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## GUY BARTLETT RETIRES AS EDITOR

Walton B. Sabin

After 25 years as editor of Feathers, Guy Bartlett has decided that it is time for him to write -30-. "Bart", as he likes to be called, nursed Feathers through the infant and adolescent stages and raised it successfully to maturity. Everyone connected with the Schenectady Bird Club, Inc., appreciates the yeoman service he has performed through the years.

Bart is the dean of local birders and one of the founders of the Schenectady Bird Club, an outgrowth of the Mohawk Valley Hiking Club. Since the inception of the club, Bart has served continuously as an officer, committee chairman, or director. He was responsible in getting many of the former and present members started in bird watching. These included Nelle Van Vorst, first secretary of the Schenectady Bird Club in the days when the executive officer was known as chairman, and who later became its first president; Barrington S. Havens, first editor of Feathers and a present member of the board of directors; George H. Bainbridge, a member who contributed many articles for Feathers; Esly Hallenbeck and many others.

Bart, of course, did not limit his interests to bird study, but included many natural history subjects such as minerology, aquatic life in ponds and streams, and the field of mammology, particularly small mammals.

The New York State Federation of Bird Clubs also includes Guy Bartlett as one of its founders. He contributed generously of his time and talents in seeing that the federation became a reality. He also served on various committees and as an officer in the early days of the federation. He was instrumental in seeing that the fifth, tenth and fifteenth annual meetings of the federation were held in our area.

Though getting out Feathers was his major interest as editor, Bart managed to get many separate pamphlets published on specific subjects. Many of these he authored himself, but through them all he amassed a great knowledge of the publishing field. At one time or another he wrote regular feature columns for the Schenectady Gazette as well.

The Schenectady Bird Club is truly sorry to see him leave, but wish him well and many years of enjoyable bird watching. The Club also extends its best to Jean for her willing and able service for refreshments and hospitality.

(Ed. note: why not make a special effort to attend the meeting on February 22 and offer your personal wishes to Guy and Jean?)

## LOOKING AHEAD

Today within the Schenectady Bird Club we speak of an enlarged organization - one of more members, more activities, a permanent site, etc. Concurrent with this are plans for an enlarged Feathers. Birding has always offered many opportunities to those affield to partake of other natural history pursuits. Birding was an excuse to get out, but there was nothing to prevent one from identifying a few trees, collecting ferns, or whatever. However, today with our greater dissemination of knowledge below the professional level and our greater amount of leisure time, these other natural history interests become all the more important and interesting. Because of this, we want to appeal to the devotees of the various natural history disciplines. We hope to do this with Feathers among other things. Our new field trip schedule already reflects some changes toward wider appeal. To accomplish the job given to Feathers will require the efforts of more than one person. Feathers will need good material for publication. Therefore, we ask that you the readers - the ones to whom this publication belongs - contribute to the success of this publication.

Over 25 years ago, Barry Havens, then editor of Feathers, expressed in Vol. 1, No. 4 that Feathers was published by and for the Schenectady Bird Club. In his inimitable way he solicited the following, "Contributions and suggestions for improvements are desired." That solicitation stands valid today - time has not dulled its message at all. Since this is your publication, help make it a better one.

Guy Bartlett has left a rich legacy. To some of us, the August-September, 1940 issue when Bart became editor was a long time ago. Surely Bart looks back on these years with many memories. Through thick and thin Feathers has issued continuously. For this and for what Bart has done to further the intentions of the Schenectady Bird Club, we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude.

I personally can vouch for Bart's legacy as I now assume the responsibility of this publication. The various equipment, supplies, suggestions and techniques that Bart has provided have made the assembling of this first issue a much easier job than it might have been. To the Club members who read this publication and who perhaps are not aware of the intricacies that Bart has borne routinely for nearly 25 years, this may not seem terribly important. To one now accepting this responsibility, this experience is invaluable. It is one of those rare essences resulting as the fruit of a job well done for the past 25 years.

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### FOR THE SOUTHWARD BOUND

For the interest of those who may be planning a trip to Florida, we have received information that the Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary tours formerly sponsored by the National Audubon Soc. under the direction of Dr. Alexander Sprunt, Jr. are once again in existence under Dr. Sprunt's direction. The trips are sponsored by Caribbean Gardens, P.O.Box 623, Naples, Florida for the season January 22 to April 23, 1965 at a cost of \$12.50.

## BRIEFING THE RECORD

The Season - August 15 to November 30, 1964

Dr. Peter P. Wickham, Records Committee Chairman

The long drought which has afflicted this region continued throughout the period. The early part of the fall was cooler than normal, with temperatures in August at Albany averaging  $66.2^{\circ}$  or  $3.8^{\circ}$  below normal. Temperatures in September and October averaged  $61.0^{\circ}$  and  $49.2^{\circ}$ ,  $0.6^{\circ}$  and  $1.6^{\circ}$  below normal, respectively, whereas in November, temperatures averaged  $41.4^{\circ}$ ,  $2.3^{\circ}$  above normal. November was the eighth consecutive month of sub-normal precipitation and at the end of the month at Albany, yearly precipitation totalled 18.3 in., 14.3 in. below normal.

Due to the long dry period, marshes and reservoirs became parched and dry. Very few marsh birds such as rails and gallinules were reported. Hawks were again seen in very low numbers, and the fall warbler migration was, on the whole, a disappointing one. On the other hand, many ducks were seen, with the number of redhead notably on the rise. Large groups of blackbirds were ubiquitous in early fall. Sandpipers and plovers were again seen widely and in good numbers, although perhaps slightly less than those of a year ago. In contrast with 1963, the finch pattern was totally different, with very few reports of evening grosbeaks or pine siskins and none of any crossbills. However, an invasion of snowy owls does appear probable this winter.

Among the more unusual species recorded were little blue heron, least bittern, shoveller, golden plover, black-bellied plover, dowitcher, stilt sandpiper, orange-crowned warbler, orchard oriole and Lincoln's sparrow.

Abbreviations: AD, Alan Devoe Bird Club; GC, Greene County Bird Club; SBC, Schenectady Bird Club; approx, approximately; arr, arrived; Co, County; com, common; imm, immature; L, Lake; max, maximum; M, Mohawk; nr, near; R, River; Ren, Rensselaer; rep, report(s); repd, reported; Res, Reservoir; R, Round; SC, Stony Creek; S, Saratoga; T, Tomhannock; VF, Vischer Ferry Game Management Area; W, Watervliet.

Observers: GB, Guy Bartlett; HE, Hazel Eddy; MWF, Mabel W. French; EH, Esly Hallenbeck; MJ, Mary Johnston; MK, Marcia Kent; ML, Mary Lynch; EMR, Dr. Edgar Reilly; WBS, Walton Sabin; BRS, Benton Seguin; DJT, Dr. Donald Tucker; PFW, Dr. Peter Wickham; RPY, Dr. Robert Yunick; BSH, Bartlett, Seguin and Barry Havens.

### LOONS - DUCKS

Com Loon: first Oct 3, SL (BRS); relatively few observed, max 6 Oct 18, SL (SBC).

Red-thr Loon: only two reports- one, Nov 15, SL (SBC) and a flock of about 50, SL, late Nov (EH).

Red-n Grebe: one was at SL and two at RL Oct 18 (EH, BRS) and one at SL Nov 4 (EH).

Horned Grebe: first Oct 18, SL (BRS) throughout period, with up to 100 at SL in late Oct and Nov.

**FEATHERS****JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 1965**

- Pied-b Grebe: two were at Old Pond, Chatham, Sept 20 and five were there on Oct 17 (AD); only other reports- two, WR, Sept 9 (PPW), one, RL, Sept 13 (DJT), three, Tuttle's Marsh, Oct 6 (AD), and one, SL, Nov 14 (BSH).
- Gr Blue Heron: fair numbers throughout region in Sept, max 17 Sept 16 VF (EH), last Nov 29, SCR (BSH).
- Com Egret: only two during period, one at WR Aug 22 (SBC) and Sept 9 (PPW), and one at VF through Sept 9 (DJT).
- Little Blue Heron: an adult was seen at Old Chatham Aug 22 (EMR).
- Green Heron: reported to Oct 4, SCR (BRS).
- Blk-cr Night Heron: few reported, mostly imm, only from Jenny L (GB) and VF (SBC), last, four (max), Sept 20, VF (EH).
- Am Bittern: very few reported, last Sept 26, WR (BRS).
- Least Bittern: the only report was of one banded and photographed at WR, Aug 22 (RPY et al.).
- Flamingo: one was discovered along the shore of the Hudson R nr Coxsackie Nov 14. The bird was able to fly and was seen by numerous observers in this vicinity until it was captured Nov 25 and turned over alive to the Delmar Game Farm. It seems probable that this bird was non-feral, although its origin has not been determined with certainty.
- No swans were reported.
- Canada Goose: many flocks observed throughout period, no outstanding numbers.
- Brant: a flock of 40 was at SL Oct 3 (BRS); one bird (probably the same individual) was observed at SL Oct 25 (WBS, PPW) to to Nov 4 (EH).
- Snow Goose: eight were at TR Nov 14 (PPW, David Stoner) and 26 were at SL Nov 15 (BRS). There were no other reports.
- Gadwall: only report, four seen, SCR, Oct 3 (SBC).
- Am Widgeon: reported Sept 12 (DJT) to Nov 1 (BRS) in small nos.
- Pintail: few reports, last Nov 22, TR (RPY).
- Gr-w Teal: reported throughout period to Nov 21 (BSH), max 500 Oct 3 SCR (SBC).
- Blue-w Teal: reported to Oct 11, Ren Co (SBC).
- Shoveller: only report, one male, SCR, Oct 24 (EH).
- Wood Duck: most departed early Oct, last Oct 25, Collins L (EH).
- Redhead: good migration observed at SL Nov 7-29, max 38 Nov 29 (BSH).
- Ring-n Duck: only reports Nov 26 and 29, SL (BSH), in contrast to 1963.
- Canvasback: good migration observed at SL, Oct 25 (EH)- Nov 29 (BSH), max 20 Nov 7 (BSH).
- Scaup: observed Oct 3, SCR (SBC) to end of period, max 200 SL Nov 15 (SBC).
- Goldeneye: first Oct 24 (EH) to end of period, with 300 at SL at end of period (BSH).
- Bufflehead: first Oct 25, SL (EH, WBS PPW) through end of period, max 40 Nov 1 SL (BRS).
- Oldsquaw: first Oct 31, MR (BRS); seen throughout Nov at SL, max 14 Nov 14 (BSH).
- Wh-w Scoter: several reports, mostly 2-6 individuals, Oct 18 (BRS) to end of period, max 14 Oct 25, SL (BRS).
- Surf Scoter: 1-2 at SL Nov 1 (BRS)- Nov 22 (BSH).
- Com Scoter: two were at MR at Lock 7, Oct 18, and nine were there Oct 23 (EH). Other reports, from SL, include two, Oct 25 (WBS, PPW); 10, Oct 31 (BRS); four Nov 8 (BSH); and two Nov 15 (SBC).
- Ruddy Duck: fewer than last year, Oct 24 (EH)- Nov 22 (BSH), max 27 Oct 25, RL and SL (WBS, PPW).
- Hooded Merganser: at least 15 were at SCR Oct 4 (WBS, DJT); others rep'd Oct 31 to end of period, max 30 TR Nov 22 (RPY).
- Com Merganser: one rep'd Oct 18; others arr during Nov, fewer than

**FEATHERS**

**JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 1965**

usual, max 56, Alcove Res Nov 22 (SBC).

Red-br Merganser: first reports Oct 18 and 28 (EH); most arrd during Nov, max 25 SL Nov 15 (SBC).

**HAWKS - OWLS**

Turkey Vulture: last seen at Westerlo Oct 1 (MK) and in Greene Co Oct 2 (GC), although recorded in Col Co at Canaan Oct 23 (AD) and at Ghent Nov 15 (AD).

Sharp-sh Hawk: at least three following what appeared to be a regular migration route at Karner Sept 13 (WBS, PPW); four others reported in Sept (AD); others, Oct 18, Melrose (RPY), and Nov 21 (BSH).

Cooper's Hawk: only one repd, nr VF Sept 13 (EH).

Red-t Hawk: repd throughout period, but not com.

Red-sh Hawk: only six rep soattered through period.

Broad-w Hawk: very few rep, no flights seen.

Rough-l Hawk: several repd toward end of period, first rep- one seen Oct 23, SCR (EH) and one killed by car picked up nr Coxsackie.

Marsh Hawk: several repd into Oct, max five Aug 23 nr Berne (MJ, ML). No Nov rep.

Osprey: migrants repd through Oct 11 (SBC).

Peregrine Falcon: one at WR Sept 26 (BRS)- the lone rep.

Sparrow Hawk: most areas had fewer individuals than usual.

Virginia Rail: only rep during period, Aug 15, VF, two (EH); adult with imm, VF Aug 25 (DJT); and one Sept 24, Vly (GC).

Sora: one imm picked up in a yard in Sept- the only rep (file Beverly Waite).

Com Gallinule: only rep- one Aug 15 VF (EH).

Am Coot: first repd Sept 20, Vly (GC) and Sept 26, WR (BRS).

A flock of approx 50 at SL Oct 18 grew to approx 150 by Nov 1, then decreased somewhat after Nov 15. A smaller flock of 12 was reported at Alcove Res Nov 22 (SBC).

Semipal Plover: repd at VF and SCR to Sept 27 (BRS); max six. Sept 12 (EH).

Killdeer: very numerous during Aug and Sept with a few lingering. to the end of the period.

Golden Plover: a flock of 12 appeared on a field in East Greenbush Sept 7 (AD) and was seen by many observers to Sept 16 when one still remained. Two were seen at North Chatham Sept 9 (possibly from the aforementioned flock), three landed on a mudflat at SCR Oct 3 (PPW) and one was observed in a plowed field nr Latham Oct 4 (PPW).

Blk-b Plover: one was at SCR Sept 6 and 26 (EH) and Sept 12 (DJT). These may not have been the same individual, since repeated trips by these and other observers during this period did not afford views of the species.

Woodcock: probable migrants observed Aug 17, Niskayuna (HE) to Oct 22 (RPY).

Com Snipe: recorded to Oct 25, SL (WBS, PPW).

Upland Plover: last Aug 26, Craig School (DJT)- a nesting area.

Spotted Sandpiper: good numbers in Aug and Sept, last Oct 11 VF.

Solitary Sandpiper: many in Aug- Sept, last Oct 3 (BRS).

Gr Yellowlegs: fairly com, Aug- Oct, last Oct (BRS, EH).

Lesser Yellowlegs: more com than preceding species in most areas in Aug- Sept, last Oct 25, Lock 7, MR (EH).

Pectoral Sandpiper: repd to Oct 31 (BRS, EH); max 45, SCR Oct 3.

Least Sandpiper: widely repd, last Oct 31 (BRS).

Dunlin: few rep; one was at Old Pond Sept 24 and Oct 17 (AD), one was at SCR Oct 3-4 (PPW, WBS, BRS), and one was at SL

Oct 25 (WBS, PPW).

Dowitcher: one was seen feeding with a flock of gr-w teal Oct 12 at Vly (GC).

Stilt Sandpiper: one in fall plumage at VF Sept 7 was compared with lesser yellowlegs and convincingly described (DJT).

Semipal Sandpiper: many rep, last Oct 28, SCR (EH).

Sanderling: one was at WR Sept 26 (BRS) and Oct 25 (EH).

Gr Blk-b Gull: only one rep, SL, Nov 29 (BSH).

Herring and Ring-b Gulls were less com than usual, although one group of 800 gulls was found feeding on dead fish at TR Nov 22.

Bonaparte's Gull: only rep- two, SL, Oct 8 (BRS).

Cuckoos: both species were rep through Sept; last yellow-b Oct 10, Ghent (AD) and last blk-b Oct 3, SCR (SBC).

Owls: four species of owl were rep during the period- the regular screech, horned and barred owl rep, and the vanguard of a snowy owl incursion. Early snowy owls appeared at Brookview and Mitzeskill Oct 28 and 29 (AD) and Schdy Nov 4. At least were rep from Albany, Coeymans and Schdy during Nov.

#### GOATSUCKERS - SHRIKES

Nighthawk: last Sept 10, Sootia (DJT).

Chimney Swift: few after mid-Aug, last Sept 8, VF (PPW).

Ruby-thr Hummingbird: several rep in mid-Sept, last Sept 20 VF (EH) and Sept 22, Catskill (GC).

Yellow-sh Flicker: very com in late Aug, early Sept; a few remained to the end of the period.

Pileated Woodpecker: a few rep, widespread.

Yellow-b Sapsucker: repd Sept 17 (AD)- Oct 3 (SBC).

E Kingbird: last seen Sept 24, VF (EH).

Crested Flycatcher: most disappeared during Aug, last Sept 20 at Castleton (AD).

E Phoebe: a few rep through early Oct, last Oct 13, Old Chatham (AD).

Empidonax: several rep, Sept 7 to 20.

Wood Pewee: last Sept 19 nr East Ghent (AD).

Olive-s Flycatcher: several seen late Aug, including four Aug 23, nr Berns (MJ, ML), last Sept 12 (EH).

Swallows: most had departed by Aug 31, although tree, bank, barn and cliff swallows were recorded at RL, Sept 13 (DJT).

The only later swallow rep were of tree swallows- five at Castleton Oct 5 (AD) and 15 at Vly Oct 12 (GC)- a late date.

Blue Jay: seemed exceptionally com this fall.

Tufted Titmouse: aside from rep from Col Co, astonishingly uncom- only two rep.

Red-br Nuthatch: first migrant Sept 13, Karner (WBS, PPW), very few rep.

Br Creeper: first migrant Sept 19, Karner (SBC); others rep from probable nesting areas, more widespread later.

House Wren: disappeared during Sept, last Oct 11, Ren Co (SBC).

Winter Wren: several observed, Sept 16- 20, last Oct 11, Ghent.

Carolina Wren: no rep.

Long-b Marsh Wren: last Sept 24, VF (EH).

Mockingbird: few rep, all from Col Co (AD).

Catbird: several Oct rep, last Oct 25 (EH).

Br Thrasher: a few rep, last Oct 11, Ren Co (SBC).

Robin: rep throughout period in large numbers.

Wood Thrush: last rep (several) Sept 20.

Hermit Thrush: few rep, last Oct 18, Melrose (RPY).

Swainson's Thrush: repd Sept 6, Loudonville (MWF) and Sept 13 at Old Chatham (AD).

Grey-ch Thrush: one was at Ghent Sept 14 (AD) and one was

**FEATHERS****JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 1965**

picked up dead (fresh) in Schodack Sept 27 (vide PPW).  
 Veery: several rep late Aug, last Sept 15 (AD).  
 Bluebird: widely rep, especially in Oct, with some observers considering the species "rare", others reporting flocks of up to 20. Last rep Nov 22, Alcove Res (SBC).  
 Golden-cr Kinglet: repd as early Sept migrant at Jenny L (GB).  
 First migrants in lower regions Oct 3, Karner (PPW).  
 Ruby-cr Kinglet: first migrants Sept 13 (PPW, AD); good migration continuing into Nov.  
 Water Pipit: not as com as in 1963; repd Sept 24- Oct 28 (EH).  
 Cedar Waxwing: very com in late summer and early fall, with groups of up to 100-300 repd, less com later.  
 N Shrike: one was seen nr Groom's Corners Nov 21 (BSH).  
 Migrant Shrike: one was at SCR Aug 21 and Sept 6 (DJT). One other shrike was at Westerlo Nov 23 (MK).

**VIREOS - WARBLERS**

Yellow-the Vireo: several rep, mid-Sept; last Sept 19, Karner.  
 Solitary Vireo: migrants Sept 12 (AD) to Oct 3 (PPW).  
 Red-e Vireo: many rep through Sept.  
 Warbling Vireo: last Sept 18 (AD).  
 Blk and Wh Warb: last Sept 19, Karner (SBC).  
 Tenn Warb: repd Sept 13, Karner (WBS, PPW) and Sept 20, Ghent.  
 Orange-cr Warb: one rep, Sept 21, Loudonville (MWF).  
 Nashville Warb: several mid-Sept reports, last Sept 19, Karner.  
 Parula Warb: repd Sept 16, Ghent (AD); Sept 19, Karner (PPW); and Sept 23, Loudonville (MWF).  
 Yellow Warb: most disappeared in late Aug, last Sept 6, VF (EH), Sept 14, Castleton (AD), and Sept 17, Ghent (AD).  
 Magnolia Warb: repd Aug 23 nr Berne where it may breed (MJ, ML); migrants repd Sept 13 to Oct 3 (SBC).  
 Cape May Warb: one rep - a male banded at WR Aug 21 (RPY).  
 Blk-thr Blue Warb: only rep, one Oct 1-3, Ghent (AD).  
 Myrtle Warb: repd throughout period to end of Oct (AD).  
 Blk-thr Green Warb: many rep, last Oct 2, Ghent (AD).  
 Blackburnian Warb: few rep, Sept 1, Red Rock (AD)- Oct 3, SCR (MJ, ML).  
 Chest-s Warb: last Sept 19, Karner (SBC) and Sept 20, Catskill.  
 Bay-br Warb: repd Sept 13-19 in good numbers.  
 Blkpoll Warb: Sept 8 (PPW) to 30 (MWF).  
 Pine Warb: one at Old Chatham Sept 13 (AD) - the only record.  
 Prairie Warb: birds in a nesting area at Ghent last seen Sept 5.  
 Palm Warb: several rep, Sept 12, VF (DJT) to Oct 12, Vly (GC).  
 Ovenbird: repd Sept 7 (DJT) to 25 (AD).  
 N Waterthrush: repd from mid-Aug, WR (RPY) - Sept 20, Vly (GC).  
 Yellowthroat: last Oct 11, Ren Co (SBC).  
 Wilson's Warb: repd only from Ghent Sept 5, 15 and Oct 15 (AD).  
 Canada Warb: only rep, Ghent, Sept 13 (AD) and Old Chatham Sept 16-17 (AD).  
 Am Redstart: migrants repd Sept 7 (DJT) - Sept 28 (MWF).

**BLACKBIRDS - SPARROWS**

Bobolink: irregular rep in Aug, last Sept 9, Meadowdale (PPW).  
 Orchard Oriole: repd at a breeding area in Castleton to Sept 12 (AD).  
 Baltimore Oriole: repd to Sept 23, Catskill (GC).  
 Redwings, Grackles and Br-h Cowbirds were observed in large flocks into mid-Nov.  
 Rusty Blackbird: repd Sept 13 (EH), but most arr in Oct when good numbers were seen; last Nov 4 (EH).  
 Scarlet Tanager: several repd in Sept, last Oct 4, Delphus Kill (PPW, Paul Grattan).

**FEATHERS**

**JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 1965**

Cardinal: fewer generally repd during the period.  
 Rose-br Grosbeak: few, Sept; last Oct 3, Ghent (AD).  
 Indigo Bunting: last Sept 22, Ghent (AD).  
 Evening Grosbeak: virtually absent, only two rep during the period away from breeding areas.  
 Purple Finch: more com than in 1963; small groups repd from many areas.  
 Pine Siskin: repd only from Col Co in Nov (AD).  
 Am Goldfinch: more com than last year, with flocks of 10-200 appearing in all sections.  
 Crossbills: none repd.  
 R-s Towhee: last rep Oct 29 (AD, GC).  
 S-c Junco: probable migrants appeared Oct 2, Westerlo (MK) and more widely Oct 11-20.  
 Tree Sparr: flocks appeared widely in early Nov.  
 Chipping Sparr: several rep, mid-Oct, last Oct 28 (GC).  
 Field Sparr: last rep Oct 17 (AD).  
 Wh-or Sparr: fair migration, Oct 3 (SBC)- Oct 18 (AD), max 12 Oct 11 (SBC).  
 Wh-thr Sparr: not many repd, last Nov 4-5, Loudonville (MWF).  
 Fox Sparr: first rep last week in Sept, last in early Nov.  
 Lincoln's Sparr: at least 3-4 were present in a field at VF Oct 4 (WBS).  
 Swamp Sparr: rather uncom, last Oct 25, SL (WBS, PPW).  
 Snow Bunting: repd Nov 14-22, SL (BSH).



# VIRGINIA RAIL AND CATBIRD FEATURE SCH'DY COUNT -- TROY HAS WATERFOWL AND GULLS. BOTH COUNTS LACK WINTER FINCHES.

Guy Bartlett and Dr. Peter P. Wickham, Compilers

Weather contributed not at all to Schenectady's Christmas Count on December 26, 1964. It was the third consecutive day of well above-freezing temperatures; the day started with heavy clouds, and fog in many sections; and there was continuing light rain after 10:30 a.m. Ground snow hardly existed, pond ice was under water, streams were opening, and fields were muddy under foot. Finches, sparrows and other northern species had previously been and were still almost non-existent; and the rain cut down on feeding station visitors -- Hazel Eddy recorded none at her usually well-attended station. Even so, 43 species and about 2923 individuals were listed on Schenectady's 36th Christmas Count, by six groups of observers. The Virginia rail, known prior to the Count to be at the Tygert Marsh, became species number 99 on Schenectady's record and number 114 on the Schenectady-Troy composite list. Also of special interest was a catbird found that day, and on later days, by Dr. Donald J. Tucker at his feeder.

Weather had its affect on the Troy Count as well. The scarcity of small land birds was attributed in part to the mild weather. On the other hand, the mild weather was believed to be responsible for favorable water conditions which afforded an interesting gull and waterfowl count. Better feeder coverage led to a new high cardinal tally. Titmice are apparently not faring as well. The area had almost no winter finches to offer.



## FEATHERS

JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 1965

The 24 observers accounted for 48 species and about 4505 individuals. Seven groups of birders covered the area. Feeder coverage involved what must be a record 25 feeders. The cooperation of observers and reporters is appreciated.

SCHENECTADY -- December 26, 1964 --- 43 Species, 2923 Individuals

Schenectady (All points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center 0.8 mile south of 42°45' and 0.3 mile west of 73°45', as in preceding years) -- December 26; 6:30 am. to 4:30 pm. Very cloudy, fog, mild rain; temp. 43 to 48°; wind S to W, 0-20 mph.; very little old snow on ground, considerable open water. Twenty observers in six parties, plus feeding station reports. Total party-hours, 37 (15 on foot, 22 by car); total party miles, 264 (23 on foot, 231 by car).

|                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 3 Mallard                | 589 Common Crow            |
| 17 Black Duck            | 188 Black-capped Chickadee |
| 2 Cooper's Hawk          | 10 Tufted Titmouse         |
| 12 Red-tailed Hawk       | 26 White-breasted Nuthatch |
| 6 Rough-legged Hawk      | 3 Brown Creeper            |
| 5 Sparrow Hawk           | 1 Catbird                  |
| 10 Ruffed Grouse         | 2 Robin                    |
| 1 Bobwhite               | 6 Cedar Waxwing            |
| 22 Ring-necked Pheasant  | 737 Starling               |
| 1 Virginia Rail          | 357 House Sparrow          |
| 2 Common Snipe           | 22 Eastern Meadowlark      |
| 12 Herring Gull          | 13 Red-winged Blackbird    |
| 4 Ring-billed Gull       | 1 Rusty Blackbird          |
| 41 Mourning Dove         | 1 Brown-headed Cowbird     |
| 1 Horned Owl             | 29 Cardinal                |
| 1 Belted Kingfisher      | 83 American Goldfinch      |
| 1 Yellow shafted Flicker | 68 Slate-colored Junco     |
| 1 Pileated Woodpecker    | 417 Tree Sparrow           |
| 15 Hairy Woodpecker      | 4 Swamp Sparrow            |
| 22 Downy Woodpecker      | 35 Song Sparrow            |
| 10 Horned Lark           | 2 Snow Bunting             |
| 140 Blue Jay             |                            |

Total, 43 species, 2923 individuals. Seen in area during count period, but not on count day: snowy owl, barred owl, yellow-bellied sapsucker, boreal chickadee, Carolina wren, evening grosbeak, Oregon Junco, white-throated sparrow and Lapland longspur.

Guy Bartlett (compiler), David P. Ellers, John Fuller, Esly Hallenbeck, Betty Hicks, Mr. & Mrs. Byron T. Hipple, Mary Johnston, Mary Lynch, Dr. Robert F. Korn, Mr. & Mrs. Howard Malone, Irene S. & Stephanie F. Podrazik, Walton B. Sabin, Benton R. Seguin, Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. Shedd, David Stoner, Dr. Robert P. Yunick.

TROY -- January 2, 1965 --- 48 Species, 4505 Individuals

Troy (All points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center 0.1 mile S of 73°40' and 0.3 mile E of 42°50' as in preceding years) January 2; 6 am. to 3:30 pm. Overcast, driving snow pm.; temp. 5 to 15°; wind NNE, 5-15 mph.; 2 in. old snow, only fast waters open. Twenty-four observers in 7 parties. Total party-hours, 41.5 (13.5 on foot, 28 by car); total party-miles, 300 (11 on foot, 289 by car).

**FEATHERS****JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 1966**

|                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 116 Mallard                | 198 Blue Jay               |
| 701 Black Duck             | 224 Common Crow            |
| 26 Pintail                 | 343 Black-capped Chickadee |
| 1 Green-winged Teal        | 7 Tufted Titmouse          |
| 2 American Widgeon         | 66 White-breasted Nuthatch |
| 21 Common Goldeneye        | 6 Red-breasted Nuthatch    |
| 18 Common Merganser        | 4 Brown Creeper            |
| 7 Red-tailed Hawk          | 1 Golden-crowned Kinglet   |
| 8 Rough-legged Hawk        | 4 Cedar Waxwing            |
| 6 Sparrow Hawk             | 360 Starling               |
| 17 Ruffed Grouse           | 728 House Sparrow          |
| 52 Ring-necked Pheasant    | 2 Eastern Meadowlark       |
| 23 Great Black-backed Gull | 4 Red-winged Blackbird     |
| 95 Herring Gull            | 1 Common Grackle           |
| 21 Ring-billed Gull        | 5 Brown-headed Cowbird     |
| 134 Mourning Dove          | 48 Cardinal                |
| 1 Screech Owl              | 3 Evening Grosbeak         |
| 3 Horned Owl               | 1 Purple Finch             |
| 2 Belted Kingfisher        | 87 American Goldfinch      |
| 2 Yellow-shafted Flicker   | 224 Slate-colored Junco    |
| 3 Pileated Woodpecker      | 780 Tree Sparrow           |
| 36 Hairy Woodpecker        | 2 White-throated Sparrow   |
| 64 Downy Woodpecker        | 13 Song Sparrow            |
| 34 Horned Lark             | 1 Snow Bunting             |

Total, 48 species, about 4505 individuals. Seen in area during count period, but not on count day: Iceland gull, hooded merganser, robin.

Guy Bartlett, Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Eddy, John and Stephen Fuller, Esly Hallenbeck, Barrington S. Havens, Betty Hicks, Mr. and Mrs. Byron T. Hipple, Mary Johnston, Mary Linch, Samuel Madison, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Malone, Mrs. Richard McFalls, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Norton, Walton B. Sabin, Benton R. Seguin, David Stoner, Dr. Donald J. Tucker, Robert Wernick, Dr. Peter P. Wickham (Compiler).

**SCHENECTADY HIGHLIGHTS**

Birds listed with groups show species seen only in that area.

Group 1 - Dr. Robert F. Kornis, Walton B. Sabin, Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Shedd, David P. Ellers, John and Stephen Fuller, David Rothaupt. Blessing, Krumkill, Normanskill, Wormer, State Farm, Foundry, Grant Hill, Depot, Hennesey, Meadowdale, and Tygert Roads, Settle's Hill, Thacher Park and Indian Ladder. 7:15 am. to 4:30 pm. Ten miles afoot, 110 by car; 4 hours afoot, 5¼ by car. 28 Species, 1153 count. Bobwhite, Virginia rail, common snipe, horned lark, rusty blackbird, snow bunting.

Group 2 - Dr. Robert P. Yunick. Holy Redeemer Cemetery, Rosendale Road, Pollak's feeder, Lock 7, Lisha Kill, River Road. 6:30 am. to 11:30 am. plus feeder record. Five miles afoot, 15 by car; 4¼ hours afoot, 3¼ by car. 23 Species, 245 count. Brown-headed Cowbird.

Group 3 - Guy Bartlett, Benton R. Seguin. Watervliet Reservoir, Guilderland Center, French's Hollow, Carman, and ex-territorially: Hennesey, Tygert and Meadowdale Roads. 7 am. to noon. Two miles afoot, 35 by car; one hour afoot, 4 by car. 27 Species, 660 count. Black duck, belted kingfisher, yellow-

## FEATHERS

JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 1965

shafted flicker, pileated woodpecker.

Group 4 - Esly Hallenbeck and, in afternoon, Guy Bartlett.  
Collins Lake and Scotia, Vischer Ferry and Game Management  
Area. 8 am. to 3:30 pm. Four miles afoot, 26 by car; three  
hours afoot, 3 by car. 12 Species, 107 count. Ring-billed  
Gull.

Group 5 - Irene S. and Stephanie F. Podrazik, David Stoner.  
Central Park, Parkview Cemetery; Troy, Balltown and River  
Roads. 9:30 am. to 3:30 pm. One mile afoot, 25 by car; 2  
hours afoot, 6 by car. 18 Species, 173 count. Cedar waxwing.

