laid, little soaring is done. During the fall migration they go in large flocks and several hundred have been noted at one time flying down mountain ranges, keeping well toward the top.

As a nesting site this hawk shows a preference for the wooded ridges and river knobs rather than small patches of timber such as the Coopers and Sharp-shinned Hawks select very often, and are to be found not far from farming operations. As yet I do not have any proven record of them catching chickens and they should be accorded full protection. They do not nest very high and in most cases a medium-sized tree is chosen that has a three or more pronged fork to it. The other selection is against the body of the tree that has a number of limbs in a cluster. They do not nest in the tops of the trees in any case and the nest is used but for one season. As an architect this hawk does not rank very high and the nest it builds has to have considerable support, which is why the nest is so often placed in the kind of position it is found in. A few dead sticks and twigs are used as an outline which will measure on an average 16" in width by 11" deep. The lining is made up of rough outer bark placed about three inches deep and the inside of the completed nest is $7\frac{1}{2}$ " X 3". This season I visited eleven new nests, of which eight contained full sets of eggs, the other three being abandoned. Nest No. 1 was found April 25th and contained two eggs at the time. Going back on the 29th, I found three eggs and the bird incubating. These eggs were removed and eighteen days later this hawk, as determined by the pattern of the markings of the eggs, had laid another set of three eggs in the same nest. Nest No. 2, May 2nd, broken top black oak 47 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' up, three eggs, (inc. 5). Nest No. 3, May 3rd, nest 42' up in the three pronged forks of a hickory tree, and contained three eggs which were about a week incubated. This hawk was killed and mounted. Nest No. 4 was found on April 19th by seeing the hawk building it. Visited nest on May 2nd, but found no eggs. The renewal of green leaves showed that the nest had not been abandoned so I came back on the 5th, and found one egg and a dead lizard in the nest. My next visit to this nest was on the 9th, and I found the hawk sitting on two eggs. Nest No. 5, May 16th, nest built in the four prong forks of a yellow oak tree, 47 ft. up, and contained four eggs incubated ten days. Nest No. 6, May 19th, nest built in the four prong forks of a small white oak tree in cut-over timber and not far from a dwelling house. It was 33 ft. up, and contained three fresh eggs. Nest No. 7, May 30th, black gum, 38 ft. up, built next to the body of the tree in a whorl of limbs, contained two eggs about ready to hatch. The last nest was found on the same day and was in the forks of a beech tree 41 ft. up, three eggs, (inc. 10).

The eggs of this hawk, ranging from two to four in a set, show a greater variety of markings and patterns than the books in which they are described would seem to indicate. Some are as handsomely marked as any hawk eggs I have seen.

The most distinctive feature of this hawk's nest is that invariably sprays of green leaves are placed in the nest after completion and renewed daily or as they wilt until incubation is well advanced.

--- F. M. Jones.

We are all indebted to Mr. F. M. Jones for the splendid series of articles on the nesting of various birds in Virginia which he has recently furnished for THE RAVEN. Of especial interest is the great mass of data which he has gathered on the nesting of the Raptores in Southwest Virginia. These articles have added much of interest and value to THE RAVEN this year.

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Mr. A. O. English has recently made a number of talks, illustrated with lantern slides, before Boy Scout Troops, Schools, Garden Clubs, the Norfolk Nature Club, and other organizations. He is hoping now to organize a nature study group in Norfolk which will affiliate with the V. S. O.

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"Bird-Banding" for January, 1932, contains a fourteen-page article by O. L. Austin, Jr., on "Cobb Island," which is of very great interest to all Virginia bird students. There are few points on the south-atlantic coast which have been visited as often and by as many prominent ornithologists as Cobb Island, or, as it is usually designated, Cobb's Island. And there is no place on the Virginia coast which offers such attractive opportunities for the study of nesting water birds. Mr. Austin begins his article with a brief history of the island. He gives a careful study of the present nesting population; and then by a chart presents the estimates made by other men on eleven trips made at various times from 1875 down to last year. In the very first issue of the Bulletin of the Nuttall Ornithological Club, which was the precursor of The Auk, H. B. Bailey had a leading article, entitled "Notes on Birds Found Breeding on Cobb's Island, Va., Between May 25th and May 29th, 1875." This was the only leading article on Virginia birds which appeared in any of the eight volumes of the Nuttall Bulletin. This article introduced Cobb's Island to the ornithological world. Since then Ridgway, Pearson, Chapman, Bent, Howell and others have worked on the island. Mr. Austin's census of breeding birds on Cobb's Island in late June and early July, 1931, is as follows: Laughing Gull, 1200 pairs, which evidently should have read 6200 pairs; Gull-billed Tern, 26 pairs; Caspian Tern, none; Royal Tern, none; Forster's Tern, 437 pairs; Common Tern, 200 pairs; Least Tern, 78 pairs; Black Skimmer, 1025 pairs; Clapper Rail, common; Willet, 4 pairs; Wilson's Plover, 8 pairs; Oyster-catcher, 4 pairs. This report covers the beach-nesting colonies on Cobb's Island proper, and the marsh colonies on Big and Little Eastward Islands, Gull Marsh Island and Cedar Island, but does not include another nearby beach colony on Wreck Island.

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FIELD NOTES

Amelia. June 14, a male Scarlet Tanager was watched for some time in a heavily wooded swamp in the north central part of the county. No nest

and no female were seen, though the male acted just as a nesting male would. June 28, Purple Grackles were flocking. The young Hummingbirds mentioned in my last report left the nest June 17. I visited them early that morning and the larger of the two flew to a branch 10 feet from the nest as I approached it. The other did not leave at that time but was gone at 1 P.M. The period from the time the female was first seen on the nest to the leaving of the young was 35 days. First Cicada June 29; second July 5. On July 10 at 4:30 I visited an old field where I heard the Henslow's Sparrows a few days previously, and at once located one of them singing from the top of a little pine. He disappeared into the grass when approached but after a wait of a quarter of an hour two of them began to sing again, one of which allowed me to get within 30 feet of him as he sat in the top of a blackberry bush singing. I studied him with 6 power binoculars as long as I wanted to, he very obligingly turning first one side and then the other to me. There is no doubt about the identification. The song and actions are absolutely characteristic in themselves, and I got the color markings plainly. The buffy nape, black sides of the forehead, reddish brown back and black streaks were all seen clearly. I became familiar with them in the summer of 1929 while at Ithaca, N. Y.

--- John B. Lewis.

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Naruna. June 4th, Summer Tanager feeding young in nest; another nest in maple tree 6 feet from ground with 4 eggs, June 14. June 6, Yellow-throated Vireo built nest in large tree near top; young in nest June 25. June 25, young pewee in nest. June 28, Dove nest in wheat field on ground with 2 eggs; abandoned after wheat was cut. June 18, Killdeer nest in cornfield on ground with 3 eggs. White-throated Sparrow singing June 11 and again on the 14th at the same place; I finally located a male in a willow along a stream. I have not seen it since the 14th.

--- Bertha Daniel.

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Hampden-Sydney. On June 16th I noticed a Crested Flycatcher feeding young in a hollow 5 feet up in the main trunk of a large tree on the campus of Hampden-Sydney College. And on the same date, at a point two miles out from Hampden-Sydney on the road to Farmville, I found the nest of a Migrant Shrike in a very unusual location. Instead of being in a thick, thorny bush, it was near the end of a branch of a pine tree, about 18 feet from the ground. The bird was evidently incubating, but I did not climb the tree to investigate, as it was raining. The second bird, which I judged to be the male, came to the nest, evidently to feed the incubating female.

--- J. J. Murray.

Harrisonburg. Since the May issue of THE RAVEN another nest of the Prairie Horned Lark was found near the Eastern Monnonite School campus. The nest discovered on May 27th contained four eggs. Incubating was evidently in progress, as the eggs hatched on June 4. The mother only was observed feeding the nestlings. As seen through the binoculars, she brought them caterpillars, grasshoppers and small moths. No doubt other insects were included in the diet. They left the nest on June 14, fully feathered, and quite able to help themselves. These larks seem to be more plentiful in this immediate vicinity this summer than ever before.

--- D. Ralph Hostetter.

