

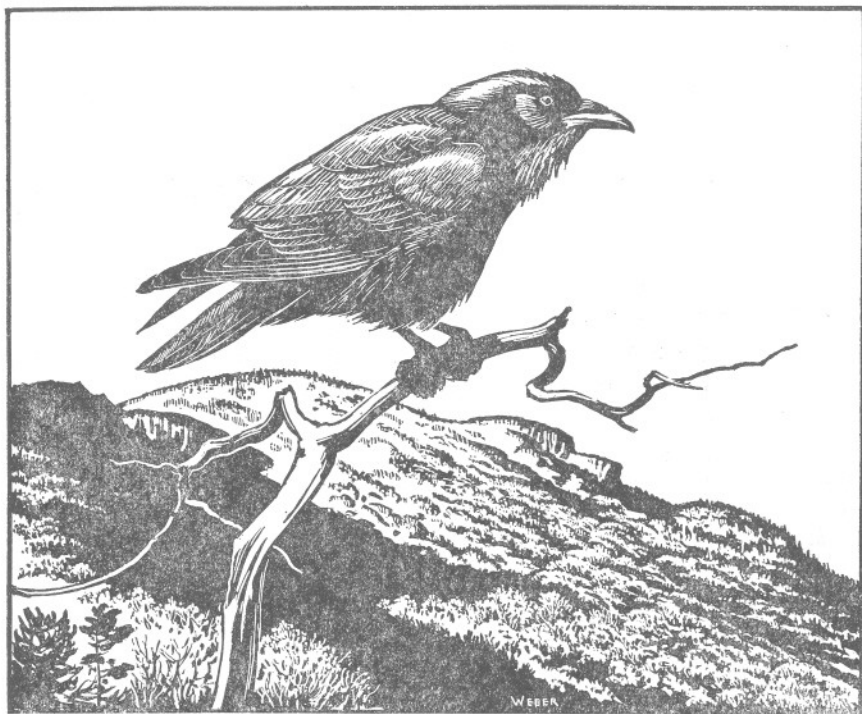
The Raven

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CONTENTS

The Mourning Warbler and Other Summer Birds of Highland County, Virginia	3
By Charles E. Stevens	
Virginia Christmas Bird Counts—1964-65 Season	7
Compiled by F. R. Scott	
Black-headed Gull and Little Gull Seen from Chesapeake Bridge, Virginia	18
By Carl W. Carlson	
Harris' Sparrow: New Bird for Virginia	19
By Mrs. Herbert M. Church, Jr.	
Western Tanager: New Bird for Virginia	20
By Frank C. Richardson	
Additional Data on the Breeding of the Trail's Flycatcher in Virginia	20
By Jackson M. Abbott	
VSO Back Bay Field Trip, December 1964	21
By Mrs. Lucille Newell Still	
News of the Local Chapters	22
Compiled by James W. Eike	
Reviews	25
News and Notes	26

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

Activities undertaken by the Society include the following:

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

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

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

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

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

Those wishing to participate in any of the above activities or to cooperate in advancing the objectives of the Society are cordially invited to join. Annual dues are \$1.00 for junior members (students), \$2.00 for active members, \$4.00 for sustaining members, \$50.00 for life members.

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THE MOURNING WARBLER AND OTHER SUMMER BIRDS OF HIGHLAND COUNTY, VIRGINIA

CHARLES E. STEVENS

Along Allegheny Mountain in northwestern Highland County a biota with some strong Canadian characteristics overlaps from West Virginia into Virginia. Upon the highest elevations and adjacent ridges there are still a few remaining red spruce groves, numbering less than a dozen and now all of small size. Much of the rest of this delightfully cool and high region, with elevations rising to a maximum of 4500 feet on Allegheny Mountain, consists of pastureland and a typical northern hardwoods forest composed of beech, birch, and maple. Lying just eastward a considerable amount of the upper Laurel Fork drainage appears to the visitor much like the Salem cigarette advertisements of recent years with shady glens of birch and sugar maple. On many northwest-facing slopes the second growth woodland consists entirely of yellow birch covering large acreage. However, it is the Allegheny Backbone which displays the most northern flora and fauna.

Conveniently for most observers, at 4400-foot altitude along U. S. Rt. 250 from the West Virginia line to a point about one-half mile east of it many Canadian zone forms can be seen. There is a place here in the less disturbed woods where the Canada mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense*) and *Clintonia borealis* carpet the ground; and while six species of clubmosses are found in this county, there are places nearby where as many as four or five occur together. Also three trilliums grow in the vicinity, the great (*Trillium grandiflorum*), the purple (*T. erectum*), and the painted (*T. udulatum*).

Here on 29 May 1961 I found two male and one female Mourning Warblers, *Oporonis philadelphia* (Wilson), representing the first report since Maurice Brooks (1935, 1937) found them in 1937 after having previously observed them in 1931 and 1933. Subsequent visits showed the birds to be present in the summers of 1961 through 1964 with the following records of singing birds: 17 June 1961, three; 24 June 1961, four; 16 June 1962, four; 1 July 1962, three; 14 July 1962, one singing briefly; 15 June 1963, four; and 25 June 1964, four. These warblers can be found most often on the south side of Rt. 250 and are usually heard from the road.

They occur here in dense blackberry thickets in a thin woods which was lumbered about six years ago. The trees, which are second growth, consist of yellow birch, sugar maple, beech, black cherry, striped maple, and scattered red spruce. Although not particularly formidable in early June, by mid July the thickets are a four to six foot high mass of blackberry and hayscented fern. Much of the time the singing Mourning Warblers are concealed in these thickets, which makes nest hunting a difficult task, but often they sing from the smaller trees, affording the observer a good view. Frequently two or three of these birds can be heard from one spot. The most common of the other birds that occur here are the Chestnut-sided Warbler, Veery, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Slate-colored Junco, Rufous-sided Towhee, and Black-throated Blue Warbler. The Mourning Warblers in this locale (and the next mentioned) seem, so far, to represent the largest population of the species in the county.

A mile eastward on 15 June 1963 a male was noted singing in young scrub at 3700-foot elevation along the recently erected Monongahela Power Co. transmission line near where it crosses Laurel Fork north of Rt. 250. On 25 June 1964 four birds were found singing in thickets of blackberry, red-berried elder, and cherry saplings along the power line right of way. This disturbance of the second-growth forest appears, along with lumbering, to attract the Mourning Warbler.

A moderate amount of time has been spent by the writer searching other

likely parts of Highland County for these birds, such as the brushy weedy openings along the upper portion of Laurel Fork and its tributaries, but little of the favored blackberry thicket habitat can be found except across the West Virginia boundary. Brooks (1937) reported them from blackberry thickets as did Stewart and Robbins (1958) in the Allegheny Mountain section of Garrett County, Maryland, the only place in that state where they occur in the breeding season. The bird can be easily found in the Cheat Mountains in West Virginia among thickets in the spruce-birch forests.