Group 6 - Margaret and Byron T. Hipple, Betty Hicks, Mary  
Johnston, Mary Linch, Virginia and Howard Malone. Six-mile  
Waterworks, Albany Airport; Sand Creek, Wolf, Fuller, School-  
house, Krumkill, Normanskill, Johnson, Wormer and State Farm  
Roads. 9 am. to 3:30 pm. One mile afoot, 30 by car; one  
hour afoot, 2½ by car. 17 Species, 569 count.

## TROY HIGHLIGHTS

Group 1 - Hazel and Gilbert Eddy, Betty Hicks, Margaret and  
Byron T. Hipple, Mary Johnston, Mary Linch, Virginia and  
Howard Malone. Hudson Highlands. 9 am. to 1:30 pm. One  
mile afoot, 31 by car; two hours afoot, 2½ by car. 24 Species,  
561 count.

Group 2 - John and Stephen Fuller, David Stoner, Dr. Peter P.  
Wickham. Tomhannock and Tamarac area. 6 am. to 3 pm. 3½  
miles afoot, 60 by car; 3½ hours afoot, 5½ by car. 33 Species,  
732 count. Screech owl, horned owl, red-breasted nuthatch,  
golden-crowned kinglet, evening grosbeak, snow bunting.

Group 3 - Guy Bartlett, Benton R. Seguin. Green Island, Cohoes,  
SW quadrant of area. 7:30 am. to 12:30 pm. One mile afoot,  
35 by car; two hours afoot, 3 hours by car. 21 Species,  
759 count.

Group 4 - Walton B. Sabin, Samuel Madison. Hudson River from  
North Troy to Stillwater. 7 am. to 2 pm. One mile afoot,  
50 by car; one hour afoot, 6 by car. 31 Species, 838 count.  
Green-winged teal, American widgeon, common goldeneye,  
Eastern meadowlark, common grackle.

Group 5 - Mr. and Mrs. Bob Norton, Douglas Norton, Mrs. Richard  
McFalls. Area bounded by N.Y. routes 7 and 40 and Tomhannock  
Reservoir. 9:30 am. to 2:30 pm. Three miles afoot, 35 miles  
by car; two hours afoot, 3 by car. 16 Species, 311 count.

Group 6 - Esly Hallenbeck and Benton R. Seguin. North shore of  
Mohawk River. 8 am. to 1 pm. Three miles afoot, 35 by car;  
1½ hours afoot, 3½ by car. 12 Species, 175 count.

Group 7 - Dr. Donald J. Tucker and Robert Wernick. NW quadrant  
of area. 8 am. to 2 pm. One mile afoot, 60 by car; 1½ hour  
afoot, 4½ by car. 19 Species, 368 count.

Feeders - A total of 25 feeders in the area contributed 24  
species, 932 count. Yellow-shafted flicker, cedar waxwing  
purple finch.

## A CALL FOR RECORDS

Those who read *The Kingbird*, published quarterly by the New York State Federation Of Bird Clubs (membership: \$3.00 per year from Alfred A. Starling, 75 Brooklawn Drive, Rochester, 18) have undoubtedly noted from time to time the mention of a New York State Bird Book. It is not a new idea, but one which has encountered many impedimenta through the years. Most recently, the president of the Federation, Robert S. Arbib, Jr., announced in *The Kingbird* (Vol. XIV(3), p.130) that John Bull has been selected as ~~editor-author~~ for the publication. With this announcement, many breathed a sigh, for now the project was formally launched. The task, however, is formidable. Realizing this and realizing that such a book should be authoritative, up to date, and accurately represent all of New York State, Mr. Arbib asked,

"1. Is there an up-to-date annotated list for the county or region covered by your club in its field work? Does it include maximum numbers, dates, observers, locations, and other vital data?

2. Has this list recently been published? Is it available to the author?

3. Is there a committee or a member of your club responsible for maintaining such a list? Keeping it up to date? Publishing it?

4. Does your club have a Records Committee responsible for the verification and validation of all field reports submitted in your area?

5. Is there a State Book Committee appointed and active in your club to act as liaison with the author, to supply him with the information as requested, data, lists, maps, censuses, etc?

6. Is your club at present engaged in that most wanted item of New York State bird knowledge, the breeding bird census of tracts of uniform habitat in your area?"

Mr. Arbib closed with these words, "--- we have a project, we have an author, we all have a job to do, and the time has come to get things rolling."

Your board of directors realizing the importance and urgency of this project took action which led to the appointment of a State Bird Book Committee consisting of Pete Wickham, as Chairman, and Guy Bartlett, Walt Sabin, Don Tucker, and Bob Yunick. Our job will be demanding. If we are to properly represent Eastern New York in this undertaking, we are going to need help and cooperation. Presently, the Records Committee headed by Pete is doing an excellent job with those records being submitted by the few observers listed in the quarterly reviews. However, the committee is in bad need of more reports.

Reporting field notes is not as gruesome a task as some might believe. Forms are available from Pete, free of charge, and all one need do is mark one's observations next to the names of the species. This would require about an hour per month. Is that too much to ask? Alas there are some who claim that they "have not seen much," so they feel that their records are insignificant or insufficient and they submit no monthly report. Do they not realize that man's greatest forms of architecture involve small

bricks and handfuls of mortar? Their few observations may be in agreement with other similar bits and facts and that the collection of these small bits of information may indicate a trend or a change in the abundance of some species. It is these observations that are so badly needed by the Records Committee. Remember also that the lack of seeing something is as important as seeing it. The serious bird student is aware of this and everyone submitting records should be also. Simply checking on the check-list the species seen at the end of a day's birding is not sufficient, for it tells only part of the story. Population changes are ever present and the lack of species is as important as the presence of species.

Unfortunately, the detailed summations of local records do not stretch back many years, and the process of record validation by way of rare bird report forms (also available from Pete) is in its infancy. Therefore, we need the cooperation of those who have properly kept records from the past. We need records from outlying areas, areas not regularly visited by the SBC. All too many areas within our region remain virgin with respect to ornithological investigation. Just consider how much more valuable our records would be if each observer would make two or three visits a year to some new areas and report on what each saw, rather than visiting the same old places time after time to tally as large a species list as possible and nothing more than that. Consider also what would be learned if an observer or a group of observers "adopted" a certain ecological area and kept it under surveillance for a season or two or three recording the valuable details of seasonal change, the breeding birds, etc. Consider the value of sharing this experience with others by putting a summary of the project in Feathers or The Kingbird. Let us get accustomed to the idea that it is no longer adequate to simply go birding to see birds - let each and every one of us contribute something to the more serious side of ornithology. It takes very little more effort than is presently expended, and adds materially to the spirit of the chase.

When the records which we seek are collected, we hope to revise the information in Guy Bartlett's Birds Of Eastern New York which was published in 1939. For years this served as a valuable guide to one learning local ornithology, but today it is sadly out of date. We can point with pride to an almost-local, up-to-date publication which, within our resources, we hope to emulate. John Bull's Birds of the New York Area (published by Harper & Row, New York, 540 pp., 1964, \$8.95) is one of those rare publications which can be called an ornithological bible. Every field observer should read and if possible, own it. Beside being such an authoritative text, this book vividly points out the many problems of collecting and evaluating field records. Please read it so that you can better understand the problem and contribute accordingly.

Anyone wanting more information about what he or she can do to help should call any of the committee members. In the meantime, remember what is needed:

1. More monthly reports.
2. More detailed reports - reports of some substance.
3. Summary reports of population trends.
4. Accurate summations of older records.

- 5. Records from a larger geographic area.
- 6. Breeding bird records.

Please help contribute in one or any number of these areas. Do you know of any regional records - yours or those of others - which have not been brought to the attention of the Records Committee? Do you know of any collectors or taxidermists who might possess valuable records? Do you possess or know where to locate old texts which describe local ornithological conditions of the past, or give accounts of records? Your informational help will be greatly appreciated.

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## THE RARE BIRD ALERT

Two years ago in Feathers the rare bird alert (RBA) was introduced by Pete Wickham as a "new experiment." Among those who have been close to the RBA, the "experiment" has no doubt proven extremely valuable. In 1964 information regarding such species as the golden plover, house finch, and flamingo was circulated through the RBA. Already this year two outstanding records of an hawk owl and Harris' sparrow have gone through the RBA.

Certainly more people than those presently participating in the RBA would like to see some of these rarities. At present, the alert consists of a telephone chain depending on each person passing the call. Perhaps this ought to be revised, especially if a number of people participate. The mechanics of the system will be reviewed and possibly revised shortly. In any event, the alert will involve receiving and passing information. Also, the RBA needs rare birds to begin. We realize that people normally cannot produce these at will, but we do ask the cooperation of those seeing *rara aves*. A single call to Pete Wickham will start the RBA. Anyone seeking information or wishing to participate in the RBA and share its rewards is urged to call Pete at 477-6345. Pete will gladly answer your queries and take your name and number for future RBA calls. Shortly when the RBA is reviewed and possibly revised, everyone having signified an interest will be informed of the details. Remember - becoming part of the RBA requires your initiative to put your name on the list.

*Ry*

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### CHECK-LISTS FOR SALE

The SBC has available check-lists of various sorts. One is a pocket-sized list of the birds of Upstate New York. Another is an 8 1/2 x 11-in. version of the same. The third is the same large list except that it has space for 12 entries beside each species listing. The fourth is 8 1/2 x 11 in. with a list of the birds of N.Y. according to the annotated list of Reilly and Parkes, 1959.

These check-lists are available through the mail from the ed. All are the same price: 25 for 75¢, 100 for \$2.00. Please add 10¢ per 25 and 40¢ per 100 for postage and handling. These check-lists are available at the Audubon Wildlife Films at the 75¢ and \$2.00 prices. Feathers will also be offered for sale at these films for 35¢ per copy.

## HAZEL EDDY WINS RARE BIRD AWARD

On behalf of three very grateful birders - Betty Hicks, Peter Wickham and myself - Hazel Eddy wins the Rare Bird Spotter's Award for meritorious service on Sunday, February 7, 1965.

All week prior to the seventh, we heard glowing accounts by various people who went to Hinsdale, Mass. in search of the Hawk owl. Seguin came back triumphant after finding the bird at the prescribed place on route 143. In fact, he stood at the very base of the power pole looking up at the owl perched atop the pole. What could be easier? Bartlett and Sabin went next day and had no trouble. Tucker, a day later, went and spotted the bird from a considerable distance and drove right to it at roadside. How could we miss? With these reports ringing in our ears the four of us set forth with considerable confidence and excitement. After all, Hazel and Betty had seen the Harris' sparrow just that morning. Why not make it two in one day?

At about Nassau the rain began. By Pittsfield the rain meant business. Once at Hinsdale at about 3:40 pm., we noted the odometer reading to be sure to mark the bird's area ahead. As we approached the long hill, probably now known as "Owl Hill", we slowed and scanned ever so carefully. Everyone was on seat's edge. Where was this obvious owl? At the hilltop, we stopped and scanned the bleak, rain-soaked countryside. The proverbial wind was rapidly leaving our sails. We proceeded ahead to the lake about which we had been cautioned as follows, "If you reach the lake and have seen nothing, you've gone too far. Turn around and go back." We turned and came back to the prescribed hill and noted Seguin's vacant telephone pole. We went back down the hill and approached once again - this time hoping for the Tucker trick. By now it was getting funny to joke about those two birds - Tucker and Seguin, not to mention Bartlett and Madison who had seen the bird and Sabin who had seen it twice!!

On the next pass, we parked and Pete and I, reasoning that the rain had sent the unobvious owl to cover, plodded several hundred yards through nearly knee-deep snow to an adjoining conifer stand and explored it for an owl. We came back quite wet. Again we cruised the road. Finally with approaching dusk, after five turn-arounds, or ten passes up and down the same stretch of road (about 12-15 miles total), we pulled into a new turn-around for variety and decided to go beyond the lake for a look, just in case. Well, this proved to be a bust.

As we approached the hilltop for about the twelfth time, all looked especially discouraging and it was more or less decided that we had been out-foxed, or in this case out-owled. The Chevy II was accelerating to the speed limit and though not a word was said, the trip was more or less declared ended by the driver. As we zipped passed the quaint, unoccupied Hollywood Inn at about 45 mph., Hazel very calmly exclaimed that the aforesaid inn had an owl weather vane. As we later learned, she was very serious and really thought that it was an owl weather vane and she had even considered not even mentioning it. Since the driver had never in his life seen an owl weather vane, and since the whole deal sounded too suspicious, one Chevy II was brought to an abrupt halt off the road adjacent, if not in, a snow bank.

Upon retracing our tracks on the highway rather dangerously counter to traffic, we gazed at the "weather vane". Suddenly a tall twitched and the aforementioned "owl weather vane" became a grizzled looking, staring hawk owl perched atop a television aerial. It was now 4:30 pm. and truly the trip had ended officially, but on a slightly different note than it had at 4:29 pm.

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**S B C CALENDAR**

- Feb. 14 - Tomhannock Winter Walk - Peter Wickham, 477-6345. Meet at Latham Shopping Center, north end, 1:00 pm.
- Feb. 22 - Annual Meeting, SBC - Pine Room, First Methodist Church, 603 State Street, Sch'dy, at 8:00 pm. Election of officers and directors. The evening's entertainment will be presented by Wayne Trimm of the N.Y.S. Conservation Dept., "Sketchbook to Tikal," a short film made at Tikal, an ancient Mayan Indian city located in the rain forest of Guatemala where extensive study is being made of the buildings, monuments, and royal burials to try to solve the mystery of the ancient Mayans. It was while Wayne Trimm was at the site collecting material to aid in illustrating a book on the birds of the area that the film was made.
- Feb. 27 - Feeder Open House - John Fuller, 869-7902. Meet at the Latham Shopping Center, north end at 9:00 am.
- Mar. 4 - Audubon Wildlife Film - Niskayuna High School, 8:00 pm. John E. Taft - "Land That I Love" Adm. by season ticket.
- Mar. 7 - Winter Tree Identification - Barry Havens, 399-3761. Meet at the Casino, Central Park, Sch'dy at 2:00 pm.
- Mar. 8 - Board of Directors' Meeting - 8:00 pm. at Peter Wickham's, 12 Columbia Drive, East Greenbush.
- Mar. 13 - Lower Hudson - Peter Wickham, 477-6345. Meet at the Joy Dept. Store, Routes 9&20, Rensselaer, at 8:00 am.
- Mar. 25 - Audubon Wildlife Film - Niskayuna High School, 8:00 pm. D.J. Nelson - "Inherit the Wild" Adm. by season ticket.
- Mar. 28 - Vischer Ferry - Donald Tucker, 877-8740. Meet at the Ponds at 8:00 am. Note the date correction.

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If anyone is interested in information regarding purchasing sun flower seed locally at \$5.50 per 50 lbs., please contact Bob Yunick at 377-0146.



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 Contact Mrs. E. L. Thomas, 37-B Fuller Road, Albany, N.Y.  
 SBC, INC.: Walton B. Sabin, Pres.; Samuel R. Madison, Vice Pres.; Donald J. Tucker, Treas.; Robert P. Yunick, Sec.





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## WAYNE TRIMM FEATURES ANNUAL MEETING

Robert P. Yunick

At the annual meeting of the Schenectady Bird Club on February 22, 1965, Wayne Trimm of the New York State Conservation Department presented a fascinating historical sketch and film of the ruins of the former Mayan empire in Guatemala. Thirty-one members and guests were present in the Pine Room of the First Methodist Church in Schenectady to hear Mr. Trimm. On display were some Mayan artifacts and some fine examples of Mr. Trimm's bird drawings for a forthcoming book on the birds of Guatemala.

During the business part of the meeting, reports were presented by various officers and committee chairmen. Highlighting these reports were those of the program, field trip and membership chairmen. Eleanor Byrne reported that this year's sales of tickets for the Audubon wildlife films have resulted in more revenue for the Club. According to Betty Hicks, our new field trip schedule for January to June, 1965 has more trips planned than were held in all of 1964. New features include a greater variety of trips dealing with more than birds, and a timing schedule which will hopefully be suitable for more people. The reception to this has been favorable and enthusiasm is high. As for membership, Lenny Thomas presented the names of 18 new active members, 10 new associate members and three new sustaining members, and these were accepted for membership. New applications for membership are continuing to be received at an encouraging rate. This reflects Lenny's efforts at the Audubon films, and the activities of other active member seekers in the Club.

The nominating committee report was given by Mary Healy for Chairman Benton Seguin. The slate was accepted as follows:

Walton B. Sabin, President  
Samuel R. Madison, Vice President  
David Stoner, Secretary  
Dr. Donald J. Tucker, Treasurer

Dr. Carl F. Runge,  
Director to 1967  
Barrington S. Havens,  
Director to 1966  
Dr. Robert P. Yunick,  
Director to 1967.

Refreshments were served by Mary Healy and her efficient helpers.

The president has named the following committee chairmen:

Mrs. E. L. Thomas, Membership  
Miss Eleanor B. Byrne and  
Barrington S. Havens, Program  
Dr. Peter P. Wickham, Records;  
and Field trips to June, 1965

Samuel R. Madison, Conservation  
Dr. Robert P. Yunick,  
Publications.

Additional chairmen will be named at a later date.

## ACTIVITIES DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE ACTS

Donald J. Tucker

The completed report and recommendations of the activities development subcommittee is expected to be submitted to the planning committee early this spring. This will represent the first of the six subcommittees, as announced in FEATHERS, December, 1964, to complete its task. The swift action is a token of the enthusiasm and hard work displayed by its members. Although the names of the subcommittee members did not appear until the December, 1964 issue of FEATHERS, the subcommittee actually began work shortly after its inception at the board of directors meeting in September, 1964. During the months that followed, frequent meetings were held by the chairman, Dr. Robert Yunick. In addition, the subcommittee divided into groups which met separately to consider such items as meetings, publications, field trips and educational programs.

At the present time, recommendations encompassing all of these topics have been presented to the subcommittee. The various groups are now preparing the draft of the formal recommendations of the subcommittee. It will then be submitted to the planning committee for its consideration and subsequently in a final form to the board of directors for their action. Although the action by the board may not be until late spring, in several instances the results of the deliberations by the subcommittee have already been put into effect. The greatly expanded field trip schedule is a testimonial to these deliberations. Because the field trip schedule must be prepared considerably in advance, many innovations were instituted even as they were being discussed by the subcommittee, so that a part of the new program could get underway this year. Not only is the schedule expanded, but also considerable attention is being directed to make the individual trips more rewarding to the participants.

When the final recommendations of the subcommittee are released, among them will be the following: regularly scheduled club meetings throughout the year; an expanded and improved club publication; the field trip improvements mentioned above; and a formal educational program which will include all aspects of natural history. Considerable emphasis is to be placed on the educational program which it is hoped might make use of the multiplicity of talent and facilities present in our area, not only in our own organization, but also in those organizations and institutions with allied interests. A program is envisioned which would be beneficial not only to the membership, but to the community as a whole.

It is gratifying to have the work of the activities development subcommittee nearly completed. It was a basic belief of the board of directors when they undertook an improvement program for the SBC that should all else not take root, the work of this subcommittee should be a fundamental part of the Club's future. For indeed an organization which does not offer its membership a worthwhile program does not deserve to exist. The work of one subcommittee is nearly complete, but now the recommendations must be put into effect. There is much work ahead, enthusiasm is high and the future is bright.

## A FLORIDA BIRD VACATION

WANT TO COMBINE A WINTER VACATION IN A WARMER CLIMATE WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO ADD SOME EXOTIC SPECIES TO YOUR LIFE LIST? IF SO, FLORIDA IS THE PLACE TO GO

### Barry Havens

After spending several winter vacations in Florida and having had some experience with the birds in that state, I now feel in a position of being able to recommend a winter birding vacation there. Think of some of the advantages! For example,

1. You can get away from winter weather for a while.
2. You can do it in two weeks or less, or easily in three.
3. It can be very inexpensive.
4. You can log some exotic species.
5. You can enjoy all the other advantages of Florida.

Taking these points in their order, here are some items of information for you to consider:

The Weather - The time to go is during the winter, for this enables you to get away from the severe weather of the North for a while. Winter in Florida is usually pleasantly warm but not too hot - if you choose your site properly. My own feeling is that Miami is too hot in winter, while the northern areas can be quite chilly - I have seen overcoats at Daytona in the winter. My preference is for the region around Kissimmee (accent the second syllable), for it is centrally located; you can take convenient side trips from there to most of the places you want to visit.

Kissimmee is on Lake Tohopekaligo (accent To and pal) and is the most northern point of the Kissimmee Prairie region, where are found many interesting species, such as the herons and ibises, cormorant, anhinga, both vultures, sandhill crane, and red-bellied woodpecker, not to mention eagles, ospreys, the ubiquitous coot, ground dove, fish crow, and boat-tailed grackle. Robins, bluebirds, sparrow hawks, meadowlarks, loggerhead shrikes and mockingbirds are common roadside species. The marshy shores of the nearby lake contain coot, herons, ducks, cormorants, anhingas, dabbling ducks and occasional gallinules. Every herd of cattle is attended by quantities of cattle egrets. Both ibises can usually be found, and the white ibis is often abundant. The misnamed wood ibis (it's really a stork) is also found there. The commonest crow is the fish crow, readily distinguished by its relatively high-pitched notes, and most of the grackles I found were boat-tailed. They have some very un-grackle-like notes and the females are brown.

From Kissimmee you can make some very interesting side trips and get back to your base of operations in one day easily. For example, you can drive to Melbourne on the eastern coast and cover Merritt Island from there, go north on Route 1A1 to Cocoa and back on Route 3 to Melbourne, then back to Cocoa again on Route 1 to return thence to Kissimmee. Merritt Island's shores are the haunts of many kinds of ducks.

You can also drive along a number of interesting secondary

roads from Kissimmee to look for the sandhill crane, or marsh denizens along the swampy shores of Lake Tohopekaligo. Farther south look for the burrowing owl in the prairie (I didn't find it) and the brown-headed nuthatch or red-cockaded woodpecker in appropriate woodlands (I didn't find either of them).

Two-week Trip - You can do it in two weeks, if you want. You can get there in four days easily, or in three if you want to cover a little more ground each day. That would leave you a week, or the better part of it, to go birding. In my own case, I left about 4:30 am., arrived by mid-afternoon, and spent the first night below Richmond. Because of limited-access highways, you can average close to 60 mph as far as Richmond. So I was at my destination the third afternoon, but even if you allow four days each way, it leaves you six solid days for Florida birding - and you can do much in that time.

It Can Be Inexpensive - Motel charges on the way will vary from \$4-5 a night to \$10 for a single, depending on the amount of luxury you want. I am entirely satisfied with second-class motels, and many's the time I have felt a third-class place was justified by the saving. As for Kissimmee, I stayed in a third-class place that had housekeeping facilities (refrigerator, range, dishes, and other kitchenware) and paid \$22.50 a week for it. If you make a side trip to Naples to see Caribbean Gardens and Corkscrew Swamp with Alex Sprunt, be prepared to pay \$12-20 a night, for that's in the resort area, and the owners make their money during the winter.

Outside of motel charges, my greatest expense was for gasoline, for I was constantly driving in search of birds. Gasoline cost me more than food. You'll find it wise to have gasoline credit cards, for they will save you out-of-pocket expense. The gasoline station that I found most universally distributed throughout the South was Texaco. I didn't have a Texaco credit card, but I intend to have one next time. At Naples I had the Texaco attendant change my oil, and he vacuumed the car as part of the service.

Exotic Species - Consider the wonderful new birds you can add to your life list, especially if you've done virtually all your birding in this area of New York State. These should include the brown pelican (and the white, if you're lucky), snowy egret, red-dish egret, Louisiana heron, yellow-crowned night heron, the three ibises (wood, glossy and white), both vultures, caracara, wild turkey, sandhill crane, limpkin, laughing gull, ground dove, burrowing owl, red-bellied woodpecker, red-cockaded woodpecker, Florida or scrub jay, fish crow, blue-grey gnatcatcher, white-eyed vireo, Brewer's blackbird, and boat-tailed grackle. There are more, if you go after them. And you'll find plenty of familiar species, too.

Other Advantages - There are, of course, other attractions in Florida. You can, if you have time, visit Cypress Gardens, or Weeki-Wachee Springs, or Marineland. You can study botany including the palmaceae, musaceae, cypresses, mangroves, orchids, tree ferns, etc. You can look for snakes, armadillos, 'gators, and 'possums. You can study chameleons and skinks, or such amphibians as cricket frogs and green and squirrel tree frogs.

One opportunity you shouldn't pass up is a trip through Corkscrew Swamp under the leadership of Alex Sprunt, dean of Florida

birders and outstanding authority on the bird life. I have circulars and will be glad to supply copies to those interested. The circulars are for this past winter and will not be good for making reservations for next winter, but could be used for information. I can supply the names of motels near Kissimmee. Another trip that looks worthwhile is a tour in the vicinity of Lake Okeechobee. I haven't taken it, but I have the name and address of the man who conducts it, as supplied by Sprunt, who recommends it.

If you go, by all means contact the Florida Audubon Society, whose headquarters are in Orlando, not far from Kissimmee. I did not learn about this until it was too late to go there this winter; I plan to do so next winter. Their address should be in the Orlando phone book.

I have maps and will be glad to furnish any other information to those thinking of making the trip.

\* \* \* \* \*

## DO BIRDS USE THEIR HEADS?

B. D. Miller

From our kitchen window, we have a clear view of our next door neighbor's house to the north. The chimneys are at opposite ends with the flue linings projecting a few inches above the brick. We have never seen birds perched on the fireplace chimney, which is seldom used, but on the furnace flue during severe weather, we see starlings perched during the day apparently to enjoy the warmth. Do these birds "use their heads"? There is some question about it. Nearly all of a bird's behavior is said to be instinct. If some of our native birds would only use their heads a little, they could throw out those cowbird eggs that they find in their nests.

Many forms of animal life, and plant life too, differ widely in their ability to adjust to a new environment. The crows, ravens, starlings and house sparrows are good examples of birds that live and thrive on a wide variety of foods, and weather conditions. Crows and blue jays are easily reared and trained to make very interesting pets. Most of our wild birds, however, with chickadees and nuthatches probably excepted, are not very sociable.

Although most of our birds like to keep us at a distance, several of them do like to live near civilization. They like our bird houses and buildings for nesting and protection. I never heard any report that the house sparrow suffered when horses disappeared from our streets. The sparrows plight is quite different than that of the Everglade kite, which we are told feed almost exclusively on fresh-water snails and suffer when the areas providing the snails are drained.

From a Catskill Mountain newspaper I read of a pair of wild mallards visiting a village swampy area. The ducks took a liking to it. The villagers noticed them and fed them occasionally. The result was that the ducks did not migrate. They nested and stayed as a small flock.

## CORNELL TO STUDY MIGRATION-WEATHER RELATION

Editor's note: the following is taken from a letter dated March 4, 1965 to Walton B. Sabin from Douglas A. Lancaster, Assistant Director, Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University.

"The Laboratory of Ornithology, the Department of Conservation, and the State Climatologist at Cornell are undertaking a joint project to analyze the effects of weather on migratory movements of birds. Within the past decade considerable effort has been expended to accumulate data on weather and migration, both in this country and in Europe.

"The project we are undertaking can succeed only through a joint effort involving many persons. To obtain the raw data from which our analyses will be made, we hope to enlist as many interested persons as possible throughout the state of New York.

"Specifically, the information we desire might best be formulated as a series of questions:

- (1) On what dates were mass movements of birds noticed?
- (2) What kinds of species were involved in the movement?
- (3) At what time of day did you see the movement?
- (4) In what direction and at approximately what altitude (not in feet; simply state high or low, etc.) were the birds moving?
- (5) Approximately how many birds were moving in each flock?
- (6) What were the weather conditions at the time? (wind direction and velocity, cloud cover, temperature, precipitation)

"Much of this information is automatically recorded on field trips by most bird watchers. Equally important to us is the reporting of nocturnal migratory movements, the time of night of such movements, and the degree of overcast. Even though the movements themselves are often not observed, the fact that they occurred the previous night is frequently evident from the abundance of foraging birds in a woodland that was quiet the previous day.

"In winter and spring, the picture of waterfowl movements is confused by the local patterns of movements of wintering birds from lake to lake and along rivers. These movements we are not interested in, since they are not migratory movements."

We hope to have details on the methods of reporting, report forms, etc. in the near future.

\* \* \* \* \*

### AUDUBON CAMPS

We have a limited number of descriptive folders and applications for the National Audubon's camps in Connecticut, Maine and Wisconsin. Anyone seeking this information should contact the editor.

Applicants must be 18 years of age or older. The Conn. camp near Greenwich is open for one-week sessions at a cost of \$70 for meals, housing and field trips. The Maine camp is on an island off the coast from Damariscotta. It is available for two-week sessions at a cost of \$125. The Wisc. camp in the northern Wisc. canoe country is open for either one- or two-week sessions at \$70 and \$125, respectively. The camps run from June 13 to August 29, 1965.

## A WHITISH ROBIN

Lillian C. Stoner

Partial albino birds have been reported in past years, but frequently they are birds which had either white patches or a few white feathers in their plumage; not so often have completely or nearly pure white birds been recorded.

On May 13, 1962, a whitish robin was observed by four Schenectady Bird Club members in the front yard of the Wendell J. Denton home at 750 Western Avenue, Albany, New York.

The bird was first noticed April 6, 1962 in a back yard tree by Mrs. Denton and her sister Francis Halstead. It returned daily for brief visits to both this tree and the neighbor's well-stocked feeding tray.

For some time, the observers had difficulty in identifying the species, as at a distance the whiteness of the bird was confusing. It usually stayed with the grackles, but on April 18 the identity was certain, for the bird stood on a limb of the tree which was near the house and gave a beautiful robin song just like a normal male robin.



ALLEN H. BENTON

### THE WHITISH ROBIN

750 WASHINGTON AVENUE, ALBANY, NEW YORK

MAY 6, 1962

Another friend, who lives one-half mile east of the Denton home, told me that she had been watching a white bird, robin-sized, in her yard. This had been two days earlier than the first appearance of the albino robin in the Denton yard.

Although I went to the Denton home soon after the bird's April 9th appearance, I did not see the bird. However, I did see it a few days later and phoned the news to other bird club members.

On April 28th, Dr. Allen Benton had the students in his ornithology class at the State University at Albany observe this queerly feathered bird. He was able to photograph the bird when it was on the grass. Other people stopped to see it at different times. Included were some who attended the annual meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs on May 11 to 13.

Not long after the identity was revealed on April 18, the whitish bird had a regularly plumaged robin companion. They, then, were seen together frequently, for their nest was built about 15 feet up in a beautiful blue spruce which stood very near the front corner of the house. They did not seem to be disturbed by the people walking on the sidewalk, or by the heavy traffic on route 20 which was some 35 feet away.

In due time, observers noticed that both birds were carrying food to the nest. They now could see that the whitish robin was not entirely white, as it had grayish-black primary wing feathers and a few black tail feathers. But only with binoculars could they detect the reddish color on the upper breast and the row of a few red dots across the upper white back near the neck. The red on the breast looked like several splashes of strawberry juice spilled on the white breast. The grackles now became belligerent and often pursued the oddly colored bird.

We could not find out what happened to the young in the nest, and the whitish bird was not seen about the tree or the house after May 26th. However, the normally plumaged female mated with a normal robin and soon had a nest in the same blue spruce. Later on, their two partially feathered juveniles were found dead on the ground. This shows the high mortality of the young of one female robin, for she mated twice in the early spring and summer and the young hatched in both nestings, but there were no survivors from either nesting.

Then some days after the white bird was last seen near its nest, another friend who lived a mile further west on Washington Avenue phoned that she had just seen a white bird the size of a robin in her front yard. This may, or may not, have been the same albino. On May 20, 1962, Dr. Benton saw another albino robin in Loudonville, New York. This bird had several patches of white feathers on the wings and body. Other albinistic birds have been seen and recorded in this area in this and other years. A few records are now given which show the deficiency of pigments in ten observed species of birds.

"An Example of Partial Albinism in the Eastern Crow" by Dayton Stoner in WILSON BULLETIN XLVII, December, 1935, pp. 274-6 pictures and tells about the capture of a "partly white" crow on November 26, 1933 in the western section of Albany. This male "calico-colored" bird died while in captivity and was later given to the New York State Museum where it was mounted, as catalogue no. 5255, and placed on exhibit.



In Dr. Stoner's and my book on THE BIRDS OF WASHINGTON PARK, ALBANY, NEW YORK, we tell of seeing a female partial albino robin in the park on May 1, 1936. It had its back distinctly and abundantly streaked with white, and the breast, belly and flanks well-marked with white.

On January 19, 1961, several of us, all members of the Sarasota Audubon Society, saw an albino mockingbird near Sarasota, Florida. The entire plumage, while not pure white, appeared sort of dirty white and yet it could not be termed grayish-white.

The four following records of Esly Hallenbeck are of local interest. On August 2, 1936, he and three observers watched a white kingbird in a farm yard which was 2.5 miles from Carman, New York. They termed this white bird a juvenile that was almost fully grown. Mr. Hallenbeck's notation on a cedar waxwing tells of the "yellow cast of breast, red dots on wing, light gray lesser coverts, and the head and the rest of the body plumage was white." Then on March 18, 1954, he and Mrs. Gerald Fitzgerald observed a pure white robin in her yard in Amsterdam, New York. He also observed and identified a partial albino chipping sparrow near Ballston Lake, New York on September 17, 1964. This bird had a white head, breast and back, and a light spot on the wing.