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Lexington. Among the rather uncommon summer residents for this locality which were seen in June were the following: Worm-eating Warbler, June 17th and 30th; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 17th; Cedar Waxwing, 18th; Cerulean Warbler, pair on 30th. On a trip up Rocky Mountain, which reaches an altitude of 4010, on June 20th, Cairns', Canada and Chestnut-sided Warblers were abundant. Carolina Juncos were common above 3000 ft. and Veeries above 3500 ft. A Mountain Vireo was seen at 3000 ft. Chestnut-sided Warblers were feeding young which had left the nest. Canada and Hooded Warblers were seen carrying food, though the young were not located. Juncos had completed the first nesting, but had apparently not begun the second. In an old barn on the mountain side four Phoebe nests were placed side by side on a rafter, one with four eggs, one a year old, one two years old, and one apparently three years old. Other breeding notes are: Acadian Flycatcher, nest with eggs, 29th; Worm-eating Warbler, Parula Warbler and Redstart feeding young birds, 30th. I found four Green Heron nests about 30 to 40 feet apart in a small thicket on June 28th. One had four eggs; one had two young, 3 or 4 days old, the egg shells still being noticeable under the tree; the third had young; and the young had left the fourth.

--- J. J. Murray.

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Bristol. A few other nesting records are herewith given. June 1st, Red Crossbill building at outer end of a fir tree branch in a cluster of twigs. Exterior of green moss lined with soft bleached grass. About a hundred feet distant a Golden-crowned Kinglet was also building in and near the top of a fir tree placing the nest close to the body of the tree. June 2nd, Red-tailed Hawk, two eggs, hickory 94' up. June 23rd, Three Verries' nests, two containing three eggs each, newly laid, and the other three young just hatched. One set of the eggs were green like Catbird eggs and the other set were blue. On the same date a Raven's nest was found being built in the steep face of a rock cliff, the nest being placed on an angle and not on a shelf. June 28th, Mountain Vireo, three fresh eggs, (the ground color of these eggs is decidedly green instead of white.) Canada Warbler, two eggs, set not completed. The young of the Rose-breasted Grosbeak were flying by June 1st and I have not found them nesting a second time. Red-breasted Nuthatches seen throughout month.

--- F. M. Jones.

THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY

Lynchburg College
Lynchburg, Virginia
July 18, 1932

Fellow Members of the V.S.O.:

At the Charlottesville meeting of the Society in February, Dr. J. J. Murray, our Editor, read a paper which is of great import to Virginia bird study, entitled "Additions to the Virginia Avifauna Since the Publication of Rives' Catalogue, 1890." It is a paper which will be of great value to all Virginia bird students, particularly to our membership, and will also be of great interest and value to libraries and museums which strive to keep complete files on research in ornithology. As an organization we may take just pride in Dr. Murray's paper, which is an important contribution to the ornithology of the eastern states.

It was the feeling of those present at the Charlottesville meeting, and of the Executive Committee, that it should receive the widest possible circulation. It was felt that THE AUK, journal of The American Ornithologists' Union, is the proper medium for publication. Due to limited funds and much available material for publication, however, Dr. Witmer Stone, editor of THE AUK, can accept only those papers for which the cost of publication is borne by the author. In the case of Dr. Murray's paper this will amount to about \$55.00. The Executive Committee is therefore appealing to our membership to contribute toward the cost of publication. Complimentary copies of the paper will be sent to all contributing to the fund for publication. To all others the price will be 25¢. Contributors will have the privilege of ordering additional copies at cost.

As this paper summarizes ornithological work in the state for the past 42 years, and as it is to appear in the best-known ornithological journal in the country, we may reasonably expect a large demand for reprints. There have been many requests for the Consolidated List of Virginia birds, published in THE RAVEN last year, from individuals, libraries and museums. The greater importance of this paper, and its wider circulation, ensure much demand for it, so it behooves those of our membership who wish reprints to be sure that their contributions or pledges or orders are in the Treasurer's hands at once.

This letter is also being sent to all members in 1931 who have thus far failed to renew in 1932. In case you happen to be one of this number, will you not also send in your \$1.50 for this year's issues of THE RAVEN? The Treasurer expresses doubt as to whether we will be able to publish all issues of THE RAVEN this year unless there are more renewals. We greatly need the financial support of all who are interested in birds. The policy of including more popular articles on Virginia birds, agreed upon at the Charlottesville meeting, and being carried out by the Editor, Dr. Murray, is already making a more interesting and valuable bulletin.

And let's not fall down on our first important project, the publication of Dr. Murray's paper in THE AUK. An early response will prevent unnecessary delay in getting the manuscript to the printer. If the bulk of the membership responds as quickly and generously as the members of the Executive Committee have, the success of the fund is assured. Any amount from 50¢ upward will be gratefully accepted. Two individuals have contributed \$2.50 apiece already.

Please send contributions to the Publication Fund, as well as checks for renewal of membership and subscription, to the Treasurer, Mr. John B. Lewis, Amelia Court House, Virginia. Watch for reports on the success of this campaign in THE RAVEN.

Very sincerely yours,

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (Ruskin S. Freer, President
(Chas. O. Handley, V.-President
(Florence Hague, Secretary
(John B. Lewis, Treasurer
(M. G. Lewis
(A. O. English



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DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR

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BIRD BANDING

As a method of studying the migratory habits of birds, bird banding or marking is not new. In Europe the "ringing" was attempted as early as 1710. Bird banding in this country dates from 1803 when Audubon used a silver wire to mark a brood of phoebes. He was rewarded the following year by two of his marked birds returning to nest in the same vicinity. By 1899 the work was being carried on in a systematic way, and between that time and 1914 some twenty different organizations took up the work. Notable among these was the American Bird Banding Association, organized in New York City, December 8, 1909. By this time records of real scientific value were being obtained.

Realizing that the information obtained from banding migratory birds would be of value in connection with the administration of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, the Biological Survey in 1920 took over the work of the American Bird Banding Association. Thus the Biological Survey became the "clearing house" of all data and the custodian of the permanent records. The number of Banding Stations is now in excess of 1800, many states having numerous stations well distributed and doing splendid work. So far very little has been done in Virginia along this line. At the end of 1929 more than half a million birds had been banded from which 30,000 return records have been obtained.

Learning to Know Birds Immediately

The closer we come to birds the keener interest and better understanding we have of them. Nowhere is this more forcibly brought home than in banding and in the subsequent studies thus afforded. The handling of these feathered creatures of the air is in itself a thrilling experience. To hold in one's palm this quivering bit of life and study its every detail of size, shape, plumage, probable age, etc., is an intensely interesting phase of this work. After a careful scrutiny of the specimen, a little wave of the hand and it is released again. Perhaps it may be caught within the hour and many succeeding times, again it may be a day or week, month or year, or not at all, according to the nature or peculiar habits of the particular bird. Also the time of year when taken bears upon this. All these things enter into the close study of the life of a bird, and can only be accurate when a definite record is carefully and fully kept and studied. Trapping and banding and retrapping makes this possible in a way no other method does. Birds when handled often take on a good deal of individuality and one soon becomes personally attached to them.

My banding operations have been very modest, to say the least, and yet I have learned far more of the ways and habits of birds in the little time devoted to this work than would have been possible otherwise. I operate three traps that are home made: #1, A Baldwin Woodpecker Trap, slightly modified to suit my own needs; #2, a Regulation Drop Trap; #3, a Government Sparrow Trap. This latter is automatic. The other two are operated by pull strings.

The work is confined entirely to song birds, or rather non-game birds, and is a direct result of the interest created by having provided food and shelter for birds during the winter. Always questions arose. Are these the same birds we fed last winter? Will they remain the whole season, or pass on while others arrive? It was to determine such questions that I made my traps and set to work on the 5th of January, 1930, having secured the necessary permit from the Biological Survey.

Two traps were set and ready for operation about 12:30 p.m., and within the hour I was learning interesting things. It is to be borne in mind that at the time I started trapping my feeding station had been well supplied since early fall, and the birds under observation. It was with a good deal of surprise therefore that I trapped five Downy Woodpeckers by 2:00 p.m. on that first day. We had felt certain there was only a pair of them, for never more than two were present at one time and that always a male and female. On December 13, 1930 one of these Downies returned; and repeated regularly for the next month. On February 9, 1931, another one returned. In other words two out of the five "checked in." This latter one has returned again on February 7, 1932.

A word of explanation regarding the term "repeat" and "return." When a bird has been trapped and retaken in a short interval, that is a repeat. A bird that has not been retaken within three months and is then trapped is a return. Supposedly the bird has not been in the vicinity during that interval.