Also in 1964 some additional Mourning Warbler records were made in Highland County, but they seemed to represent outlying individuals rather than local populations. A female 25 June observed in a blackberry thicket feeding a young bird out of the nest at 3600 feet on Collins Run near where it joins Laurel Fork provided the first evidence of breeding in Virginia. This locality is two miles northeast of the Rt. 250 and power line populations. A nonsinging but scolding male accompanied by a full-grown young was seen on 7 July at 3500 feet at the head of Bearwallow Run on Allegheny Mountain, 6.5 miles north of Rt. 250, in a rather different habitat consisting of beaver ponds bordering an old burn covered with a chest-high growth of bracken, goldenrod, and fireweed with some aspen and willow saplings. The final outlying record was of a female seen by Steve Calver, of Charlottesville, and me at 3700 feet on 10 July near the West Virginia line above Bearwallow Run in a small roadside elder thicket.

Lumbering observed in 1964 in George Washington National Forest lands on Allegheny Mountain at the northern tip of Highland County might provide suitable habitat in a few more years.

As a singer, the Mourning Warbler seemingly is not as persistent as the congeneric Kentucky Warbler, which sings much throughout the day in this writer's experience. The Mourning Warbler is most voluble at dawn, singing rather steadily for several hours then diminishing considerably for the remainder of the day. The song season appears shortly terminated, as in the Ovenbird, with song slackening and ending by mid July.

In summary, there appear to be about four pairs of Mourning Warblers along Rt. 250 near the West Virginia line, about four more pairs one mile northeast along and near the electric transmission line, and some scattered individuals northward along Allegheny Mountain. The maximum count is of seven singing males and a female with one young on 25 June 1964.

Recent notes on some other summer and permanently resident birds, with southern as well as northern affinities, follow.

Sharp-shinned Hawk, *Accipiter striatus* Vieillot

A very agitated pair seen in a spruce grove on the east side of Tamarack Ridge on 14 July 1962 were possibly nesting.

Red-shouldered Hawk, *Buteo lineatus* (Gmelin)

Its status is not known, but the following records are presented: 29 May 1961, two; 16 June 1962, one; and 25 July 1964, one (all Laurel Fork and Allegheny Mountain).

Turkey, *Meleagris gallopavo* Linnaeus

Not uncommon; poults on the wing were seen on 25 June 1964 on Bearcamp Knob.

American Woodcock, *Philohela minor* (Gmelin)

One was found on Laurel Fork at Knotmaul Run on 7 July 1964.

Solitary Sandpiper, *Tringa solitaria* Wilson

An early fall migrant was seen flying over the beaver ponds at the head of Newman Run on 25 July 1964.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, *Sphyrapicus varius* (Linnaeus)

This is very common in summer on Allegheny Mountain from Tamarack Ridge south to a point one mile north of Bald Knob, which is as far south along the ridge as I have been. Fourteen individuals were counted in six miles on 25 June 1964. Where it occurs it is by far the commonest woodpecker. Their almost human tapping and drumming is a frequent sound on the high ridges and is sometimes given from telephones poles. With the exception of one heard calling at 3750 feet at Locust Spring at the northern tip of Highland County on 7 and 10 July 1964, it has been found thus far only for about seven miles along Allegheny Mountain near Rt. 250. Ruskin S. Freer (letter) reports it breeding here, and I found it feeding young in the hole on 25 June 1964.

Least Flycatcher, *Empidonax minimus* (Baird and Baird)

Uncommon but widely distributed, probably throughout the county.

Tree Swallow, *Iridoprocne bicolor* (Vieillot)

Although Brooks (1935) wrote of it as a "fairly common summer resident at the higher elevations at least," and J. J. Murray (1954) reported one on 28 June 1954 on Allegheny Mountain near Rt. 250, I have been so far unsuccessful in finding it.

Common Raven, *Corvus corax* Linnaeus

An unusual concentration of 26 birds was found on Red Oak Knob eating ripe serviceberries in the trees on 25 June 1964.

Black-capped Chickadee, *Parus atricapillus* Linnaeus

This is the resident chickadee throughout Highland County as well as northern Bath County. I have heard chickadees calling south of Fort Lewis in Bath County which were puzzling and not typical of either species. I have no Highland County records of the Carolina Chickadee.

Red-breasted Nuthatch, *Sitta canadensis* Linnaeus

Brooks (1935) reported it from Allegheny Backbone "wherever there is good sized standing spruce." Most recent records are from a single small spruce grove beside Rt. 250 on its northern side at the West Virginia line. F. R. Scott (letter) saw one there on 22 June 1961. I found a pair scolding around a cavity in a dead spruce on the edge of the grove two days later but was not able to substantiate nesting. Also single birds were seen there on 16 June 1962 and 25 May 1963. This little grove is close to more extensive spruce stands in adjacent Pocahontas County, West Virginia. Elsewhere, Murray (1954) reported an individual at Locust Spring on 29 June 1954.

Winter Wren, *Troglodytes troglodytes* (Linnaeus)

The urge to quote Brooks (1935) cannot be resisted: "I remember following down a small stream that crosses the Allegheny Plateau until I reached a spruce and rhododendron thicket. Here, in June, 1931, I heard the fine song of the Winter Wren. I do not doubt that it may be found in many such places on the Virginia side; I know that it may be found on the western slope of the same range." This statement, which has a rather wistful quality now, constitutes the only Highland County record. I have searched assiduously for this wren on Allegheny Mountain, including one particularly likely concentration of hemlock and spruce, without success. As far as can be ascertained the mature spruce stands in the county are too scattered and have little or no understory, while several of the dense stands are too young for a suitable understory to have developed.

Hermit Thrush, *Hylocichla guttata* (Pallas)

Steve Calver and I heard an individual of this species singing at dawn on 10 July 1964 at 3800 feet in a small red pine (*Pinus resinosa*) planting above Locust Spring at the northern tip of Highland County. The pines were

bordered by young spruce and brushy openings. There is a high density of Veeries in this area, as Murray (1954) has previously reported, as well as a few Wood Thrushes. Having heard three Hermit Thrushes singing several days earlier only four miles to the north in a red pine plantation in Pocahontas County, West Virginia, at a place with the curious name of The Pigs Ear, I was hoping to find it at Locust Spring and was of course enthusiastic with the success. There are young red pine plantings of fair size extending eastward for about a mile from the Locust Spring shelter which would bear investigation. The pine plantings have a rather dry appearance, but in addition to moister habitats the Hermit Thrush's selection of somewhat xeric pine woods and barrens in West Virginia, Maryland, Long Island, and Cape Cod is well known.