In the "General Notes" sections of three different ornithological magazines in 1964, there are reports of several albino birds that were observed. In the March, 1964 issue of WILSON BULLETIN LXXVI, No. 1, p. 98 under the title of "Albinism in the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher", J. David Ligon of the University of Florida, Gainesville, told how Mr. and Mrs. John Taylor saw a white flycatcher near Mead, Oklahoma. Later the same day of July 10, 1961, Mr. Ligon and a friend saw and captured this female adult bird, and it was then made into a skin for the University of Oklahoma Museum of Zoology.

In the September, 1964 issue of IOWA BIRD LIFE XXXIV, No. 3, p. 72, Fred Leshner of Minneapolis, Minnesota reported seeing a whitish willet in a flock of 29 willets at the Genoa fish hatcheries near Genoa, Wisconsin. This is only a few miles away from northeast Iowa.

In the October, 1964 issue of AUK XXCI, No. 4, pp. 351 and 360, there are two illustrated "General Notes" about albino herring gulls by two different ornithologists from widely separated areas. The illustration of Professor Alfred O. Gross formerly of Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine, showed an adult, albino, male herring gull beside a nest which contained two young: one dark and one pure white. This young, white bird and another albino of about the same age, found some years later, did not survive more than a day. These birds were observed at the Bowdoin Scientific Station, Kent Island, New Brunswick, Canada.

Then, Walter P. Nichols of the Cranbrook Institute of Science, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan photographed a herring gull in a nest when the bird was 8-10 days old and also when it was a little over a month old. This young albino was in a large colony of nesting herring gulls at Calcite, Rogers City, Michigan.

Other records from THE KINGBIRD, the magazine of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs should be cited. A peculiar looking

grackle which was not an albino was watched by Alice Pauline Schafer at her window feeding shelf at 33 Hawthorne Avenue in Albany, New York. This male bird had what appeared to be only one white tail feather. It was not the outside tail feather, but the third one from the outer edge. The strange part was that it appeared in her yard for part of the summers of 1962, 1963 and much of the 1964 season. In 1963, it had a companion which had two white wing feathers. However, pure or partially albinistic birds are seldom seen the year following their sighting. This was true of our 1962 whitish robin. Although we and others watched in the spring of 1963, no one reported seeing the bird again in Albany.

\* \* \* \* \*

## LISHA KILL FUND DRIVE MEETS GOAL

Mrs. John F. Brown, Jr.

Successful completion of the fund drive for establishing the Lisha Kill Natural Area has been announced. Attainment of the goal of \$31,000 for the nature sanctuary in Niskayuna was announced by Dr. Frank S. Ham, campaign chairman of the project, at the annual charter meeting of the Eastern New York Chapter of the Nature Conservancy in Albany.

A major factor in the success of the drive, which ended December 31, 1964, was a \$2,000 contribution from the Life Membership Fund of the Federated Garden Clubs of New York State. This gift was made public at the meeting by Mrs. Lambert D. LeMaire, legislative chairman of the Federated Garden Clubs. Another substantial contribution to the fund, announced earlier, was a conditional gift of \$3,000 from an anonymous donor, promised to the drive if a matching amount could be raised by the end of 1964. This condition was met and the \$3,000 donation received, according to Dr. Ham.

Numerous individuals and organizations throughout the area have exhibited their support of the project by their donations.

Attainment of the campaign goal makes possible repayment of the loan taken out in February, 1964 to purchase 80 acres of land for the project, Dr. Ham stated at the meeting, and will also permit purchase of additional land to complete the sanctuary.

The Nature Conservancy started negotiations for the Lisha Kill sanctuary in January, 1963, when it took an option on the main 80 acres of land. Attention of the Conservancy was directed toward this unique Niskayuna natural area after efforts to preserve it had been initiated locally. The project has been directed by a committee of Schenectady area residents with Dr. H. M. Rozendaal as chairman, including Dr. Thomas H. Alden, James E. Beggs, Mrs. John F. Brown, Jr., C. Donald Carpenter, Mrs. Gert Ehrlich, Dr. Philip W. Ham, John J. O'Brien, Paul Schaefer and Richard M. Sills.

The sanctuary will be preserved for educational use: trails through it will be maintained, but no roads or structures are planned. It will be administered by a committee under the Eastern New York Chapter of the Nature Conservancy, with Dr. Ham serving as committee chairman. Further information on the natural area is available from him at 1445 Valencia Road, Schenectady.

## SECOND ANNUAL TRIP TO CAPE ANN MASSACHUSETTS

Benton R. Seguin

The weekend of January 31, 1965 found six SBC members combing the Atlantic waters around Cape Ann for wintering water birds. An advance party, consisting of Guy Bartlett, Barry Havens and "Beezer" Seguin, arrived in Gloucester at noon on Friday. After an afternoon and the following morning of scouting, the three B's rendezvoused with Sam Madison, Walt Sabin and Peter Wickham Saturday noon at the Fisherman's Statue. We had our headquarters at the Mansion House Inn where very enjoyable eating and sleeping accommodations were had by all.

The weather, although a little chilly at 6-20°F, favored us with clear skies and excellent viewing conditions. Featuring the birds observed were the Barrow's goldeneye, common and king eiders, Iceland and Kumlien's gulls, and snowy and short-eared owls. In addition, good comparative views were obtained of the three species of scoters.

The record of the eared grebe was after-the-fact and by the courtesy of Mr. Eldred of the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Barry Havens and Beezer Seguin were watching three horned grebes at Bass Rocks with their respective scopes when Havens remarked that one of the grebes was different than the other two. The odd grebe was darker around the throat and appeared to have a "dirtier" appearance than the other two. Unfortunately, the trip coordinator was able to convince Barry that the odd-ball was a horned grebe going through a phase change. A short distance south along the Cape, we contacted Mr. Eldred who told us about an eared grebe that had been staying near Bass Rocks for several weeks. According to Mr. Eldred, all we had to do was find a "dirty-looking" horned grebe that was associating with two horned grebes. The coordinator has observed the eared grebe in the Mid-west and muffed this record, because he forgot a fundamental rule of observing rare birds - "All birds have wings, and, because of these wings, some will fly to strange places where they may be recorded if one pays attention to details." Although we made several return trips to the Bass Rocks area, we were unable to find the bird again.

To give you some idea of what Cape Ann offers our list of 53 species and one subspecies follows:

|                      |                            |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 26 Common Loon       | 213 White-winged Scoter    |
| 5 Red-throated Loon  | 30 Surf Scoter             |
| 229 Horned Grebe     | 78 Common Scoter           |
| 1 Eared Grebe        | 1 Common Merganser         |
| 33 Great Cormorant   | 170 Red-breasted Merganser |
| 20 Canada Goose      | 2 Red-tailed Hawk          |
| 36 Mallard           | 1 Red-shouldered Hawk      |
| 1121 Black Duck      | 6 Rough-legged Hawk        |
| 12 Canvasback        | 1 Marsh Hawk               |
| 137 Scaup            | 6 Sparrow Hawk             |
| 997 Common Goldeneye | 5 Ring-necked Pheasant     |
| 2 Barrow's Goldeneye | 1 American Coot            |
| 166 Bufflehead       | 75 Purple Sandpiper        |
| 8 Old Squaw          | 25 Sanderling              |
| 61 Common Eider      | 4 Iceland Gull             |
| 38 King Eider        | 1 Kumlien's Gull           |

|                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Great Black-backed Gull  | Common Crow             |
| Herring Gull             | Black-capped Chickadee  |
| Ring-billed Gull         | White-breasted Nuthatch |
| 1 Mourning Dove          | Starling                |
| 2 Snowy Owl              | 4 Myrtle Warbler        |
| 3 Short-eared Owl        | House Sparrow           |
| 1 Yellow-shafted Flicker | Slate-colored Junco     |
| Hairy Woodpecker         | Tree Sparrow            |
| Downy Woodpecker         | 2 Song Sparrow          |
| 2 Horned Lark            | 10 Lapland Longspur     |
| Blue Jay                 | 40 Snow Bunting         |

\* \* \* \* \*

## WHAT NEXT?

### BIRTH CONTROL COMES TO THE COYOTE

"The stage was set a few weeks back, when the Interior Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries revealed that it was using birth control drugs with some success against the coyote.....

"The coyote has been hunted, trapped, poisoned, pursued by dogs. Yet, virtually alone among American predators, he has extended his range of operations. Today, perhaps half a million coyotes roam the U.S., 85 to 90 percent of them west of the Mississippi.

"For such reasons, the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife set out to find better ways to control the coyote. Scientists at its Denver Wildlife Research Center came up with the idea of birth control. The synthetic female hormone, stilbestrol, is incorporated into bait fed to coyotes during their breeding season. Stilbestrol works best during the first 15 days of the coyote's annual breeding period; after that, larger or repeated doses are needed to prevent pregnancy. The scientists say stilbestrol has no side effects on the coyote and does not harm domestic dogs.

"The birth control idea would seem to be a good one, particularly in the light of the coyote's prolific nature. Females breed when they are one year old. The litter averages five or six. The scientists see in their birth control scheme simply an effective way to control the coyote's numbers, not a way to wipe him out....."

[Reprinted from CHEMICAL & ENGINEERING NEWS, March 1, 1965, p. 116.]

### NEW PHILLIPS PROCESS SENDS BIRDS

"Phillips Petroleum's new Avitrol bird management process works by inducing a few birds in a flock to scare away others. The process, which is based on certain distasteful chemicals, is available in the U.S. through trained pest control operators licensed by the company.

"The chemicals, Avitrol 100 and Avitrol 200, have been registered with the U.S. Department of Agriculture for controlling sparrows, starlings, cowbirds, pigeons, and certain blackbirds around buildings and in feedlots. The chemicals are not for sale to the general public. They will not harm pets or other animals who eat birds who have eaten them.

"The Avitrol compounds are used to treat feed, usually grain, which is then fed to a limited number of birds in the flock. Birds who eat the treated grain utter distress calls that frighten off the rest of the flock. The Avitrols are mildly toxic, but the amount used is controlled carefully, and the birds who eat the treated feed rarely die. Phillips is still working to get the method registered with USDA for such uses as controlling birds around airports and field crops....."

Reprinted from CHEMICAL & ENGINEERING NEWS, November 16, 1964, p. 114.

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## A STEP BACKWARD TO MAKE A STEP FORWARD MARTINS TO SUBSTITUTE FOR DDT

### BIRDS ENLISTED IN MOSQUITO DRIVE

"NEPTUNE, N. J., Feb. 25 - Municipal officials here are planning to combat mosquitos this summer by making the community more attractive to insect-feeding birds.

"They plan a colony of bird houses populated by purple martins which they say thrive on eating mosquitos in huge quantities.

"Andrew S. Peluso, a member of the Board of Health who heads the antimosquito drive to start April 1, said the houses would be duplexes, with each floor accomodating 12 birds. Plans will be provided by municipal officials.

"Mr. Peluso said the month-long drive on the mosquito would also include 'a two-week period of locating stagnant ponds and water holes.'

"This job would be handled by Boy Scouts and community volunteers and the group would map the exact locations of the stagnant water areas.

"While the survey is in progress Girl Scouts will distribute leaflets encouraging the elimination of stagnant water areas near private homes."

Reprinted from THE NEW YORK TIMES.

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### S B C FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Dr. Peter P. Wickham, Chairman

#### TOMHANNOCK WINTER WALK

FEBRUARY 14

The day was cold and cloudy as we arrived at Tomhannock Reservoir for our afternoon jaunt. After parking our cars we set out through a large stand of red pines, crunching through the snow on an old road to the shore of the ice-covered water. Along the way

we noted the small groups of tiny birds that fed high in the tree tops and surrounding vegetation. We walked back through the orderly woods, observing animal tracks, and spied a red squirrel as well as a few birds.

Upon returning to the cars, the observers divided into two smaller groups to explore different regions. As the sky cleared, the first group left to go to the Tamarack area where assorted hawks and shrikes were to be expected. The second group set out around the north end of the reservoir, continued to the west side and made stops in forested areas as well as open lands and corn fields.

At the end of the day the 19 observers listed 18 species of birds.  
--Johnny Steadwell

LOWER HUDSON

MARCH 13

On a beautiful, clear day, with the temperature in the 20's, 12 adult and five young birders left Rensselaer at 8 am. and headed south along the east side of the Hudson River. We made several stops along the way to Columbiaville where Stockport creek enters the Hudson.

After parking our cars we walked south along the railroad tracks and viewed the river from many points. Already, we had seen five species of ducks including 35 common mergansers, nine green-winged teal and eight pintail. Many of the common winter birds were seen, also a few common grackles and large numbers of returning red-winged blackbirds. How pleasant the song of the red-wing sounded, announcing the approach of spring.

Among the day's total of about 250 gulls were 40 great black-backed gulls. While five scopes were scanning the area, a large white gull was seen. Its proximity to a great black-backed gull gave us a good size comparison and it was identified as a glaucous gull. Later, this bird displayed its soaring powers against a brilliant blue sky. It was most impressive.

We returned northward and stopped at the Wickhams' for coffee and rolls. This was a delightful way to end the morning. Thirty-one species were recorded for the day.

--Dave & Muriel Stoner

MUSEUM FILMS

Guy Bartlett has called attention to the Fact and Fantasy Film Program at the New York State Museum, Albany. Attendance at these films is free. The films are held for children on Thursday afternoon from 4-4:30 on the fifth floor. The year's remaining program is as follows:

- April 8 Nature's Engineers/Littlest Angel
- April 15 Time of Wonder/Five Chinese Brothers
- April 22 Amphibians - Frogs, Toads and Salamanders/Little Red Hen
- April 29 Mr. & Mrs. Robin's Family/Steafast Tin Soldier.

HEAVY EAGLE

Seeing a recent note in the SCHENECTADY GAZETTE about a "50-pound" bald eagle that was shot and left on a street in New Bedford Mass. reminds me of an incident that occurred three years ago in the museum in Charleston, W. Va. I was tending the Brooks Bird Club exhibit room one weekend. On display, among other things, was a second or third year bald eagle that had been confiscated locally by a federal game warden from a fellow who shot it thinking that it was a crow, and who not being able to identify the bird kept asking people what it was until his fateful meeting with the law. The bird was very splendidly and impressively mounted. The taxidermist who mounted it took great pain with his work and when something special like an opportunity to mount an eagle came about, this man literally poured a little of himself into the job. Normally a mount of this size would take three or four hours, but this eagle got 12 hours worth.

The bird drew many "oh's" and "ah's" from those who viewed it. Two men stood admiring it and one exclaimed to the other, "Look at that thing, it must have weighed 75 pounds!" I chuckled to myself, for the taxidermist was a good friend of mine and he had showed me the bird in his shop within hours of having set the bird to dry. The bird had weighed 12 pounds when it arrived in the shop in the hands of the federal warden.

COMING OF AGE

A recent letter sent to Book-of-the-Month Club members offered a copy of either Peterson's eastern or western field guide along with a pair of binoculars! The letter said, "Today it is reckoned that all across America upwards of ten million city, suburban and country dwellers - men as well as women, youngsters as well as adults - enjoy the year-round hobby of bird watching. The reasons are not hard to fathom: (a) birds are found everywhere; (b) the only equipment needed is a copy of Roger Tory Peterson's A FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS and a pair of good sports binoculars...."

With ten million bird watchers in this country and the Book-of-the-Month Club making the above offer, bird watching apparently has arrived.

SBC GIFT TO LISHA KILL FUND

Most of you will be glad to know that the SBC contributed to the success of the Lisha Kill fund which is mentioned on page 10. Our contribution was \$250.

NEW MEMBERS

In an effort to encourage more people to join the SBC, we are beginning the practice of offering complimentary copies of FEATHERS, along with a field trip schedule and membership blank to interested persons. Lenny Thomas will handle the mailing of these. If you know of someone who could be encouraged to join, please send their name and address to Lenny and she will take care of the rest.

*Rj*

## S B C CALENDAR

- Apr. 10, Sat. -SARATOGA & ROUND LAKES for waterfowl. Walt Sabin, 439-1144. Round Lake on Route 9 at 8 am.
- Apr. 25, Sun. -MEADOWDALE BRUNCH at migration high tide. Beverly Waite, 861-8998. Hennessy Rd. RR crossing at either 6 or 7 am. Brunch at 10:30 at Aunt Jemima's at Western Ave. and Fuller Rd.
- May 1, Sat. -GREENE COUNTY for variety. Bob Wernick, 374-5813. Latham Shopping Center at 6:30 am. with a lunch.
- May 8, Sat. -LISHA KILL for wood's flora as well as avifauna. Hazel Eddy, 393-9542. Firehouse on Rosendale Rd., 2pm.
- May 10, Mon. -BOARD OF DIR. MEETING at Carl Runge's, 1533 Baker Ave. at 8 pm.
- May 12, Wed. -POST-DUSK SONGS, bring your ears. Mildred Crary, 346-3007. Pull-off area on Rosendale Rd. east of River Rd. intersection at 7:30 pm.
- May 15, Sat. -CENTURY RUN, survival of the fit. Go where and with whom you choose to amass the magic number. Mail report promptly to Bob Yunick, 1527 Myron St.
- May 19, Wed. -BANDING, bank swallows and/or shorebirds at the Glenville Landfill, Sunnyside Rd., Scotia. This trip is tentative subject to landfill conditions at the time. Call Bob Yunick, 377-0146 to confirm a week ahead.
- May 23, Sun. -WOLF HOLLOW, bird in am., ferns etc. in pm. Gus Angst, 374-9298. Van Curler Garage, Sch'dy, at 8 am., or at hollow at 8:30 with a picnic lunch.
- May 29, Sat. -NISKAYUNA WIDE WATERS, a trip which features an ardent leader. Carl Runge, 393-2847. Same meeting area as May 12 at 8 am.
- May 31, Mon. -KARNER, a trip to an unusually varied ecological niche. John Fuller, 869-7902. Robert Hall Store, Western Ave., Guilderland at 8 am.
- June 6, Sun. -MT. GREYLOCK, an evening of aural delight. Dave Stoner, 785-0800. North end of Latham Shopping Center at 4 pm., or at Greylock summit with lunch.
- June 12, Sat. -BREEDING BIRD COUNT, details and/or meeting plans by calling Peter Wickham, 477-6345 by June 7.
- June 20, Sun. -CONSALUS VLY, another local ecological niche worth seeing. Clifford Tepper, 374-8213. Routes 147 & 67 at 1:30 pm.

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## 1964 FIELD TRIPS SET SPECIES RECORD

Betty Hicks

Co-chairman, Field Trip Committee

The 1964 field trips set a new record for species sighted by a narrow margin - ONE bird! The 1959 list totaled 192 plus one hybrid having surpassed the previous record in 1957 of 190 plus an hybrid. 1964 produced 193 plus an hybrid Brewster's warbler for good measure. This accomplishment may have resulted from more observers (364) compared with 338 in 1963. On the other hand these participants must have been more alert or more fortunate, for they had only 18 trips in 1964 rather than 23 in 1963. Twenty-two trips had been scheduled last year, but two of these were extra-territorial, thus not included in this resume, and the Tomhannock trip of November 8 was cancelled by the closing of the woods due to dryness.

Most of the trips were the usual repeats, but Lisha Kill which had been previewed in 1963 and proved of interest drew one of the largest gatherings, and was worthwhile for the novelty and variety of its offerings, if not for the birds. The Glenville bird-banding venture was most rewarding and it did not matter that the territory was small and the list short, for never had many observers seen birds at such close range in the hand, or in such detail. It was an exciting evening and one to be repeated.

It is easy to see why the Century Run has its devotees and its glamour when one notes by studying the composite that 27 species found at this time were seen only on this day. They were: red-necked grebe, brant, turkey vulture, bald eagle, sora, common gallinule, American woodcock, screech owl, red-headed woodpecker, Traill's flycatcher, purple martin, Swainson's thrush, gray-cheeked thrush, blue-gray gnatcatcher, loggerhead shrike, worm-eating warbler, blue-winged warbler, Tennessee warbler, parula warbler, Cape May warbler, prairie warbler, Northern waterthrush, yellow-breasted chat, Wilson's warbler, redpoll, savannah sparrow, Henslow's sparrow. During the remainder of the year 16 species were sighted only once too, but these occasions were scattered and therefore less spectacular. These "singles" were: red-throated loon, p; least bittern, l; shoveler, c; ring-necked duck, c; canvasback, p; old-squaw, p; white-winged scoter, p; surf scoter, p; common scoter, p; goshawk, a; Cooper's hawk, r; marsh hawk, n; peregrine falcon, f; American golden plover, n; white-winged crossbill, a. Only the November trip to Saratoga-Round Lakes with six "exclusive finds" offered a faint hint of challenge to the uniqueness of the Century Run, because all six of these were seen by all members of the group. This trip to Saratoga-Round Lakes obviously cannot serve the purpose of the annual New York State duck count, but the 13 species of ducks seen contrasted with the four of the duck count showed that it offered a better opportunity to those who wished to see

ducks both in variety and numbers under more favorable weather conditions. It will continue to be a popular last-fall and first-spring trip for many members and understandably so.

All things considered, 1964 was a good year for field trips. The success of any schedule depends more on the cooperation, ability and enthusiasm of its trip leaders than well-intentioned plans. These leaders proved their worth and permit the evaluation of a "good" 1964. Our thanks are extended to each leader!

The following summary was compiled by Guy Bartlett.

### FIELD TRIPS -- 1964

| Trip | Date  | Area                 | Spec. Seen | No. of per-tic. | Page | Shoveler            | c      | h      | l     |
|------|-------|----------------------|------------|-----------------|------|---------------------|--------|--------|-------|
| A    | 1/18  | Winter Duck Census   | 29         | 9               | 23   | Wood Duck           | cd     | h      | l     |
| B    | 3/21  | Meadowdale           | 27         | 28              | 25   | Redhead             |        | h      | p     |
| C    | 4/11  | Saratoga-Round Lakes | 47         | 35              | 56   | Ring-necked Duck    | c      |        |       |
| D    | 4/25  | Meadowdale Breakfast | 52         | 39              | 59   | Canvasback          |        |        | p     |
| E    | 5/3   | Lisha Kill           | 34         | 44              | 60   | Greater Scaup       |        | h      | n pg  |
| F    | 5/10  | Wolf Hollow          | 43         | 16              | 60   | Lesser Scaup        | c      |        | p     |
| G    | 5/13  | Rosendale Vaspers    | 26         | 18              | 61   | Common Goldeneye    | u c    |        | pg    |
| H    | 5/16  | Century Run          | 161        | 45              | 41   | Bufflehead          | c      |        | p     |
| I    | 5/20  | Swallow Banding      | 19         | 26              | 61   | Oldsquaw            |        |        | p     |
| J    | 5/30  | Niskayuna Widewaters | 63         | 19              | 62   | White-winged Scoter |        |        | p     |
| K    | 7/19  | Jenny Lake           | 47         | 20              | 63   | Surf Scoter         |        |        | p     |
| L    | 8/22  | Watervliet Reservoir | 38         | 3               | 62   | Common Scoter       |        |        | p     |
| M    | 9/19  | Karner Barrens       | 33         | 12              | 74   | Hooded Merganser    | c      | h      |       |
| N    | 10/3  | Stony Creek Ravr.    | 45         | 4               | 74   | Common Merganser    | a c    | h      | pg    |
| O    | 10/11 | Hudson Highlands     | 41         | 7               | 75   | Red-br. Merganser   | c      | h      | p     |
| P    | 11/15 | Saratoga-Round Lakes | 35         | 16              | 75   | Turkey Vulture      |        | h      |       |
| Q    | 11/22 | Alcove Reservoir     | 23         | 6               | 75   | Goshawk             | a      |        |       |
| R    | 12/26 | Schenectady Xmas     | 43         | 20              | 65-8 | Cooper's Hawk       |        |        | r     |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Red-tailed Hawk     | ab d f | h j    | nop r |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Red-should. Hawk    | bc     | h      | q     |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Broad-winged Hawk   | d f    | k      | q     |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Rough-legged Hawk   | ab     |        | r     |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Bald Eagle          |        | h      |       |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Marsh Hawk          |        |        | n     |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Osprey              |        | h      | o     |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Peregrine Falcon    |        | f      |       |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Sparrow Hawk        | abcd   | h      | nop r |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Ruffed Grouse       | b e    | h k m  | r     |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Bobwhite            | d      | h      | r     |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Ring-neck. Pheasant | b d    | gh     | no r  |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Virginia Rail       | d      | h      | r     |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Sora                |        | h      |       |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Common Gallinule    |        | h      |       |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | American Coot       |        |        | pg    |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Semipalmated Plover |        | hi j   |       |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Killdeer            | cd     | hi j l | nop   |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Amer. Golden Plover |        |        | n     |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | American Woodcock   |        | h      |       |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Common Snipe        | d      | h      | r     |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Upland Plover       |        | h      |       |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Spotted Sandpiper   | d      | hi j l |       |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Solitary Sandpiper  |        | hi     |       |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Greater Yellowlegs  | d      |        | no    |
|      |       |                      |            |                 |      | Lesser Yellowlegs   |        | hi l n |       |

|                       |         |           |                     |       |          |         |         |   |
|-----------------------|---------|-----------|---------------------|-------|----------|---------|---------|---|
| Pectoral Sandpiper    | h       | n         | Cedar Waxwing       | bc    | h        | jkim    | o       | r |
| Baird's Sandpiper     | h       |           | Loggerhead Shrike   |       | h        |         |         |   |
| Least Sandpiper       | hij     | n         | Sterling            | ab    | defghij  | lmnopqr |         |   |
| Semipalmated Sandp.   | h       | n         | Yel.-thr. Vireo     |       | h        | j       | m       |   |
| Gr.Black-backed Gull  | c       |           | Solitary Vireo      |       | h        | k       | m       |   |
| Herring Gull          | c       | h         | Red-eyed Vireo      |       | h        | jk      |         |   |
| Ring-billed Gull      | c       | h         | Philadelphia Vireo  |       | h        |         |         |   |
| Black Tern            |         | h         | Warbling Vireo      |       | h        | j       |         |   |
| Mourning Dove         | bedefgh | j         | Blk-&-wh. Warbler   | e     | h        | km      |         |   |
| Yel.-billed Cuckoo    | f       | h         | Worm-eating Wblr    |       | h        |         |         |   |
| Black-billed Cuckoo   | h       | j         | Golden-wing. Wrblr  |       | gh       | j       |         |   |
| Screech Owl           | h       |           | Blue-winged Warbler |       | h        |         |         |   |
| Great Horned Owl      | h       |           | [Brewster's Wrblr]  |       | gh       |         |         |   |
| Whip-poor-will        | gh      |           | Tennessee Warbler   |       | h        |         |         |   |
| Common Nighthawk      | hi      |           | Nashville Warbler   | e     | h        |         |         |   |
| Chimney Swift         | r       | h         | Parula Warbler      |       | h        |         |         |   |
| Ruby-thr. Hummingbird | h       | jk        | Yellow Warbler      |       | h        | j       | l       |   |
| Belted Kingfisher     | cd      | hi        | Magnolia Warbler    |       | f        | h       | mn      |   |
| Yel-shafted Flicker   | def     | h         | Cape May Warbler    |       | h        |         |         |   |
| Pileated Woodpecker   | d       | f         | Blk-thr. Blue Wblr  |       | h        | k       |         |   |
| Red-headed Woodpeck.  | h       |           | Myrtle Warbler      | ode   | h        | km      |         |   |
| Yel-bel. Sapsucker    |         | h         | Blk-thr. Green Wblr |       | f        | h       | km      |   |
| Hairy Woodpecker      | ab      | def       | Blackburnian Wblr   |       | f        | h       | n       |   |
| Downy Woodpecker      | abcde   | gh        | Chestnut-a. Wrblr   |       | fgh      | j       | m       |   |
| Eastern Kingbird      |         | h         | Bay-br. Warbler     |       | f        | h       | j       | m |
| Gr. Crested Flyct.    |         | ef        | Blackpoll Warbler   |       | gh       |         |         |   |
| Eastern Phoebe        | cd      | fgh       | Pine Warbler        |       | f        | h       |         |   |
| Traill's Flycatcher   |         | h         | Prairie Warbler     |       | h        |         |         |   |
| Least Flycatcher      |         | h         | Palm Warbler        |       | h        | m       |         |   |
| East. Wood Pewee      |         | h         | Ovenbird            |       | fgh      | k       |         |   |
| Horned Lark           | ab      | h         | No. Waterthrush     |       | h        |         |         |   |
| Tree Swallow          | cd      | f         | La. Waterthrush     |       | ef       | h       | j       |   |
| Bank Swallow          |         | hi        | Yellowthroat        |       | fgh      | jkl     | o       |   |
| Rough-w. Swallow      | d       | hi        | Yellow-br. Chat     |       | h        |         |         |   |
| Barn Swallow          | d       | f         | Wilson's Warbler    |       | h        |         |         |   |
| Cliff Swallow         | d       | h         | Canada Warbler      |       | f        | h       |         |   |
| Purple Martin         |         | h         | American Redstart   |       | f        | h       | jkim    |   |
| Blue Jay              | a       | odef      | House Sparrow       | abod  | f        | h       | j       | m |
| Common Crow           | a       | odef      | Bebolink            |       | h        | j       |         |   |
| Blk-cap. Chickadee    | a       | odefgh    | Eastern Meadowlark  | b     | d        | fghij   | no      | r |
| Tufted Titmouse       | e       | hi        | Red-winged Blackbd. | ab    | defghijk | no      | r       |   |
| White-br. Nuthatch    | def     | h         | Baltimore Oriole    |       | fghij    | l       |         |   |
| Red-br. Nuthatch      |         | k         | Rusty Blackbird     | a     | h        |         | r       |   |
| Brown Creeper         | e       | h         | Common Grackle      | abc   | def      | him     | o       |   |
| House Wren            | efgh    | j         | Brown-hd. Cowbird   | odef  | h        | jk      | op      | r |
| Winter Wren           |         | h         | Scarlet Tanager     |       | fgh      | jk      |         |   |
| Long-b. Marsh Wren    |         | h         | Cardinal            | abod  | h        |         | op      | r |
| Short-b. Marsh Wren   |         | h         | Rose-br. Grosbeak   |       | fgh      | jk      |         |   |
| Catbird               | gh      | jkim      | Indigo Bunting      |       | gh       | j       |         |   |
| Brown Thrasher        | de      | h         | Evening Grosbeak    | abode | h        | k       |         |   |
| Robin                 | bedefgh | jkimnopqr | Purple Finch        |       | e        | h       | k       |   |
| Wood Thrush           | efgh    | jk        | Common Redpoll      |       | h        |         |         |   |
| Hermit Thrush         | e       | h         | Pine Siskin         | abc   | h        |         |         |   |
| Swainson's Thrush     | h       |           | Amgr. Goldfinch     | abcd  | f        | h       | jkimnop | r |
| Gray-checked Thrush   | h       |           | Red Crossbill       | de    |          |         |         |   |
| Veery                 | fgh     | jk        | White-w. Crossbill  | a     |          |         |         |   |
| Eastern Bluebird      | d       | h         | Rufous-s. Towhee    | efgh  | m        | o       |         |   |
| Blue-gr. Gnatcatcher  | h       |           | Savannah Sparrow    |       | h        |         |         |   |
| Ruby-cr. Kinglet      | def     | h         | Grasshopper Sparrow |       | h        | j       |         |   |
| Water Pipit           |         | no        | Henlow's Sparrow    |       | h        |         |         |   |

|                     |           |                    |                    |
|---------------------|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Vesper Sparrow      | od h      | White-thr. Sparrow | defgh k m o        |
| Slate-colored Junco | a f h k   | opqr Swamp Sparrow | d h jk r           |
| Tree Sparrow        | abc       | pqr Song Sparrow   | abodefghijkl nop r |
| Chipping Sparrow    | def h k m | Snòw Bunting       | ab                 |
| Field Sparrow       | def h j o |                    |                    |
| White-cr. Sparrow   | h no      |                    |                    |

\* \* \* \* \*

## NEXT SEASON'S AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS

Barrington S. Havens

Program Co-chairman

The schedule of Audubon Wildlife Films for the Club's 1965-1966 season has been completed and will include the following:

| <u>Date</u>  | <u>Speaker</u>   | <u>Subject</u>                      |
|--------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| September 23 | Robert C. Hermes | South on the Wind                   |
| October 21   | Stuart Keith     | Sights & Sounds of the African Wild |
| November 18  | Frank McLaughlin | A Wonderland Endangered             |
| January 20   | Karl Maslowski   | Gone With the Wilderness            |
| March 3      | James A. Fowler  | Trailing Nature Northward           |

All of these films will take place on Thursday nights, for we have found that night provides optimum likelihood of obtaining the auditorium of our customary meeting place: Niskayuna High School. However, this year as last year, we have been unable to engage Niskayuna for all dates, and consequently had to make other arrangements for the third film, on November 18.

As we were also unable to engage Linton High School for that night, we finally made arrangements with Colonie Central Schools for the use of their high school auditorium on the night in question. This is a relatively new school with plenty of parking space, and the auditorium has a seating capacity about the same as Niskayuna. Furthermore, and most important, the school is situated in a relatively central location for our membership, many of whom live in Albany and Troy.