Titmice, unlike Downies, arrive all at once! And there is a great stir and commotion as they feed and carry off great hoards of food. Five titmice were banded soon after operations started, and they were constantly in the traps, often several times a day. Three of them never repeated after February 25; the other two repeated until June 18; and no returns have been taken of these first five Titmice banded January, 1930. However, one banded December 15, 1930, returned December 2, 1931; and one banded October 30, 1930, returned January 17, 1932.

Like the Titmice the Chickadee makes a great "to do" when feeding. Only two were banded that first year, but one of these returned February 7, 1931, with four others, and they were ever present, becoming even a nuisance, until the middle of March. No other returns have been taken on them.

Of the two White-breasted Nuthatches banded January 1930, one returned December 13, 1930. Note the Nuthatch and Downy returned the same date. They often seem to travel together.

Fourteen Mockingbirds have been banded, and one of these at least is a migrant. Banded October 11, 1930, it returned February 24, 1931, and repeated until April 4, and was seen no more then, but was retaken again January 28, 1932. Most of the mockers have repeated often enough to prove them permanent residents. In all I have trapped and banded 27 species and 265 individual birds.

I would give much to know where the junco that was banded on January 18, 1930, nested. It repeated here up to February 2, and after an absence of many months returned on January 14, 1931, just four days from the date of its first arrival. It was present to February 9, and then journeyed on again. Where was it bound? For the far north, or did it breed within the confines of our own state? Questions such as these are always urging one on to find out more and more about this intriguing subject.

---Katharine P. Claytor.

(This article is in somewhat condensed form the paper written by Miss Claytor for the Charlottesville meeting of the V. S. O.)

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THE HERONS OF TIDEWATER VIRGINIA

(Having recently received an inquiry from Dr. T. Gilbert Pearson as to the status of certain of the herons in Virginia, the Editor passed the question on to Mr. Joseph E. Gould, of Norfolk, who has had more field experience in south-eastern Virginia than any of our members now living in the State. On a trip into the Dismal Swamp, May 23 to 26, 1932, Dr. W. B. McIlwaine and I saw many Little Blues flying along the northern shore of the Lake and up the Portsmouth Ditch to some feeding place in the Swamp. They were probably nesting somewhere in that region. Mr. Gould's answer follows. Editor.)

"The only Heron, besides the Great Blue, that may possibly nest in the near vicinity of Norfolk is the Little Blue, as it is the only one I have seen in the spring. On April 18, 1926, I flushed one from a small pond in the "Desert" near Lynnhaven, and on May 31, 1932, Mr. H. H. Bailey and I saw another. It is therefore likely that a pair or two may nest in that locality. I have no record of ever seeing the Louisiana Heron anywhere about Norfolk. The Black-crowned Night Heron is here in the spring in small numbers; and I think a few pairs used to nest in some woods just south of Money Point on the bank of the southern branch of the Elizabeth River, but I could never locate their nests."

VULTURES ATTACKING PIGS

During the first week in June while on a trip in Norfolk County, I had occasion to call on a Mr. Ewell, a farmer, who specializes in raising and breeding hogs. During the conversation he remarked that he had lost a large number of small pigs one and two days old on account of the buzzards. Questioning him more closely for details as to the kind of buzzards and their methods of attack, he related that the Turkey Buzzard and the small "South Carolina Buzzard" (Black Vulture) were the aggressors and travelled together. Thinking perhaps a careless sow had mashed some of the newly born pigs, which often happens, and which was responsible for the presence of the vultures, I asked him if he had ever seen one catch a live pig. He replied he had and on one occasion had surprised one with a live pig and had forced the vulture to drop it.

Walking through the hog lot, a wooded area about a half acre enclosed with wire, we discovered three sows with small pigs. Two of them had ten and twelve pigs, the third had only five and two of these bore signs of attack. One had a clean cut taken out of the ear and the other had its tail off short with appearance of a fresh cut. Mr. Ewell remarked that the buzzards had been active here and carried off perhaps five or six pigs. He further stated that he kept sows expecting pigs in private enclosures, but on account of the great number of hogs it was almost impossible to single out every one.

During my trip I talked to several other farmers about the matter and they all stated that they were acquainted with such losses, but had not experienced the same trouble on account of their enclosures being in the open.

In view of the fact that the Turkey Vulture and the Black Vulture are truly scavengers, it would seem from the above that they sometimes vary their diet.

---A. O. English, Norfolk, Va.

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THE CLIFF SWALLOW IN ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

(I have been interested in the status of the Cliff Swallow in the Valley of Virginia. I only see them in Rockbridge County in small numbers during migrations, but I have been told by residents of the county that they formerly nested in some numbers. I have also had reports of a few nests three years ago on a cliff high up on House Mountain, Rockbridge Co., but have seen no nests myself. On July 14, 1932, at Massanotta Springs, Rockingham County, five miles east of Harrisonburg, I saw 25 or 30 Cliff Swallows, old and young, perched on telephone wires along with Barn Swallows. On returning home I wrote Prof. Ralph D. Hostetter, of the Eastern Mennonite School near Harrisonburg, asking him to investigate. He gives the information below. Will other members of the V. S. O. who have any data on the breeding in Virginia of this swallow send it in for the next issue of THE RAVEN. Editor.)

"I do not have the Cliff Swallows on my summer list; I have never found their nests. Last Saturday, July 30, I went to the Springs to see whether I could get any information on nesting sites. I found the Swallows perched on the telephone wires behind the hotel near to an old barn. There were about 35 young ones who were being fed by eight or ten adults. The old barn contained very many Barn Swallow nests, quite a number containing young, but no Cliff Swallow nests about the place. I also observed that while the Barn Swallows were continually going in and out of the barn, the Cliff Swallows were either resting on the wires or flying over the meadow in search of food. I visited a number of barns within a radius of a mile or more from the hotel, but found no nests. I also spoke with a number of farmers who have lived in that neighborhood for many years, and only one recalled having ever seen a nest like the one built by the Cliff Swallows, and that was seen years ago in a different locality.

"I spoke with Prof. Chappellear, instructor in Biology at State Teachers College, Harrisonburg, to get his information on this bird. He informs me that he has found only one nest, two years ago, about fourteen miles west of Harrisonburg.

"From what I saw at the Springs last Saturday I am inclined to believe that they were hatched not so very far from the Springs, and have come there to the meadow to feed upon the insects flying over the stream, to be with the Barn Swallows and probably migrate with them. The strange part of this is that none of the native peoples have seen such nests as they build."

---D. Ralph Hostetter.

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It is time for us to be thinking of the Annual Meeting. Several members of the Executive Committee have suggested that Norfolk be the place this time and that the meeting be held earlier, say in January when the great flocks of wild fowl may be seen in Back Bay, or later than formerly, say in late April or early May when the shore bird migrations have begun. If any of the members have ideas as to place or time or program they should send them to Prof. R. S. Freer, Lynchburg College, Lynchburg, Va., at once.

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In the window of the Worthington Hardware Company of Staunton, Virginia, is a fine specimen of the Snowy Owl. The Editor was informed by one of the clerks that the bird was killed seven miles north of Staunton on the Spring Hill Road on Christmas Eve, 1931.

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A nature record of interest, even though it does not pertain to ornithology, is one that was brought out in the Biology section of the meeting of the Virginia Academy of Sciences, namely, that the last Buffalo killed in Virginia was shot in Bath County about the year 1829.

Notes for the October issue should be sent in to the Editor at once. There will probably be only two further issues this year -- the October issue, and a combined November-December issue. Notes on the month of October should be sent in by November 10th, however, in case three issues may be found possible.

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The members of the V. S. O. will be glad to note that our President, Prof. Ruskin S. Freer, is back at his regular post at Lynchburg College after a year's absence of studying at the University of Virginia and teaching in Pennsylvania.

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FIELD NOTES

Norfolk. Mr. H. H. Bailey, of Coral Gables, Fla., on his way to England, stopped off at Newport News, and we spent two days in the country looking for birds and their nests. On May 31st I met him at the Newport News Ferry, and we drove toward Cape Henry, stopping along the way to explore likely looking woods and marshes. We saw no migrants and only a few local birds and summer residents. Crossing Lynnhaven Bridge not a sea bird was in sight. Our objective point was "The Desert", a large tract of rolling country, densely wooded, with cypress sloughs of more or less extent in the valleys.