Veery, *Hylocichla fuscescens* (Stephens)

This is perhaps the commonest woodland bird along Allegheny Mountain, with a maximum count of 74 in 10 hours on 7 July 1964. Eggs were found on 10 July 1964, a very late date.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, *Poliophtila caerulea* (Linnaeus)

This species has not been found in western Highland County, but it occurs along the Bullpasture River near the Bath County line, where it has been found in spring as early as 13 April 1963. A bird was seen sitting on a nest 16 and 17 May 1959 a mile above Williamsville at 1700-foot elevation.

Golden-crowned Kinglet, *Regulus satrapa* Lichtenstein

Since it was first found during summer in Highland County in June 1952 (Scott, 1952), this species has been reported by several observers from a number of spruce groves. These locations are (1) the spruce fringe about the summit pastureland on Sapling Ridge (4000 feet), several pairs; (2) a tall spruce grove by a pasture on Bearcamp Knob (4100 feet), two pairs; (3) a spruce-hemlock stand on a nameless mountain $\frac{3}{4}$ mile east of Bearcamp Knob (3800 feet), one pair; (4) a spruce stand on a western ridge of Red Oak Knob (4000 feet), a pair; (5) a large young spruce-hemlock grove at the head of Newman Run on Allegheny Mountain (3600 feet), at least a pair; (6) a hemlock-spruce grove on the east side of Tamarack Ridge (3800 feet), a pair; (7) a small spruce grove beside Rt. 250 at the West Virginia line (4200 feet), a pair; (8) a small spruce grove on the West Virginia line $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south of Rt. 250 (4300 feet), a pair. In addition I heard on 25 June 1964 a bird singing in a birch-maple woods (3800 feet) near upper Laurel Fork. My maximum count is six singing males on the same date.

Golden-winged Warbler, *Vermivora chrysoptera* (Linnaeus)

This species has been found not uncommonly in many parts of Highland County, wherever suitable habitat exists, not only in the higher western part of the county.

Magnolia Warbler, *Dendroica magnolia* (Wilson)

This is a common breeding bird in spruce, spruce-hemlock, and mixed coniferous-hardwood associations throughout the Laurel Fork drainage and upper Back Creek. Adults feeding young have been found from 16 June to 23 July.

Louisiana Waterthrush, *Seiurus motacilla* (Vieillot)

This bird occurs sparingly up Laurel Fork at least as high as 3600 feet. Birds seen at the beaver ponds on upper Bearwallow Run (3400 feet) and Buck Run (3650 feet) in July may have represented postbreeding wanderers. The spruce, alder, and willow-studded ponds with their multilevel rice paddy effect would appear to offer suitable habitat for the Northern Waterthrush, which breeds commonly in the Cheat Mountain area of West Virginia, but as yet none have been discovered here.

Purple Finch, *Carpodacus purpureus* (Gmelin)

The Purple Finch is now found almost everywhere that there are openings with scattered mature spruce, and observations are too numerous to list individually. It occurs at the head and along the upper parts of Locust Spring Run, Bearwallow Run, Newman Run, Collins Run, and Laurel Fork, as well as on Red Oak Knob, the Middle Mountain School area, and points along Allegheny Backbone. My maximum count is four singing males on 10 July 1964. These birds are more easily noticed in July when they sing vigorously while many other birds' singing is on the wane. There is no breeding evidence yet.

Red Crossbill, *Loxia curvirostra* Linnaeus

A bird was heard by R. J. Watson and me on 6 June 1964 over pines on Shenandoah Mountain near Headwaters, and a bird was heard on Allegheny Mountain at the West Virginia boundary near the top of the county on 7 July 1964. Not much significance can be attached to these records due to the erratic nature of the species. They probably represent vagrants from last winter's (1963-64) spectacular invasion.

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VIRGINIA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS—1964-65 SEASON

F. R. SCOTT

About 215 different observers participated in 18 Christmas bird counts in Virginia this year during the period from 22 December through 3 January. This appears to be a record number of participants for the state. Another and equally important record was set in that the participants logged a total of 823 party-hours in the field versus the previous record last year of 733. These facts indicate quite clearly that we are taking our Christmas counts more seriously and trying to produce better and more useful results.

The total number of species seen, 165, was down from last year's 171. This total can be put into proper perspective when we see that 29 of the 165 species were reported only once out of the 18 counts, and 18 species were found only on the Chincoteague count. Only one species seems to be new for Virginia Christmas counts, the Snowy Owl at Lynchburg. Missing from the counts this year were such often recorded species as the Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Rough-legged Hawk, Least Sandpiper, Black Skimmer, and Evening Grosbeak.

The counts are tabulated in Table 1 more or less in the order of their increasing distance from the coast. Counts 1-7 were on the Coastal Plain, 8-11 on the Piedmont, and 12-18 from the Blue Ridge westward. Figure 1 shows the count locations superimposed on a map of Virginia, and supporting data on each count follow this summary.

The Fort Belvoir count as usual ran away with all honors for the best coverage. Its 43 observers and 140 party-hours should be a stimulus to participants in other counts to improve the coverage of their count areas. The Lexington count still holds the honors for the most number of Christmas counts printed. This count has appeared in *The Raven* 35 times—every year but one since the 1929-30 winter.

The weather both before and during the count period often has a profound effect on the birds seen. December was generally warmer than normal (averaging 3.2° above normal at Richmond), and there had been no significant snowfall or icing conditions prior to the counts, seemingly favorable conditions for many birds with southern affinities. The count period was quite warm, temperatures at Richmond actually reaching 71° on 25 and 26 December. Heavy rain or fog on some of the counts (Back Bay, Newport News, Big Flat Mountain, and Lexington) hampered visibility and reduced counts on many species, particularly the birds of prey. All in all, with a few exceptions the weather appeared to be favorable for good concentrations of wintering birds.

This was obviously an "off" year for most northern birds, with the Snowy Owl providing the only obvious exception. There were no Rough-legged Hawks, relatively few Red-breasted Nuthatches, only one Pine Siskin report, and no Evening Grosbeaks or crossbills. Last year all of these were recorded, the nuthatches and finches in outstanding numbers.

Briefly checking some of the other features of the counts, we note three unusual water birds on inland counts, the Red-necked Grebe at Fort Belvoir, the Black-crowned Night Heron at Rockingham County, and the Blue-winged Teal at Warren. Waterfowl were generally in good numbers in the eastern part of the state, though observations in some areas were hindered by adverse weather. The Golden Eagle at Fort Belvoir was an excellent record, wisely rechecked the following day. This appears to be only the second Virginia record for a Christmas count, the first being at Mt. Rogers in 1953. Ruffed Grouse, while in small numbers, were seen on 7 different counts, two east of the Blue Ridge.