### Ticket Sales, New Style

This year we are actively progressing plans for improving and streamlining our methods for the sale and distribution of tickets. Co-chairman Eleanor Byrne, without whose assistance I would be completely helpless, is collecting a mailing list of all non-member prospects, and invitations to subscribe will be sent everybody on the list as soon as all material becomes available. It is her plan eventually to have a complete list of all subscribers and prospects, enabling us to make contact entirely by mail. The procedure will be as follows: each person on the list will be sent a prospectus covering the coming season with an application to fill out and return with check for tickets. When the money is received, the tickets will be mailed. This may eventually eliminate the

personal canvassing that has been necessary in the past, and when it does, should come as a welcome relief to the canvassers. The list will also serve a valuable ancillary purpose: it will give us a mailing list for other important notices and provide a means of communication between the Club and a selected group of persons interested in nature and conservation.

It is entirely likely that our list will grow to a size greater than our auditoriums, seating approximately 1000, will accommodate. If this does occur, it will be necessary to sell tickets on a first-come, first-served basis. Therefore, it is important for prospects to return ticket applications with the money promptly.

If there is any doubt in your mind whether any name is on the mailing list, by all means pass the names and addresses along to Eleanor. We do not want to miss anybody.

We know you will be pleased with next season's Audubon Wildlife Films. You'll be hearing from Eleanor.

\* \* \* \* \*

## MORE WILDLIFE FILMS

Because of the overwhelming success of last year's "Summer Film Festival" at the New York State Museum (drawing almost 4000 people), this year's program will be expanded. The movies will be shown on Tuesdays and Thursdays from July 6 to August 26, at 12 noon and 3 pm., in the auditorium of the State Museum, fifth floor of the State Education Building on Washington Avenue. Admission is free and all are cordially invited. Write to the Museum Educational Office, New York State Museum and Science Service, Albany, New York, 12224 for free schedules. Briefly, the program is as follows:

### Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12 noon and 3 pm.

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| July 6 & 8   | Adelie Penguins of the Antarctic/Old Order Amish |
| July 13 & 15 | The Olympic Elk / Tibetan Traders                |
| July 20 & 22 | Beaver Valley/Prehistoric Images: The First Art  |
| July 27 & 29 | Between the Tides / The Alaskan Eskimo           |
| Aug. 3 & 5   | Bear Country / Valley of Standing Rock           |
| Aug. 10 & 12 | World in a Marsh / Africa Awakens                |
| Aug. 17 & 19 | Seal Island / Legend of Johnny Appleseed         |
| Aug. 24 & 26 | Water Birds / Remnants of a Race                 |

Some of these films are a part of the Disney "True-Life Adventure" series and the quality of these is familiar to most everyone.

\* \* \* \* \*

Join the National Audubon Society and receive one of the finest nature magazines in America - help conservation.


**BRIEFING THE RECORD**

THE SEASON - WINTER - DECEMBER 31, 1964 to MARCH 31, 1965

Peter P. Wickham, Records Committee Chairman

After a mild, rather wet December, the area experienced three cold, dry months. Temperatures in December averaged 27.9° at Albany, 1.4° above normal and precipitation totaled 3.28 in., 0.69 in. above normal. Much of the latter occurred as rain or as freezing rain. Temperatures at Albany in January, February and March averaged 18.1°, 22.3°, and 31.2°; these were 4.6°, 1.4°, and 1.8° below normal, respectively. Precipitation in January totaled 1.95 in., 0.52 in. below normal; in February, 1.92 in., 0.28 in. below normal; and in March, 1.73 in., 0.99 in. below normal.

Despite the cold weather, the ground in the Hudson and Mohawk valleys was without snow cover most of the winter. This was because much of the precipitation fell as rain, sleet, or freezing rain. The lack of snow cover undoubtedly dispersed winter birds more than usual, the feeders in the area had few visitors when compared with other years. Even allowing for this fact, however, most fringillids seemed far fewer in numbers than usual throughout the area. High numbers of gulls and ducks remained on the Upper Hudson above Troy well into January for the first time in several years. Although it appeared in the fall that a widespread invasion of northern hawks and owls was to take place, relatively few remained and most raptors were decidedly uncommon. The only exceptions to this were rough-legged hawk and great horned owl. Northern shrikes seemed much more widespread than usual, perhaps also an indication of an influx of northern predators.

Unusual or rare species reported during the period included the first records for our area of Harris' sparrow from two localities; bald eagle, peregrine, gyrfalcon, Virginia rail (wintering), glaucous gull, Iceland gull, long-eared owl, black-backed three-toed woodpecker, boreal chickadee, Bohemian waxwing, migrant shrike, dickcissel, white-winged crossbill, savannah sparrow, Oregon junco and white-crowned sparrow.

Abbreviations used: (ad)- Alan Devoe Bird Club record; (gc)- Greene County Bird Club record; (sbc)- Schenectady Bird Club field trip; (adcc)- Alan Devoe Christmas Count (Chatham); (gccc)- Greene County Christmas Count (Catskill); (scc)- Schenectady Christmas Count; (tcc)- Troy Christmas Count; arr- arrived; com- common; imm- immature; I- Island; L- Lake; max- maximum; nr- near; rep(s)- report(s); repd- reported; R- River; SCR- Stony creek Reservoir; SL- Saratoga Lake; SS- Stockport Station; UH- Upper Hudson, the Hudson River between Troy and Stillwater; VFG- Vischer Ferry Game Management Area; WR- Watervliet Reservoir. In many cases, species names are abbreviated. These abbreviations are too numerous to list. Since checklist order is used, the complete names are readily obtained from a checklist.

Observers: (HE)- Hazel Eddy; (MWF)- Mabel French; (JF)- John Fuller; (EH)- Esly Hallenbeck; (MJ)- Mary Johnston; (MK)- Marcia Kent; (DR)- David Rothaupt; (WBS)- Walton Sabin; (BRS)- Benton

Seguin; (DJT)- Dr. Donald Tucker; (PPW)- Dr. Peter Wickham; (RPY)- Dr. Robert Yunick; (GMZ)- Gladys Zimmer; (bsh)- Guy Bartlett, Benton Seguin and Barry Havens.

### LOONS - DUCKS

No loons were repd during the period.

Horned Grebe: last Dec 6, SL (BRS); no March reps.

Pied-billed Grebe: only one, Mar 6-8, UH (bsh).

Great Blue Heron: late individuals Dec 6, SCR (BRS) and Jan 10, Chatham Center (ad). Only spring reps, Mar 23 and 28, Colonie, (JF, DR).

Blk-cr Night Heron: three Mar 5 over Delmar (R. Darrow) were unusually early.

Canada Goose: last Dec 6, SL (BRS); first Mar 7, SS (PPW); good-sized flocks (70-100 birds) appeared Mar 24-28.

Mallards and Black Ducks concentrated at Green I, appearing sporadically elsewhere until early Mar, high counts 227 and 1373, respectively, Jan 9 (sbc).

Pintail: an unusually high number remained late on the UH, max 26 (tcc) Jan 2, last Jan 10 (bsh); first spring Mar 6, SS (ad).

Green-w Teal: up to 3 remained on the UH to Jan 10 (sbc); first spring Mar 7, SS (PPW).

Blue-w Teal: first Mar 27, VFG (bsh) and in several other places later in Mar.

American Widgeon: 1-2 remained on the UH through Jan 10 (sbc); first spring Mar 6, SS (ad), few in Mar.

Wood Duck: first Mar 7, SS (PPW), gradually increasing throughout area in Mar.

Ring-n Duck: last, 4, SL, Dec 6 (BRS); first Mar 9, Embought (gc).

Canvasback: last, 16, SL, Dec 6 (BRS); no Mar reps.

Scaup: last, 2 greater, (adcc) Jan 2; first Mar 27, several areas.

Com Goldeneye: a few remained throughout winter, increasing in late Feb and Mar.

Bufflehead: last, 10, Dec 6, SL (BRS); first, 2, Mar 9, Hudson R south of Albany(bsh).

Hooded Merganser: one female remained on the UH through Jan 9 (sbc); first arr Mar 7, VFG (DJT). Two males at Schroom L outlet Feb 27 (bsh) may have been very early migrants or wintering birds.

Com Merganser: 1-9 remained on the UH throughout the winter.

Numbers rapidly increased in Mar, max 200 SS Mar 17 (ad).

Red-br Merganser: arr Mar 27, Mohawk R (bsh).

### HAWKS - OWLS

Turkey Vulture: first Mar 2, Kiskatom (gc).

Goshawk: only three reps, all in Jan (ad).

Sharp-shinned Hawk: five reps scattered through the winter; probable migrants Mar 27, Hudson (ad) and Mar 28, Colonie (JF, DR).

Cooper's Hawk: five reps during period, including two Mar 28 at Colonie (JF, DR) and at Schodack Center (Lee & Virginia Burland).

Red-tailed Hawk: rather scarce in most localities this winter.

Red-shouldered Hawk: four reps, Dec-Jan; a return movement noted in Mar, with individuals repd at Catskill Mar 16 (gc) and at three localities Mar 28.

Rough-legged Hawk: the most com hawk in most areas Jan-Mar, max 10 Feb 13 between Albany and Catskill (WBS et al.)

Bald Eagle: an adult was observed in flight nr Chatham Center

- Feb 16 (Murray Giddings, George Milne) and an imm was observed in flight over VFG Mar 28 (sbc).
- Marsh Hawk: only three different reps throughout period.
- Osprey: a very early individual was south of Hudson Mar 27 (ad).
- Gyr Falcon: one (dark phase) repd Jan 21. Alan Devoe Sanctuary, Old Chatham; a second (dark phase, the same?) Feb 1, nr Chatham Center; and two (dark phase) Feb 13, a few miles south of Albany (all reps from Dr. E.M. Reilly, Jr.)
- Peregrine: an adult was observed at close range bedeviling a flock of cowbirds and blue jays on Feb 6 at Canaan (ad).
- Bobwhite: at Meadowdale and Lyons L, Nassau.
- Wild Turkey: repd from Red Rock (Fred & Myra Sniflow) and Windham (Blanche Wasson).
- Virginia Rail: 1-2 were at a spring-fed marsh nr New Salem from late Dec-early Mar (many observers). This appears to be the first winter record for this region.
- Killdeer: last Dec 13, WR (bsh); no winter reps, first nr Castleton (PPW), gradual influx throughout Mar.
- American Woodcock: an injured individual came to a feeder in Burnt Hills from Dec-Jan (DJT); first migrants Mar 24, Colonie (JF, DR), late.
- Com Snipe: 1-2 wintered at the same marshy area nr New Salem as the rails did; this is the same marsh in which at least one snipe has appeared for the last three winters. No migrants were repd during Mar.
- Glaucous Gull: one adult was on the UH Mar 6-8 (bsh) and another was at SS Mar 20 (sbc), as well as at least one additional unidentified "white-winged" gull.
- Iceland Gull: one in very dusky plumage, judged a first-year imm, was on the UH Dec 19 and 27 (bsh)- the only rep.
- Great Blk-b Gull: numbers remaining on the UH throughout Dec and early Jan were unprecedented, included 20 Dec 19 (bsh) and 23 (tcc) Jan 2. Numbers dwindled rapidly to one Jan 9-10 (sbc), but a few remained all winter; large influx in early Mar, max 40 SS Mar 7 (PPW) and Mar 20 (sbc).
- Herring Gull: good numbers remained late on the UH into early Jan- e.g., 95 (tcc) Jan 2- these dwindled rapidly; a few remained throughout the winter, with a general influx from Mar 3 on.
- Ring-billed Gull: similar in pattern to herring gull, but in fewer numbers.
- Mourning Dove: wintered quite locally in very high numbers- e.g., 187 (adcc) and 134 (tcc) Jan 2.
- Screech Owl: only four reps received.
- Great Horned Owl: the most com owl of the winter, present throughout the region.
- Snowy Owl: relatively few were present, contrary to expectations, after their early appearance in fall, 1964. A total of nine probably different birds were repd, Dec to Mar.
- Barred Owl: only three reps- Dec 24, Altamont (Beverly Waite); Jan 16, Guilderland (MJ) and Mar 29, Hudson (ad).
- Long-eared Owl: an individual was picked up after flying into the side of a barn and breaking its neck on Feb 17 nr Cairo (Norma Bondy).
- Short-eared Owl: only one- nr Dormansville, Jan 31 (vide MK).
- No Saw-whet Owls were repd.

#### Goatsuckers - Shrikes

Belted Kingfisher: about six scatered winter reps, no appreciable



influx in Mar.

Yell-sh Flicker: more reps than usual: two in Dec, eight in Jan, five in Feb; there appeared to be a slight influx during Mar.

Pileated Woodpecker: rather few.

Yell-b Sapsucker: one female was in Niskayuna, at the same feeder at which a female appeared last winter, on Dec 20, Dec 24 and Jan 2 (RPY).

Blk-b Three-t Woodpecker: one found Feb 7 in the Schroon L area by (JF).

Horned Lark: numbers seemed somewhat low in most areas.

Com Crow: remained into Jan in larger numbers than past three years- e.g., 589 (scc) Dec 26 and 466 (adcc) Jan 2.

Boreal Chickadee: only one verified rep for the winter- one, Colonie, Dec 30 (JF).

Tufted Titmouse: holding its own or increasing, 24 repd on (adcc), (gcc), (scc) and (tcc) combined.

Red-br Nuthatch: only from our area where it nests and usually winters, such as Alan Devoe Sanctuary, Tomhannock Res and northern Warren County.

Winter Wren: one, WR, Jan 6 (EH) the lone record.

Mockingbird: at least 4-5 in different areas throughout the winter.

Catbird: one at a Sch'dy feeder Dec 26 and 28 (DJT) the only one.

Brown Thrasher: one remained at a Niskayuna feeder through Jan and into early Feb (Mrs Frazer Price) and another was at a feeder in Catskill from Dec 20 through Jan (gc).

Robin: remained in small numbers in many sections and in larger numbers in Greene and Columbia Counties. Migration- late; there were large waves Mar 28 and 29.

Bluebird: repd at Colonie, Ghent, Bethlehem Center and Greenville during the winter. Returned Mar 9 to a nesting area in East Greenbush (fide PPW), and Mar 10 in Catskill (gc); it was absent then from the East Greenbush site for about two weeks, then reappeared; the species also appeared at Gallupville nesting sites Mar 26 and 29 (GMZ), suggesting waves early and late in Mar.

Golden-cr Kinglet: very scarce except in larger evergreen tracts.

Bohemian Waxwing: one was feeding Dec 6 in a mountain ash tree in Niskayuna with several cedar waxwings following the severe ice storm Dec 5 which coated most things with an inch of ice (RPY).

Cedar Waxwing: a few were repd throughout the winter, with definite increase in Mar, when flocks of up to 50 appeared.

Northern Shrike: probable flight year: at least nine adults repd in four counties, Dec-Feb. Surprisingly no Mar reps.

Migrant Shrike: only one, Black Creek Marsh, Mar 28 (BRS).

#### BLACKBIRDS - SPARROWS

Eastern Meadowlark: more com locally than usual with 22 (scc) and 40 (adcc).

Red-w Blackbird: a few wintered, first migrant flocks Mar 1 and 2, Castleton marshes (PPW), appearing widely Mar 5-7.

Com Grackle: followed same pattern, first Mar 2, Castleton (PPW).

Rusty Blackbird: at Loudonville Dec 20 (MWF), nr New Salem Dec 28, Jan 17 and 24 (WBS, BRS) and Niskayuna Jan 13-23 and Feb 1 (HF). Returning birds seen Mar 2, Castleton marshes (PPW), followed by a few later in Mar.

Brown-h Cowbird: many wintered, max 376 (adcc). Appeared to return later than the other blackbirds; a large influx occurred Mar 24-31, when flocks of 20-50 appeared in all sections.

- Cardinal: still increasing throughout region with 139 on four area Christmas Counts.
- Dickcissel: an adult female was seen Feb 2 at a feeder nr Catskill (gc), the only rep.
- Evening Grosbeak: rather rare most of the winter except possibly in mountainous areas; increased considerably in Mar when flocks of up to 30 were seen at feeding stations.
- Purple Finch: almost wholly absent in early winter, but increased rapidly after mid-Feb to become easily the most com finch in Mar. At Niskayuna, (RPY) banded 202 from Feb 21-Mar 31, none before
- Pine Grosbeak: two reps- 5, Hannacroix, mid-Feb (T. & M. Zaph) and 12, Schroon L area, Feb 27 (bsh).
- Com Redpoll: only five reps Dec-Feb.
- Pine Siskin: even less com, a "few" at Durham, Feb (Vernon Haskins) and one in Troy Mar 29 (Mary Kilcawley).
- American Goldfinch: less com than last winter. A large group of about 500 was nr Schroon L Mar 13 (DR).
- White-w Crossbill: the lone rep of crossbills- a group of 3 nr Schroon L Feb 7 (JF).
- Rufous-s Towhee: two reps- one at a Chatham feeder, Jan-Mar (ad); one to Dec 6, Burnt Hills feeder (BRS).
- Savannah Sparrow: up to 3 appeared at feeders in Greene County in Jan and Feb (gc).
- Oregon Junco: three reps, all of adult males in which dark hood sharply separated from brown back with rusty flanks: one, Colonie, sporadically at feeder, Jan 1- Mar 28 (JF); one, Catskill, Jan 25-Feb 26 (gc); one, Claverack, Feb 4-10 (ad).
- Field Sparrow: appeared this winter at Colonie (JF), Chatham (ad), Claverack (ad), Elnora (DJT), Ghent (ad) and Loudonville (MWF).
- Harris' Sparrow: the first records for this region. An adult appeared at a feeder in Voorheesville "sometime late last fall" and remained to Feb 24. The "black cap, face and bib, pink bill, large size, clear grey breast, ochre cheeks, long tail" were noted by many observers, including (WBS, bsh, HE, DJT). An imm appeared at a feeder nr Athens Jan 27 after a snow storm. This bird displayed "pink bill, large size, erect stance, ochre cheeks, clear grey breast which was traversed across the upper part by irregular black blotches forming a necklace-like pattern." It was also seen by many observers including Geoffrey Carleton, (WBS, PPW, and DJT) and was still present Mar 31.
- White-cr Sparrow: two were coming to a feeder in Castleton (ad) and one to a feeder in Ghent (ad); these birds appeared in mid-Feb and remained into Mar.
- White-thr Sparrow: at least ten winter reps; scarcer than in 1963-64.
- Fox Sparrow: late at Guilderland (MJ, Mary Linch) and East Chatham (P. & N. Schwabe) to mid-Dec. Spring migration quite late, first Mar 24, Kiskatom (Walter Smith) and Mar 26, Westerlo (MK). A very large wave occurred Mar 29 following a snowstorm when 1-15 appeared at almost every feeding station in the area. Observers in the field the previous weekend, Mar 27-28, did not see any, so it seems likely the birds moved in, or were grounded, the night of Mar 28.
- Swamp Sparrow: very scarce, only reps: (scc) Dec 27 and at Black Creek Marsh (one) Feb 21 (bsh).
- Song Sparrow: fewer than usual.
- Lapland Longspur: Meadowdale, Dec 6-Feb 7, max 4; nr Kinderhook
- Snow Bunting: very few, last Mar 21 nr Canajoharie (GMZ). (Feb 13).

## CENTURY RUN - TWO NEW RECORDS

Donald J. Tucker

It was shortly after midnight when this compiler, tossing about in a none too successful attempt to sleep, was wakened by a brief burst of song from a perhaps equally restless chipping sparrow. This became number one for the day - a distinction shared with the more normally nocturnal whip-poor-will and screech owl. Both of these were recorded by other observers before retiring for the evening, shortly before the stroke of twelve. Most waited until 5 am. before starting out officially, but one group was underway by 3 am. Night migrants were relatively quiet despite a clear sky. The air cooled quickly toward dawn and the temperature was recorded at a chilly 32° along the Black Creek Marsh railroad tracks. As the day lightened in the east, a full moon appearing as a huge silvery ball settled behind the Indian Ladder escarpment. Thus did the annual assault on the century mark begin.

What a day it was! For the second year in a row, the weather was ideal. Although the early morning chill was numbing to the fingertips attempting to focus binoculars, the appearance of the sun in an almost cloudless sky caused the temperature to climb quickly to comfortable levels before finally reaching the mid-70's. The wind was negligible. It was a glorious day to set a record! No one could linger long in any one spot. There were time tables to adhere to. Parties encountered one another all day long in such familiar places as Black Creek Marsh, Kerner, Lisha Kill and the Ladder. Eight parties of forty-one observers combined their efforts and the result was a record breaking 162 species, topping last year's 161 species. Two groups exceeded 100 - one recording 114 and the other 129. The latter was a record individual group high. Despite the fact that it is becoming increasingly more difficult to add to the master list, two more species were added this year. This brings the total to 224 species and two hybrids. Group D and G found the common scoter at Saratoga and Group H, examining a rocky outcropping at Schroon Lake, picked out a ruddy turnstone.

What were some of the highlights? There was a cormorant at Saratoga, first since 1960; green-winged teal, recorded for the fourth time; ruddy duck, first since 1954; pigeon hawk, second time, last in 1949; dunlin, recorded previously only in 1963; great black-backed gull, for the third time; Philadelphia vireo, now two years in a row; common tern, first since 1959; mourning warbler, third time; blue-gray gnatcatcher, two years in a row.

How did the day go? Foliage was average, or perhaps a little behind. At higher elevations, warblers were relatively easy to spot in the treetops. A few days prior to the count day, foliage was minimal and cool weather was not encouraging. No waves were reported early in the month and in general the migration was disappointing. Warblers were not very numerous. A good variety was found, but the birds just seemed to trickle through. A number of migrants had either not appeared or were spotty with low numbers. Among the latter were Swainson's thrush, Traill's flycatcher, wood pewee, nighthawk, blackpoll warbler. Most kinglets were gone, though brown creepers were still easily found. Most solitary

vireos and white-crowned sparrows had already passed through.

There were misses too. The red-shouldered hawk was missed for the first time ever. The cliff swallow was not seen locally, but was reported in northern Warren County. Reliable breeding colonies seem to be dwindling locally. The common gallinule was also missed for the first time, although this compiler feels that he heard a short "kik-kik" at the Widewaters. Although in previous years the pine warbler was regularly recorded, in recent years it has been increasingly difficult to find. This year it was recorded only near Schroon Lake. For the third year in a row, accipiters were missed.

List of possible additions is dwindling! With a master list of 224 species - including most of the species that have been recorded in the SBC area, except for such winter visitants as snow bunting, longspur, white-winged crossbill and pine grosbeak - the possibility for additions has lessened considerably. Most of those remaining to be added are uncommon at any time of year. Observers in the future might be on the lookout for surf scoter\*, caspian tern\*, gadwall\*, shoveler\*, Kentucky warbler\*, black-bellied plover\*, dowitcher\*, golden eagle, northern shrike, white-eyed vireo, boreal chickadee, stilt sandpiper, the white-winged gulls, little blue heron and snowy egret. The caspian tern, black-bellied plover and dowitcher have been on old lists. The starred (\*) birds seem to be the best bet.

Northern coverage makes the difference. Coverage of northern sections was a little better than usual, and contributed significantly to the record-breaking list. One count - Group H - was made exclusively in northern Warren County. Indicative of the great variety to be found was the 99 species recorded there. All in all twelve species, which were missed elsewhere, were recorded in one northern area. Among these twelve were the yellow-bellied sapsucker, red-breasted nuthatch, mourning warbler, solitary vireo, and the barred owl, in addition to the seven recorded by Group H only.

Capsule commentary on the species.

**Hérons:** Only one great blue could be located. No one knows a reliable place for black-crowns.

**Canada Goose:** The flight of 127 over Black Creek early in the morning was just as impressive as the first "v" I ever saw.

**Ducks, Loons and others:** Saratoga Lake again proves its worth by adding at least 14 species to the list. But a week later it is barren.

**Hawks:** Numbers were definitely down, especially red-shouldered hawks. Migrating broad-wings were not too hard to come by.

**Turkey:** No one ventured into the southern area to find one, and maybe missed an orchard oriole or Kentucky warbler, too.

**Rails and Gallinules:** In spite of early morning efforts, they were still hard to find. This shows that although they may be there, some days you just cannot win. How come none of those gallinules sounded off?

**Shorebirds:** A respectable list with the dunlin and turnstone outstanding. No semipalmated plover though.

**Gulls and Terns:** Again hurrah for Saratoga. At least 20-25 each of Bonapartes and black terns.

**Owls:** Three this year - not bad! If we could only pre-locate some of the others.

- Woodpeckers: Red-heads were seen on May 16 in Schoharie County.  
 Flycatchers: Most groups had trouble with the pewees and Traill's.  
 Swallows: Everybody sees purple martins these days, but no one knows where the cliff swallows are. We need a change in emphasis.  
 Thrushes: Swainson's low in numbers and no one glimpsed the gray-checked.  
 Kinglets: Uncommon as usual.  
 Vireos: The solitary was tough to find this year.  
 Warblers: Good variety, but numbers were low. Oh, for those days when they seemed to be everywhere. Yellows and chestnut-sided were abundant.  
 Sparrows: True to form - a few lingering tree sparrows were unusual. No one glimpsed a Lincoln's - and that is not at all unusual.

Participants and Areas (The species listed with each group are those species seen by that group only):

- Group A- G. Angst, 6:30 am. to 3:00 pm. Rosendale-River Roads, Lock 7, Sparrowbush Road, Vischer Ponds, Crescent. 70 species. Philadelphia vireo.
- Group B- Chester, Gladys and Naomi Zimmer. Gallupville and vicinity in Schoharie County. 51 species. Pigeon hawk.
- Group C- John, David and Michael Harrison and John and James Steadwell, 7:00 am. to 8:00 pm. Vischer Ferry, Scotia. 53 species.
- Group D- Benton Seguin, Guy Bartlett and Esly Hallenbeck, 5:30 am. to 9:15 pm. Stony Creek Reservoir, Round Lake, Saratoga Lake, Congress Park, Vischer Ferry, Lock 7, Lisha Kill, Niskayuna Widewaters, Albany Airport, Karner, Central Park, Watervliet Reservoir, Meadowdale, Black Creek Marshes. 114 species. Pied-billed grebe, greater scaup, oldsquaw, ruddy duck, red-breasted merganser, greater yellowlegs, pectoral sandpiper, semipalmated sandpiper, yellow-bellied flycatcher, blue-gray gnatcatcher.
- Group E- Mrs. Robert Arnold, Betty Hicks, Mary Johnston, Mary Finch and Hazel Eddy, 5:00 am. to 5:30 pm. Meadowdale, Vly Creek Reservoir, Indian Ladder, Watervliet Reservoir, Karner Niskayuna Widewaters, Rosendale Road. 92 species. Traill's flycatcher.
- Group F- Pauline Baker, Helen Budlong, Eleanor Byrne, Neil Gomberg, Byron Hipple, Sally Kelly, Pat and Virginia Malone, Leo and Stella Novak, Helen O'Meara, Lucille Roberts, Mrs. F. Samuels, Lillian Stoner (compiler), and Lee Thomas. The observers were not together all the time, 5:00 am. to 8:00 pm. Washington Park, Cary Road, Fuller and Karner Roads, Albany Airport, Niskayuna Widewaters, Meadowdale, Thacher Park, South Bethlehem, Hudson River - west side to Van Wie Point and east side to marshes. 97 species. Ruby-crowned kinglet.
- Group G- Walt Sabin, Dr. Peter Wickham, Dr. Donald Tucker, Dr. Hollis Ingraham, Dr. Robert Korns and Sam Madison (part of the time), 3:00 am. to 9:30 pm. Black Creek Marshes, Indian

Ladder, Meadowdale, Watervliet Reservoir, Karner, Albany Airport, Niskayuna Widewaters, Stony Creek Reservoir, Vischer Ferry, Round and Saratoga Lakes, Jenny Lake, Corinth. 129 species. Horned grebe, double-crested cormorant, great blue heron, marsh hawk, sora, dunlin, common tern, blue-winged teal, mourning warbler, Wilson's warbler.

Group H- John and Stephen Fuller and a friend. Schroon Lake and northern Warren County. 99 species. Common merganser, ruddy turnstone, great horned owl, cliff swallow, gold-crowned kinglet, pine warbler, evening grosbeak.

The list - 162 Species - Century Run 1965.

|                      |          |                       |          |
|----------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|
| Common Loon          | d gh     | Ring-billed Gull      | a de gh  |
| Horned Grebe         | g        | Bonaparte's Gull      | d g      |
| Pied-billed Grebe    | d        | Common Tern           | g        |
| Double-cr. Cormorant | g        | Black Tern            | gh       |
| Great Blue Heron     | g        | Mourning Dove         | abcdefgh |
| Green Heron          | a defgh  | Yellow-b. Cuckoo      | efg      |
| American Bittern     | defgh    | Black-b. Cuckoo       | b def    |
| Canada Goose         | e g      | Screech Owl           | fg       |
| Mallard              | a defgh  | Great Horned Owl      | h        |
| Black Duck           | a cdefgh | Barred Owl            | gh       |
| Green-winged Teal    | gh       | Whip-poor-will        | e gh     |
| Blue-winged Teal     | de g     | Common Nighthawk      | c g      |
| Wood Duck            | defgh    | Chimney Swift         | abcdefgh |
| Greater Scaup        | d        | Ruby-thr. Hummingbird | bcdefgh  |
| Lesser Scaup         | gh       | Belted Kingfisher     | bcdefgh  |
| Oldsquaw             | d        | Yellow-sh. Flicker    | abcdefgh |
| Common Scoter        | d g      | Pileated Woodpecker   | b defg   |
| Ruddy Duck           | d        | Yell.-b. Sapsucker    | gh       |
| Common Merganser     | h        | Hairy Woodpecker      | b defg   |
| Red-br. Merganser    | d        | Downy Woodpecker      | abcdefgh |
| Red-tailed Hawk      | efgh     | Eastern Kingbird      | abcdefgh |
| Broad-winged Hawk    | a de gh  | Gr. Cr. Flycatcher    | a defgh  |
| Marsh Hawk           | g        | Eastern Phoebe        | ab defgh |
| Osprey               | d h      | Yellow-b. Flycatcher  | d        |
| Pigeon Hawk          | b        | Traill's Flycatcher   | e        |
| Sparrow Hawk         | a defgh  | Least Flycatcher      | ab defgh |
| Ruffed Grouse        | b d      | Eastern Wood Pewee    | b ef     |
| Bobwhite             | defg     | Horned Lark           | cdefg    |
| Ring-n. Pheasant     | cdefgh   | Tree Swallow          | abcdefgh |
| Virginia Rail        | d g      | Bank Swallow          | a cdefgh |
| Sora                 | g        | Rough-w. Swallow      | abcd fgh |
| Killdeer             | abcdefg  | Barn Swallow          | abcdefgh |
| Ruddy Turnstone      | h        | Cliff Swallow         | h        |
| American Woodcock    | defgh    | Purple Martin         | a cd fgh |
| Common Snipe         | de g     | Blue Jay              | abcdefgh |
| Upland Plover        | d g      | Common Crow           | abcdefgh |
| Spotted Sandpiper    | ab defgh | Blk-c. Chickadee      | abcdefgh |
| Solitary Sandpiper   | cde gh   | Tufted Titmouse       | d f      |
| Greater Yellowlegs   | d        | White-br. Nuthatch    | ab defgh |
| Pectoral Sandpiper   | d        | Red-br. Nuthatch      | gh       |
| Least Sandpiper      | d fgh    | Brown Creeper         | d fgh    |
| Dunlin               | g        | House Wren            | abcdefgh |
| Semipal. Sandpiper   | d        | Winter Wren           | e h      |
| Great Blk-b. Gull    | d g      | Long-b. Marsh Wren    | de g     |
| Herring Gull         | a cd fgh | Catbird               | abcdefgh |

|                       |          |                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|
| Brown Thrasher        | a defgh  | Prairie               | e w      |
| Robin                 | abcdefgh | Swainson              | a cdefgh |
| Wood Thrush           | a cdefgh | Northern Waterthrush  | b g      |
| Hermit Thrush         | gh       | La. Waterthrush       | a de gh  |
| Swainson's Thrush     | c f h    | Mourning              | g        |
| Veery                 | ab defgh | Yellowthroat          | abcdefgh |
| Eastern Bluebird      | b d fgh  | Yellow-br. Chat       | e g      |
| Blue-gray Gnatcatcher |          | Wilson's              | g        |
| Golden-cr Kinglet     | h        | Canada                | a defgh  |
| Ruby-cr. Kinglet      |          | American Redstart     | abcdefgh |
| Cedar Waxwing         | fgh      | House Sparrow         | abcdefgh |
| Starling              | abcdefgh | Bobolink              | abcdefg  |
| Yellow-thr. Vireo     | a cdefg  | Eastern Meadowlark    | ab defgh |
| Solitary Vireo        | gh       | Red-w. Blackbird      | abcdefgh |
| Red-eyed Vireo        | a defgh  | Baltimore Oriole      | abcdefgh |
| Philadelphia Vireo    | a        | Common Grackle        | abcdefgh |
| Warbling Vireo        | ab defgh | Brown-h. Cowbird      | abcdefgh |
| Warblers              |          | Scarlet Tanager       | a cdefgh |
| Black and White       | defgh    | Cardinal              | abcdefg  |
| Worm-eating           | fg       | Rose-br. Grosbeak     | abcdefgh |
| Golden-winged         | a defg   | Indigo Bunting        | a defg   |
| Blue-winged           | g        | Evening Grosbeak      | h        |
| Tennessee             | a d fg   | Purple Finch          | b d gh   |
| Nashville             | a d gh   | American Goldfinch    | abcdefgh |
| Parula                | d f      | Rufous-sided Towhee   | abcdefgh |
| Yellow                | abcdefgh | Savannah Sparrow      | defgh    |
| Magnolia              | a cdefgh | Grasshopper Sparrow   | efg      |
| Cape May              | a c g    | Henslow's Sparrow     | d gh     |
| Black-thr. Blue       | cd fgh   | Vesper Sparrow        | defg     |
| Myrtle                | a cdefg  | Slate-colored Junco   | c gh     |
| Black-thr. Green      | defgh    | American Tree Sparrow | f h      |
| Blackburnian          | a defgh  | Chipping Sparrow      | abcdefgh |
| Chestnut-sided        | ab defgh | Field Sparrow         | ab defgh |
| Bay-breasted          | d f      | White-cr. Sparrow     | a f      |
| Blackpoll             | def      | White-thr. Sparrow    | a cdefgh |
| Pine                  | h        | Swamp Sparrow         | a defgh  |
|                       |          | Song Sparrow          | abcdefgh |

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE RECOVERY OF A BANDED BARN SWALLOW

Robert P. Yunick

The date was August 29, 1964; the place Vischer Ponds. I arrived at 5:30 am. to enjoy a delightful sunrise in the cool, humid air with a delicate veil of mist hanging over the ponds. Mixed with the songs and calls of various land birds were the notes of shorebirds and occasional quacks of waterfowl. The clarion call of the greater yellowlegs was most distinctive. The almost complete lack of man-made noises amid this natural chorus made the early morning sounds all the more titillating to the ear.