The day was perfect, bright and not too warm, and no wind, but few birds. The following birds were observed: several Ospreys, both

kinds of buzzards, Sparrow Hawk, Fish Crows, Blue Heron, five Wood Ducks were flushed from one of the sloughs - they evidently nest, a male prothonotary warbler singing. It also likely nests, as some years ago I found a nest a few miles from there. Ovenbirds heard singing; Carolina Chickadee; one Black Poll Warbler singing, migrant; several Acadian Flycatchers, and a typical nest with three eggs was found on a sloping limb of beech, near a path; several Crested Flycatchers; a Hairy Woodpecker; several Hooded and Prairie Warblers; a Bluebird, several Bluegray Gnatcatchers; Pine Warblers, Brownheaded Nuthatch; Red-eyed Towhee; Flicker; Catbird; Wood Thrush; Southern Parula Warbler (heard singing); Thrasher and Kingbird.

The next day Mr. Bailey met me at the Newport News side of the ferry, and we drove north a short distance beyond Buckroe Beach to investigate a colony of Seaside Sparrows, nesting between the sand hills and a salt-water marsh. We probably flushed thirty pairs of birds, and found seven nests, one new, one with one egg, three with three eggs, and two with four eggs. Also found three nests of the Clapper Rail, one new nest, one with thirteen eggs, and one chick just hatched and one with twelve eggs. This colony of Seaside Sparrows was discovered by Mr. Bailey and his father some twenty-five years ago.

At the head of the marsh in an old field we saw a male Henslow's Sparrow sitting on a weed stalk singing. It was the tamest Henslow's I have ever seen, and allowed us to approach within ten feet, singing all the while before it flew. It evidently had its nest nearby. Also found several Marsh Wrens' nests under construction. On the beach we saw a small flock of Ruddy Turnstones. We were very sorry our friend Mr. A. O. English could not be with us, but business engagements prevented.

---Jos. E. Gould.

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Amelia. The following birds were last heard singing on the dates given: Kentucky Warbler, July 7; Hooded Warbler, July 7; Orchard Oriole, July 16; Brown Thrasher, July 10; Wood Thrush, July 19; Chat, August 6; Blue Grosbeak, August 13. The last Purple Grackle was seen July 7. Red-winged Blackbirds were flocking July 22, and the last one was seen August 1. In the summers of 1930 and 1931 a pair of Nighthawks nested about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of Amelia, and were seen regularly all through the summer. Another pair nested both summers on the Sheppard farm four miles east of Amelia. Miss Sheppard found the nest in the summer of 1931. This summer (1932) not a nighthawk was seen by either the Sheppards or me, up to August 28, when I saw six. This was doubtless the beginning of fall migration. They have been seen in about the usual numbers since that date. Only one Bachman's Sparrow has been observed this summer, a singing male in the north east part of the county, July 12. I visited a large pond that was new to me on Sept. 2 and saw a Pied-billed Grebe. A farmer who is familiar with the pond told me that "seven or eight had been on the pond all summer." On August 21, while a party of amateur botanists were at Hill's Mill Pond in Dinwiddie County four large, white herons were about the pond. Several members of our party, including Miss Bernice Rives of McKenney, Mr. Harry Sheppard, my daughter and myself, were fortunate in having one of these birds light on a mud flat within about 60 yards of us, where we watched it with binoculars as long as we cared to. It was without doubt an American Egret. It seemed to be larger than a Little Blue Heron that lit not far away and gave an opportunity for comparison as to size. We could detect no dark markings on it anywhere. The bill was yellow and the legs black. We did not get a close up view of the three white herons, but judging from their size when seen near the one that was closely observed, they were of the same species. Miss Rives had seen the birds at the pond several days before the above date and had decided that they were American Egrets. A little blue heron in adult plumage was on the pond at the same time.

----John B. Lewis.

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Lynchburg. Miss Lena Henderson reports that a warbler picked up on a road near Lynchburg in July was identified by Dr. H. C. Oberholser as a Prairie Warbler. She also mentions finding the nest of a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher by the James River.

Lynchburg. July 30, Carolina Wrens with half-grown young at Snowden. July 31, Ruffed Grouse with 7 young on trail up Rocky Row Mountain, near Snowden. Aug. 2, Chipping Sparrows feeding young. August 4, House Wren feeding young, second brood to be reared in same box. Aug. 7, Ruffed Grouse with 12 or more young on Snowden Mountain. On June 16 my son and I watched a House Wren roll the eggs of an English Sparrow out of the nest and then completely destroy the nest.

---Mrs. C. L. Burgess.

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Stokesville, Augusta County. (Miss Betty Hone, the writer of the following notes, spent July and August at a Girl Scout Camp at Stokesville. She is a niece of Mrs. Florence Merriam Bailey. I had sent her at the beginning of the summer a list of the birds she might expect to find, and this is her report. Editor.)

"Migration was over, I think, when we arrived (June 27th), but was beginning again among the resident warblers and others before camp closed (August 22d). However, I did not notice any strangers from the north among the flocks before I left. Although I did not have time for concentrated nest hunting, I found a Mountain Vireo and Wood Thrush nesting in camp when we arrived, and later had my attention called to baby Mountain Vireos, Black & White Warblers, Towhees and others by their over-anxious parents. On August 12 in a chapparal of scrub-oak and laurel in the mountains back of camp I found a Towhee's nest with eggs, rather an afterthought it seemed to me. On Bother Knob, 4400 feet, I found Juncos and Veeries and thought I heard a Chestnut-sided. Back in the mountains I was glad to find the Pileated Woodpecker not as uncommon as I had feared. The most characteristic camp birds were the Black & White Warbler and the Towhee, with the Hooded Warbler and the Mountain Vireo second. I was able to note 72 of the species on the list."

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Lexington. The most interesting find of the season was an American Egret at Big Spring Pond on July 26th. It is still there on Sept. 26th. I had it on the Rockbridge Co. list on the word of several local people, but this is the first positive record anywhere in western Virginia. Mr. Lewis reports it in this issue in Dinwiddie Co. Heretofore it has only been seen in Tidewater and in the Potomac section. On July 1st I saw a male Cerulean Warbler carrying food to a young bird. On the 2nd I found a nest of a Summer Tanager with one egg, located 15 feet up in a small sycamore tree. It was an unusually deep tanager nest and was of better construction than is customary with these birds. Unfortunately, in climbing to the nest, I twisted the branch, and the bird deserted the nest. On the same day and within a few feet of the sycamore I found two young Spotted Sandpipers that were not over two or three days old. One of the little fellows took to the water when pursued, and swam with ease. When one of the boys with me waded out

to the young bird it dived and was caught under water. The sandpipers along this stream are accustomed to fly out over the adjoining grain fields, alighting on fence posts and oat shocks. On the 6th I found a Red-eyed Vireo's nest that had in it two naked young vireos, a young Cowbird twice as large as the young vireos, and an unhatched vireo egg around which had slipped half of the shell of the Cowbird's egg. On the 26th I saw a Solitary Sandpiper at Big Spring. Previous to this fall I had had few fall records for this bird, and nothing so early as July. They have been common this year in September. I was absent from the county during all of August.

---J. J. Murray.



THE RAVEN

BULLETIN OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY
PUBLISHED AT LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA
DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR

VOL. III

October & November, 1932

Nos. 10 & 11

THE THIRD ANNUAL MEETING

Plans are rapidly taking shape for the third annual meeting of the V. S. O., to be held at Norfolk, January 20 and 21, 1933. The Program Committee consists of Dr. J. J. Murray, Chairman, Miss Florence Hague and Prof. Robert P. Carroll. There will be a dinner on Friday night, following the afternoon program of papers. The business meeting will probably be held following the dinner. Mr. Charles O. Handley is arranging a trip at Back Bay, near Virginia Beach, on which the thousands of water fowl which winter there may be seen. This trip will doubtless be the big feature of the meeting.

Mr. A. J. English of Norfolk is chairman of the committee on local arrangements. More extended announcements will be made by these committees in the next issue of THE RAVEN. In the meantime, bear the date and place in mind, and make plans to attend.--Ruskin S. Freer.

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The Program for the Annual Meeting

The President has appointed the following Committee to prepare a program for the Annual Meeting: Dr. J. J. Murray, Chairman; Dr. Florence S. Hague; and Prof. Robert P. Carroll. The Committee hopes that many members of the Society will prepare papers to be read at the meeting. The success of the meeting will depend on the interest and the activity of the members. The papers need not be at all technical. In fact, we particularly want papers that deal with informal subjects of popular appeal. All members who are willing to prepare papers are requested to send to the Chairman as soon as possible their titles and an estimate of the amount of time that they wish. That should be done by December 1st, if possible, and certainly by Christmas.

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The Economic Value of Birds

By William B. McIlwaine, Jr.