Some of the gulls were in unusually good numbers. The counts of Great Black-backed Gulls inland at Brooke and Fort Belvoir were both records, and the 120 Laughing Gulls at Newport News was an astonishing count for late December. Bonaparte's Gulls showed up well on all of the coastal counts. A total count of 3259 Mourning Doves was reported on 17 of the 18 counts, which I suspect may be a record. Red-headed Woodpeckers were found on only 4 counts (versus 11 last year), though Little Creek reported 15 birds, a good winter count. The Short-billed Marsh Wren at Fort Belvoir was a surprising inland record. The total count of 52 Brown Thrashers was excellent but well under the peak of 95 two years ago. However, the fact that 5 were reported on 4 counts west of the Blue Ridge was significant.

The status of the Hermit Thrush and Eastern Bluebird, two of the so-called disaster species that reached such low numbers during the winters of 1960-61 and 1961-62, was contradictory. The Hermit Thrush appeared to decline, with only 67 birds reported on 10 counts. Last year the count was 77 reported on 11 counts. Based on total party-hours, however, the decline was even greater. For this year the figure was 8 birds per 100 party-hours versus 11 last year, a 27% decline. Bluebird populations seemed to improve a bit. This year 150 birds were recorded on 11 counts as compared with 127 on 9 counts last year. This works out to 18 birds per 100 party-hours; it was 17 last year. For those interested in the historical aspect, the recent peak in Bluebird populations was the winter of 1957-58, when 844 birds were reported on 18 counts, or 133 per 100 party-hours. So, while the current trend seems favorable, the total population is still highly depressed.

Blackbird populations continued high in the state, though only Lynchburg could offer a full-fledged roost, which totaled 1,512,000 birds (including Star-

lings). The count of 4320 Boat-tailed Grackles at Chincoteague may be a record count for Virginia. Tree and White-crowned Sparrows were in good numbers and continued the slow increasing trend of the past few years. The 7 White-crowns at Little Creek were particularly notable.

1. Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center 2 miles north of center of Chincoteague as in previous 10 years; open farmland 16%, insular pine woodland 9%, mainland woodland 23%, scrub pine and myrtle thickets 2%, fresh-water marshes and impoundments 10%, salt marshes 25%, sheltered bays 10%, dunes 3%, mud and sand flats 1%, ocean beach 1%).—Dec. 30; 6 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 43° to 55°; wind SE to SSW, 5-20 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Twenty observers in 9 parties. Total party-hours, 90 (75 on foot, 15 by car); total party-miles, 230 (69 on foot, 161 by car). Observers: J. M. Abbott, B. J. Alexander, L. L. Calvert, W. S. Clark, Mrs. R. D. Cole, Jared Diamond, P. A. DuMont, P. G. DuMont, B. H. Dwyer, D. L. Hall, J. A. Halperin, W. H. Hoover, E. T. McKnight, G. M. Meade, J. B. Meade, R. L. Pyle, F. R. Scott (compiler), J. W. Terborgh, J. S. Weske, W. W. Wiggins. This count included parts of extreme southern Worcester Co., Md. A breakdown of the count by state is available from the compiler. Species seen only in the Maryland part of the count were the Ring-necked Duck, Black Vulture, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, Brown Creeper, and Golden-crowned Kinglet. The Piping Plovers were found by Abbott, Clark, the DuMonts, and Pyle and the Semipalmated Plover by Mrs. Cole and party. The Whimbrel, the second winter record for the area, was seen by McKnight and the Willet by Abbott and Clark, who also reported both dowitchers. The high count of Common Egrets, Common Scoters, American Woodcock, Short-eared Owls, and Boat-tailed Grackles appear to be record winter counts for this area. The woodcock were found at dusk moving into the edge of a pasture to feed.

2. Little Creek (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center 1.5 miles NE of Kempsville, including Lynnhaven Inlet, Little Creek, eastern portion of Norfolk City, Stumpy Lake; farmland 15%, pine woodland 10%, deciduous woodland 25%, salt marsh, sand beach, bay, and rivers 10%, suburbs 40%).—Jan. 2; 4:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 40° to 63°; wind S to SW, 0-22 m.p.h., heavy winds commencing about 10:30 a.m.; ground bare, water open. Thirteen observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 35 (27 on foot, 8 by car); total party-miles, 253 (13 on foot, 240 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Barn Owl, Screech Owl, Eastern Bluebird, Dickcissel. Observers: Mrs. J. C. Addington, Miss M. Bryant, Mrs. F. C. Burford, Mr. & Mrs. D. D. Green, Miss A. Grimm, Miss G. Grimm, Miss M. T. Gwathmey, F. S. Hespenheide, F. C. Richardson, W. F. Rountrey, P. W. Sykes, Jr. (compiler), Miss S. Wilcox. The turnstone, Royal Tern, and Short-eared Owl were reported by Hespenheide and Sykes. Mrs. Burford's party found the White-crowned Sparrows.

3. Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center 1.5 miles east of Back Bay, including much of the mainland of Virginia Beach; farmland 20%, pine woodland 10%, deciduous woodland 20%, beach 5%, marshes and bay 45%).—Dec. 26; 4 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Cloudy and windy until 1 p.m., then steady rain; temp. 66° to 71°; wind S, 11-25 m.p.h.; 1 inch of rain fell between 1 and 4:30 p.m.; ground bare, water open. Fifteen observers in 6 parties. Total party-hours, 56 (31 on foot, 25 by car); total party-miles, 330 (30 on foot, 300 by car). Observers: S. E. Breneiser, Mrs. F. C. Burford, W. A. Cooper, Mr. & Mr. D. D. Green, F. S. Hespenheide, J. Parker, W. W. Pinkham, F. C. Richardson, W. F. Rountrey, B. D. Sustare, P. W. Sykes, Jr. (compiler), R. L. Waterfield, H. E. Watson, F. W. Whitehurst. The Snowy Egret was found by Cooper and Sustare and the Louisiana Heron by Parker, Sykes, and Whitehurst.