I was tending my mist nets set the evening before amid some shorebird decoys on a mudflat near the entrance to the ponds. Near the river were some additional nets set along an open field edge for sparrows. It proved to be a very active morning, for by time I furled my nets at 2 pm., I had taken 65 birds of 16 species including 15 shorebirds of eight species. Most noteworthy at the

time was the capture of a snipe and the near capture of a Virginia rail. During various times of the morning I saw Carl Runge, Esly Hallenbeck and Phil Clark. Mary Linch and Mary Johnston were helping to remove netted birds.

Among the seemingly inauspicious birds banded that day were 11 immature barn swallows. Adult barn swallows are quite net wary and have excellent eyesight to detect mist nets. Early that morning a number of swallows moved intently north to south over the ponds. Some of these coursed low over the adjoining fields and among them these 11 less experienced, younger birds fell to the nets.

In due course their banding was reported to the Fish and Wildlife Service. On March 12, 1965 there arrived one of those white envelopes labeled "Official Business" from the United States Department of the Interior. These envelopes usually cause the pulse to quicken and are opened in great haste to see what treasure they contain. This one was a real treat, for it concerned a barn swallow, 71-98120, banded August 29, 1964 at Vischer Ponds. It was a carbon copy of the information sent to the reporter of the band. Beside giving my banding data for the bird, it carried, "The information from the addressee above is as follows:

Species: Swallow                      Date: October 12, 1964

Taken at: Aboard ship off coast of Panama      How: Found dead."

This was my first recovery of a banded bird outside of North America. To add to the international flavor, the "addressee" was Mr. P.H. Erkens of Rotterdam, Holland!

However, the story did not end here. I was far from satisfied with the amount of recovery data, so on March 13, 1965 I wrote to Mr. Erkens. I really did not expect a reply, because experience had dictated that people do not answer such inquiries - at least I had yet to receive a reply from such a letter written to band recoverers, except for other banders, in the United States. I was concerned about the weather at the time of recovery and how freshly "dead" the bird was. A ship at sea can cover considerable area and it is conceivable for this bird to have been encountered elsewhere and carried some distance aboard ship. Beside asking numerous questions about the recovery, I told Mr. Erkens that Schenectady had been settled by the Dutch and that nearby we had a town called Rotterdam. I thanked him for his report.

Much to my great surprise on April 22, 1965 I received an air mail envelope bearing no less than 49 cents postage from P.H. Erkens posted in Wilmington, California of all places. Inside was a letter, a colored picture postcard of m.v. Dongedyk of the Holland-American line, a descriptive brochure illustrating the various ships and describing how to sail from the West Coast to Europe via the Panama Canal; and finally an attractive magazine entitled, "Rotterdam," which is the magazine of the city of Rotterdam and which is published quarterly in English, Dutch and German. I sometimes think that we Americans have much to learn.

Mr. Erkens' letter, written April 18 in Los Angeles, follows:

"Dear Mr. Yunick,

After some delay your letter reached me yesterday here in Los Angeles, to where it was forwarded from Rotterdam, Neth....



It was certainly quite interesting to learn where these birds came from, and we are sure glad you are so kind to give us the details.

Our data are as follows: We left Cristobal, Canal Zone very early in the morning bound for Europe. Thus we were in the Caribbean, during part of the day within sight of the coast of Panama. In the morning heavy clouds and in the afternoon sunny and very hot. Sometime in the morning we noticed a few dozen of swallows circling the ship. They stayed with us the whole day and later in the afternoon they settled here and there on deck where the crew could easily take them up. They were clearly exhausted. Our chief cook, who has always several kinds of birds in his cabin, took care of them and in the evening he had maybe 12 or 15 gathered. He tried to give them some water, but food they would not take since they are insect eaters if I am right. Gradually they had all died in the next 36 hours. I think mainly of exhaustion. I do not know what makes them stay with a ship since land was reasonably close. We intended to keep them until the Caribbean islands but they didn't make it. This is then the information regarding the barn swallow banded by you.

On the same voyage we also had a sparrow hawk while we were off Guatemala, perhaps attracted by a lot of flycatchers. The flycatchers usually die very soon. The sparrow hawk we let go in Panama, he was a good meat eater. We also had for a few months a Baird's ? or Cassin's ? sparrow who could get along pretty well with the other cage birds the chief cook had during that trip. Three banded pigeons were our guests for three months, they came on board just out of the English Channel; but the 'ring bureau' notified us if the owners didn't send notice they wanted them, we had to kill them. We let them go anyway later. Thank you for your interesting letter sir..... Sincere regards and hoping to be of service to you in the future.

Yours truly

P.H.Erkens"  
(signed)

Thus the barn swallow had continued its migration 44 days after banding and nearly 2500 direct air-miles later. It had almost reached the northern limit of the winter range of the barn swallow. Bent describes this northern limit as Columbia. Apparently many interesting ornithological happenings take place aboard ship. The September-October, 1964 and January-February, 1965 issues of AUDUBON MAGAZINE carry two very interesting stories by J.P.Perkins of his observations on an ore boat on the Great Lakes. I recommend them for your reading.

The remains of the bird which bore band number 71-98120 probably lie at the bottom of the Caribbean along with not only the remains of its 12 or 15 contemporaries of October 12, 1964, but also the remains of untold millions of birds that have perished over thousands of years on their perilous migratory journeys between continents.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### CORRECTION

In the last issue of FEATHERS (Vol. 27, No. 2, Mar.-Apr., 1965) the caption under the picture on p. 23 should read 750 Western (not Washington) Avenue. Also, p. 24, par. 7, end of line 2 should read Western (not Washington) Avenue.

**NEWS AND NOTES IN BRIEF**STATISTICIANS' NOTE

Statements in some popular field guides concerning the identification of Oregon juncos are misleading, resulting in many erroneous reports of this species. A correct and adequate field identification distinguishing an Oregon junco from races of the slate-colored junco and from hybrids must be based not only on the sharp line of demarcation between the colors of the hood and sides, but also on a careful and clear observation that the black or grayish of the back of the head meets the brown of the back in a sharp line of demarcation. Verifying write-ups, of course, should be required to make it very evident that both these demarcations were studied under good circumstances and were seen clearly. The color of sides, back, and various parts of the hood should also be described as exactly as possible.

The statisticians believe that the confused and questionable taxonomic status of the hybrids and hybrid-like juncos grouped together under the name *Junco hyemalis cismontanus* is such that at the present time it would be undesirable for the PROTHONOTARY to publish sight records of this uncertain and controversial so-called subspecies of the slate-colored junco. Collected specimens that can be made into museum study skins, however, will be of considerable interest and value. Brown-backed juncos, including ones fitting some of the descriptions presently assigned to *J. h. cismontanus*, appear to have increased notably in the East during the past decade, and a fairly active birder can now see several or many in the Niagara Frontier Region during an average year. (From PROTHONOTARY, Vol. 31, No. 1, January, 1965, page 5; published by Buffalo Ornithological Society, Inc.) -- G.B.

FIELD TRIP REMINDER

Cliff Tepper asks that those persons planning on attending the Consalus Vly trip on Sunday, June 20 please bring along some form of protective footwear. The bog is wet and overshoes or a waterproof boot is desirable if one is to enjoy the trek through the area.

\* \* \* \* \*

**EDITOR'S NOTES**CONGRATULATIONS

It seems that the Audubon Wildlife Film season just ended and already next year's is arranged. In any event, the SBC owes its thanks to Eleanor and Barry for their fine job of an efficiently planned and smoothly run operation. It is not easy to accommodate nearly a thousand people and care for the seemingly endless detail that arises in such an endeavor. Congratulations to Eleanor and Barry for their fine effort and results.

SHOREBIRD RECOVERIES

Notice of some interesting shorebird recoveries appeared recently in the banding literature. From THE RING (Series A, Vol. IV, No. 42, p.103, Feb., 1965) a brief review of banding in Japan mentions the banding of 18 turnstones in May, 1962 near Tokyo. Twenty days later one of these birds was recovered 440 km. (about 2550 miles) away on the eastern coast of Arctic Siberia. The turnstone breeds in Siberia and Alaska and was believed that the Siberian birds migrate via Japan and the Alaskan birds via North America. However, another one of those 18 turnstones was recovered two years later in August, 1964 at Pribilof Island, Alaska indicating some exchange of migration between the two hemispheres. Two such recoveries from a group of 18 birds is truly remarkable.

Another recovery of significance was reported in BIRD-BANDING (Vol. 36, No. 2, p.112, April, 1965) and involved the Siberian recovery of a pectoral sandpiper. The bird was banded on September 20, 1961 near Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. It was shot within the Arctic Circle at 68°30'N, 134°45'E along the Yana River at Yanskij, Yakut, U.S.S.R. on May 28, 1963. The recovery area is 1560 miles west of the western tip of Alaska and 3800 miles west, via the Bering Straits, of the banding area in Saskatchewan. The bird was quite possibly shot on its breeding grounds. Since the wintering area of this species is Peru, southern Bolivia, and northern Argentina south to Patagonia, and since most of the migratory movement appears east of the Rocky Mountains, it appears that the migration involves a movement of about 2500 miles east before a southerly movement of about 7200 miles. Such a trip would involve approximately 20,000 miles per year.

CAMPING ANYONE

The Government Printing Office recently released a notice on the sale of various camping brochures covering the Appalachian Trail, National Park System, Backpacking in the National Forest, Camping, National Forest Vacations, etc. All are at nominal cost. They, and information about them, are available from the Superintendent of Documents, Gov. Print. Off., Washington, D.C., 20402

SCHENECTADY MUSEUM

Plans for a new Schenectady Museum building in the Urban Renewal Plot in Schenectady appear to be progressing as indicated by the recent selection of a New York architectural firm for the construction. A building of 40,000 square feet and of "contemporary design" is planned. The location of the 60-year old present Museum building is being sought as a site for a new school.

HERONRY SURVEY

Mr. W.E. Benning of Clyde, New York is once again appealing to the bird clubs of the State to participate in a heronry survey. Last year's survey helped to locate a number of nesting areas. The results will appear in THE KINGBIRD. Peter Wickham will gladly receive your reports of any local heronries. The information will be collected and reported to Mr. Benning. Beside indicating location, please give, as best possible, a nest count, number of young per nest, type of habitat, is it a new or an old heronry? On what dates was it observed?

WORLD TOUR

The last issue carried a note about birding having come of age. The following indicates this to an even greater extent. Treasure Tours, Inc. is sponsoring a six-week "field trip" billed as "The World of Birds - Selected Ornithological Areas on a Journey Around the World." The transportation is primarily by KLM and JAL. The trip will include two weeks in Japan; the tropical and subtropical offerings of Hong Kong, Bangkok and Rajasthan in India; as well as the alpine life zones of Kashmir's Himalayas. The group will be one of the first organized tours of naturalists to visit Russia. The Arctic Circle will be crossed in Finland. The trip's finale is Holland's Island of Texel. Departure was 1400 hours 6 June from San Francisco for the sum of \$2,565 U.S.

If you prefer Africa, SAS and Swissair will take you on an ornithological safari sponsored by the Clara Laughlin Travel Services, Inc. This one costs \$1,998 and departs from New York on July 10 for Zurich. The first African stop is Nairobi, and includes a stay at the Tree Tops Hotel - a tree hotel 40 feet off the ground built over a water hole visited by rhino, buffalo and elephant. Other stops will be Mt. Kenya and various preserves. The trip ends August 2 with a flight from London to New York.

If you think that rounding up leaders for local field trips has its problems, can you imagine the predicament of the field trip committee in naming local leaders for these little jaunts?

Ry

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## BIRD INFORMATION CENTER TO BEGIN

Peter P. Wickham

Chairman, Records Committee

The records committee of the Schenectady Bird Club is instituting a new "information center" for the use of Club members. The information center will supplement the rare bird alert. It will deal with species of more regular occurrence than those reported on the RBA, but ones which members might like to observe nonetheless. This service will begin September 1.

The information center, for the present, will be located in the homes of the three members of the records committee. Club members wishing to know what interesting species of birds have been seen recently should call one of these members, and will receive from him a short summary. This should, we believe, be somewhat analogous to the system which has been used for a number of years in eastern Massachusetts. In addition, if the caller wished to see a particular species, he could ask about this specifically. In this way, members may be able to see birds which, while not of RBA-rarity, may still have evaded their own life lists. Local directions will be given, except in cases where this information is contained in the SBC "Baedeker".

The center will work only if SBC members are willing to use it both ways. In other words, if you want to receive information from it - you must feed information into it. This information must be relayed rapidly or the information center will not be useful. We suggest that SBC members, upon completion of a trip, call that same day to one of the members of the records committee who will relay the information to the others.

The reason for setting up a triumvirate is simply to enable any person to be absent without hampering the action of the information center. Persons calling one number, and receiving no answer, should then try another one until they reach a member of the committee.

We emphasize that this proposal is an untried one, and we anticipate some changes will be necessary in its actual operation. However, we believe that this service should be of real value to SBC members in enabling them to enjoy the varied birdlife of our area more fully.

The records committee:

Walton Sabin  
Donald Tucker  
Peter Wickham

Telephone 439-1144  
Telephone 877-8740  
Telephone 477-6345

## A MORNING IN POKOMOKE SWAMP

Peter P. Wickham

( Ed. note. This past June, Pete and Louise Wickham visited some friends on the eastern shore of Maryland. While there, Pete was "induced" to visit Pocomoke Swamp near Snow Hill, Md. Here is his report-- )

As we entered the swamp that morning, daylight was filtering very gradually through its tall trees. We disembarked from the car, and walked along the road; the air was damp and heavy about us, and mist obscured the tops of many of the trees. Somewhere in among them, a red-shouldered hawk squealed. Several great blue herons flapped ponderously over, leaving some hidden roost.

After a quarter-mile or so, the road passed over the Pocomoke River. The water was a rich brown, of the color and transparency of "regular" coffee. The foliage of the bushes bordering the stream was extremely dense, so that ears, rather than eyes, were primarily relied upon for finding and identifying birds. Just beyond the stream, a path wound along its bank. Even though this path was but six feet, or less, from the edge of the water, the lushness of the foliage was such that it was virtually impossible to see any of the other side.

At one point, an emphatic two-parted song strange to the writer was heard. The singer - situated on the other side of the stream - was never located, since even the bush or tree in which he was singing could not be seen! Another bird, however, singing the same type of song, was soon found on our side of the stream. It turned out to be an acadian flycatcher - apparently one of the commonest species in the swamp.

The best method of seeing birds in all this greenery seemed to be to stand in one place and squeak - and let the birds come to us. Several prothonotary warblers and redstarts were attracted into conspicuous perches nearby through this technique.

Returning to the road, we heard other songs, including those of the hooded, Kentucky and worm-eating warblers. At one place, we plunged into the woods seeking another unknown singer. This warbler was soon found in the top of a tall loblolly pine. Our view spotlighted him against the sun - naturally! Due to the foliage, we could not find another view of him in this tree. He soon flew off, however, and was heard from another perch deeper in the woods. This farce was repeated many times in the ensuing half-hour. The bird was always in the top of a tall pine, although the woods were primarily deciduous. Finally we gave up, impatient and humiliated at having missed a probable yellow-throated warbler.

As we were coming out of the swamp, we stopped where an open patch of foot-high pines grew on one side of the road. Somewhere nearby, a tanager was singing. We walked into the patch of young pines and then saw him in a taller pine at its edge. While he sang and preened, we obtained an unforgettable view of a lavishly red summer tanager (Wow)! Returning to the car, our attention was diverted by some little piping notes. Finally the

composers appeared - some brown-headed nuthatches. Restless and playful, they reminded us more of chickadees than our own deliberate nuthatches.

While we had been in the swamp, the busyness of people and the passage of time seemed unimportant and far-distant. As we emerged from the woods, we suddenly felt the heat. Turkey vultures soared and banked on the rising thermals. Activity in the swamp also was moderating to cope with the heat of the day as we leisurely left the area. Our list totaled 56 species of birds, including red-bellied woodpecker, blue-gray gnatcatcher, yellow-throated and white-eyed vireos, Louisiana waterthrush, and parula and pine warblers.

\* \* \* \* \*

## BRIEFING THE RECORD

# WESTERN TANGER FEATURES SPRING RECORDS

THE SEASON - SPRING - APRIL 1 to MAY 31, 1965

Peter P. Wickham, Records Committee Chairman

April was a rather cold month, with an average temperature at Albany of  $42.2^{\circ}$ ,  $4.0^{\circ}$  below normal. Particularly cool periods were April 1-4, 17-19, and 23-27. Precipitation totaled 2.38 in., 0.39 in. below average. May was extremely dry, with a total precipitation of 1.22 in., 2.25 in. below average. Temperatures averaged  $59.6^{\circ}$ ,  $1.7^{\circ}$  above average. Warm periods included May 3-4, 9-12, 22, 26 and 27; cooler than average periods included May 13-15, 21, 23-24 and 29-31.

The most outstanding feature of the season was the lack of precipitation or even cloud cover during most of late April and May. As a result, the landbird migration for the most part was spectacularly unimpressive. Very few waves were noted, and transients, particularly in May, were difficult to find. However, nesting warblers and vireos in more northern areas seemed in good numbers despite the paucity of local reports. Most probably, "waves" of landbirds were not grounded and passed on directly to nesting areas without stopping, due to the favorable weather conditions.

Hawks and other predators, especially owls, continued their alarming decline: it seems quite evident now that particularly those nesting in this or nearby areas (as opposed to migrants through the area) have been most affected, as many species are wholly absent from former breeding localities. Numbers of migrants seen were very low, too. The drought of four years' duration, perhaps combined with other factors, continues to adversely affect populations of rails, pied-billed grebes, bitterns, great blue herons and other marsh species.

The increase of southern species such as the cardinal, mockingbird and tufted titmouse seems to be accelerating this year. The Carolina wren, on the other hand, has not reappeared in the

region since the severe winters several years ago when the species was eliminated from the area.

The shore bird migration was again, as in 1964, the most rewarding feature of the season. Especially good flights were noted May 23 and 26. Outstanding shore bird records included ruddy turnstone, black-bellied plover, white-rumped sandpiper, dunlin and a group of 18 semipalmated plover.

Other unusual species included red-throated loon, double-crested cormorant, cattle egret, shoveller, common scoter, Iceland gull, barn owl, yellow-bellied flycatcher, blue-gray gnatcatcher, migrant shrike, Philadelphia vireo and Kentucky warbler. The western tanager reported below may be the most "exciting" find of the year.

Abbreviations used: (ad)- Alan Devoe Bird Club record; arr- arrived; BCM- Black Creek Marshes; Co-County; com- common; CP- Central Park, Schenectady; EG- East Greenbush; (gc)- Greene County Bird Club record; IL- Indian Ladder; imm- immature; L- Lake; LK- Lisha Kill; max- maximum; nr- near; NWW- Niskayuna Wide Waters; rep(s)- report(s); repd- reported; Res- Reservoir; RL- Round Lake; (sbc)- Schenectady Bird Club field trip; SCR- Stony Creek Reservoir; SL- Saratoga Lake; TR- Tomhannock Reservoir; VF- Vischer Ferry Game Management Area. In many cases, species names are abbreviated. These abbreviations are too numerous to list. Since checklist order is used, the complete names are readily obtained from a checklist.

Observers: (GB)- Guy Bartlett; (HE)- Hazel Eddy; (JF)- John Fuller; (EH)- Esly Hallenbeck; (MK)- Marcia Kent; (DR)- David Rothaupt; (BRS)- Benton Seguin; (WBS)- Walton Sabin; (RS&MLS)- Robert and Mary Lou Shedd; (DJT)- Dr. Donald Tucker; (PPW)- Dr. Peter Wickham; (RPY)- Dr. Robert Yunick; (GMZ)- Gladys Zimmer; (bsh)- Guy Bartlett, Benton Seguin and Barrington Havens.

### LOONS - DUCKS

Com Loon: Apr 10, SL (sbc), first (late)- May 22, RL (PPW, DJT).  
 Red-thr Loon: one Apr 29, SL (BRS)- rare spring migrant.  
 Red-necked Grebe: only one, Apr 14, SL (EH).  
 Horned Grebe: Apr 3, Four-mile Point (ad)- May 21, Alcove Res (WBS et al.).  
 Pied-billed Grebe: good migration, last May 15, SL (BRS, GB, EH); none known nesting.  
Double-crested Cormorant: one at SL May 15 was seen both flying and sitting on the lake (WBS, DJT, PPW).  
 Great Blue Heron: rather uncommon, seen throughout the period.  
 Cattle Egret: becoming of rare but regular occurrence in late Apr and early May. One rep: one, May 4-5, NWW (DJT et al.).  
 Green Heron: first Apr 28, Vly (gc) and widely the first week of May, late.  
 Amer Bittern: first Apr 29, BCM (RS, MLS), late.  
 Canada Goose: a good flight, flocks of over 100 repd Apr 10, 11, 15, 19, May 1, 2, and 15, last May 15, BCM (sbc).  
 Brant: only reps- 38, SL, May 19 (GB, BRS) and one, Alcove Res, May 21 (WBS)- contrast with the flights of last spring.  
 Snow Goose: a flock of 30 flew over South Schodack Apr 5 (ad) and one (possibly an escape?) remained at a pond in Old Chatham



- for about two weeks in late Apr (ad).  
 Gadwall: two reps- Apr 22, Basic Res (gc) and two, May 2 Water-  
 vliet Res (bsh).  
 Amer Widgeon: repd regularly to May 2; a male was at NWW May 14-  
 19 (DJT,bsh).  
 Pintail: last May 2, West Sand L (Katherine Bordt).  
 Green-w Teal: repd through period to May 19, NWW (GB,BRS).  
Shoveler: two Apr 4 (ad), Four-mile Point; and three, NWW, May 1  
 (PPW) the only reps.  
 Redhead: two May 29, very late, Embought (gc) the only rep.  
 Ring-necked Duck: a good flight, last May 1, Vly (sbc), max 50  
 SL Apr 10 (sbc).  
 Canvasback: only reps- two, Watervliet Res Apr 3 (PPW); three, SL  
 Apr 10 (BRS); and three, Coxsackie, May 8 (gc).  
 Scaup: last May 15, SL (sbc).  
 Com Goldeneye: most left rapidly in mid-Apr, last May 12, SL  
 (GB,BRS).  
 Bufflehead: good numbers in Apr, last May 1 (sbc).  
 Oldsquaw: at least six reps of 1-4 birds Apr 3- May 15 at Basic  
 Res and SL.  
 White-w Scoter: one, May 1, SL and two May 8, SL (GB,BRS) the  
 only reps.  
Com Scoter: five, SL, May 15 and one SL, May 19 (sbc) very unusual,  
 as this species is very rare in spring in this area.  
 Ruddy Duck: repd Apr 4, Four-mile Point (ad) and at SL Apr 10,  
 14 and May 15 (sbc).  
 Hooded Merganser: most left by Apr 17, one straggler, a female,  
 May 19, VF (GB,BRS).  
 Com Merganser: regularly repd into May, last May 10, SL (DJT) and  
 May 12, Schroon L (JF,DR).  
 Red-breasted Merganser: repd to May 15, SL (GB,BRS,EH).

HAWKS - OWLS

- Turkey Vulture: very scarce, only five reps during period.  
 Sharp-shinned Hawk: only three reps.  
 Cooper's Hawk: only one rep- May 21, Jenny L (GB).  
 Red-tailed Hawk: fewer than usual.  
 Red-shouldered Hawk: six reps, Apr 3- May 14.  
 Broad-winged Hawk: marked influx after Apr 19 with several small  
 flights observed.  
 Rough-legged Hawk: several Apr reps, last Apr 17.  
 Bald Eagle: an imm remained at SCR throughout the period (many  
 observers).  
 Marsh Hawk: seven reps, Apr 3- May 19.  
 Osprey: good numbers seen, Apr 17- May 15, max 9 Apr 24,SCR(bsh).  
 Bob-white: repd from BCM, EG, Greenville, Nassau and Sand Lake.  
 Virginia Rail: first Apr 18, BCM (bsh), relatively few reps.  
 Sora: three reps, BCM, Apr 30- May 15.  
 Com Gallinule: light influx from May 1 on, few repd in usual .  
 nesting areas.  
 Amer Coot: 1-2 repd in at least four areas Apr 9-30.  
 Semipalmated Plover: good flight May 16-31, max 18 May 26 nr  
 Scotia (RPY).  
Black-bellied Plover: one May 26 nr Scotia (RPY) was unusual.  
Ruddy Turnstone: one May 15 on rocky outcropping on Schroon L  
 (JF,DR,Stephen Fuller) was the first record in several years  
 in the area.  
 Amer Woodcock: frequently repd throughout period from most parts  
 of the region.

- Upland Plover: repd from Craig School May 1 and 15 (GB,BRS); Niskayuna May 5 (PPW); Gallupville May 12 (GMZ) and Albany Airport May 15 (WBS,DJT,PPW).
- Spotted Sandpiper: first Apr 29, BCM (RS,MLS), widely first week of May.
- Solitary Sandpiper: May 4, Elnora (DJT)- May 21, Scotia (RPY).
- Greater Yellowlegs: scattered reps, mostly Apr 18, BCM (bsh)- May 23, Niskayuna (RPY).
- Lesser Yellowlegs: arr Apr 29, SCR (BRS), rather early; three other reps, May 10-28.
- Pectoral Sandpiper: more observed than usual, May 15-31, max seven May 26, SCR (EH).
- Least Sandpiper: heavy flight, May 6-31, max 30 May 15 at SCR and SL (BRS,GB,EH); 20 May 23, Scotia and 16 May 26 Scotia (RPY).
- Dunlin: one, SCR, May 15 (WBS,DJT,PPW) only rep.
- Semipalmated Sandpiper: few, May 13-31.
- White-rumped Sandpiper: lone rep- two at SCR May 31 (BRS,RPY).
- Iceland Gull: a bird in pale plumage was seen with a large group of herring and ring-billed gulls at RL Apr 3 (bsh).
- Great Black-backed Gull: repd regularly through Apr, last May 15, SL (sbc), late.
- Bonaparte's Gull: good numbers observed Apr 11- May 15 at SL and Basic Res, max 25 May 15, SL (WBS,DJT,PPW).
- Com Tern: a few reps, Apr 27- May 15, last May 29, NWW (PPW), late.
- Black Tern: first Apr 29, RL (BRS), early; max 25 SL May 15 (WBS, DJT,PPW), last May 29, NWW (PPW).
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo: arr May 8, Catskill (gc), and generally subsequent week.
- Black-billed Cuckoo: arr widely May 10 (DJT).
- Barn Owl: one was seen at Meadowdale May 9 roosting in a white pine (WBS); subsequent efforts failed to find it again.
- Screech Owl: very few repd- only two reps.
- Horned Owl: repd from several areas.
- Barred Owl: repd only in Jenny L and Schroon L areas.

GOATSUCKERS - SHRIKES

- Whip-poor-will: first Apr 23, nr New Salem (Charles Brown), several reps about May 1.
- Com Nighthawk: first May 15, most arr nr end of May.
- Chimney Swift: first Apr 21, Ghent (ad), widely repd by May 1.
- Ruby-thr Hummingbird: one individual, quite early, at Greenville May 1 (gc); most arr in marked influx May 9-15.
- Pileated Woodpecker: at least a dozen probably different birds repd.
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: frequently repd; migration dates, Apr 12, Westerlo (MK)- May 5, Niskayuna (HE,EH).
- Eastern Kingbird: first May 2, Kiskatom (gc), widely by May 5.
- Great Crested Flycatcher: first May 2, TR (RPY), widely by May 5.
- Eastern Phoebe: arr Catskill Apr 5 (gc), widely by Apr 10, late.
- Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: only rep- two May 15, SL (BRS,GB,EH).
- Traill's Flycatcher: first nr New Salem May 15 (HE, B.Ricks, M.Linch).
- Least Flycatcher: first nr Red Rock Apr 25 (ad), widely by May 9.
- Eastern Wood Pewee: first May 8, LK (sbc), most arr May 15-25.
- Olive-sided Flycatcher: unrepd.
- Tree Swallow: first Apr 3 Castleton (ad), somewhat late.
- Bank Swallow: first Apr 10, SL (BRS), early.
- Rough-w Swallow: three reps Apr 16-18, widely by Apr 24, early.
- Barn Swallow: first Apr 17, SL, widely Apr 25, somewhat late.
- Cliff Swallow: few seen, first Apr 18, Watervliet Res (bsh).

- Purple Martin: first Linlithgo (breeding area) Apr 6, early (ad).  
 Tufted Titmouse: repd from at least seven localities in four  
 counties- apparently increasing.  
 Red-br Nuthatch: only three migrants noted, although plentiful  
 in nesting areas.  
 Brown Creeper: rather com during migration, max 8 Apr 17 TR (PPW).  
 House Wren: first Apr 24, marked influx Apr 27-30.  
 Winter Wren: a few observed, Apr 20 (RS,MLS)- May 8 (BRS,GB).  
 Carolina Wren: still no reps.  
 Long-billed Marsh Wren: first May 9, BCM (EH), late.  
 Mockingbird: remarkable increase; repd from five localities in  
 Greene Co, at least three in Columbia Co, three in Rensselaer  
 Co, four in Albany Co and one each in Schenectady and Sart Co.  
 Catbird: first May 2, several areas.  
 Brown Thrasher: arr about as usual, first Apr 23, Westerlo (MK).  
 Wood Thrush: first Apr 24, Kiskatom (gc), marked influx Apr 28-  
 May 2.  
 Swainson's Thrush: only five reps of migrants May 8-23.  
 Gray-cheeked Thrush: only one rep- May 2, LK (BRS), quite early.  
 Veery: most arr rather late, first May 5, Niskayuna (RPY).  
 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: first, two, May 1, Catskill (sbc); this  
 pair was seen twice later in the month at the same locality;  
 also repd from Four-mile Point twice (gc); BCM May 2, 8, 14  
 and 15 (bsh,WBS) nr a nesting site of 1964; and May 13, CP,  
 two (GB,BRS).  
 Golden-cr Kinglet: a few repd Apr 15- May 1.  
 Ruby-cr Kinglet: many repd, Apr 18- May 15, max 75 May 1 at  
 Kiskatom (sbc).  
 Water Pipit: only rep Apr 24, Ghent (ad).  
 Cedar Waxwing: rather com throughout period; unusual was a flock  
 of 75 May 29, NWW (sbc).  
Migrant Shrike: one was seen Apr 4 at Embought (gc). An imm  
 shrike was seen singing at BCM Apr 3 (PPW).