About 1885 the United States Department of Agriculture began the systematic study of birds, especially as to their economic importance. And from that day to this we have been getting astounding revelations! Of course the value of a bird depends mainly on what it eats. With a body temperature of 100 to 112 degrees, F. and given to intense

activity a bird must eat a great deal. The supply is exhausted quickly, and must be replaced. It is estimated that at one season or another through the year we have in the United States a total of 4,000,000,000 birds. Think of all these hungry mouths! But even then we are scarcely prepared for some of the totals of food consumption.

One of our small northern sparrows is the tree sparrow, just one of thirty or more species in the large family. Some years ago Professor Beall undertook to see what this little bird would eat in the 200 days of his residence in the State of Iowa each year. He estimated ten to the square mile, each eating 1/4 oz. of weed seed daily. Multiplying out he found that this one species of sparrow in the one State of Iowa during 200 days of the year will consume 875 tons of weed seed.

Dr. S. D. Judd calculated that quail in North Carolina and Virginia consume between Sept. 1 and April 30, 1341 tons of weed seed. In addition the Bob White accounts for at least 145 species of insects, including the cotton boll weevil and the potato bug, and to a quantity amounting to around 340 tons annually. (Importance of Bird Life. P.145) Many people hold the quail to be America's most valuable bird. Isn't it strange that an intelligent farmer will allow pothunters and selfish sportsmen and friends for the season to exterminate this useful ally? Millions of them are slaughtered every year for "just the fun of the thing."

Valuable as are the seed eaters, more valuable still are the insect eaters. Of course almost all birds eat insects and feed them almost exclusively to their young; but many adult birds eat almost nothing else.

In an article in the Scientific American several years ago Dr. L. O. Howard of the U. S. Department of Entomology made the statement that many scientists hold that the greatest danger to the human race lies in the world of insects which seem better adapted to conditions here than does man. He said also that insects destroy in the United States annually property valued at \$2,000,000,000. The insect is man's mortal enemy, and the mortal enemy of the insect is the bird. Nature has given us birds to combat insects everywhere - in the air, on the foliage and bark of trees and shrubs, beneath the bark, on the ground and under the ground. We have often watched swifts and swallows, fly-catchers, vireos and warblers, woodpeckers, thrushes, robins, blackbirds, and many others. They are eternally after the insects. Chester A. Reed of Massachusetts gives us in the preface to his Bird Guide a few estimates, which if accepted as holding for the State of North Carolina, would give us a yearly consumption in this state by the birds of 30,000,000 bushels of insects.

Or consider the Birds of Prey - the hawks and owls. The main food of these birds is mice, rabbits, rats, gophers, lizards and such. One of the daily papers of Chattanooga, Tenn. carried last week a news item telling of how a deputy game warden of McMinn and Meigs Counties has declared war on hawks, offering a bounty for their heads. Will not

someone bring to his attention the fact that Massachusetts tried this plan years ago with results that Dr. Forbush characterized as "worse than useless." Pennsylvania also tried it, and killed 100,000 hawks and owls. It took eighteen months to get this foolish measure repealed, and the property damage resulting in that time is placed at more than \$4,000,000.

Everyone who has been to Salt Lake City has heard the history behind that beautiful monument to the Franklin gulls. The Mormon colonists had been reduced to lean rations by the destruction of their wheat fields by small black beetles. And other colonists were on the way across the plains. They had planted the second year; the prospects were golden; when again the beetles appeared swarming, consuming. The planters stood despairing. Brave hearts trembled. Just then the air became thick with flying wings, and great flocks of gulls descended on the fields. And when they had finished their work, to use the words of one narrator, "not a cricket's chirp remained." The colony was saved.

A French scientist has said, 'Destroy every bird, and in nine years there would be no green thing on the face of the earth.' That would mean the triumph of the insects. But no! the prospect is better than that. We are accomplishing much today as we show the people the Economic Value of Birds.

I saw with open eyes
Singing birds sweet
Sold in the shops
For the people to eat;
Sold in the shops of
Stupidity Street.

I saw in vision
The worm in the wheat,
And in the shops nothing
For people to eat;
Nothing for sale in
Stupidity Street.

(Ralph Hodgson.)

(Editor's Note: This paper is part of a radio address delivered at Charlotte, N. C., by Dr. William B. McIlwaine, Jr., now of Alexandria, Va., and a member of the V. S. O.)

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Bluebirds Enjoy Bathing

Close to the porch, under an apple tree with low-hanging branches, I placed my bird bath. It is the most popular spot on the yard for my feathered friends. And do they enjoy it? Just watch them and see.

Late on a hot, sultry August afternoon, just before the storm, the Bluebirds seemed to feel that it was all theirs. They dipped in and out, up into the tree and back again. Finally, eight were in at the same time. What a splash! How the spray flew! Other species were nearby, on fence, ground and tree, but the Bluebirds made them wait.

---Bernice Rives, Dinwiddie County.

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Long-eared Owl in Albemarle County

Mr. J. Thomas Stewart, Jr., of Portsmouth, writes about a Long-eared Owl that was caught in a steel trap in Sugar Hollow, 15 or 20 miles from Charlottesville in the fall of 1929 (November?). The head was identified at the U. S. National Museum. This owl was formerly a common resident in Virginia, but is now quite rare.

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Notes from Rockbridge County

Two Yellow-throats taken near Lexington on Sept. 16, 1932, were identified by Dr. H. C. Oberholser as the Northern Yellow-throat (Geothlypis trichas brachidactyla). Three forms of the Yellow-throat occur in Virginia. The Maryland Yellow-throat is a common summer resident all over the State except in the extreme south-east; the Florida Yellow-throat is a summer resident in the Dismal Swamp section, and probably all across the south-eastern corner of the State south of Chesapeake Bay; and the Northern Yellow-throat is a migrant through the State, though there are no other records in the western part of the State. I have been trying to get definite evidence as to the subspecies of the Robins in western Virginia. An immature bird, with spotted breast, taken on Sept. 5th, and an adult, taken on Sept. 16, at Lexington, were identified by Dr. Oberholser as the Southern Robin (Turdus migratorius achrusterus). Our winter birds in western Virginia are almost certainly the Northern form. For five years I have been hoping to find the Virginia Rail at Lexington but without success until I saw one at Big Spring Pond on Sept. 26th and again (probably the same bird) on Oct. 1st. I cannot understand why this bird should be so uncommon in interior Virginia. Dr. Smyth used to find it at Blacksburg, but the only records in the files of THE RAVEN are of one reported at Blacksburg by Mr. Brown, one reported (for Dec. 24, 1930) by Mr. J. B. Lewis, and the occurrence here noted.

---J. J. Murray

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A Book Worth Getting

A beautiful quarto volume comprising the ninety-two full color plates, by L. A. Fuertes and Allen Brooks, and one black and white by Dr. John B. May, appearing in the three volumes of the "Birds of Massachusetts and other New England States," by Edward Howe Forbush, has been published by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is now available to everyone at the low price of \$1.75 per copy. The plates illustrate three hundred and forty-four species of birds with five hundred and sixty-four separate figures. While the plates were

intended primarily to illustrate the birds of the New England States, a more complete or beautiful set of plates illustrating the birds of the Atlantic coastal states is not available. Every bird-lover in Virginia who is not so fortunate as to have the three volume set of Forbush's magnificent work should not miss this opportunity to get this copy of the plates. It can be secured from the Secretary of the Commonwealth, Room 118, State House, Boston, Massachusetts.

---C. O. Handley.

(No bird lover should fail to secure this volume of plates. Another interesting and valuable book on birds, which is being distributed for the mere payment of the postage, is "The Birds of Louisiana." It is a State Bulletin of 598 pages, illustrated paper covers. The Department of Conservation, New Orleans Court Building, New Orleans, La., will send it for 25¢ to cover postage. Still another book that anyone interested in game birds should have is A. C. Bent's "Life Histories of North American Gallinaceous Birds." It is Bulletin 162 of the U. S. National Museum, and can be secured from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., for \$1.00 (paper covers). It has a wealth of material about the Bob-white, Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, and all other upland game birds of America. Editor.)

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All lovers of the wild life of our coastal region will be glad to know that the lock in the Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal has been restored. This lock, which holds back the salt water from the great semi-inland sea of Back Bay and Currituck Sound, was removed ten years ago, with the consequent destruction of much of the duck food of that region. Now the water plants will have a chance to gradually come back, and the water birds should come in larger numbers.