4. Newport News (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, bounded by

Greater Scaup	630	....	....	....	....	....	2356	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Lesser Scaup	....	55	3	....	....	6000	2192	....	....	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	87
Scaup (sp. ?)	20	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Common Goldeneye	122	25	....	76	....	23	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	8
Bufflehead	681	54	1	106	24	35	298	....	12	....	....	6	....	....	....	....	....	6	92
Oldsquaw	70	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
White-winged Scoter	2350	....	56	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Surf Scoter	3500	....	17	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Common Scoter	16,300	40	118	3	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Ruddy Duck	230	27	....	15	25	17	6429	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	2
Hooded Merganser	246	36	4	4	14	....	4	2	....	....	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	4
Common Merganser	17	2	23	3	168	160	43	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Red-breasted Merganser	219	14	57	18	....	140	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Turkey Vulture	239	7	29	....	27	68	2	14	45	6	36	134	64	1	7	6	4	4	4
Black Vulture	4	12	27	....	19	57	....	24	79	....	14	2	....	....	3	33	....	....	....
Sharp-shinned Hawk	3	....	....	....	....	1	....	1	....	1	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Cooper's Hawk	....	1	....	....	....	....	2	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1
Red-tailed Hawk	4	9	....	....	....	5	3	6	1	....	2	....	1	1	1	1	1	1	3
Red-shouldered Hawk	3	8	1	....	....	2	7	2	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Golden Eagle	....	....	....	....	....	....	1*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Bald Eagle	....	3	....	....	6	3	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Marsh Hawk	36	3	14	1	....	2	....	2	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Peregrine Falcon	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Pigeon Hawk	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Sparrow Hawk	31	26	45	12	4	2	4	3	4	....	3	....	....	....	....	....	....	2	1
Ruffed Grouse	....	....	....	....	....	....	1*	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Bobwhite	39	20	21	15	28	110	92	37	33	....	58	15	....	9	1	73	....	2	44
Turkey	....	....	....	....	4	....	....	....	....	....	4	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Clapper Rail	11	11	....	7	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Virginia Rail	18	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Sora	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
American Coot	360	13	25	1	350	....	....	....	....	....	....	6	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
American Oystercatcher	18	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Piping Plover	8*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Semipalmated Plover	1*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Killdeer	49	239	121	42	10	4	66	15	2	....	....	41	....	....	....	....	....	16	....
Black-bellied Plover	189	4	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Ruddy Turnstone	28	1*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
American Woodcock	14*	....	....	....	1	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Common Snipe	7	1	37	1	9	2	1	2	10	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	4	....
Whimbrel	1*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Willet	1*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Greater Yellowlegs	33	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Lesser Yellowlegs	3	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Dunlin	2850	14	....	3	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....

(Continued on following page)

Blue Jay	17	34	3	47	42	270	335	50	7	14	59	11	2	17	1	43	27	30	
Common Raven	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	3	....	5	3	1	....	5
Common Crow	4100	161	170	33	64	250	396	506	633	138	212	187	277	120	5	166	26	740	
Fish Crow	450	123	16	30	....	4	6	7	....	....	....	5	....	....	....	....	....	6
Black-capped Chickadee	....	....	....	....	....	7	9	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	3*	....	6
Carolina Chickadee	71	90	127	89	93	200	806	122	99	39	200	64	4	79	34	63*	48	188	
Tufted Titmouse	10	41	9	75	28	70	470	43	17	28	143	15	9	30	9	70	19	125	
White-breasted Nuthatch	....	4	2	8	4	3	77	11	4	7	31	3	2	5	3	11	3	51
Red-breasted Nuthatch	....	....	....	....	....	2	3	2	2	....	2	....	....	....	....	....	....	1
Brown-headed Nuthatch	....	8	15	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Brown Creeper	6	5	7	6	13	4	13	4	2	1	2	....	....	4	....	....	1	8
House Wren	....	....	3	....	2	....	2	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	7
Winter Wren	1	....	2	....	6	2	7	1	....	....	3	1	....	....	....	1	....	7
Carolina Wren	67	54	134	50	42	70	143	8	3	4	26	2	....	....	....	5	6	11
Long-billed Marsh Wren	8	....	9	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Short-billed Marsh Wren	20	....	15	....	....	....	1*	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Mockingbird	28	104	82	91	39	120	247	84	39	37	75	35	11	7	4	105	43	72	
Catbird	20	1	13	1	1	3	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Brown Thrasher	23	8	4	5	4	2	....	....	....	....	1	1	....	....	....	1*	1*	2
Robin	137	31	209	3	5	130	42	14	5	....	2	....	....	9	345	524	2	27
Hermit Thrush	16	5	3	3	13	10	7	1	3	....	....	....	....	....	6	....	....	....
Eastern Bluebird	9	....	57	11	6	22	23	....	5	....	5	....	....	3	....	4	....	5
Golden-crowned Kinglet	7	16	8	6	5	1	108	7	39	3	1	7	....	5	....	....	....	47
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	23	21	4	6	14	13	47	17	13	13	38	....	....	....	2	2	....	5
Water Pipit	11	25	....	....	4	....	6	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Cedar Waxwing	2	14	45	22	49	230	108	89	5	....	2	....	....	23	28	24	....	12
Loggerhead Shrike	2	....	....	....	9	9	....	2	8	....	3	....	2	....	....	5	1	4
Starling	810	1709	1206	3508	400	1000	2743	1163	13,020	300	832,000*	1722	447	2	3	8000	2620	2425	
Myrtle Warbler	2160	244	1892	191	4	100	77	11	6	3	2	....	....	....	....	6	....	5
Pine Warbler	....	2	11	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Palm Warbler	8	42	8	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Yellowthroat	2	1	2	....	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Yellow-breasted Chat	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
House Sparrow	260	285	313	794	151	400	550	13	36	121	272	560	145	....	2	210	115	527
Eastern Meadowlark	1005	211	191	120	203	64	20	100	69	9	33	67	32	17	....	10	8	118
Red-winged Blackbird	4500	307	725	106	5	2000	478	256	119,500*	5
Baltimore Oriole	3	6	1
Rusty Blackbird	2	4	25	1500	14	354	1	1500*	2
Boat-tailed Grackle	4320
Common Grackle	310	154	116	553	2	56	69	20	113	454,000*	64

(Continued on following page)

(Continued from preceding page)

	1. Chincoteague	2. Little Creek	3. Back Bay	4. Newport News	5. Hopewell	6. Brooke	7. Fort Belvoir	8. Charlottesville	9. Warren	10. Sweet Briar	11. Lynchburg	12. Rockingham County	13. Augusta County	14. Big Flat Mountain	15. Three Ridges	16. Lexington	17. Roanoke	18. Blacksburg
Date	12-30	1-2	12-26	12-26	1-2	12-22	1-2	12-29	1-3	1-2	12-31	12-29	12-31	12-27	12-31	12-26	1-2	12-22
Brown-headed Cowbird	500	679	93	209	110	3	1171	7	281	20	105,000*	...	...	...	...	...	101	...
Cardinal	114	181	158	126	110	220	672	217	75	34	136	42	11	35	10	87	59	134
Purple Finch	...	3	3	...	5	80	106	61	19	3	41	...	23	20	2	26	12	2
Pine Siskin	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
American Goldfinch	85	45	79	87	43	280	418	203	48	1	112	44	...	13	7	30	20	69
Rufous-sided Towhee	36	65	48	54	31	18	21	6	3	...	13	...	...	...	...	1	...	9
Ipswich Sparrow	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Savannah Sparrow	66	81	171	65	2L	14	3	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sharp-tailed Sparrow	5	104	...	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Seaside Sparrow	1	79	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Vesper Sparrow	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Slate-colored Junco	154	383	142	386	147	500	1764	461	302	158	263	28	6	73	43	168	111	195
Tree Sparrow	1	2	1	...	...	70	129	86	...	...	12	3	...	3	...	17	...	...
Chipping Sparrow	...	5	5	7*	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	15*	...	...	...	...	1*	...
Field Sparrow	28	122	140	71	47	130	179	210	28	2	62	1	...	27	10	56	6	26
White-crowned Sparrow	...	7*	...	...	...	1	...	3	32	39	10	5	...	...	...	1	4	72
White-throated Sparrow	689	488	611	302	308	480	861	127	57	46	138	6	2	11	17	110	51	61
Fox Sparrow	42	44	3	16	4	2	8	26	2	...	5	2	...	...	...	2	1	...
Swamp Sparrow	164	68	302	2	6	35	73	22	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Song Sparrow	387	176	355	135	74	220	323	403	39	11	145	17	2	6	10	15	24	46
Snow Bunting	...	...	...	90	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total Species	130	107	105	83	79	87	82	64	63	35	60	50	27	32	30	55	43	65
Total Individuals	100,394	17,662	93,701	15,400	20,447	18,930	27,343	5823	15,819	1160	1,519,514*	3282	1116	562	595	10,353	3467	5821
Total Party-hours	90	35	56	48	34	79	140	42	28	20	58	36	9	19	10	35	16	68
No. of Observers	20	13	15	17	9	13	43	5	4	9	30	8	3	3	1	13	13	22

Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, James River, Grafton; woodland 30%, open fields 30%, fresh-water ponds 10%, waterfront 30%).—Dec. 26; 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Cloudy with rain; temp. 53° to 62°; wind SW, 5-10 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Seventeen observers in 6 parties. Total party-hours, 48 (24 on foot, 24 by car); total party-miles, 320 (36 on foot, 284 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Gannet, White-winged Scoter, Surf Scoter, Black-bellied Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Yellow-breasted Chat. Observers: Carolyn Ayers, Chris Bradshaw, Frances Cumming, Jeff Davis, Zim Davis, Jack Ennis, J. H. Grey, Jr., C. S. Hacker, Ben Harrison, Norma Katz, Emmy Lou Machen, Robin Machen, Mr. & Mrs. S. Mitchell, Doris Smith, W. P. Smith (compiler) (Hampton Roads Bird Club). The Chipping Sparrows were seen by Mrs. Mitchell, who had had them under observation all winter.

5. **Hopewell** (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center in Curles Neck as in last 10 years; includes Presquile National Wildlife Refuge; farmland 30%, brushy fields 10%, marshes and river shore 10%, deciduous wooded swamp 10%, woodland 40%).—Jan. 2; 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mostly overcast; temp. 35° to 60°; wind S veering to SW, 5-18 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Nine observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 34 (24 on foot, 6 by car, 4 by motorboat); total party-miles, 203 (15 on foot, 166 by car, 22 by boat). Observers: Cleo Allen, Mr. & Mrs. R. L. Comstock, Jr., Mr. & Mrs. J. H. Roberts, F. R. Scott (compiler), J. R. Sydnor, Mary Tompkins, E. F. Woodson.

6. **Brooke** (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center on road 3 miles ESE of Brooke and including Potomac River from Widewater to Maryland Point Lighthouse and Virginia upland nearly to Fredericksburg; tidal water 15%, marsh 10%, deciduous wood swamp 7%, fields 9%, hedgerows 11%, mixed forest edge 23%, deciduous woods 15%, pine woods 5%, slash 5%).—Dec. 22; 5:40 a.m. to 4:40 p.m. High thin clouds with haze over water in a.m., clear in p.m.; temp. 28° to 40°; wind SW, up to 7 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open except for thin ice on edges of sheltered bays. Thirteen observers in 9 parties. Total party-hours, 79 (75 on foot, 4 by car); total party-miles, 116 (45 on foot, 71 by car). Observers: Roy Bailey, A. A. Baker, Henry Bell, III, E. L. Boudette, J. H. Eric, Luna Leopold, E. T. McKnight (compiler), B. J. Skinner, R. L. Smith, D. B. Stewart, E. W. Tooker, A. M. White, D. R. Wones.

7. **Fort Belvoir** (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center at Lebanon, Fairfax Co.; tidal water 30%, deciduous woods 20%, pine woods 10%, pasture 10%, fields 10%, town suburbs 18%, cattail marsh 2%).—Jan. 2; 5:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Overcast; temp. 35° to 46°; wind, calm; ground bare, water open. Forty-three observers in 19 parties. Total party-hours, 140 (115 on foot, 25 by car); total party-miles, 368 (109 on foot, 259 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Horned Grebe, Ring-necked Duck. Observers: J. M. Abbott (compiler), Ted Banvard, Dick Banvard, Dr. & Mrs. H. W. Carhart, W. S. Clark, R. B. Culbertson, Jack Danyew, E. G. Davis, Bill DelGrande, P. G. DuMont, E. W. Estes, Dan Feaser, Mrs. J. Furculow, Harriet Gilbert, Helen Goldstick, J. A. Halperin, Mr. & Mrs. I. C. Hoover, W. A. Houston, Mr. & Mrs. D. R. Huddleston, Bruce and Colin Huddleston, Dr. & Mrs. J. E. Johnson, Lee Johnson, D. F. Keeney, Tom Kent, Mr. & Mrs. J. L. Kinsey, Kathy Klimkiewicz, Gertrude Lees, Gale Monson, John Nevins, Bill Oberman, Virginia Roberts, Mr. & Mrs. W. G. Rothery, Thelma Smith, Mr. & Mrs. R. P. Teele, W. W. Wiggins. Four species were new to this long-established count: the Red-necked Grebe (seen by Houston), the immature Golden Eagle (Ted and Dick Banvard and W. S. Clark—confirmed the following day by J. M. Abbott and Gorman Bond), the Ruffed Grouse (DelGrande), and the Short-billed Marsh Wren (Wiggins). The Whistling Swan, the second count record, was seen by Nevins and others.

8. **Charlottesville** (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center near Ivy as in previous years; habitats the same as last year).—Dec. 29; 6 a.m. to

5:30 p.m. Cloudy; temp. 36° to 46°; wind SW, 0-5 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Five observers in 5 parties. Total party-hours, 42 (38 on foot, 4 by car); total party-miles, 149 (59 on foot, 90 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: unidentified oriole. Observers: Steve Calver, Mrs. C. O. Gregory, Kenneth Lawless, R. S. Merkel, C. E. Stevens (compiler).

9. Warren (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center near Keene as in previous years; habitats the same as in previous years).—Jan. 3; 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 32° to 50°; wind NW, 10-35 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Four observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours, 28 (23 on foot, 5 by car); total party-miles, 135 (40 on foot, 95 by car). Observers: Kenneth Lawless, R. S. Merkel, Keith Richards, C. E. Stevens (compiler). High gusty winds throughout the day considerably hindered observations. The Blue-winged Teal were reported by Merkel.