#### VIREOS - WARBLERS

- Yellow-thr Vireo: first May 4, LK (DJT).  
 Solitary Vireo: first Apr 27 CP (bsh), several to May 10.  
 Red-eyed Vireo: first May 4, Gallupville (GMZ), widely by May 12.  
Philadelphia Vireo: one was at IL May 14 (WBS et al.) and one was  
 at Wolf Hollow May 23 (sbc)- the only reps.  
 Warbling Vireo: first Apr 29, Rensselaer (PPW), widely by May 6.  
 Warblers:  
 Black and White: first Apr 25, Canaan (ad).  
 Worm-eating: first May 5, Leeds (gc) and May 10, IL (DJT).  
 Golden-winged: first May 6, Niskayuna (EH).  
 Blue-winged: first May 4, EG (PPW).  
 Tennessee: brief migration, May 10-19.  
 Nashville: first Apr 27, CP (bsh).  
 Parula: first May 3 EG (PPW), more than usual numbers seen.  
 Yellow: first Apr 28, Embought (gc).  
 Magnolia: several reps May 10-18, slightly late.  
 Cape May: May 1, Elnora (June Strunk), early- May 15 (sbc).  
 Black-thr Blue: first May 2, CP (GB,BRS).  
 Myrtle: Apr 10, SL (sbc)- May 15.  
 Black-thr Green: First May 2, CP (GB,BRS).  
 Blackburnian: first May 2, CP (GB,BRS).  
 Chestnut-sided: first May 3, EG (PPW).  
 Bay-breasted: May 8, Catskill (gc)- May 19 SL (GB,BRS).  
 Blackpoll: first May 13, LK (GB,BRS), max seven May 31 (PPW).

- Pine: one Apr 25, Meadowdale (DJT) and one May 7, Kiskatom- the only migrants repd. Also repd from northern Warren Co, May 15 (JP,DR) and nr Warrensburg, May 23-24 (EH).
- Prairie: first May 6, Catskill (gc).
- Palm: nine reps- more than usual, Apr 18, BCM (bsh)- May 8, VF (GB,BRS).
- Ovenbird: first May 2, LK (BRS), widely May 4-8.
- Northern Waterthrush: May 2, Niskayuna (bsh)- May 23, Wolf Wolf Hollow (sbc).
- Louisiana Waterthrush: first Apr 25, Red Rock (ad), widely by Apr 30.
- Kentucky: again at Ghent, May 15-17 (ad) where it has annually appeared recently.
- Mourning: only reps from nesting areas at Jenny L, first May 15 (WBS,DJT,PPW).
- Yellowthroat: arr many areas May 2-4.
- Yellow-breasted Chat: First May 10, BCM (DJT); two were singing there May 15, and another was at VF May 19 (GB,BRS).
- Wilson's: two only, May 13 and 15, BCM (DJT et al.).
- Canada: first May 2, CP (GB,BRS), rather few.
- Amer Redstart: first May 5, Leeds (gc) and May 6, VF (DJT).

BLACKBIRDS - SPARROWS

- Bobolink: arr May 4, several areas.
- Orchard Oriole: first May 3, Catskill (gc); other reps from Catskill May 5 (gc); Merwin's Pond May 31 (PPW,ad) and at least five at Castleton (ad).
- Baltimore Oriole: first Apr 25, Greenville (gc), several areas May 1, early.
- Rusty Blackbird: several individuals and small groups repd, mainly Apr 23 - May 2, last.
- Scarlet Tanager: marked influx May 8-12. On May 8 in Catskill, 12 males were seen (gc).
- Western Tanager: a singing male was observed at Wolf Hollow May 16 (Gus Angst). This individual had black wings, yellowish wing-bars, yellow underparts and yellow head (no red). The sharp demarcation between the black wings and back, and yellow neck was noted particularly. The bird was singing a song similar to that of the scarlet tanager, but composed of shorter, somewhat sweeter phrases. Subsequent efforts later in the week to locate the bird failed to find it.
- Cardinal: becoming quite com.
- Rose-br Grosbeak: first late Apr, at a feeding station nr New Salem (Charles Brown), widely May 2-8.
- Indigo Bunting: first May 10, Greenville (gc), widely by May 15.
- Evening Grosbeak: disappeared rapidly in early Apr, last Apr 8 Kiskatom, (gc).
- Purple Finch: repd frequently throughout period.
- Pine Siskin: only rep- flock at Jenny L Apr 25 (GB).
- No Crossbill reps.
- Rufous-sided Towhee: first Apr 21, Catskill (gc), appearing widely by Apr 28.
- Savannah Sparrow: first Apr 11 at Catskill and Westerlo.
- Grasshopper: repd only from HCM, from May 10 or (DJT et al.)
- Henslow's: also rare, first May 2, BCM (DJT).
- Vesper: good numbers, first Apr 12, Westerlo (MK).
- Slate-colored Junco: heavy flight Apr 10-30, few stragglers later; 62 seen in one hour, EG, Apr 15 (PPW).
- Amer Tree Sparrow: not com, but lingered late, last (several) May

15 (sbc).

Chipping: first Apr 19 nr Glenville (EH), most arr Apr 24-28.

Field: first Apr 8, Westerlo (MK), widely the following week.

Harris': the individual which wintered nr Athens was last seen

May 3 (gc).

White-cr: not as frequent as in recent springs, most appeared

May 4-16.

White-thr : migrants appeared Apr 15, Niskayuna (HE)- May 22

SL (WBS,DJT,PPW). Most observers felt that there were fewer than usual, max 50 in one hour Apr 23 nr Rensselaer (PPW).

Fox: most disappeared by Apr 7 after the big flight on Mar 29,

but a few appeared later, last Apr 17 (EH).

Swamp: first Apr 9, Ghent (gc), most arr after Apr 15.

No Snow Buntings were seen during the period.

\* \* \* \* \*

## S B C FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Peter P. Wickham Field Trip Committee Chairman

### FEEDER OPEN HOUSE

FEBRUARY 27

Though the mild weather prevented the fourteen adventurers from having a large list of unusual species, the warm and friendly atmosphere of the participants made the trip worthwhile. The birders had a chance to study many winter beauties close-up.

The Virginia rail showed itself long enough for a quick view at the Picard and Tygert Marsh, and bob-white were seen at a farm feeding station. Twenty-two species were tallied.

--John Fuller

### VISCHER PONDS

MARCH 28

A large bird wheeling and banking over the Widewaters was a moment of excitement for about half the group. An immature bald eagle with uniform brownish plumage gave the observers only a short glimpse before passing out of sight. The finding of a bald eagle in our area has become a rare treat in recent years. It was a clear spring-like day which greeted the 19 participants who broke up into two groups and covered the Ponds at a leisurely pace. Waterfowl were not plentiful in numbers, but fine views of wood duck, pintail, both teal, and ring-necked duck were had, plus Canada goose, hooded and American merganser. Land birds were inconspicuous, and only red-winged blackbird, grackle, robin and killdeer were among the early spring migrants. The trip list reached 33 species.

--Don Tucker

### GLENVILLE LANDFILL

MAY 19

Eight people came to see swallows and shore birds banded at the landfill. Mist nets set on the oozing mud flat near the railroad tracks took a grackle, robin, 11 least sandpipers, a semipalmated plover, spotted sandpiper and rough-winged swallow. Nets set on the north bank in front of the bank swallow burrows caught 45 bank swallows.

Of the latter, 15 were unbanded, 24 were birds previously banded this year, and six were returns from last year's banding.

Among the shore birds, four of the least sandpipers were already banded, as was the plover.

--Bob Yunick

### WOLF HOLLOW

MAY 23

Twelve adults and three youngsters gathered at the picnic site in Wolf Hollow at 8:45 am. The weather was cool and the sky overcast, which did not augur well for the success of the trip as far as bird observation was concerned. Both the total number and the number of species of warblers found was rather disappointing. No unusual species of birds were observed on this trip.

Since the birds chose not to cooperate, a group, under the capable leadership of Dr. Runge, concentrated on the study of wild flowers, plants and ferns. Nancy Slack stole a few minutes of her very busy day and very kindly brought us a list of flowers and plants and told us where to look for them. Among them was the maidenhair fern, rare in this region, which was to be found on the westside cliffs near the last cut-out in the road, toward the top of the hollow. However, no one in the group was keen enough to hazard the climb except Dr. Runge, who, after the picnic lunch, scoured the cliffs for the rare fern, but had no luck finding it.

By the time the group had completed the circle around the hollow, it was noon and time for the picnic. All in the party, however, except Dr. Runge and the coordinator, skipped the lunch and departed, because of other pressing engagements, or, maybe they were just tired.

After lunch Walton Sabin and Sam Madison joined us. They were rather disappointed to find the rest of the group had left, since Walton had kindly agreed to lead us in the afternoon study of flowers and plants. We climbed around the cliffs and on top of them, noticed some interesting flowers and plants and observed a few more warblers, but had no more luck with the maidenhair fern than Dr. Runge did.

On the way back to Schenectady we followed Ridge Road and observed four eastern bluebirds at three different locations. The total number of species observed was 51, exclusive of the bluebirds.

--Gus Angst

### NISKAYUNA WIDEWATERS

MAY 29

Everyone met at 8 am. at the parking turn-out on Rosendale Road, having previously left a Jeep at the terminal point of the walk for the return of drivers. Twenty people were present.

We proceeded by four cars to the culvert at Lock 7 Road and from there west by wood road on foot. This area usually produces a number of nesting species including veery, redstart, yellow warbler, oriole and warbling vireo, and all were present in fairly large numbers.

From the end of the wood road we continued westward along the abandoned railroad tracks paralleling Niska Isle, for about two miles, terminating the walk where the railroad comes near to Rosendale Road at the WTRY radio towers.

No unusual species were seen. The weather was rather chilly,

about 55° and the sky overcast. The foliage was thick and many more birds were identified by voice than by sight. However, most species that were heard were eventually seen at least once. Three nests were identified: warbling vireo, oriole and robin.

From the end of the walk, the four drivers were returned by Jeep to pick up their cars, in turn to bring all the remaining people back to the starting point. Everyone seemed to enjoy the walk in spite of the weather. --Carl Runge

MOUNT GREYLOCKJUNE 6

On June sixth, three cars left Latham for Mt. Greylock. Several stops were made along the mountain side streams to identify singing warblers and other birds..

More SBC members were waiting at the summit. We took time out for our picnic supper which we shared with flies, gnats etc. We covered all sides of the summit until 9 pm. listening for thrushes with no success. We did hear the blackpoll warbler.

An earlier group of birders heard the Swainson's thrush and wood thrush. Twenty-eight people were on the Mt. Greylock trip. Twenty-seven species of birds were identified. --Muriel Stoner

CONSALUS VLYJUNE 20

We left from the Scotch Bush Church on Sunday, June 20. Our party consisted of 40 people, four of whom were children between the ages of nine and 12. Many of these people were new to the Club.

The birding was not rich and we saw pretty much what we expected. It took us about one hour to get into the center of the bog and, as is usually the case, the going was pretty tough. A number of people who had improper clothing and footwear, I am sure were sorry. I had warned them in advance what they were in for.

Nancy Slack was her usual informative self and imparted a lot of information concerning the abundance of botanical life both on the approach and the center of the bog. In the bog, we saw cotton grass, sheep laurel, sundew, pitcher plants, Labrador tea, bog cranberry, leather leaf, bog rosemary, pagonia (orchid), bog (white-fringed) orchid, plus cold water and an abundance of sphagnum moss and insects.

I think everybody had a pretty exciting time and we never lost more than two or three people at a time. Some of them elected to stay longer; so Nancy Slack stayed with a group of 15 and I led out 25. As is usually the case, the trip out was relatively easy. Bob Wernick kept the records for us. I am sure that if we have the trip again, it would be advisable to have more leaders. The going is really rugged and I think it was a little too much for some of the older people. Fortunately, Bob Wernick and my 12-year old son were along. Both had been in before and were familiar with the terrain. They were most helpful.

I will be interested in the comments from others.

--Cliff Tepper

## TWO YEARS IN THE HILLS OF WEST VIRGINIA

Robert P. Yunick

(Continued from the July, 1964 issue)

June of 1963 brought an interesting happening. During the spring the yellow-throated warbler had been added to my life list. The more that I learned of this bird, its local occurrence and its hypothetical connection with Sutton's warbler, the more intrigued I became. Two subspecies of the bird are listed. The yellow-throated warbler, Dendroica dominica dominica, is the eastern race occurring east of the Appalachians, while the sycamore warbler, Dendroica dominica albilora, is the western race occurring in the Mississippi Valley and its tributaries. Dominica is described as a bird of the open tall-pine country, while albilora is an inhabitant of the sycamore groves so common in the river bottoms along the Mississippi and Ohio. At the time of the discovery of Sutton's warbler in 1939 in the eastern panhandle of West Virginia, dominica was unknown in the state. Albilora was known many miles to the west along the Ohio. In the mid- or late-50's yellow-throated warblers of unknown subspecific identity were found nesting at the Berry Hills Country Club near South Charleston. Since the location of this area is 60 miles up the Kanawha from the Ohio, it was quite reasonable to expect the birds to be albilora, however, they were found in tall pines bordering the open fairways. They were in typical dominica habitat. These birds prospered and the nesting population grew. In 1962 two local banders attempted to make a positive identification, but failed to capture any of these birds which love the tops of the 50-60-foot high pines. At the time 14 pairs were estimated in the area.

The same woman who found the birds in the 50's and who had tried to capture them in 1962 expressed an interest in making another attempt. This sounded like a sporting proposition and June 1 at 6 am. was set as the meeting time. Our nets were up by 7:30. It was a cool morning and the air along the ninth fairway was filled with many songs, but the most prominent and the one that captured our attention was that of the six or eight male yellow-throated warblers which sang. Shortly we were joined by another bander and set in place the last of our 15 nets. We watched and patrolled looking anxiously for one of our nets to contain the precious quarry. We caught a blue-gray gnatcatcher which I banded. Even though it was a life bird on my banding list, I was not excited, because it did not compare to what we were after. Perhaps on another day or at another place such a capture would have been appreciated. With our quarry darting and singing high over our heads, we had the deepest of respect for a bird's freedom of motion. Cowbirds and towhees came to the nets. We also caught ovenbirds and an acadian flycatcher. By mid-morning the day was becoming very hot and the bird song activity decreased markedly. By noon the day was a complete drag, and looked like a failure. We sought the shade and from time to time answered the questions of curious golfers whose shots brought them to the rough.

Another net check was made at 12:30. We split up each taking different nets. At the highspot along the fairway ahead of me, one of the nets had a bird in the top shelf. From a distance it was grayish and could have been the ubiquitous titmouse. As I neared, its warbler-like character became apparent and I began to



hasten my step as I wondered - could it be? As I thrust my hand into the net and rolled over the bird, so that its gray back yielded to its golden throat, I knew what it was like to handle living gold. A joyful shout brought the others and the three of us feasted our eyes on an adult yellow-throated warbler. I felt all the more lucky when I considered that had the warbler's course been one foot to the left or one and one-half feet higher, it would have missed the net which was the end net in a string of four nets stretching 160 feet.

A quick trip was made to the clubhouse to call a member of the Department of Natural Resources to ask whether he wanted to see the bird and pass judgement. He recommended writing a detailed description of the bird and taking measurements. We composed the description and found that the lack of calipers prevented us from taking the proper bill measurement. Later we learned that this measurement was the most critical for determining the subspecies. The bird gave the impression of being the western abilora, despite its nesting habitat. At this point extensive checking of various texts possessing descriptions of the yellow-throated warbler began to present slight discrepancies and our lack of a proper bill measurement made an unequivocal identification impossible. However, the color of the lores and the proximity of the nesting location to the Ohio via the Kanawha Valley strongly suggested the abilora race.

The day's excitement did not end with the yellow-throated warbler. I returned home during the heat of the day and set my nets in the yard as usual. About ten birds were captured. At 9:15 pm., I went out to furl the nets for the night. At the second net along the holler edge, I reached down to free the bottom trammel and was startled by the whistle of wings and the thrashing in the net only a few feet away. My immediate thought was that I had a quail, but as I reached into the net to grasp the bird, the dim fading light in the west revealed the orangish breast and long bill of a woodcock! Just seconds before I had walked within six feet of the bird and it had not budged. After banding, the timberdoodle left my hands with a characteristic whistling of wings as it flew off in the semi-darkness to feed two lots away.

We were treated to a second woodcock several weeks later. The bird was seen from the window at about 12 feet away on the lawn. This bird favored a clump of pokeweed at the holler edge and could be flushed from the roost regularly for several days before it finally took up residence in the holler. On several occasions while furling nets at dusk or sitting outside waiting relief from the day's heat, I heard the woodcock flush at about 9 pm. After several days I learned that the bird came out of the holler, through our yard, and flew to a vacant moist lot two yards away to feed. I decided that a properly placed net would get the bird. The net was set one day and no bird was heard coming from the holler at the prescribed time. I took down the net at 9:15 and as I walked to the house, the bird came along its usual path. The next evening I sat and waited. I listened while my eyes pierced the near-darkness for some semblance of the bird's shadow. Suddenly there was the usual whistling flush as the bird came up the holler. I listened and watched. At about the prescribed point there was the anticipated silencing of the whistle and in its place the thrashing of feathers on the nylon mesh. Once again the net scored its mark. With a comfortable sense of pride and accomplishment, I

rolled off the chaise and ran to the net to remove the bird. Within five minutes a banded woodcock was released. Once later in the summer she was recaptured early one morning on her way to her pokeweed roost.

The summer of 1963 was considerably more interesting than a year earlier. Even though the heat and high humidity continued to bother us, they were less pronounced. According to the natives, both '62 and '63's summers were cool. We would have hated to experience a hot one.

We had a titmouse explosion, if one could call it that. In '62 we started with one pair which produced only one offspring. This summer, eight immatures were banded bringing the total number to 14. Two of the new adults must have been transients, for they were never caught again, while the other titmice repeated continually. The cardinals were not so fortunate in 1963. Despite the extreme commonness of the species in the yard, we saw only one immature cardinal and that was very late in the summer.

The latter half of July brought a number of warblers to the yard. These birds had completed their rearing responsibilities and were released from their territories to wander prior to migration. On July 14 the sky cleared late in the day. Two troupes of warblers came through the yard visiting the dripping shrubs. I netted my first cerulean warbler. This bird was in the company of redstarts, gnatcatchers, yellow warblers, titmice, Carolina chickadees and other warblers. July 17 was another 90-plus-degree day and reclining on the chaise was the sport of the evening. From my reclined position, I sipped lemonade and watched some of these same warblers work through the sycamore, tulip poplar and red maple. With them were two life worm-eating warblers. That evening I saw a slow dribbling of about 30 migrating purple martins making their way southeast. The evening of the 26th was another for the lounge, and beside the gnatcatchers, redstarts and yellowthroats, there was a black-throated green in the yard. The lounging reached its peak on the 28th. The day had been uncomfortable and a violent thunder storm came in time to make the evening pleasant. The first species was a parula warbler followed by ceruleans and redstarts. Mixed in with some gnatcatchers were two black and whites and three black-throated greens. Summer tanagers seemingly played tag near a power pole in a neighbor's yard while martins poured overhead. Yellowthroats sang. Suddenly a yellow-throated warbler came into view. The bird darted about with a male redstart and came within seven feet of a net. By 8:15 the air was full of martins flying generally northeast. I estimated that about 50-100 had passed overhead, but at a later date when I tried counting them I found the estimate to be terribly low. I had heard from some of the club members that a willow-covered island in the river was the scene of a large martin roost at this time of year. These birds were heading in that direction.

At this time the banders began to talk about going to the McClintic Wildlife Refuge to band the residents, and on August 2, a group of three other banders, some club members and myself went to the barr and set up shop. Relief from the heat came only mildly in the evening. In one and one-half hours my nets took 21 birds of ten species. At about 9:30 we made the last rounds with our headlamps. About one-half hour earlier a screech owl had been heard at a nearby grove. On this last net check we were

fortunate to find it in the net resting very quietly. It was an ugly thing. It was in molt and partly bald. Despite its appearance we carried it back to the barn as a treasured item. I won the bird by default - no one else had a band big enough for it. It was very docile. When released it spread its long, rounded silent wings and headed for the grove. Next morning we found a net in the grove with a hole and two screech owl feathers. Apparently there had been good mousing near the nets that night.

That night was one that I shall not forget. Anticipating a cool night, I brought a sleeping bag. Since the night stayed warmer than I had expected and the barn was too hot, I decided to brave the mosquitos and sleep outside for the benefit of the cooler air. Ha! such folly. The ground would be too damp I reasoned, so I chose the flat roof of the pump house. At about 10:45 I climbed atop the roof under the light of a very full moon. The mosquitos arrived instantly. I crawled far into the bag and covered my head with a shirt leaving one opening for air. Outside the shirt the mosquitos flew menacingly. Their constant hum, like the sound of rain on a roof, warned me of the hostile environment. The heat in that bag was unbearable and I kept coming out more and more only to be attacked. Finally I gave up at 11:30 and went in the barn. I thought that I would find comfort, because I could lay uncovered and eventually escape the heat. At midnight I had had enough of the barn's mosquitos. There was only one refuge remaining. I took my gear and entered the Volkswagen. I do not recommend sleeping sitting in a Volkswagen, but at least it was mosquito-free. It took about 15 minutes to find a semi-comfortable position and in so doing, I rocked the car and knocked down two net poles which had been propped against the car. The noise startled two sleepers in a nearby station wagon. At 2 am. a slammed car door awakened me. Another one of the barn occupants had given up the ship and sought the seat of a Ford. After waking many times and sleeping no more than two-three hours, dawn came and I was glad to arise. Comparing notes with the rest of the crew proved most interesting.

It was not an especially good day. It warmed to over 90 degrees in the shade and must have been 105 in the sun. Patrolling the nets was a job. We had 34 nets stretching nearly 1400 feet. With 11 people present these nets were visited every 15 minutes or less. Most everything was caught in the cool of the morning and very little during the heat of the day. In fact, all day I banded 21 birds - the same number as in one and one-half hours the evening before. The afternoon wind made the netting poor. Also memorable was the eagerness of the Rachel Carsonists, who were to stay another night in the barn, to get DDT to rid the barn of mosquitos. (To be concluded in the next issue).

\* \* \* \* \*

## EDITOR'S NOTES

### WATERFOWL TOMORROW

The Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 20402 has available at \$4.00 per copy a newly published volume called WATERFOWL TOMORROW (Cat. no. I49.4:177).

It contains 784 pages and has over 150 photographs and is illustrated by Bob Hines. According to the Govt. Print. Office, this volume is "A story of migratory waterfowl on the North American Continent written by experts from the United States, Canada, and Mexico. This non-technical book details simply but fully the many natural processes and the numerous activities of man which have affected these birds from glacial times to the present day. One section of 13 chapters deals with progress and recommendations for assuring the future of these wildfowl. It is a volume packed from cover to cover with interesting and important information..."

#### ADDITIONAL PUBLICATIONS

Also available from the Supt. of Doc. are several other publications which might be of interest to SBC members. Two park brochures have been revised. "Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho" (Cat. no. I29.6:Y3/19/965) costs 15 cents and is 35 pages with illustrations. "Everglades National Park, Florida" (Cat. no. I29.6:Ev27/2/965) is 31 pages, illustrated, and costs 15 cents also. Both booklets describe the respective parks and have maps.

"Lake Powell" (Cat. no. I27.2:L14p) at 75 cents per copy describes a new lake, 186 mile long with 1860 miles of shoreline, formed behind the Glen Canyon Dam in northern Arizona on the Colorado River. A recent issue of "Occupational Outlook Quarterly" dealt specifically with recreation and how it will be affected by the shortened workweek and workyear. It is available as Cat. no. I2.70/4:9/2 at 35 cents per copy. Lastly is "Quest for Quality" (Cat. no. I1.2:Q3) at \$1 per copy. Prepared by the Department of the Interior, this book "vividly alive with color, outlines the challenges presented by a rapidly growing America. The bold imagination with which we take a second look at our natural resources, the accuracy with which we gauge the demands of tomorrow - will have far-reaching effects on the future meaning of 'the American way of life'.... How the Department of the Interior is facing up to these exciting new challenges is the theme of this informative, easy-to-read book."

Ry

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68

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## SCARLET IBIS A FIRST - MAYBE

Guy Bartlett

New York State's first scarlet ibis visited Jenny Lake, in the lower Adirondacks of Saratoga County, August 3, 4 and 5. Nearby Efner Lake was the bird's site from then until at least August 9. And then, after a week of inconspicuousness, the ibis appeared at Thompson's Lake, in the Helderbergs, on August 16, leading to a photograph and write-up in the ALBANY TIMES-UNION of August 18.

There were no doubts about the identity of the bird, but plenty of them as to its source. As Roger Tory Peterson points out in his Eastern Field Guide, "Pink birds are probably escapes, as zoo birds lose color." The visitor was not a bright scarlet, but tended toward orange-red, and the neck and head were even duller with very little red in cheeks and crown. The extremely long decurved bill and legs were dull red, and the wings black-tipped. Its flight was normal. At both Jenny and Efner Lakes it was tame.

The bird was first noticed at Jenny Lake Tuesday morning, August 3, by Paul Williams of White Plains who was fishing from a row-boat. He was only casually interested in observing the bird, but rowed close to it in Turtle Cove, a shallow bay with numerous protruding rocks along the undeveloped shore of the lake. He told others about the bird at noon, and they found it feeding or roosting in the cove. The bird was not identified, however, since Peterson's guide does not picture this species.

I heard about the bird at 3:30 pm. and was able to identify it for the observers with the picture in Pough's Audubon Guide. Thereupon Barry Havens was picked up and we rowed across to Turtle Cove, along with my wife Jean and Mrs. Eugene C. Helwig of Schenectady, who had just returned from seeing the bird.

We had no difficulty in spotting the ibis while we were still distant. Slowly we rowed in, and the bird continued to feed in the very shallow water, walking back and forth over the protruding rocks in the small bay. We rowed as close as we could with our fully loaded boat, to within 100 feet. We hardly needed our seven-power binoculars; and the bird was quiet enough and the sun bright and back of us so that the gunstock-mounted 20X scope could be used for intimate examination of the head and neck plumage.

Mr. Williams rowed in to join us, and told of having been within 10 feet of the bird earlier in the afternoon when the ibis flew from its perch in a tree at shoreline to land in the shallow water. We studied the bird several minutes and then started back to camp. When we were well away from the cove and no other boat was near, we saw the bird in its longest flight. It flew, low and with occasional coasting, along the shoreline to nearby Sandy Beach, less than

an eighth mile. There it disappeared from our sight into a tree.

What next? Here are some of the facts:

The scarlet ibis had never been seen in New York State, at least so far as the Reilly-Parkes state list, John Bull's new book on the New York area, and other easily available sources are concerned.

The cover of AUDUBON MAGAZINE, March-April, 1965 featured a color photograph of a scarlet ibis and cattle egret to accompany an article telling how imported scarlet ibis eggs had been hatched by white ibis during July, 1961 in the Greynolds Park refuge just north of Miami, leading to at least one nest by a pair of scarlets and two nests by mixed pairs in 1964.

There had been strong south winds for two days prior to the sighting, but no hurricane or storm reports.

Calls to Lake George Animal Land and Catskill Game Farm showed the bird did not escape from either -- but produced memories of the flamingo of the preceding November on the Hudson River below Albany, finally trapped and returned to its zoo in Ohio.

But who could be sure of what? So in went a rare-bird alert shortly before 4 pm., with the information the bird was "tame" and somewhat off-plumage in head and neck.

What's a 100-mile round trip when an hawk owl, Harris' sparrow or what-not is concerned? So, a little after 6 pm., two cars arrived -- Walt Sabin, Don Tucker, Pete Wickham and Bob Yunick were all set for one more on their life-lists. In the meantime, about 5 o'clock, Mr. Helwig had rowed across to try for telephoto shots in color, but had not seen the bird.

Using the rowboat and a canoe the foursome covered the area completely without success. They also investigated the more logical larger marsh at Jenny's inlet-outlet. A little time remained before dark so Hunt Lake was visited since, at Turtle Cove, Hunt was only 0.2 mile south of Jenny and had a similarly undeveloped and remote marshy area. There was no hint of the ibis.

Next morning, I rowed over alone just after 7 am., found the ibis in the original cove, and phoned in the rare-bird alert to Beezer Seguin before he had left for work. During the day the bird remained under observation much of the time by numerous campers. It was last seen at 3:30 pm., flying back into the woods at Turtle Cove. Seguin arrived at 6 pm. and again -- no sight of the bird. I even tramped back from the shore from Sandy Beach to Turtle Cove, hoping to flush the ibis into view while Beezer sat in the boat.

Home Beezer went, but bright and early the next morning at 6 am. he was back and we were out again. There was no sign of the ibis until about 7 am. when he spotted the bird in flight. It came in from the east, low and close to us over the trees at Turtle Cove, rose higher as it crossed Jenny Lake, and disappeared in the direction of Efner Lake, 0.4 mile to the west, and Sacandaga Reservoir a few miles farther. That was the last observation of the bird at Jenny Lake.

At Efner Lake the story was even more that of a tame bird. It was seen first there on Thursday, August 5, and remained at least

through Monday, the ninth. While at Jenny the ibis stayed away from camps, but at Efner it worked along the shore beside boat docks at several camps. At first its favorite area was the marsh at the eastern edge of Mesacosa girls' camp. Plenty of people watched the bird, and some walked beneath its perch without flushing it.

On Sunday morning, the eighth, Professor Bill Huntley of Union College wanted to see the bird. We drove to Efner and talked with a number of the campers. Rocco M. Teta of Loudonville, who had seen the bird repeatedly, volunteered to cover the lake with his outboard-powered boat until we found the ibis. We were hardly out from his dock before we saw it in a lake-edge tree at Mesacosa Cove, to the side of his property. He shut off the power after we were close to the spot and rowed the rest of the distance until the bird was as close as we wanted it. When we rowed away, other boats came to see the bird.

The ibis spent Monday, the ninth, in the Efner Lake outlet marshes, more remote from the camps. Then it dropped from sight until its rediscovery a week later at Thompson's Lake -- but that's someone else's story.

So much for New York State's first scarlet ibis. Or doesn't it count?

\* \* \* \* \*

## ADSC REPORT SUBMITTED

Mary R. Healy

On September 9, 1965 at Van Antwerp Junior High School, the activities development subcommittee made a detailed report to the planning committee suggesting a future course of action for the Schenectady Bird Club, Inc. This report was the result of the efforts of eighteen people who had consented to serve on a committee chaired by Robert P. Yunick. Over a period of several months eight meetings were held and by May of this year the final revision was completed. The planning committee accepted the report and later presented it to the board of directors. Recommendations were grouped under four major headings, each the product of considered discussion by a subgroup headed as follows:

Meetings - Elton C. Lowerree  
 Publications - Donald J. Tucker  
 Field Trips - Peter P. Wickham  
 Education - Clifford M. Tepper

Formation of new or expanded committees to implement the recommendations would be necessary.

### Meetings

The report recommended that regularly scheduled monthly meetings be held; that they cover a broad range of natural history topics, and be informative as well as entertaining. At times, tours, demonstrations, or picnics might be substituted. Regular meetings would provide greater social interchange among members, something

practically nonexistent at present.

### Publications

The report recommended that FEATHERS be expanded to include all aspects of natural history. To accomplish this, the editor would be assisted by an editorial board and by an organized editorial staff composed of various departmental editors. Departments suggested were: field trips, record, conservation, natural history, Club business and news, special projects, junior activities, banding and feeding stations, and calender of events, this last to include planned activities of other organizations. The report supported the continued issuance of bulletins.

### Field Trips

The report recommended that more planning go into field trips to make them more rewarding to the participants and to encourage newcomers. To this end, the field trip schedule might offer more diverse opportunities for education in and the enjoyment of nature. (This is being done to some extent in the current year.) Groups should be no larger than 10 or 12; a greater number at the meeting place should be divided into smaller units, some perhaps to cover a small area intensively on foot, another to cover a larger section by car, or possibly to divide into novice and experienced groups. Where more than one unit is participating, the leader would choose the subleaders. Each leader has a special responsibility to make sure each person with him is enjoying the trip and not missing anything, and this, of course, is easier in a small group. The leader need not be an expert birder, and the Club has many potential leaders.

The subcommittee's report urges that a special opportunity be provided on field trips for socializing - this could be a picnic lunch or snack at the end of the trip, or by gathering informally at a nearby diner or coffee shop. When arranged in advance, this gives members information on where and when the trip will end.

Continuance of special trips outside our local territory is advocated, for example, to Cape Ann or Brigantine. Nearer unexplored areas offer possibilities also.

### Education

The report recommended formation of a permanent education committee to guide intensified educational activities by the Club. The first step should be a survey of local manpower and facilities available in the natural history domain, and liason should be established between the Club and other organizations with similar interests. The subcommittee felt strongly that the Club should establish a program of courses in natural history for adults and children; that this and the community resource survey are of paramount importance. They also suggested that the Club enlarge its library and slide collection, and establish an up-to-date bibliography, and be in a position to recommend to local libraries possible purchases of publications on natural history subjects.

\* \* \* \* \*

Have you submitted any field notes lately? They would be very helpful in assessing changes in status of the area's avifauna.




**BRIEFING THE RECORD**

THE SEASON - SUMMER - JUNE 1 TO AUGUST 15, 1965

Peter P. Wickham, Records Committee Chairman

June was another dry month, with precipitation totaling 1.91 in., 1.34 in. below average. Despite the cool period from June 1-5, temperatures averaged 66.90°, only 0.4° below normal. Temperatures in July averaged 68.90°, 3.2° below normal. The precipitation, 3.52 in., was essentially normal, and afforded some relief to the drought-stricken region. Precipitation averaged greater than usual in August.