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Mr. N. R. Barger, who formerly contributed to THE RAVEN, was out of the State last winter. We are glad to note that he is again in Charlottesville.

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Even though it was found that there was money enough in the treasury for separate issues for October and November the way in which the material has come to the editor has made it seem advisable to combine the issues. Hence this unusually long issue of THE RAVEN. Notes and contributions for the December issue should be in the hands of the editor before December 10th.

FIELD NOTES

Ashland. -- May 24; 6:30 A.M., a male Scarlet Tanager was observed on the topmost bough of a large sweetgum tree in full song; first seasonal record as well as first record for Hanover county. The bird continued to sing from the tree-tops in the neighborhood for half an hour or more. The same bird or another was observed on July 1 about a quarter of a mile away. A male tanager was seen and heard at this location several times during the month.

Fredericksburg. -- July 12, a Song Sparrow was observed at the home of Mr. Clarke Venable just north of the city in full song. Mr. Venable says that a few are seen about his place throughout the summer. Evidently Fredericksburg is near the southern boundary of the bird's nesting range. I have never seen it at Ashland during the summer.

Richmond. -- Last dates: Aug. 18, a flock of about a dozen Purple Martins seen over the fields at the north end of Chamberlayne Avenue; Oct 17, while waiting for the traffic light at 2nd and Leigh Streets, shortly after 5 o'clock, eleven Chimney Swifts appeared near at hand in the misting rain. Apparently the birds were just part of a flock; however, the haze and growing darkness limited observation and the changing of the light just then made it necessary to move on. I had set Sept. 28 as the last appearance of the swift this year and usually they have all gone by the end of the first week of October.

Warren County (north of Front Royal)-- Sept. 9, an adult cock quail and 4 Mourning Doves were seen beside a mud-puddle along the roadside. They had evidently come there to drink, as was indicated by tracks in the mud which led to the water's edge. This and several other observations made by myself and others in Virginia during the drought of 1930 and 1932 would indicate that the Bob-white may be more dependent on watering places, at least during periods of severe drought, than was anticipated by H. L. Stoddard and myself at the conclusion of the Cooperative Quail Investigation.

Richmond. -- Aug. 27, first migrating Nighthawk of the season seen just north of the city. State Game Farm, New Kent county; Aug. 29, 6 P.M., during a period of about fifteen minutes, fully fifty Nighthawks passed by over an open field all going in the same general direction.

Ashland. -- Oct. 22, White-throated Sparrows made their first appearance.
---Chas. O. Handley.

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Amelia. In the morning of Oct. 31, a friend found a coot in the public road that was so exhausted, or otherwise disabled that it could not fly. He caught it in his hands. This adds another bird to my Amelia list. (*Fulica americana*). Birds last seen: Kingbird, Sept. 2; Crested Flycatcher, Sept. 5; Night Hawk, Sept. 8; Summer Tanager, Sept. 19;

Amelia (continued)-- Wood Pewee, Sept. 20; Wood Thrush, Sept. 25.
 Maryland Yellow-throat, Oct. 1; Chimney Swift, Oct. 2; Catbird, Oct. 4.
Birds first seen: Song Sparrow, Sept. 27; (An unusually early date).
 White-throated Sparrow, Oct. 20; Cedar Waxwing, Oct. 21; Junco, Oct. 21;
 Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Oct. 27.

---John B. Lewis.

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Naruna. Ruby-crowned Kinglets reached here on Sept. 26, and have been unusually abundant. Sept. 10 and 21, Yellow Palm Warblers; Oct. 13, 14, 27, Palm Warbler; 4, Brown Creeper; 8, Purple Finch; 22, Pileated Woodpecker, Greater Yellowlegs; 23, two Red-tailed Hawks, and again on 28th. 25, Tree Sparrow; 28, Sora; 30, Coot (?).

---Bertha Daniel.

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Charlottesville. Oct. 18, last Chimney Swift, large flocks of Purple Grackles, Oct. 15, Vesper Sparrow, Savannah Sparrows, Prairie Horned Larks, Chipping Sparrows in fall plumage, Marsh Hawks, House Wren, Swamp Sparrow, Yellow Palm Warbler. First dates: 8th, Ruby-crowned Kinglet; 12, Winter Wren; 14, Junco (N.R. Barger), White-throat; 15, Brown Creeper; 22, White-crowned Sparrows (rare here); 25, Sapsucker; 30, Fox Sparrows (early date); 31, Purple Finches.

---Martin Curtler.

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Floyd County. During the summer months I noted the Red-breasted Nuthatch near Willis, 12 miles southwest of Floyd on July 27th and August 16th. White-breasted Nuthatch is more common in Floyd county than in other sections of the State with which I am familiar. During October members of the sparrow family have been noticeably abundant, though I do not know how this compares with other years at this season. White-throated sparrows have been very common along roadsides. Juncos are now abundant everywhere. I did not see them in any part of the county until Sept. 28, though I was on several occasions at an elevation of 3700 feet. This is probably slightly below the minimum limit of elevation for summer occurrence in this latitude. Song Sparrows, Field Sparrows, Chipping Sparrows and Vesper Sparrows have been common along with the White-throats and Juncos. An observation which is of little or no scientific value because of uncertainty, though none the less interesting, was the observance on November 1 of a bird which I am quite sure was a Bonaparte's Gull, at least a Gull of like size, seen flying north westerly from the highway a few miles east of Christiansburg in Montgomery county.

---Merriam G. Lewis

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Alleghany County. Near the village of Barber, Oct. 29, I saw 3 Black Vultures. This is within twenty miles of the West Virginia line. On the same day I saw 7 Black Vultures at a point three miles east of

Lewisburg, West Va.; and a female Ring-necked Duck and a Pied-billed Grebe on the lake at the golf course at White Sulphur Springs, West Va. At Hot Springs, Va., Oct. 26, I saw 2 Red-tailed Hawks, a Sparrow Hawk and a Sharp-shinned Hawk, a Red-bellied Woodpecker and many Myrtle Warblers and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. Two male Hairy Woodpeckers were observed going through some odd ceremonies, chasing each other from tree to tree, and then lighting on a limb facing each other and bobbing up and down at each other as Flickers do during courtship. They paid little or no attention to a female that was pecking away on a nearby tree, but finally when she flew one of the males followed her until the other male flew at him and they went back to their sport of chasing each other.

---J. J. Murray

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Blacksburg. June 2, Blue-winged Teal, American Coot. June 13, Hummingbirds hatched, leaving the nest on 29th. June 13-25, Scaups. July 30, Robins hatching third brood. Aug. 31, fourteen Sharp-shinned Hawks circling over the campus, on the day of the eclipse. Oct. 24, Blue-winged Teal. Last dates: Sept. 1, Warbling Vireo; 25, Acadian Flycatcher; Oct. 9, Least Flycatcher; 12, Pewee; 23, Towhee, Blue-headed Vireo. First dates: Sept. 25, Black-throated Green (also on 18th), Black-throated Blue (also on Oct. 18), Magnolia Warbler; Oct. 6, Sapsucker; 12, Black-poll Warbler, Yellow Palm Warbler; 14, Bay-breasted Warbler (also on 18th); 23, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Olive-backed Thrush, Golden-crowned Kinglet, White-throated Sparrow, Myrtle Warbler. Warblers have been scarce this fall.

---Ralph M. Brown.

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Lexington. Additional Sept. records are: 5th, Little Blue Heron (first record for Sept.), Semi-palmated Sandpiper (first fall record), Raven, Long-billed Marsh Wren; 12th, Least Flycatcher; Wilson's Snipe on 14 and 19 and 26, fall records here being very few. The Nighthawk did not occur after Sept. 3, while it is usually abundant through Sept. and present until mid-October. Warblers have been very scarce this fall, as was the case at Blacksburg according to Mr. Brown's notes. The Tennessee, which is usually abundant in fall, I only saw on Oct. 9th; the Black-poll, also usually common, only on the 8th; the Magnolia only on 8th and 10th; the Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green and Oven-bird only once each. The Northern Water-thrush, always rare, was seen Oct. 1st. Myrtle Warblers alone were more common than usual. Purple Grackles were only seen three times, but on 20th and 24th flocks of about 150 were noted. Two species occurred later than I have ever noted - Indigo Bunting on Oct. 3 and Catbird on 9th. I saw a young female Marsh Hawk that a hunter had killed on Sept. 3, and observed two others high in the air on the 11th. Solitary Sandpipers occurred up to the 20th. On Oct. 31st, I saw a female Green-winged Teal (first fall record); a female Gadwall (rare here); and a female Ring-neck (uncommon here).