10. Sweet Briar (all points within a 3-mile-diameter circle, center at Sweet Briar College; open fields 30%, pine woodland 5%, deciduous mature woodland 20%, about buildings and barns 10%, hedgerows and creek bottoms 25%, ponds 10%).—Jan. 2; 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Overcast; temp. 30° to 45°; wind W, calm in a.m. becoming fairly strong in p.m.; ground clear, water open. Nine observers in 3 parties (including one party at feeder). Total party-hours, 20 (10 on foot, 1 by car); total party-miles, 17 (11 on foot, 6 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Eastern Bluebird. Observers: Evelyn Barbig, Howard Barbig, Thomas Barbig, Jeanette Boone, Fred Griffin, Elisabeth Moller, Gene Moore, Myriam Moore, Gertrude Prior (compiler).

11. Lynchburg (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center at Lynchburg College, including James River, College Lake, Timber Lake, Graves Mill, airport, and Tomahawk, Blackwater, and Judith Creeks; mixed woods 30%, fields and pastures 23%, creeks 12%, lakes and ponds 10%, lowland woods 10%, pine woods 7%, rivers 5%, marsh 3%).—Dec. 31; 6:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 38° to 51°; wind NW, 0-5 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Thirty observers in 6 parties. Total party-hours, 58 (40 on foot, 18 by car); total party-miles, 256 (37 on foot, 219 by car). Observers: Arey Bailey, Evelyn Barbig, Jeanette Boone, R. P. Carroll, John Cousins, Bertha Daniel, Audree Dodd, P. B. Echols, Jr., R. S. Freer, Mary Guenther, Norma Harper, Roger Hill, Gordon Howell, W. S. Hooks, Vivian Maxon, Clara McCarty, Evelyn McPherson, Gene Moore, Hazel Moore, Myriam Moore (compiler), Sally Nelson, Gertrude Prior, Steven Reams, Rosalie Rosser, M. B. Tillotson, J. S. Thornhill, S. L. Thornhill, Mary Walker, Mr. & Mrs. J. W. Wiltshire, Jr. (members and guests, Lynchburg Bird Club). The Snowy Owl was found by the Thornhills. The blackbird roost in Madison Heights, Amherst Co., had been studied carefully prior to the count. On the count day 6 parties on stations selected by Freer estimated 1,512,000 birds divided as follows: Starlings 55%, Red-winged Blackbirds 7.9%, Rusty Blackbirds 0.1%, Common Grackles 30%, and Brown-headed Cowbirds 7%. Total individuals excluding blackbirds and Starlings were 2514.

12. Rockingham County (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center at Ottobine, including Silver Lake in Dayton; lawn and shade trees in town 5%, cottonwood-sycamore river bottoms 5%, open farmland and farm woodlots 55%, mixed Appalachian conifers and hardwoods in mountains 35%; elevation 1160 to 3200 feet).—Dec. 29; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cloudy until noon; temp. 34° to 40°; wind, calm; ground clear, water open. Eight observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 36 (20 on foot, 16 by car); total party-miles, 295 (18 on foot, 277 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Horned Lark, Robin, Loggerhead Shrike. Observers: R. K. Burns, Max Carpenter (compiler), Donald Carpenter, H. G. Helbert, Dianne Helbert, H. G. M. Jopson, Frances Silliman, Herbert Whitmer. The Chipping Sparrows were reported by Drs. Burns and Helbert.

13. Augusta County (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center at Mint Spring, including Bethel Green, Greenville, Senger's Mountain Lake, Wilda, Stuarts Draft, and Staunton).—Dec. 31; 7:45 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Clear; temp. 28° to 54°; wind W, 5-10 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Three observers together. Total party-hours, 9 (3 on foot, 6 by car); total party-miles, 80 (3 on foot, 77 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Great Blue Heron, Bobwhite. Observers: F. W. Hobbie, J. F. Mehner (compiler), James Sprunt.

14. Big Flat Mountain (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center on Pasture Fence Mountain on the Albemarle and Rockingham Counties boundary as in previous years, mostly in the southern section of Shenandoah National Park; same habitats as in previous years).—Dec. 27; 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Fog and drizzle in a.m., rain in p.m.; temp. 45° to 55°; wind W, 0-10 m.p.h.; ground bare, water open. Three observers in 1 to 3 parties. Total party-hours, 19 (18 on foot, 1 by car); total party-miles, 44 (34 on foot, 10 by car). Observers: Steve Calver, R. S. Merkel, C. E. Stevens (compiler).

15. Three Ridges (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center on Potatopatch Mountain, Nelson Co.; from Reeds Gap to summit of Three Ridges (3920 feet) to South Fork Rockfish River (980 feet) and Laurel Springs Gap area; hardwoods 75%, farmland 25%).—Dec. 31; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clear; temp. 30° to 45°; wind NW, 0-25 m.p.h. on ridge; ground bare, water open. One observer. Total party-hours, 10 (on foot); total party-miles, 27 (17 on foot, 10 by car). Observer: C. E. Stevens.

16. Lexington (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center at Washington and Lee University; open farmland 30%, deciduous woodland 20%, cedar and pine woodlands 25%, scrub 25%).—Dec. 26; 5:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cloudy with rain; temp. 58° to 60°; wind S, 7-15 m.p.h. with higher gusts; ground bare, water open. Thirteen observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 35 (32 on foot, 3 by car); total party-miles, 121 (27 on foot, 94 by car). Observers: R. P. Carroll, R. P. Carroll, Jr., Gordon Echols, D. W. Huffman, Terry Huffman, Jack Lakemann, Mrs. C. S. McKendree, J. J. Murray (compiler), J. J. Murray, Jr., Mrs. A. W. Moger, R. O. Paxton, Cabell Tutwiler, Joshua Womeldorf. The Ruffed Grouse is quite rare in the open valley country here. There were probably more Black-capped Chickadees among the 63 Carolinas. The Brown Thrasher is the second December record for Rock-bridge Co.

17. Roanoke (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center at Wesena Bridge, Roanoke City; creek bottom and ponds 20%, open fields 30%, woodland 20%, farmland 30%).—Jan. 2; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 32° to 50°; wind W, none in a.m., 15-35 in p.m.; ground bare, water open. Thirteen observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 16 (13 on foot, 3 by car); total party-miles, 69 (8 on foot, 61 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: **Common Loon**. Observers: Gary Davis, M. E. DeHart, B. B. Dulaney, A. O. English (compiler), Mrs. A. O. English, Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Harper, Billy Kendig, P. F. Kendig, Mr. & Mrs. E. C. Moore, Mrs. W. N. Nelson, David Ochsner. The Brown Thrasher was found by DeHart and the Chipping Sparrow by Mrs. Moore.