For most observers, the season was a disappointing one. Most warblers seemed to be nesting in reduced numbers throughout the region. Nesting marsh birds continued their decline, with no reports of nesting marsh hawks, pied-billed grebes, gallinules, least bitterns or coot, and only one or possibly two of Virginia rail and sora. Herons were also quite uncommon, with only four American bitterns and no nighthérons reported. In addition, the nesting birds of prey continued to be scarce, with very few reports of owls and only a scattering of hawks other than the red-tailed and sparrow hawks. After two good years, the shore bird flight this summer was quite disappointing - probably due to a combination of late-summer rain and an accumulation of grass in some long-dry sections of local reservoirs.

On the other hand, a number of unusual species was reported. This list is prefaced by the scarlet ibis, although possibly an escaped bird. Mockingbirds are becoming much more widespread in the region, with two local nestings reported this year with many additional records. Other unusual species included bald eagle, sanderling, barn owl, red-headed woodpecker, yellow-bellied flycatcher, boreal chickadee, blue-gray gnatcatcher, Cape May warbler and cerulean warbler.

Abbreviations used: (ad) - Alan Devoe Bird Club record; (sbc) - Schenectady Bird Club field-trip record; BCM - Black Creek Marsh; Co - County; com - common; imm - immature; JL - Jenny Lake; L - Lake; Nisk - Niskayuna; nt - near; pr - pair; R - River; Res - Reservoir; VFG - Vischer Ferry Game Management Area; WR - Watervliet Reservoir. Species abbreviations are not listed, because check-list order is used and a check list may be consulted for full names.

Observers: (EH) - Esly Hallenbeck; (WBS) - Walton Sabin; (RS,MLS) - Robert and Mary Lou Shedd; (DJT) - Dr. Donald J. Tucker; (BW) - Beverly Waite; (PPW) - Dr. Peter P. Wickham; (RPY) - Dr. Robert Yunick; (bsh) - Guy Bartlett, Benton Seguin and Barry Havens.

LOONS - DUCKS

Herons were decidedly scarce.

Great Blue Heron: few - repd only from BCM, Castleton, Tomhannock Res and VFG, with no known nests.

Com Egret: one Jul 22, VFG (BRS) and one Aug 17-18, Tomhannock Res (M. Kilcawley et al.) the only reps.

Eastern Green Heron: fairly numerous and widespread.

No reps of nighthérons.

Amer Bittern: Repd only from BCM, Castleton and VFG, very scarce.

Scarlet Ibis: a bright scarlet individual with a decurved bill was at JL and Efner L Aug 3-8 and another (Quite probably the same individual) was at Thompson's L Aug 16-18 (bsh, WBS and others). Although no escaped ibises have been repd in this area, it seems likely the bird was liberated or escaped from captivity.

No unusual species of ducks repd, although adults and young of mallard, black, wood and blue-w teal were seen occasionally.

#### HAWKS - OWLS

Turkey Vulture: unrepd in early summer, with flocks of up to 6 appearing in the Chatham area in Aug (ad) and one at Nisk Aug 11 (DJT), scarce.

Cooper's Hawk: one, JL, mid-Jul (bsh), the only accipiter rep.

Red-tailed Hawk: decidedly uncommon.

Red-shouldered Hawk: only records- one, Voorheesville, Jun 12

(PPW); one, Consalus Vly, Jun 20 (sbc); one nr Sart L Jul 23 (sbc)

Broad-w Hawk: one, Crane Mt, Jul 11 (sbc) and one Glenville, Jul 26 (EH) - only reps.

Bald Eagle: an adult flew over the New Scotland dump Jul 3 (RS,MLS)

Marsh Hawk: no reps.

Osprey: none known nesting in area, reappeared at VFG Jul 31 (BRS).

Ring-n Pheasant and ruffed grouse seemed in good numbers.

Virginia Rail: two reps- one pr seen with young in North Troy

(Robert and Nancy Brown); one seen at WR Aug 3 (BW).

Sora: an imm was at WR Aug 3 (BW).

Com Gallinule: none repd.

Semipalmated Plover: one was at SCR Jul 31 and Aug 8 (BRS, EH) and one at WR Aug 5 (BW).

Killdeer: rather com, cogregating in late Jul and Aug.

Amer Woodcock: few reps.

Com Snipe: at BCM Jun 19 (RS, MLS) and at WR Aug 2 (BW).

Upland Plover: at least six were at a Nisk locality in Jun and early Jul, including two imm birds (RPY).

Solitary Sandpiper: four reps, Jul 31-Aug 11.

Gr Yellowlegs: two at VFG Jul 18 (PPW) and one at WR Aug 2 (BW).

Lesser Yellowlegs: one Aug 2, WR (BW), and one, Aug 11, Vly (gc).

Last Sandpiper: last spring Jun 5, nr Scotia (RPY); up to 25 at

SCR and VFG Jul 26-31 (BRS, DJT); also at WR Aug 2 (BW).

Semipal Sandpiper: last spring Jun 5, nr Scotia (RPY); first fall Jul 28, SCR (DJT), max 20 Aug 8, SCR (EH).

Sanderling: one was at WR Aug 2 (BW).

Herring Gulls were the only summering gulls.

No terns were seen.

Both species of cuckoos were widely repd.

Barn Owl: one was present nr Coxsackie Jul 15-Aug 12 (gc).

All owls seemed very scarce.

#### GOATSUCKERS - SHRIKES

Whip-poor-will: repd to Jul 16 (EH).

Red-headed Woodpecker: one was present at Hudson in early Jun (ad); an adult pr with at least one flying imm which was fed by one of the adults was seen in a large grove of diseased elms nr Gansevoort in mid-Jul (PPW, F.W.Gubitz et al.).

Yellow-b Sapsucker: appeared com in known nesting areas at Berlin Mt, North I, JL, and Crane Mt.

Yellow-b Flycatcher: one was seen and three heard at JL in mid-Jul

- and very likely bred in the vicinity (bsh).  
 Olive-s Flycatcher: a late migrant was at Central Park, Schdy Jun 4 (BRS) and a fall migrant at WR Aug 14 (PPW).  
 Bank Sallow: 901 were banded at a colony nr Scotia compared with 828 last year; an additional 130 returnees from 1964 were recovered. Good nesting success apparently due to a lack of interference with the cliff nesting area during the breeding season resulted in an earlier exodus than last year, peaking about Jun 25 (RPY).  
 Cliff Swallow: appeared as com as the barn swallow in the Warrensburg-Thurman area Jul 11 (sbc); quite uncom in most lowlands.  
 Purple Martin: a colony of four pr was located in the Poestenkill area (M.Kilcawley), a new location.  
 Boreal Chickadee: one was seen and heard in the spruce area at the top of Crane Mt (about 3200 ft.) in north Warren Co Jul 11 (PPW).  
 Tufted Titmouse: repd from several localities throughout the period.  
 Red-br Nuthatch: fairly com in usual upland nesting areas.  
 Mockingbird: two conclusive breeding records- a pr nested in South Schodack and was seen with 2-3 young (ad), and a pr was seen in Altamont with two young just ready to leave the nest on Jul 8 (BW). This nest, surprisingly, was located in a forty-foot tree about 8 feet off the ground. There were several additional reps indicative of the influx noted this spring.  
 Hermit Thrush: com in the usual nesting areas, with 15 heard at Crane Mt Jul 11 (sbc).  
 Eastern Bluebird: about as com as in 1964.  
 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: a pr was on Schodack Island nr Castleton Aug 1 (PPW).  
 Swainson's Thrush: recorded at Berlin Mt Jun 27 and at Crane Mt Jul 11 (sbc).  
 No shrikes were seen.

VIREOS - WARBLERS

- Solitary Vireo: repd only from JL (bsh).  
 Black and White Warbler: few reps- seemed unusually scarce.  
 No parula warblers were repd.  
 Cape May: one was seen in the northwestern corner of Sart Co on Aug 1, very early (WBS).  
 Cerulean: a singing male was one of a pr observed Aug 1 at Schodack Island nr Castleton in a grove of tall poplar a few feet from the Hudson River (PPW).  
 Northern Waterthrush: in mid-Jul at JL (bsh).  
 Mourning Warbler: at least three pr with young were in the JL area Jul 15-17 (bsh).  
 Yellow-br Chat: at least two were heard in the Meadowdale area during Jun (sbc).

BLACKBJRDS - SPARROWS

- Bobolink: holding its own as a nesting species. Migrants Aug 1 on.  
 Evening Grosbeak: a flock of 15, containing male and female birds, was nr Lock 7 on the north side of the Mohawk River Jun 4 (BRS)- a most unusual record. The species nested in the JL area as usual.  
 Purple Finch: seemed widespread and unusually com during Jun and Jul.  
 Grasshopper Sparrow: very scarce, only rep from the Catskill area.  
 Henslow's Sparrow: no reps.  
 White-thr Sparrow: repd from Consalus Vly and from upland areas just south of Sart L in Jun and Jul, as well as from the usual higher elevations.

## NEW MEMBERS

### Lenny Thomas

Chairman, Membership Committee

The following is a list of those people who have applied for membership and whose names do not appear in the last directory dated May 1, 1965. This increase in membership reflects the activity of a number of Club members in seeking new members. Have you contributed your share? If you have the name of anyone possibly interested in joining, please send it to me and that person will in turn be sent a membership blank, field-trip schedule and copy of FEATHERS.

### Sustaining

Miss Ida M. Clough  
312 King's Rd  
Schenectady, 12304

Dr/Mrs Lee LeVine  
2084 Lexington Pkwy  
Schenectady, 12309

### Active

Mr/Mrs Charles Alheim  
1462 Garner Ave  
Schenectady  
Mrs Winifred S. Augusta  
515 Glen Ave  
Scotia, 12302

Miss Frances Adams  
305 Sixth Ave N  
Troy

Mrs Beverly Adams  
1 Fruitwood Dr  
Burnt Hills, 12027

Mr/Mrs C.H. Bayer  
51 Saratoga Dr  
Scotia, 12302  
Miss Doris Carpenter  
108 N Toll St  
Scotia, 12302

Mr/Mrs James Corbett  
Lee Corbett  
1047 Hickory Rd  
Schenectady, 12309  
Dr C.W. Huntley  
Union College Campus  
Schenectady, 12308

Mr/Mrs George M. Krouse  
1 Vley Rd  
Scotia, 12302

Mr/Mrs Robert C. Leech  
911 Pearse Rd  
Schenectady, 12309

Mrs J.G. Leshen  
1170 Mohawk Rd  
Schenectady, 12309

Dr/Mrs Robert M. Leibers  
1136 Avon Rd  
Schenectady, 12308

Miss Rosemary Miner  
2031 Arcona Ct  
Schenectady, 12309

Mrs Arthur McHugh  
Miss Mary Esther McHugh  
76 Burhans Pl  
Delmar, 12054

Miss Margaret M. Ostapaw  
709 Pleasantview Ave  
Scotia, 12302

Miss Ann Parker  
2177-D Daisy La  
Schenectady, 12309  
Mrs Arden R. Rauch  
909 Karenwald La  
Schenectady, 12309

C.H. Schermerhorn  
RD 3  
Ballston Lake, 12019  
Mr/Mrs R.B. Tatge  
11 Eltinge Pl  
Scotia, 12302

### Associate

Mr/Mrs J.M. Laverty  
17 Harward St  
Schenectady

Mrs Robert D. Liddle  
Font Grove Rd  
Slingerlands, 12159

Mrs Thomas McGuirk  
99 Willow St  
Guilderland, 12084

Mrs William G. Moffat  
Hickory Hollow  
RD 3 Ballston Lake, 12019

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## TWO YEARS IN THE HILLS OF WEST VIRGINIA

Robert P. Yunick

(Continued from the July-August, 1965 issue)

August, 1963 produced a growing interest in the daily "martin showers." Every evening, weather permitting, the air overhead was full of martins. For the most part the birds circled about and drifted northeasterly. It was a pleasure to relax on the chaise and watch the martins drift leisurely through the air. Their graceful, deliberate, almost bat-like flight coupled with their mellow calling made one admire these large swallows.

Shortly after 7:45 on the evening of August 13, a call came from a bird club member. She and another woman had been out birding and had covered the river valley. They had checked the island roost of years past, but found no martins. However, in the South Charleston area of the Kanawha Valley they had spotted a black cloud of birds circling and diving over a marshy wooded area. Closer inspection showed that this was a cloud of over 5000 martins. This roost was less than a mile from the house. I jumped in the car and hurried to the place. The birds milled about wildly. They reminded me somewhat of the precisely banking, unsettled flocks of starlings that one sees in the fall. There were two basic differences: the flight was more graceful and the air was full of melodious calls and twitterings. All the excitement was there, however. The birds streamed in gracefully from the hollers along the river valley. They came in tens and twenties, slowly and constantly. As they joined the great swirling flock, their pace quickened and they became a part of the confusion. For the most part, the flock flew a counter-clockwise circle, however, at various elevations some birds flew counter to most of the flock. The air was just swarming with martins. All the while over one special area, which appeared to be the center of attraction, the birds came dropping like a hail of stones. Some came from a considerable height with folded wings in free fall. They descended to below tree level and broke their fall with spread wings and banked and disappeared in the thick vegetation. Due to limitations caused by wet ground, a creek, and especially thick, mosquito and reportedly snake-infested cover between us and the roost, we were unable to get close enough to actually see the roost, however, we could hear the considerable noise made by the birds in the roost.

Several visits were made to this area in order to observe the birds in more detail and to see how their numbers varied. The largest number of birds was seen on August 14 when upwards of 10,000 martins were estimated. That day I wrote, "In the evening I revisited Jefferson Park to try to locate exactly the martin roost and to see whether it was possible to band the birds. It was a quiet, mild evening. At 8 pm. there was hardly a martin in the sky. Slowly they began to collect. The first birds

circled very leisurely and called in the usual, slow, relaxed martin manner. By 8:15 the birds were congregating. About 1000 were present and they began a more or less circular flying pattern overhead. In about five minutes the number of birds doubled. In several more minutes there must have been 3000 birds circling more deliberately and calling more excitedly. Here and there in the flock there were local skirmishes as one bird chased another emitting harsh screeches. The air was full of one large merry-go-round of martins which kept circling and circling overhead. Suddenly the flock action changed. All the while the tempo had been increasing. However, at once the gentle, almost random circling of the birds became a regimented concerted effort. Several circles were made at higher altitude and the flock descended in unison and began a rapid circling over the roost. With each pass about five percent of the flock folded its wings and dropped. The aerial birds continued a frenzied circling and continued to fall from the sky.

Slowly but surely the low-pitched chatter, much like the sound of running water, originated from the roost area. In five to seven minutes from the time the first bird dropped to the roost, the sky was clear of martins and considerable noise came from the roost."

Night after night this performance was repeated until early September. It was interesting to speculate where these martins originated. My own feeling was that this roost was a melting pot for birds from all along Lake Erie and south to Charleston. From my backyard observations it became apparent that the flock was quite dynamic. Each evening, especially in the early evening, a slow, but constant stream of martins flew deliberately south. These birds made no interruptions to feed and they looked every bit like south-bound migrants. Occasionally they were joined by swallows and nighthawks. Later in the evening the locally feeding transients who used the roost would pass over going north to the river valley. Curiosity got the best of me and I began counting these birds. On August 21, a flight of 100-200 nighthawks and 200-plus martins went south in the early evening. Later many, many more martins, which were difficult to count, came overhead on their way to the roost. Despite the continual drain on the flock, the roost's population appeared fairly constant at about 5000 birds.

There was some talk about visiting the roost before dawn and observing the dispersing of the birds. Several people expressed some interest, but unfortunately the visit was never made.

August bowed out interestingly. The morning of the 31st was cool and pleasant. The day started with a black and white on the sycamore trunk. In minutes, one then two yellow-throated warblers were in the yard within a few feet of the nets. They were watched with much eagerness and anticipation, but they continued their journey unbanded. Later in the day a call came from one of the banders. She had a pied-billed grebe, but no band for it, and wanted to know if I wanted the bird. I accepted gladly. Such opportunities are not to be passed. The bird had landed in a swimming pool and lacked a sufficiently long runway for takeoff. However, it led a merry chase in the pool before it was captured. It was a peculiar looking, snake-like creature. It did considerable snapping and striking with its bill. It took one person to

hold the bird while the other banded it. It was taken to the river bank and released.

September brought renewed interest in the McClintic Refuge and its banding possibilities. This was to be our last month in the hills and I wanted to make the most of the remaining weekends. For the weekend of September 7-8, I was able to muster one club member to join me at the barn. We had an enjoyable time, but it was plain that the migration had not gone into high gear. A screech owl called in the evening and we enjoyed the serenade under the stars. Shortly after the owl stopped calling, the air in and about the barn reaked of the smell of butyl mercaptan. We had been preparing for bed. Barefooted, he and I walked the chilly dew-soaked grass round the barn searching with an headlamp for our mephitic friend. Every step was taken with extreme caution for fear that some dark shadow should suddenly produce the striped one. We never did find him and next morning we found his tracks in some sandy soil near the barn.

We caught 39 birds of 11 species. Buntings, catbirds, thrashers and yellowthroats predominated. My first Swainson's thrush was banded. We saw another elusive yellow-throated warbler in the early morning fog. The bird activity almost stopped by 1 pm. One of the more spectacular events occurred in the early evening when we went to take down the nets. As we approached the first net, we saw a harrier cruising the adjacent field. Suddenly the bird hovered and plunged, but came up and resumed its flapping. The raptore banked sharply, folded its wings and dropped among the tall grass and ragweed. After a slight delay, the bird became laboriously airborne and appeared to be carrying a burden. It flew to the field edge and dipped into an area hidden from our view by the field vegetation. I ran at the distant bird curious to see what it had captured. I came closer and closer and finally at about 30 yards, the harrier flushed and its prey - a still very much alive quail - came flying at me and passed within ten yards. I am not sure who was the most surprised - the still-hungry harrier, the frightened quail, or me.

The following two weekends were spent alone at the barn. It became quickly apparent that when one slept alone in the barn, the noises of the barn assumed different proportions. The creaking and wind noises became louder. Judging from the noises of the rats and mice in the walls of the barn on that second weekend, I thought for sure that I would be trampled by the mob before dawn had those rodents ever decided to change sides of the barn. All night they scratched and gnawed and ran and occasionally squealed. I am sure that their numbers were actually very few, but they made tremendous noises.

This weekend provided four new warbler species - the northern waterthrush (a lifer also), a blackburnian, magnolia and Wilson's. Again the thrashers, catbirds, buntings, yellowthroats and goldfinches were most common. All told 41 birds of 15 species were banded. I quit in the early afternoon when the late-summer hush fell over the fields and hedges, and the birds would not move or call. Cold weather was needed to get things moving.

Even by the 20th and 21st it had not come. The usual summer residents persisted along with a sprinkling of migrants. One of the first birds in the net on the first round in the early morning was a newly arrived white-throat. By 9 am., the

going was quite slow and before noon I began to furl my nets for the last time at McClintic. One of the last nets contained a pleasant ending to my McClintic adventures. In the bottom shelf of the net amid the grass was a dull-colored warbler which proved to be a life immature Connecticut warbler.

Full of many memorable experiences at the barn I drove along the Ohio and up the Kanawha to South Charleston. The last week there was hectic. Saying goodbye to those whom we had shared so many fascinating experiences was difficult, because words sounded so inadequate. On the 26th the movers came, Anne and the children flew to Schenectady and I bid farewell to the titmice at our empty feeder. On the 27th at 1:30 pm., I crossed the Ohio at St. Mary's, West Virginia and was officially out of the hills. As I rode east on the New York State Thruway on the 28th I experienced the coming of a very grey, cold dawn. Once sufficient light was available, the countryside was gloriously aflame in its autumnal dress. Before me stretched miles and miles of the brilliant reds and yellows of Upstate New York. It felt good to be home.

In the 22 months that we lived in South Charleston, the list of birds seen or heard in our yard totaled 96: sharp-shinned hawk, red-shouldered hawk, broad-winged hawk, marsh hawk, sparrow hawk, Bobwhite, American woodcock, rock dove, mourning dove, yellow-billed cuckoo, screech owl, common nighthawk, chimney swift, ruby-throated hummingbird, belted kingfisher, yellow-shafted flicker, pileated woodpecker, red-bellied woodpecker, yellow-bellied sapsucker, hairy woodpecker, downy woodpecker, downy woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, crested flycatcher, Eastern phoebe, Eastern wood pewee, tree swallow, barn swallow, purple martin, blue jay, American crow, Carolina chickadee, tufted titmouse, white-breasted nuthatch, brown creeper, house wren, Carolina wren, mockingbird, catbird, brown thrasher, American robin, wood thrush, gray-cheeked thrush, Swainson's thrush, Eastern bluebird, blue-gray gnatcatcher, ruby-crowned kinglet, cedar waxwing, common starling, white-eyed vireo, yellow-throated vireo, red-eyed vireo, warbling vireo, black and white warbler, worm-eating warbler, Nashville warbler, parula warbler, yellow warbler, magnolia warbler, myrtle warbler, black-throated green warbler, cerulean warbler, yellow-throated warbler, palm warbler, ovenbird, Kentucky warbler, common yellowthroat, yellow-breasted chat, Wilson's warbler, Canada warbler, american redstart, house sparrow, Eastern meadowlark, red-winged blackbird, orchard oriole, Baltimore oriole, rusty blackbird, common grackle, brown-headed cowbird, scarlet tanager, summer tanager, cardinal, rose-breasted grosbeak, indigo bunting, evening grosbeak, purple finch, common redpoll, American goldfinch, Eastern towhee, savannah sparrow, slate-colored junco, American tree sparrow, chipping sparrow, field sparrow, white-crowned sparrow, white-throated sparrow, fox sparrow, and song sparrow. In the yard and at McClintic a total of 23 new birds was added to my life list.

\* \* \* \* \*

Is your feeder ready? Now is the time to get it in shape. A coat of paint or varnish will help preserve it from the vagaries of the weather. Since there are reports that a substantial finch flight is in the offing, a store of seeds would be appropriate.



**S B C FIELD TRIP REPORTS**

Peter P. Wickham, Chairman

SARATOGA BOGS

JULY 23

Four members and a guest encountered hot, very humid weather and dried bogs when they treked into Luther's Forest in the area of Black Pond near Saratoga Lake. The air was thick with haze and the going was slow. Apparently the birds found it the same way, for they were quiet and scarce. We had to work to get 20 species and finally tallied 25.

The fact that the bogs were dry - a condition new to me in the more than 15 years that I have known the area - probably led to a considerable lessening in the numbers of nesting species, especially the white-throat. Normally the area is filled with the waivering, plaintive calls of these denizens of the north. In three hours, we listed only four white-throats. We found no pitcher plants which are usually abundant.

In the adjacent extensive stands of pine, the distant trill of a would be pine warbler was detected. Considerable search finally revealed the myrtle warbler which had us fooled. The "find" of the day was a hermit thrush - seen in the pine stand while we hunted the warbler.

--Bob Yunick

BERNE-KNOX

AUGUST 28

The two leaders, Mary Linch and Mary Johnston, started at 7:35 am. from Altamont with Mr. and Mrs. Charles Scrafford. The temperature was 77°, the wind southeast and the sky sunny and blue. Our two guests who formerly lived in the Berne-Knox area, very kindly offered to conduct us through the various unmarked roads familiar to them, but not to us.

Last year about the same time, we had been invited by the Scraffords to go with them for the day and casually rode and picniced along the way. The territory so intrigued us as being a wonderful new trip for the SBC that we prevailed upon the kindness of Charles and Margaret to help us lead the trip.

As other leaders of other trips are aware, you wait for telephone calls, you listen for weather reports, you plan, you hope to give each member a trip each will enjoy. I am so sorry so many members were vacationing, out of town, or just didn't know there was a trip scheduled, because they surely missed a good one.

We traveled 45 miles and ended the trip at 2:30, for we were not on a strict schedule, otherwise the trip would, or could, have ended about 1:00 pm. Thirty species were observed. The honors went to Margaret for spying and identifying the red-tailed hawk. She saw it alight on the side of the road while the rest of us missed it. "No," I was quick to say, "I doubt it could be a red-tail as it isn't quite a likely place for one to be - but then-"

and it suddenly flew up in front of the car - was my face red, because Margaret is a very inexperienced birder. Then, "Oh, oh, oh - there was a deer back there" - Margaret again! Every leader needs a bright, trained eye on a trip and we were lucky.

--Mary Johnston

MEADOWDALEOCTOBER 2

A group of seven went off "down the tracks" for a tally of thirty species - a good count considering such a gray, windy, cold morning with only an encouraging burst of sun now and then.

The trio of Marys were properly thrilled, upon early arrival, to be greeted by a wedge of about 70 noisy Canada geese headed south. Three warblers, a pair of black ducks, one lone wood duck, a great blue heron and the workings of the beaver discovered by Mary Linch, Walt Sabin and David Stoner were also of interest.

--Mary Lou Shedd

\* \* \* \* \*

**EDITOR'S NOTES**CORNELL COURSES

Unfortunately this notice is too late for this year, but it is worth keeping in mind for next year. On October 1 the College of Agriculture at Cornell began two home-study courses entitled Conservation of Natural Resources and Current Topics in Conservation. The former involves seven lessons dealing with the history of conservation, principles of soil, land, water and forest resources, wildlife law and management and ecology of wildlife management. The latter covers eight topics dealing with water resources and pollution, the Barge Canal and Forest Preserve, deer, land use, outdoor recreation and pesticides.

There are no prerequisites and no university credit is given. The courses are \$10 each. I have descriptive folders for anyone who is interested.

NORTH AMERICAN NEST CARD PROGRAM

As many readers are aware, the nest record card program has now been launched on a continent-wide basis. This does not mean, however, that the program is any less important within New York State. Mr. Robert Arbib, President of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs announced at the recent annual meeting in Syracuse that the federation has high hopes that the long-projected state bird book will soon be started. In this, the nest record card program will play an important role; the more so because, thanks to the assistance of Mr. Donald McChesney, the data are being transferred to punched cards from which rapid analysis can be made.

It is therefore urged that members of this club support the program by returning completed cards on all nests found. Cards and instruction sheets can be obtained from the records chairman or direct from the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell.

"YES" FOR PROPOSITION 1

On November 2 New York State voters will have the opportunity to vote on a pure waters bond issue. The passage of this issue could be monumental in promoting further legislation and funds to combat water pollution across the nation.

New York is richly endowed with 3.5 million acres of ponds and lakes, 70,000 miles of rivers and streams and several hundred miles of coastal salt water. However, our endowment is riddled with pollution which directly and indirectly affects all of us. Clean water is essential to our economy, well being and recreation. Cleaning our polluted waterways and preventing pollution of others will have long-reaching and profound effects.

Proposition 1 will provide one billion dollars through the issue of State bonds for the construction of sewage treatment plants. The State will provide 60 percent and municipalities 40 percent toward construction costs. This year's State Administration and Legislature unanimously supported a seven-point program to combat water pollution. Now it is up to you - the voter. VOTE YES.

A CALL FOR BACK ISSUES

The Club is endeavoring to consolidate its stock of back issues of FEATHERS. Guy Bartlett has done the valuable job of cataloging and packing our present stock. Fortunately, we have a few complete sets of FEATHERS for volumes 1 to 26. These will remain Club property. In lieu of the fact that requests for single copies, various volumes, or a complete set sometimes originate from some individual or organization, we would like to increase our inventory. We have loose issues and with the help of people with extra or no-longer-wanted issues, we could complete our files. Please donate your back issues that are no longer needed. Those issues which we especially need are:

|                            |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Vol. 1, No. 4 Sept., 1939  | Vol. 12, No. 8 Aug., 1950 |
| Vol. 10, No. 4 April, 1948 | No. 11 Nov., 1950         |
| Vol. 11, No. 2 Feb., 1949  | Vol. 23, No. 1 Jan., 1961 |

Recently Viola Mabb very generously gave the Club her bound, complete set of FEATHERS. We gratefully acknowledge her thoughtfulness and would welcome other sets or copies.

AUGUST 29, 1964 AGAIN

A recent issue of FEATHERS carried the story of the Panamanian recovery of a barn swallow banded August 29, 1964 at the Vischer Ferry Game Management Area. Since then a second recovery card has been received from the Fish & Wildlife Service regarding another bird banded that day at the Ponds. The recovery concerned an immature killdeer caught on a mud flat near the entrance to the Ponds and retaken in a trap on January 21, 1965 at Bath, North Carolina. Not only is this my first shore bird recovery and North Carolina recovery, it represents the first time I have had two foreign recoveries on two birds banded the same day.

ZIP CODE - DIRECTORY - DUES

Shortly dues will be due. Your prompt submission of dues is

appreciated and eliminates the need of sending costly reminders later. We ask that you make a special effort this year to include your Zip Code. The U.S. Post Office is anticipating new bulk-mailing regulations which will require bulk mailers to sort mail by Zip Code if they want to continue to enjoy bulk-mailing rates. Please send corrections or changes in the directory to the editor.

FROM CORNELL

The Club has received a reminder from Cornell regarding the weather-bird migration study which is under way. Support by way of field observations is needed if the program is to be a success. The details of this study were given on page 22 of the March-April issue of FEATHERS.

*Ry*

\* \* \* \* \*

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## A NEW EDITORIAL POLICY

The last issue of FEATHERS referred to the acceptance of the report of the activities development subcommittee by the planning committee, and the presentation of the planning committee's recommendation to the board of directors. The board in turn directed the editor to implement the recommendations on publications. The editorial board presented the following editorial policy to the board of directors and this policy will go into effect with the next issue of FEATHERS.

It will include the following departments and people:

President's page - President, Walton B. Sabin  
Club news, notes and calendar - Secretary, David Stoner  
Field trips - Field trip chairman, Dr. Peter P. Wickham  
Field notes - Records chairman, Dr. Peter P. Wickham  
Library - Miss Mary Healy and Mrs. Gordon Link  
Exchanges - Guy Bartlett  
Conservation - Conservation chairman, Samuel R. Madison  
Banding and feeders - Editor  
Junior activities - To be announced  
Features and special series - Miss Eleanor Byrne and  
Dr. Donald J. Tucker

Each of these people will have the task of submitting material to the editor. In some cases it will be of their own writing. However, many times their job is going to involve soliciting material from the membership. Therefore the success of this undertaking will depend on more than the cooperation of those listed above. It will depend on your cooperation. So remember, when you are asked, lend a helping hand. Better yet, why wait to be asked? Why not volunteer some articles or notes for use in FEATHERS? In so doing, you would share your birding experiences and views with others.

Some of the departments will occur in each issue, while others will appear at varying intervals. Since FEATHERS appears bimonthly, we are going to try to get it in the mail the last week of the first month or first week of the second month of issue. In order to do this, material will have to be received the first week of January and every second month thereafter.

Muriel Stoner will be responsible for circulation. Mildred Cray will continue to help in this vital area. Also assisting with circulation will be Mrs. Price and Mrs. Leshen.

We would welcome suggestions from our readers regarding what they would like to see more of in FEATHERS. We hope to hear from you in '66.

## VOTERS OVERWHELMINGLY APPROVE PROPOSITION NO. 1

Samuel R. Madison  
Conservation Chairman

One of the greatest steps ever taken forward in conservation was the approval on November 2nd of the plan for New York State to raise one billion dollars to finance a long-range program to purify the state's waters. Proposition No. 1 had been rated as having a 60-40 chance of passage. Despite its worthy purposes it faced the hard fact that voters are taxpayers and do not like to cast a ballot which will increase their tax bills. The wide margin in favor of the measure (over four to one) evidences the public's awareness of the serious consequences from continued pollution of our state's fresh water supply.

It has been estimated that in 15 years the total demands of industrial and residential users of water will increase three-fold. This demand cannot be met unless our water supplies are purified by terminating water pollution.

Approval of the bond issue opens the way to construction of sewage treatment plants and interceptors by all municipalities.

Purification of our waters will achieve benefits other than supplying our water needs. It should encourage economic and industrial growth and create more jobs and greater individual income. It should also increase property values. These results will help defray the cost of the program.

The increased outdoor recreational opportunities and reduction in dangers to health are inestimable in monetary returns. Hazards to fish and wildlife will be reduced. The recreational values of fishing, swimming and hunting will be made available to more people. This is a most happy prospect in this era of increasing urbanization.

\* \* \* \* \*

## LOCAL OBSERVATIONS ON *ARDEIDAE*

Joanna Barker

The avifauna of Winne Pond, Schenectady County, New York was studied from the spring of 1961 until the fall of 1963. Only the territoriality and feeding behavior of three members of the family *Ardeidae* will be discussed in this article. During the study period, great blue herons (*Ardea herodias*), Eastern green herons (*Butorides virescens*), and American bitterns (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) were present. Although the black-crowned night heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) was observed occasionally, it is not included here.

Miss Barker was a member of SBC while she was a student at the State University at Albany. Presently she teaches biology at the State University at Buffalo.

Winne Pond is part of the Niskayuna Wide Waters of the Mohawk River system. It is located along and south of N.Y. route 7C, sometimes called River or Rosendale Road, between the village of Niskayuna and the WTRY radio towers. Winne Pond was of interest because it was a new habitat created by the clogging of the drainage of the pond.

Data were collected from May 1st through December 1st, 1961 to 1963. Daily observation periods were 7 to 7:30 am. and 5 to 5:30 pm. Additional observations were made on each Friday during 1962 and 1963.