---J. J. Murray.

Giles County. Nov. 9.- "I banded a Mourning Dove last week after keeping it in a cage for three weeks healing a broken wing. The bird seemed none the worse for his confinement....Slate-coloured Juncos have been in evidence for about ten days. Quail seem to be fairly numerous. More Black Vultures this fall than I have seen since coming to Virginia."

---Charles D. Klotz.

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Harrisonburg. On Sunday afternoon, Sept. 11, while walking on the road leading from Harrisonburg to Greenmount, we flushed a covey of eight Bob-whites from under the fence along the road. The birds flew several hundred yards into the grass field. To our surprise we saw a young one scampering along under the fence. As soon as we gave chase, it sat flat and motionless in the grass, and apparently was unmindful of our close scrutiny. When we attempted to touch it, it darted off very unceremoniously. This youngster was covered with down, and appeared to be a recently, normally hatched Bob-white, rather than a "scrub" in the covey. Why so late, we do not know.

After reading Dr. Murray's comment on the American Egret in the August-September issue of THE RAVEN, I thought it may be of interest to know that one was shot near here two years ago. On July 11, 1930, an American Egret (*Herodias egretta*) was shot along the Chesapeake and Western Railroad, near Dayton. The bird was brought to the Eastern Mennonite School to be mounted for the party interested. In the meantime, suit was brought against the parties involved, for hunting without a license, and for killing a bird protected by law. The fines were paid, but the party could not claim the Egret. It is now in the School Museum protected by both State and Federal Permits. It is a male, and mounted, stands 35 inches high.

---D. Ralph Hostetter.



THE RAVEN

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DR. J. J. MURRAY, EDITOR

VOL. III

DECEMBER, 1932

No. 12

THE NORFOLK MEETING OF THE V. S. O.

The committees which are at work making plans for our annual meeting at Norfolk on January 20 and 21 are very anxious that special efforts be made by our membership to attend. It is realized that for the most of our members Norfolk will not be as convenient a meeting place as were Richmond or Charlottesville. However, the meeting at Norfolk will offer two advantages which should appeal to everybody. In the first place, it will provide contacts with a number of members of the V. S. O. who have not been able to attend previous meetings. The opportunity to get better acquainted with the members of the Tidewater section will be appreciated by those of us who live in the central or western part of the State. And many new members should be attracted to our Society by the Norfolk meeting. In the second place, the field trip to Back Bay, where thousands of water fowl spend the winter, provides an opportunity which may not come to us in an annual meeting again for some years.

Mr. English writes that rates for rooms will be as follows, at either Hotel Southland or The Monticello:

	<u>Single</u>	<u>Double</u>
Without bath	\$2.00	\$3.50
With bath	\$3.00 & up	\$4.50 & up

As information for members that will come by automobile, there is a parking station on Boush Street at the rear of the Hotel Southland which has been decided upon as headquarters for the convention.

It is requested that members register at the desk (Hotel Southland) in the hall on the mezzanine floor and secure tickets for the evening dinner. The hotel requests that we give the number to be served as early as possible that day.

The Field trip is in charge of Mr. Chas. O. Handley, who will have the cooperation of the State Game Commission in providing boats and a guide.

In case members desire further information concerning program, rooms, or the field trip, the names and addresses of chairmen of committees are given below:

Program: Dr. J. J. Murray, Lexington, Va.

Hotels and Local Arrangements: Mr. A. O. English, 227 Granby St., Norfolk.

Program

Friday, 2:00 P.M. (Hotel Southland)

Program of papers

Appointment of committees and general business

7:00 P.M. (Hotel Southland)

Dinner (\$1.00 per plate)

Additional papers

Election of officers and reports of committees

Saturday, 7:30 A.M. Leave at point to be announced in meeting, for Field Trip to Back Bay. The Field Trip will doubtless take most of the day, but should be over in time to allow members to drive home that night. Plans for lunch will be announced in the meeting.

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THE PROGRAM OF THE NORFOLK MEETING

It is hoped that a considerable number of members of our organization will prepare papers for the Annual Meeting, to be held at Norfolk, January 20 and 21. The interest and success of the meeting will depend, in large measure, upon the number filling places on the program. Informal and popular papers are desired just as much as those that may have material of more permanent importance, and no one need hesitate to submit a paper. It will be quite all right for any member to present more than one paper. Even if you cannot be present to read your paper in person, the Program Committee would like to have you send it in advance to the chairman, Dr. J. J. Murray, Lexington, Virginia, so that it may be read by some one else. It is not necessary to send in papers in advance if the writer expects to be at the meeting, but the chairman would like to have the titles of all papers sent to him as soon as possible, so that the program can be properly planned.

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THE RAVEN now completes the third year of its existence. One of its chief values has been to furnish a bond of union for the membership of the Society and to provide an official organ. It has also done a good deal to gather information on the birds of the State, particularly as to the distribution of the more common birds. This volume has run to about eighty pages, providing almost exactly the same amount of material that there was in volume two, and twice as much as was planned for when volume one was begun. Our publication would have considerable more value if we would print it, but that does not seem possible unless the membership can be considerably enlarged.

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CHRISTMAS CENSUSES

It is hoped that all Virginia readers of Bird-Lore will take a

Christmas Bird Census and send it in to that magazine. Before taking the census, the directions given on page 386 of the November-December issue of Bird-Lore should be carefully studied. In order to make it acceptable the census must be taken not earlier than Dec. 22 nor later than Dec. 27, and only one day's records can be included. The trip must take at least four hours, and giving a whole day to it is preferable. The area covered must not exceed fifteen miles in diameter. The report should be typewritten. When more than one person is working, all names should be signed. The list should be headed by the name of the place, the date, time at beginning and end of trip, weather, temperature at start and finish, distance traveled by car and on foot. The names of all species observed, in the order of the new A. O. U. Check-List, and the number of individuals of each species should be given. Unusual records should have the reasons for the identification given in a foot-note. Usually there are only four or five reports from Virginia. We should like to see a dozen this year. Send reports as soon as taken to: Editor of Bird-Lore, American Museum of Natural History, New York City.

Please send a copy of your list to the Editor for publication in the January issue of THE RAVEN. Members who are not subscribers to Bird-Lore are requested to take a census anyway and send it to THE RAVEN. The same rules will apply, except that the time for our reports will be extended to cover from Dec. 13 to 31 inclusive. It might be well to make two tries and send in the best list.

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Dues for 1933 are now in order, and the Treasurer will be spared trouble and expense if members will send them in without further notice. Associate membership is \$1.50 - Active membership, \$2.50 - Sustaining membership, \$5.00. All classes receive THE RAVEN. Dues should be sent to Mr. John B. Lewis, Amelia Courthouse, Virginia.

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AN ALBINE

On November 11th at my home at Naruna, Virginia, I saw an albine bird in an apple tree. It was snow white, with few black markings. Its size, posture on the limb and note led me to believe that it was a Field Sparrow. It was seen again on the 15th by a friend hunting on the other side of the farm, who considered it an unusual sight. It was evidently migrating as Juncos and sparrows were very abundant that morning. I have only been able to see it the one time, yet I have not ceased to wonder where its journey ended.

---Bertha Daniel.

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THE HERONS OF THE COASTAL REGION

Referring to Mr. Joseph E. Gould's notes on the herons of Tidewater Virginia in THE RAVEN for August-September, 1932, I find the following records in my own notes, covering the past five years:

1. Great Blue Heron; and 2., Little Green Heron. Summer residents, usually solitary. No nests observed in this locality.
3. American Egret; and 4., Louisiana Heron. Rare summer visitors. Two Egrets and one Louisiana Heron were observed at Grand View on June 30, 1929, my identifications being confirmed by Dr. Witmer Stone, Editor of THE AUK. After having made the twelve mile trip to Grand View several times a month without seeing any more of the Louisiana Herons, I was amazed to see this bird stalking up and down on the sand bar in front of my home on the Boulevard just outside Newport News on Oct. 3 and 4 of the same year. I have always believed that it was the same individual, as I have no other record of this heron.
5. Little Blue Heron. Summer visitor, arriving as early as April 25, and reaching its greatest abundance in mid-summer, a flock of 70 birds having been observed on July 7, 1930, at Grand View Lagoon, near Buckroe. Only eight birds were there on Sept. 15 of that year, almost all in white plumage.
6. Black-crowned Night Heron. Winter resident, in small flocks, made up principally of immature birds.

---George C. Mason, Hampton.

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NEWS NOTES

We are glad to include occasional nature notes of importance, dealing with wild creatures other than birds. A note of Nov. 26, 1932, in the Lynchburg News, tells of a large otter that was caught near Farmville, Va., a short time before. They are said to have been scarce in that section in late years. Beavers, which had formerly been seen there, seem to have disappeared altogether.

Mr. George C. Mason has been giving a series of nature talks this winter to the Scoutmasters of Newport News, the first on Dec. 5th, the subjects being "Songbirds," "Game Birds, Water Birds and Birds of Prey," "Trees," and "Ferns."

A letter from our Treasurer, Mr. John B. Lewis, says that the Research Committee of the Virginia Academy of Science has appropriated \$10.00 for the publication fund for the paper on "Additions to the Virginia Avifauna," which will probably appear in THE AUK this spring. This completes the amount necessary for the publication of the paper. We appreciate the interest shown by the Academy in our work as we do the financial help.

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THE AUK for October, 1932, contains several notes on Virginia birds. Mr. John B. Lewis has a note on "The Nesting of the Brown-headed Nuthatch at Amelia, Va." Dr. Murray has several notes: - one on the occurrence of an "American Egret in the Valley of Virginia;" one on the "Northern Phalarope in the Dismal Swamp, Virginia," describing the bird collected there on May 24, 1932, which was the third record for Virginia and the first spring record; and a longer note, "Wayne's Warbler, An Addition to the Virginia Avifauna,"

describing the discovery by Dr. William B. McIlwaine and himself of the breeding of this species in the Dismal Swamp, which is the farthest northward occurrence of this bird and the first record of its breeding north of southeastern North Carolina.

In Bird-Lore the Washington section of the reports on "The Season" is always worth the study of those who are interested in the birds of northern Virginia. In the November-December issue there are many items of interest, including some very late and very early fall records. The visits of the Snowy Egret to the upper Potomac seem to be increasing, and the American Egret was common in late summer, up to Sept. 23. A Florida Gallinule was reported at Four Mile Run, Va., Aug. 25.

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FIELD NOTES

Hampton. The grounds of the Mariner's Museum, with which I am connected, have been constituted a State Game Sanctuary. They include a lake of 175 acres, 500 acres of woodland and 100 acres cleared or under cultivation. Our check list includes 136 species, of which 48 are known to nest on the property. Four young Virginia deer have recently been released in the forty-five-acre deer park, which also contains a flock of eight Whistling Swans, two Australian Black Swans and a flock of six Wild Turkeys. About five acres of woods, marshland and water have been enclosed as a sanctuary for wild geese, of which we have about 40, which are pinioned. The following species of ducks have been noted on Lake Maury in the Museum grounds: Mallard, Black Duck, Baldpate, Widgeon, Pintail, Wood Duck, Redhead, Lesser Scaup, and Ruddy Duck. There are a number of Mallards and Scaups which have been pinioned. The Mallards and Wood Ducks are nesting on the lake shores, and a flock of over 100 Wood Ducks may be seen later in the winter on the more secluded portion of the lake. A Bald Eagle has recently been pursuing the ducks on a small pond in the grounds, but has secured none so far. Coots have been very plentiful on the lake this autumn, and may be seen in a flock of 30 to 40, feeding on the open lawn near the main entrance road.

Some first arrivals this fall are: Nov. 11, Pipit; 14, Slate-colored Junco; 28, Fox Sparrow. Three of our principal winter residents, the White-throated Sparrow, Myrtle Warbler and Golden-crowned Kinglet, arrived together during the first week in October. A Holboell's Grebe, in winter plumage, and a female or immature American Merganser were seen on the Mariner's Museum lake on Dec. 5.

---George C. Mason.

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Naruna. Last dates: Nov. 21, Chipping Sparrow; 23, Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Two Pileated Woodpeckers on Nov. 25. Phoebe still here, and calling.

---Bertha Daniel.

Gordonsville. On a trip to Richmond I had an extended view of a female Marsh Hawk at close range, ten miles south of Gordonsville; and a Red-bellied Wood-pecker at the same place. I also saw a female Marsh Hawk near Columbia.

Buckingham. On the return trip I picked up in the road a male and a female Cowbird that had been struck by automobiles. A Migrant Shrike was seen near Powhatan.

---J. J. Murray.

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Amelia. At dusk on the evening of Nov. 6, while M. G. Lewis and I were on a little branch near Amelia, a heron flew over an open field on the opposite side of the stream, wheeled and lit about 35 yards from us, down in the shadow of the trees. We approached, and it flew up. It was too dark to distinguish color markings, but its size, form and movements were those of the black-crowned night heron. Again, on the night of Nov. 11, I was out enjoying the moonlight farther down the same branch where there are open fields on either side, when a bird of the same species, possibly the same one, flew up from the deep channel of the branch hardly 30 yards in front of me. There were some low bushes along the bank, and I had evidently taken him by surprise. About Nov. 24th, my friend Mr. J. K. Irving was at the Beaver pond mill, where he noticed a small brown bird creeping up the brick wall below a spout that discharges a blast of air from a machine that takes dust and other impurities out of the wheat. The bird was evidently searching for grain weevils and other small insects that were being blown out and had lodged on the wall, in the same manner in which they glean from the trunks of trees. Mr. Irving watched it for some time as it crept up the wall to the top and then dropped down to the base to begin over again. Mr. Irving described the brown creeper quite accurately in telling me the incident. On Nov. 29th I saw a flock of five Mallards on the beaver pond, about a half mile above the mill. They flew up about 150 yards ahead of me, but one of them was almost certainly a male Mallard, as he had a green head and white neck ring. The first Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was seen on Nov. 4. The first Horned Larks, probably Prairie, were seen Nov. 4, since which time an unusually large number have been seen.

---John B. Lewis.

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Lexington. Late dates: Nov. 1, Yellow Palm Warbler; 8, Purple Grackle. Early dates: 1, Creeper; Pipit, a flock of 50, large flocks occurring throughout the month, feeding in plowed ground; White-crowned Sparrow, which have been more common than usual, and which were singing at times; 2, Tree Sparrow; 7, Hermit Thrush; 10, Prairie Horned Lark. A Great Blue Heron seen at Big Spring on the 5th and 21st, and another on the 10th at Cameron's Pond, where I have never seen it before. The following ducks were seen, all at Cameron's Pond unless otherwise noted: Mallard, 17th, male; Common Black Duck, 21st, three, one of them at Big Spring; Gadwall, rare here, pair on 7th; Green-winged Teal, 5 males and a female on 1st, and a female on 3rd; Shoveller, male on 12th; Lesser Scaup, male on 12th and 14th; Ruddy Duck, of

which I have only two previous records, three different individuals, all females, one at Cameron's Pond on 8th & 10th, one at same place on 21st, and one at the small city reservoir on 11th and 12th. A single Snipe, common in spring but for which I have only one previous fall and two winter records, was seen on four occasions at Cameron's Pond.

On the 2nd, a Coot, which I flushed from the margin of the same pond, flew across the pond and lit on a hillside in a thicket of devil's shoe-string bushes fifty yards from the water. When I approached, it flew up from the water, circled the pond, and flew away. A female Marsh Hawk was seen near this pond on the 2nd and 10th. On the 7th I heard three Ruffed Grouse drumming, and saw two of them. The farmer, on whose place, at the foot of Dale Mountain, I heard the Grouse, told me that he had seen three Ravens that morning, and seven Wild Turkeys earlier in the month. The same day I found ten Robins in a sheltered place at the foot of the mountains.

---J. J. Murray.

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Blacksburg. Nov. 3, Junco, first. Nov. 6, Myrtle Warbler, last; Towhee, four (Dr. Smyth's latest date being Oct. 22); Red-bellied Woodpecker, first; Fox Sparrow, first; Bluebird, thirty; Mockingbird, singing; Flicker, pair. Nov. 13, Winter Wren, first; Cooper's Hawk; Robin (flock of 200); Kingfisher (I now have them for practically every month in the year). Nov. 20, Pileated Woodpecker. This bird seems to be on the increase. There are more this fall than I have noted in seven years. Formerly seen once a year and sometimes not at all, I now hardly ever take a Sunday walk without seeing one. I have seen them in four different localities this fall. Nov. 27, Tree Sparrow. On Nov. 15, on the Cowpasture River in Bath County, I saw an Olive-backed Thrush (very late) and a Fox Sparrow.

---Ralph M. Brown.