#### American Bittern

The pond was mainly surrounded by cattails, providing adequate habitat for the American bittern. One pair of American bitterns inhabited the pond each year, remaining until early September (September 15, 1961; September 2, 1962; September 7, 1963). Each year the American bitterns maintained a territory limited almost exclusively to the cattail region at one end of the pond. They ventured into open water only to forage. At no time was the bittern observed more than 15 feet from the edge of the cattails. Refer to the Figure for their territory during the summer of 1962.

Characteristic of the species, the bird was usually seen standing motionless among the cattails with bill pointed upward. Usually seen in this position, the bird is protected by its coloration. The bird did not venture from cover unless foraging or flushed. At no time did the American bittern fly more than 75 feet, and always landed in water or on dry land.

Its method of foraging was to watch and wait, and wade and walk slowly. Each movement was slow and deliberate, head held low, and neck retracted. At the slightest sound, the bird would "freeze" pointing its bill upward. A few minutes later the bird would continue foraging. Just prior to striking the neck was retracted. The bird exhibited another foraging pattern, "wing-flicking." It is believed (Meyerriecks, 1959) that this action scares fish into moving because it appears as a shadow moving over the water. Just before striking the bird observed would flap its wings, possibly to startle prey.

American bitterns nested each year, and their nest was located each year. It was a flat platform a foot in diameter of dead cattail flags. The nest was elevated about four inches from the water.

#### Great Blue Heron

Great blue herons are not known to nest in the area (Schenectady Bird Club, Inc., 1952). The author feels that since the Niskayuna Wide Waters is large, and part of it remains uninvestigated, the species may be found to nest here.

Great blue herons were observed in the Niskayuna Wide Waters area in late July, and early August (July 28, 1961; August 1, 1962; August 8, 1963). Only after the departure of the green herons in early September did the great blue herons appear at Winne Pond. Only one particular individual visited Winne Pond each year. Although as many as eight individuals were observed at one time in surrounding ponds, one individual claimed the

open water of Winne Pond as its feeding territory. Great blue herons were last observed at Winne Pond on November 15, 1961; October 17, 1962; October 27, 1963.

Usually seen standing near the shore, the great blue heron would frequently be seen standing on top of a muskrat house. The bird foraged in the central area of the pond. Feeding was a combination of "watch and wait," "wading" and "wing-flicking." Just prior to striking the bird would often flick its tail from right to left. Prey, when caught, was held in the beak scissors-fashion. With prey in beak, the bird would fly to the nearest patch of land, often an island exposed near a black willow. After landing the bird would drop the fish and glance around. On all occasions the great blue herons observed stabbed the prey two or three times with partly opened bill before swallowing the prey. The neck was raised higher and higher to allow the prey to go down.

During the short flights across the pond, the bird's legs and neck were not in normal flight position. It seemed that the great blue heron observed usually took off in the opposite direction from its ultimate direction of flight.

#### Eastern Green Heron

Eastern green herons nested at Winne Pond in 1961, 1962 and 1963. They nested in a black willow tree in the center of the pond in 1961 and 1962, and in a black willow tree at the edge of the pond in 1963.

Green herons spent most of the time in bushes and trees over water. The author never observed the green herons foraging in open water. Green herons remained at the pond until September (September 8, 1961; September 15, 1962; September 5, 1963).

#### Discussion

Although great blue herons, American bitterns and Eastern green herons inhabited Winne Pond, their individual territories did not overlap to any great extent. Each inhabited a slightly different habitat. The American bittern remained in cattails, venturing out only to forage. The Eastern green herons spent most of the time in bushes and trees over the water. The great blue herons spent most of the time in open water.

The territory of the American bittern was smaller than that of either green heron or great blue heron. The green heron inhabited most of the bushes and trees of Winne Pond. The green heron not only landed on one particular tree on the edge of the pond, it always landed on one of the two bottom branches. The territories of the green heron and American bittern were nesting as well as feeding territories. Winne Pond made up part of the feeding territory of the great blue heron. Although at first it might appear that these three species inhabited the same habitat, conditions were slightly different for each species.

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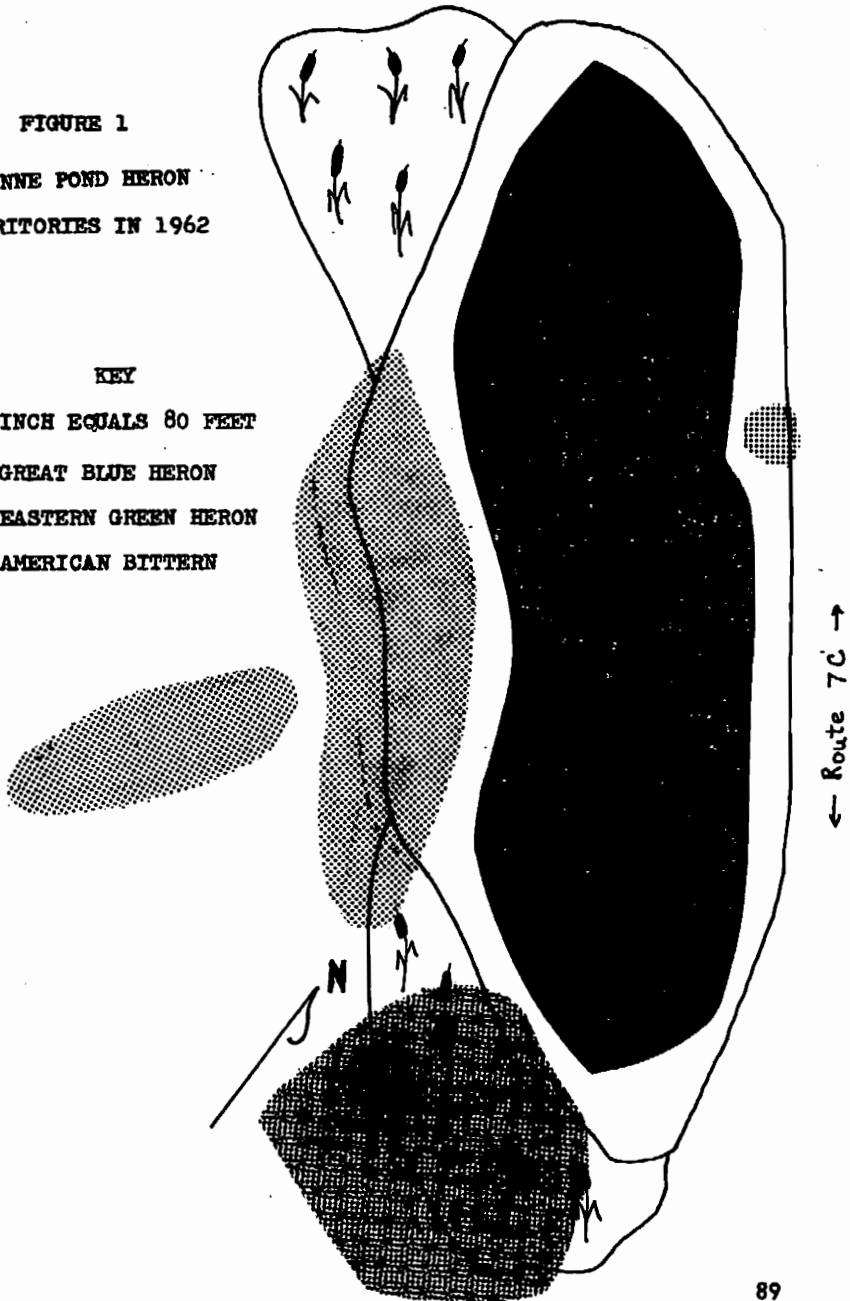
FIGURE 1

WINNE POND HERON  
TERRITORIES IN 1962

KEY

1 INCH EQUALS 80 FEET

-  GREAT BLUE HERON
-  EASTERN GREEN HERON
-  AMERICAN BITTERN



## FLY-BY NIGHT

"During what hours do our millions of migratory songbirds travel? How fast do they fly? How far during one hop? These are questions that have puzzled ornithologists for years. The use of moon-watching, radar, and the recording of birds' calls at night brought in some evidence. Comparing the radar and call-recording data, Survey ornithologist R. R. Graber noticed that the radar data suggested a daily migratory peak at 10 or 11 o'clock at night, decreasing soon after, and indicating that most birds were down by 2 am. The call-recording, on the other hand, indicated a flight peak at midnight, continuing with little change to predawn, with landing at first light. The only way to get at this answer was somehow to follow individual migrating birds from the moment each left one area until it landed at the end of its flight.

"Radio tracking seemed to be the most feasible answer. Could a transmitter be designed small enough that it would not bother the flight of a small bird? Survey wildlife expert and electronics engineer W. W. Cochran, designer of portable transmitters for deer, ducks and many other species, set about to design such an instrument -- small enough to be carried by a bird, strong enough to emit a receivable signal (a series of beeps), and with enough battery power to last several days. He finally came up with a satisfactory model that weighed only one-tenth of an ounce. Then came the problem of how to fasten it to the bird without interfering with its flight movements. This was solved by a neat way of gluing it to the back just behind the head.

"Nearly trials were discouraging. Birds were trapped, radios attached, the birds were released, and then followed by directional receivers mounted in the Natural Resources Building in the Graber home (this one monitored by Mrs. Jean Graber), and one mounted in a truck. A charter plane with a special receiver was gassed up and ready to take off at a moment's notice. The birds, no longer visible by sight, could be followed in their movements around Urbana by 'radio fixes' from these monitoring stations. Some birds refused to migrate before the batteries ran down. Other birds, watched continuously for hours, slipped away and were 'lost' to the radio receiver.

"Finally on May 6th, a freshly tagged Swainson's thrush took to the air in Urbana at 7:50 pm. C.S.T. Strong signals told watchers Cochran and G. W. Swenson III in the building and Jean Graber at her station that the bird was in the air. The two stations obtained successful 'fixes' on the bird and determined immediately that it was heading northwest. They phoned Dr. Graber, waiting at the airport. He and the pilot jumped in, were off the ground immediately and soon had located the bird. The bird flew at about 40 mph., the plane had a stalling speed of 60 mph., hence the pursuers had to occasionally circle back to get behind the bird, but were able to follow it and plot its course with great exactness. About midnight, approaching Moline came a ticklish decision: Would the bird fly much longer? If not, the plane had plenty of gas; if it flew very much further, there were no airfields with gas pumps open after midnight ahead on the projected flight of the bird. They decided to refuel at Moline and fretted 40 minutes on the ground waiting for

someone with a key to the gas pump, etc., etc.; finally they were on their way again. Following a projection of the course the bird had flown, they located it again within an hour, only a fraction off its earlier course. At 4 am. C.S.T. the bird landed north of Rochester, Minnesota. It had flown for eight hours and ten minutes at 43 miles an hour. The straight-line distance between Urbana and the landing spot is 350 miles; the bird had flown a very faint arc so that it had actually covered 353. As the pilot said, 'I couldn't navigate that well myself.'

"With the tracking method proven workable, these researchers feel that we can finally get definite answers to some of the long-asked questions on songbird migration."

(Reprinted from IBBA NEWS, Vol. 37, No. 4, p.62, July-Aug., 1965 as reprinted from THE ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY REPORTS, June, 1965. Editor's note: one-tenth of an ounce is about 2.9 grams. Swainson's thrush weighs about 30 grams or just over one ounce.)

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## ADVENTURE ALONG THE GASPÉ

Donald J. Tucker

At this time of year, summer seems a long way off. Chilly blasts of arctic air sweep down out of Canada, and in the mornings car windshields are covered with ice. Snow flurries are apt to occur at any time. The early winter snows are soon upon us, and the depths of winter are imminent. By late afternoon it is already dark and the wayfarer trudges home to spend a long winter's night. But, while the wind whistles under the eaves and snow piles up around the doorway, many a person sits warm and cozy inside, thinking of the summer to come and the summers past. It is on such a night that I think back a few years ago to an "Adventure Along the Gaspé."

After leaving Quebec and the towering Chateau Frontenac, we head generally northeast along the south bank of the St. Lawrence. The river begins to widen quickly here and it is not long before the opposite shore is no longer visible. When we reach Rimouski the first abundance of waterfowl is seen. A family of white-winged scoters paddles away from a shore; at our approach and are joined by several black ducks. From now on, small groups of these are frequent. There is a constant traffic of gulls up and down the river, mostly herring and ring-billed. Now and then, a small group of great black-backed gulls stands on the rocks. Broad green meadows come down to the water's edge and rocky outcroppings and boulders project out of the water - which is deep blue. In the shallows great blue herons stalk deliberately and suddenly jab their long spear-like bills into the water at passing fish. Now and again a black-crowned night heron joins its larger relative. Cormorants perch on the rocks, and hold their wings outstretched in serpentine fashion. Overhead bands of cliff swallows dive and swoop erratically after their insect quarry.

The river continues to widen, as it stretches toward its rendezvous with the sea. It is 450 miles to the outer reaches,

and low plains gradually give way to rocky shores and promenories, as the backbone of the Gaspé rises more sharply from the river's edge. Quite often unstable weather moves across the river bringing low-hanging, fast-moving clouds and chilling rains. Summer thunderstorms may bring downpours and spectacular lightning displays. Following the storms, the sun once again bursts forth, bathing the countryside in its warmth. Raindrops on the flowers and trees of the meadows and forests glisten and sparkle like thousands of tiny prisms.

Summers are short, and spring may linger as if to greet the first signs of fall. Meadows are white with hundreds of thousands of daisies, or yellow with mustard and buttercups, and with splashes of dark purple vetch. Vesper and song sparrows sing from the fence posts, while in nearby woods juncos trill and white-throated sparrows lift their clear "sweet Canada, Canada, Canada" into a chorus of the ethereal songs of hermit and Swainson's thrushes. A cool fresh breeze wafts the aroma of balsam from dense coniferous stands of spruce and fir, while the morning sun falls on the glistening white trunks of large canoe birch. Gold and yellow goldfinches call "per chick-o-ree, per chick-o-ree" in undulating flight over the meadows, while flocks of pine siskins and red crossbills pass overhead to disappear into stands of hemlock and spruce.

Continuing our journey, the road sometimes passes close to rocky shores. At other times it detours up and over the mountains which rise directly from the river's edge. At one point a pigeon hawk darts across the road and disappears into a grove of spruce trees. Flocks of siskins and crossbills are frequent. After crossing overland, the road dips down to the sea again at St. Marjorique. There on the mudflats, ravens are numerous and their coarse "er-r-r-ruck" makes our crows sound timid. In the inlet kingfishers and great blue herons keep watchful eyes on the shallows; while further out in the bay rafts of common mergansers dive after passing schools of small fish.

We have turned the furthestmost tip of the Gaspé now, and begin to swing south. Perce Rock becomes visible at quite a distance as we approach from the north. Just beyond is Bonaventure Island, a pleasant green island from this point. After a long swing around the bay, the road passes upward to approach Perce from the hills behind. As it drops toward the village, a marvelous view of Perce Rock and Bonaventure Island, rising out of the deep blue gulf, unfolds before us.

Lying several miles off shore, Bonaventure is unassuming from land. It presents a pleasant patch work of light green meadows and darker green conifers. Here and there a few dwellings are visible. The closer view of Perce Rock is more spectacular; its unscalable cliffs rising from the water to a grass-covered mesa-like top.

When we arrive at Perce, it is late afternoon and time to make plans for spending the night on Bonaventure. A few inquiries at the wharf result in arrangements for staying with one of the residents of the island.

We board a small fishing boat, and head slowly away from the wharf toward the island, which appears deceptively close. Ac-

accompanied by the chug-chug-chug and putting of the engine, the boat churns toward its destination. Overhead herring and ring-billed gulls circle and their cries fill the air. A bit of salt spray wets our brow, and we inhale deeply the smells of the sea. Off to port a small dark object takes flight and races away with rapid wing beats. The white wing patches confirm it as a black guillemot. Now and then a cormorant passes, flying low over the water toward the colony on Perce Rock. A few gannets are seen and they are magnificent, but the real thrill will be tomorrow. Soon the boat is at anchor, and we step ashore. The troubles of the world have been left on the mainland, and a pleasant sense of peace and relaxation comes over us.

Supper, simple but good fare, is taken with the family of our host. There is no electricity here and we talk by flickering lights. Our host tells that every three or four years, the water freezes over to form an ice bridge to the mainland, over which a few predatory foxes may reach the island.

At dusk we step outside once again to look toward the village of Perce, its lights flickering in the distance. There is a chilly onshore breeze and we wish we had brought another sweater. The sky, clear with a few scattered cumulus clouds, has already darkened in the east; but towards the west a warm red glow still paints the bases of the clouds and creeps up the sides of the mountains of the Gaspé, stretching away towards the high peaks inland. As darkness becomes complete, it is time to crawl under the comforters and quilts. Tomorrow will be a grand day! Then there is restful sleep.

When we awaken the next morning, it is indeed a glorious day! A hearty breakfast is had while the sounds of the new day make us impatient to get under way. After a few directions we set off along one of the many paths which meander over the island. We follow the ridge path through stands of spruce and fir. We are headed generally east, since Bonaventure cliffs are on the seaward side of the island. As we walk along, we pass carpets of bunchberry, twinflower, and clubmoss. The pale yellowish flowers and white bracts of the bunchberry or dwarf dogwood have mostly given way to clusters of red fruit. About us is the "zi-zi-zi-zi-" of blackpoll warblers everywhere. Hidden in the dense spruces, magnolia warblers frequently give a rapid "weeta-weeta-weeta". There is an occasional black-throated green warbler. High clear notes of white-throats come from every quarter, and there are trills of juncos and a few chipping sparrows. A Swainson's thrush greets the new day with a song, and another flushes from the path and disappears into the shadows of the spruce tangles. Occasionally flocks of white-winged crossbills fly over, sometimes alighting in the conifers nearby, affording fine views of the distinctive bills.

Pushing on, the blue waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence are soon visible through the trees. We step out into a meadow of daisies, astoundingly beautiful as thousands of yellow and white flowers wave in the breeze. Suddenly, overhead, a gannet with glistening white body and black wingtips goes by; then another and another. The cliff drops straight away to the sea below and there are many gannets in the air here. But it is not until we pass through another grove of trees that we step out into a veritable sea of birds. Gannets are everywhere, almost every square foot of space contains a nest, which now

holds an ungainly young bird. The whole top of the cliff is covered with upwards of 50,00 birds. It seems much more. They spill over the edge and down the face of the cliff to the sea below. Every available rock shelf is taken. Birds are constantly coming and going. Out over the ocean they fly, then suddenly plunge and plummet into the water with a great splash. Further down the cliff alcids dart away toward the open sea. There are black guillemot, razor-billed auk, and the common murre. As we look out to sea we pick out alcids in groups of two or three racing toward us, with a rapid projectile-like flight. It appears they will smash head long into the face of the cliff. But a moment before impact, they slow, before merging indistinguishably with the hoard of birdlife crammed into every niche. There are puffins here, but we do not see them since they spend most of the daylight hours in their burrows. Down near the water's edge dainty kittiwakes wheel and bank about their nests.

The next few hours are spent with rapt attention as we drink in the spectacle before us. All too soon it is time to make our way back to the dock and depart to the mainland. We return by way of the boat around the island. From below, the cliffs tower above us. Alcids are better seen here, as are the kittiwakes. But still no puffins. As we round the end of the island heading for shore, a common eider passes over, flapping and sailing, appearing white above and dark below. The day is over.

Now it is the present again. Winter has taken hold of the land. Far to the north, the cliffs are empty of gannets and the winter seas beat grey and white with foam on the base of the cliff. But spring will return again, and by mid-May the gannets will lay a single pale blue egg in a of seaweed. Six weeks later the young will hatch. With luck, maybe this summer we'll be back for another "Adventure Along the Gaspé."

\* \* \* \* \*

## S B C FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Peter P. Wickham, Field Trip Chairman

### LISHA KILL

MAY 8

There were thirty-four participants out for an early May afternoon walk through the Lisha Kill Preserve. More than thirty species of wild flowers, shrubs and trees were identified and as many birds. The temperature was a pleasant 65°. Both senior as well as junior members as well as many guests of the Club contributed helpful information about the specimens of wildlife seen and heard.

--Hazel V. Eddy

### HUDSON HIGHLANDS

OCTOBER 9

Hazel Eddy let out a funny kind of little shriek, "What is it?" A provocation like that will turn the head of any birder and we all looked around at Hazel who was bringing up the rear on our walk along Haughney Road on this early October Hudson Highlands trip. We saw Hazel bent over, glasses dangling and both hands on her knees, looking down instead of up as we had expected. "A deer mouse," someone exclaimed, "and a baby one at

that." The little fellow at first appeared oblivious to the giants gathering round him, but it wasn't long before he decided that the middle of the road was no place for him and he charged recklessly through our ring into the leaves and brush off the roadside.

We initiated this field trip report with this little anecdote just to show our appreciation to Hazel for the temerity she exhibited, above and beyond the call of duty, in heading off the repeated "charges" of Deermouse Jr. long enough for all to gather round and observe him closely.

The weather forecast for the day was anything but promising, but the day dawned beautifully clear and although it later turned partly cloudy, there was little threat of showers indicated. The temperature climbed to the low sixties and a SSW wind blew in sporadic little gusts up to 15 miles per hour. Our party was small but we felt we had a remarkably good trip registering 42 species of birds.

Hazel brought Betty Hicks, Mary Lynch and Mary Johnston to join Lois, Doug and Bob Norton for this traditional sojourn among the hills along the Hudson's east shore.

Our first few hours were spent in a leisurely mile walk southward along the old Boston and Maine railroad tracks which took us through a countryside intermittently marked with fairly heavy stands of conifers on our left or uphill side. On our right we looked down from the elevated railroad bed into dense tangles and thickets amid scattered deciduous hardwoods with the sun at our backs. Somewhere up ahead of us on the hillside to our left, a wily ring-necked pheasant flushed cackling from a covert well ahead of some hunters and flew downhill across the tracks in front of us to settle in the tangle below and undoubtedly run for several hundred feet to put precious distance and cover between him and the gun.

Then in fast order we listed a brown creeper, flickers, myrtle warblers, evening grosbeaks and a marsh hawk -- his white rump showing plainly.

The walk back was rather uneventful except for the dazzling display of railwalking put on by Doug and Mary Lynch as we made our way down the tracks.

A short ride later, we stopped and walked a bit near where the Coolkill crosses under the road hoping to find a winter wren. This was the locale of the deermouse incident and also where we added juncos, tree sparrows and other species to our list. On River Road just below the dam at Lock 2 we saw herring gulls, a great blue heron and three pied-billed grebes. Further on we saw a titmouse mixed in with some chickadees and myrtle warblers. A ruffed grouse walked out on the road and flushed between our two cars as we drove northward. We spent a little time walking along the dirt road which parallels the Hoosic River near the historic Knickerbocker mansion. There we saw meadowlarks, a yellow-bellied sapsucker, mourning doves and three greater yellowlegs.

It was past noon now and, much as we regretted it, we called a halt to the day's birding. After regrouping to consolidate

our list, we headed back towards home and on the way added a rough-legged hawk (light phase) and killdeer to complete our day.  
--Bob Norton

PLEASANT VALLEY SANCTUARY

OCTOBER 16

On an exceptionally beautiful fall day five adults and two children drove to the Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary just north of Lenox, Mass. The tree coloring varied from the blue-green evergreens to the yellows, browns and reds of the deciduous trees in their finest fall dress.

Although the bird count was quite low with nothing but the regulars, the drive and the walks along the trails of the sanctuary were exceedingly beautiful. We had a leisurely picnic lunch and visited the wildlife museum which contained many in-animate and live exhibits.  
--Dave Stoner

ROUND LAKE - SARATOGA LAKE

NOVEMBER 14

A stalwart group aggregating nine members, though never more than seven were together at any one time, braved the very changeable weather on Sunday and garnered a total of 34 species..

En route to Round Lake yours truly drove through a rainstorm. On at least four occasions birding was interrupted by snow squalls. Some of these were so heavy that the south end of Saratoga Lake was not visible from Stony Point. The intermittent periods of sunshine were a welcome respite even though the strong west winds never relented.

High points of the trip, bird wise, were the sighting of two red-necked grebes at Round Lake (on the return trip), the two white-rumped sandpipers at the west end of Brown's Beach, Saratoga Lake, and the very late osprey observed from the boat-launching site at the north end of Saratoga Lake.

--Walton B. Sabin

\* \* \* \* \*



NEWS AND NOTES IN BRIEF

Guy Bartlett

ALAN DEVOE RECORDS

--A BLACK VULTURE

Among September records of the Alan Devoe Bird Club, Columbia County, were two black vultures along with three turkey vultures near Old Chatham September 16, and a golden plover with a dozen killdeer at East Chatham September 8-10.

To raise money for a pond in the club's sanctuary, a benefit showing was held at the local theater, and bird-house collection boxes have been spotted variously for contributions of green stamps.

GREAT BEAR SWAMP

--NEEDS HELP

Great Bear Swamp, in the Westerloo area, was featured in the ALBANY TIMES-UNION in mid-October. An undertaking of The Nature Conservancy and the Eastern New York Chapter, both financial and moral support are needed. Robert Rienow, chairman, has pledge cards.



WESTERN NEW YORK FIRST

--A HOUSE FINCH

Western New York had its first house finch; there was a singing male at a feeder in Snyder, June 19 to August 4. It is the 374th species or collected subspecies in the Niagara Frontier Region.

A curlew sandpiper, the first record in the Buffalo Ornithological Society study area, was seen for three weeks and then collected September 11. It is specimen BSNS 5072 in the Buffalo Museum of Natural Sciences.

A wheatear was recorded at Beaver Island State Park September 25 by five or more observers. It was near a golf course, as was one seen in nearby Ontario 16 years earlier.

Also notable rarities in September were willet, buff-breasted sandpiper, Hudsonian godwit and black-headed gull.

HAWK MOUNTAIN

--OFFERS BIOLOGY COURSE

Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association, Pennsylvania, has opened a new field through its cooperation with Lehigh University to offer an intensive summer course in practical ecology for high-school biology teachers.

HINSDALE HAWK OWL

--WHERE ART THOU

"Will Hinsdale's Hawk Owl Be Back?" is the subject of an illustrated article by Herb Saltford in the November issue of the magazine YANKEE. Included is a photograph made Sunday afternoon, February 21, the day after the bird was banded by Bob Yunick. The bird was, quoting Saltford, "atop the very tree in which I'd been told to watch for it!"

The rare visitor (seen by so many SBC members) arrived in that area sometime before January 13 and remained at least until the all-day rain-snow-sleet storm of March 3.

SCHENECTADY MUSEUM

--A NEW HOME

The Schenectady Museum will have a new home. The Museum board selected the Nott Terrace Field, owned by the city school district, and will have a building-fund campaign in 1967. The new site is centrally located for the city, and offers room for extended activities and facilities.

PRAIRIE CHICKENS

--NEED GRASSLANDS

Attwater's prairie chicken needs grasslands to survive in Texas. The bird, a symbol of the vanishing American prairie, faces certain extinction unless immediate action is taken.

Texas Wildlife, a World Wildlife Affiliate, 105 Oil and Gas Building, Houston, Texas, is seeking funds for purchase of 3400 acres of prairie in Colorado County, Texas, for the 1000 or so remaining birds. The bird is a close relative of the heath hen which is now extinct in the East. --G.B.

\* \* \* \* \*

NOTICE

NEW MEMBERS -- COME ONE, COME ALL -- TO THE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS

MEETING -- DECEMBER 13, 8PM. -- FIRST METHODIST CHURCH.

**EDITOR'S NOTES**

CHRISTMAS COUNTS--DON'T FORGET

Plan now on participating in the Schenectady and Troy Christmas Counts. The Schenectady count will be Sunday, December 26, 1965, and the Troy count will be Saturday, January 1, 1966. The compilers are Guy Bartlett (393-0014) and Peter Wickham (477-6345), respectively. Come to the December 13 meeting for details. Let's try to get some additional coverage this year. Check with the compilers to make sure you are not duplicating someone else's territory.

ZIP CODE - DUES--AMEN

Please remember to include your Zip Code when you pay your dues. We need the Zip Code to comply with bulk mailing rules.

INFORMATION CENTER--WELL

How does the sighting of a dunlin or white-rumped sandpiper in November appeal to you? Or better yet, how would you like to see a Canada jay or black-backed three-toed woodpecker? Then there's always a saw-whet owl or boreal chickadee to be added to one's yearly or life list. Perhaps a little less spectacular, but nonetheless interesting, would be a Lincoln's sparrow, red crossbill or Lapland longspur. Well, if all these are old hat to you, don't bother reading further.

On the other hand, if you're one of the 40-hour slaves who might glean some weekend pleasure and relaxation from viewing such avian delicacies, through your binoculars that is, perhaps you should subscribe to the information center. It's free! It's convenient to use, and while it cannot guarantee (perish the thought) anything other than perhaps a wild-geese chase or even a wild-ibis chase for that matter, its promoters can point to the fact that in the past two months or so each of the above species, minus the mythical goose and ibis of perhaps equal status, has been sighted in the area.

All it takes is a call to Don, Walt or Pete. Besides providing you with information on the hiding places of the above mentioned avian jewels, such a call would help to convince the three promoters their efforts are not wasted, and the information center was a good idea.

And since this is the season, don't be a Scrooge by keeping secret your outstanding observations. The aforementioned trio would welcome information, so they could pass it on. In fact, they would welcome a report listing your more mundane observations. Don't feel ashamed if you can't come up with an Harris' sparrow, hawk owl or ibis. Many of us have to settle for less. It's the little things that count.

BENT SERIES--COMPLETE

The reprinting of Arthur Cleveland Bent's incomparable LIFE HISTORIES OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS by Dover Publications, Inc. has been completed. The sale of the first of these reprints began in 1962. The set totals 23 volumes at a cost of \$2.35 to 2.70 per volume. All volumes are 5 3/8 X 8 1/2 inches paperbound in sturdy fashion. The set totals over 8500 pages of text plus over 1300 pages of photographic plates.

THANKS

With this issue my tenure as editor totals one year. It has been a year of changes. The changes are not yet complete as evidenced by the advent of the new editorial policy referred to elsewhere in this issue. Surely 1966 will continue to involve as many if not more changes, for this editorial policy is one thing on paper and another thing to be proven worthy. Hopefully 1966 will point to an editorial routine that will be appealing to a large number of members and aid materially in attracting new members.

At this time I should like to thank those who have contributed so generously to this publication. I hope to hear more from them in the coming years and would welcome contributions of material by other Club members. From a personal point of view some of the most valuable contributions have appeared "behind the scenes" and involve three people who I wish to mention. One is Guy Bartlet for his suggestions and constructive criticisms which I hope I have properly used to improve FEATHERS. It is sometime very difficult to elicit a feeling from people who read a publication like this and Bart's comments have been appreciated.

Secondly there is Mildred Crary. Few People realize the burden of getting FEATHERS from printer to post office. Our mailing to members and exchanges has increased considerably to nearly 250. Mildred can no longer continue single-handed in this job. Coupled with this increased circulation has been added burden for her at home and work and it has been necessary to arrange for someone with free time during business hours to take charge of carting FEATHERS about town so that it will be folded, addressed, stamped and delivered. This behind-the-scenes contribution by Mildred has not been her only service to the Club. She is a ticket collector at the Audubon Wildlife Films and has formerly served as secretary, board member and membership chairman. She will continue to assist by addressing and folding FEATHERS. For her past efforts and continued help I thank her.

Lastly there is one who is not usually associated with this publication and whose name rarely receives mention in these pages. Her name is Anne. She lives at 1527 Myron Street. Due to her tolerant attitude toward my sometimes avocationally wayward ways, she has contributed much to this publication. To her I am forever grateful.

"THE 'CALL-OUT'"

"Probably some American ornithologists know the procedure of the 'call-out' but even among those, many may not be familiar with the British term.....

"This..... consists of reading out the names of all birds on the British check-list, at the end of the day when the observers on a particular census have assembled. As each bird's name is called, the observers individually state how many of that species they have seen. The person functioning as secretary or tabulator records each answer, and thus the total amount of kinds and the numbers of each species are obtained...

"...We have manageable local, regional and even seasonal lists that could be used for this purpose. However it strikes me that we generally have overlooked this socially promising ornithological exercise in favor of mailing census lists to a designated and more impersonal center. Not that the 'call-

out' is unknown in the U.S., but it is certainly not a traditional end-point for our days afield. To me it sounds admirable especially if accompanied with material as well as social relaxants - an oyster stew on a cold day....."

(By G. Brook Worth, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad; reprinted from IBHA NEWS, Vol. 37, No. 5, p.79)

**SEASON'S GREETINGS**

With the hope that this holiday season is pleasant for you and yours - a MERRY CHRISTMAS and HAPPY NEW YEAR.

\*\*\*\*\*  
 \*  
 \* **DON'T FORGET** - The annual Christmas meeting will be \*  
 \* held on Monday evening, December 13, 1965 at 8 pm. \*  
 \* at the Pine Room of the First Methodist Church at \*  
 \* State and Lafayette Streets, Schenectady. The \*  
 \* Schenectady and Troy Christmas Counts will be \*  
 \* planned. There will be refreshments and a sound, \*  
 \* color film, "World in a Marsh." The latter deals \*  
 \* with birds, reptiles, insects and fishes as they \*  
 \* struggle for survival in a marsh community. Plan \*  
 \* on coming and bring a guest or new member and intro- \*  
 \* duce him to others. \*  
 \* \*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

*ly*

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