18. Blacksburg (all points within a 15-mile-diameter circle, center near Linkous Store; pasture and plowed land 20%, town and suburbs 10%, mature white oak wood lots 20%, mixed pine and oak wood lots 20%, river and creek bottoms 30%).—Dec. 22; 6:50 a.m. to 6:50 p.m. Partly cloudy, shower in p.m.; temp. 28° to 42°; wind NW, 0-30 m.p.h.; 0 to 0.5 in. snow cover, ponds frozen, streams open. Twenty-two observers in 9 parties. Total party-hours, 68 (57 on foot, 11 by car); total party-miles, 288 (48 on foot, 240 by car). Seen in area count period, but not on count day: American Coot, Red-headed Woodpecker, Common Grackle. Observers: J. W. Akers, D. G. Cochran, R. S. Die-

trich, R. V. Dietrich, M. W. Fincham, M. G. Hale, J. S. Larson, R. B. Lloyd, B. S. McGinnes, J. W. Murray (compiler), C. W. Roane, Mrs. C. W. Roane, E. L. Roane, Douglas Shear, G. M. Shear, Ronald Shear, E. A. Smyth, Mrs. E. A. Smyth, E. A. Smyth, Jr., Mrs. C. P. Stone, B. Thielen, D. A. West.

115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond, Virginia 23226

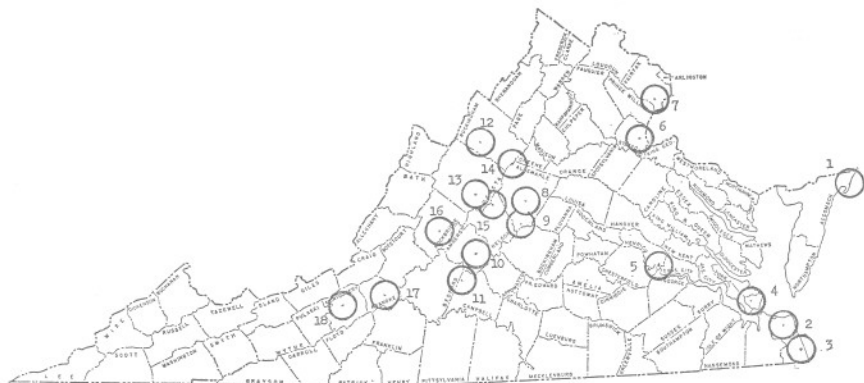


Figure 1. Locations of the 1964-65 Christmas bird counts in Virginia. The count numbers coincide with those used in the text and in Table 1.

BLACK-HEADED GULL AND LITTLE GULL SEEN FROM CHESAPEAKE BRIDGE, VIRGINIA

CARL W. CARLSON

On 6 December 1964 our group left Virginia Beach after attending the Northern Virginia Chapter's trip to Back Bay Refuge, and by 8 a. m. we were on the new Chesapeake Bridge. During the night a strong off-sea wind had blown from NE to NNE, but now was about due north. The rain had stopped, but clouds were heavy and the temperature in the low forties. Traffic was almost non-existent and we could drive very slowly and even stop.

Since we had seen or heard of both Black-headed and Little Gulls off the coast at Henlopen, Indian River, and Ocean City during the previous two weeks, we had checked the field marks for those species the evening before. We kept the books open to the gull plates as we drove.

We soon found flocks of Bonaparte's Gulls flying low over the water, keeping close to the bridge and heading into the north wind. The gulls used the bridge as a windbreak, staying on the easterly side, flying close to the bridge and just below the railing, but soaring up to hold in the air just off our right side. At about 1.5 miles from Little Creek, one gull soared up in this way, riding just above a dozen Bonaparte's Gulls. We saw the black under-wing pattern plainly and stopped. The bird was within 50 feet, hanging in the wind, so that we could check the field marks clearly, and identify it as an adult Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*) in winter plumage. The white leading wing-edge and black under-wing pattern (with the one white primary showing clearly in contrast to the black) were clearly visible without binoculars, but glasses were needed to catch the red of the bill against the gray sky. Bonaparte's Gulls were close by for direct comparison; their mantles seemed definitely darker and their bills and head markings were noticeably different.

About a half-mile further, a small flock of Bonaparte's Gulls flew along the

bridge rail, keeping just ahead of us. We spotted one with a strongly-marked "W" pattern on the upper side. Mrs. Baker was able to stop and Miss Goldstick and I checked the bird with binoculars; at times it must have been within thirty feet of us. The W pattern and its remarkably small size enabled us to repeatedly spot it in the flock without using binoculars. The primaries on the upper side were strongly black, without the white or whitish markings of the nearby Bonaparte's, both adult and immature. The terminal band and squarish tail, and the mottled markings of the back were clearly seen. By the time the flock moved away, we had checked the bird to Peterson and Pough, and identified it as an immature Little Gull (*Larus minutus*).

After these sightings, we kept a close watch for the rest of our crossing, but the only other sighting of interest was of two Purple Sandpipers on the rock bulwark beneath the bridge at the parking area (south end of the south tunnel).

Our party included Mrs. N. M. Baker of Washington, D. C., Miss Helen Goldstick of Arlington, Va., and the writer.

5706 Lone Oak Drive, Bethesda, Maryland

HARRIS' SPARROW: NEW BIRD FOR VIRGINIA

MRS. HERBERT M. CHURCH, JR.

On 30 November 1964, during a light snow storm, I captured and banded an immature Harris' Sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*) at my home two miles north of Ashburn, Virginia. The bird was held overnight and taken to the U. S. National Museum the following morning where the identification was confirmed by Drs. John Aldrich, Alexander Wetmore and others. It ate well during the two days and was released in good condition the morning of 2 December. As far as I can determine, this is a first record for Virginia.

On 20 December, after another snow fall, an unbanded immature Harris' Sparrow was seen at the same place by my husband and later in the day two were seen at the same time, one banded, one unbanded. On 24 December both were captured and at this time photographed singly and together. In addition to the Fish and Wildlife Service aluminum bands they were color-banded, the November bird with a pink plastic band and the December bird with yellow. We have been able to keep track of them easily since.

Both have been seen regularly during January, sometimes together and sometimes singly. They are not at all trap-shy. The November bird has been recaptured in ground traps, table-top traps and in an Australian Crow Trap which has an entrance about five feet off the ground.

I have heard that two Harris' Sparrows were captured in Maryland not more than 40 miles from us on 23 or 24 January. It would seem worthwhile to keep a careful watch for further Virginia records as this species may well be expanding its wintering range.

Janelia Farm, Ashburn, Virginia

WESTERN Tanager: NEW BIRD FOR VIRGINIA

FRANK C. RICHARDSON

On 29 January 1965 my wife excitedly urged me to come quickly to "see the pretty bird with lots of yellow on it." I hurried to the window of our home in Virginia Beach and there was a bird that had me puzzled. My first impression was that it was a female oriole; it was olive above and yellow below with wing bars. But two things were wrong; the bill was shorter, less pointed than an oriole's and lighter in color, a sort of flesh color, or "dull wax-yellowish," as it is aptly described in Pearson's *Birds of America*. There were two wide, very yellow wing bars. The bird was feeding on suet. As soon as it left I rushed to my books and easily identified it as a female Western Tanager, *Piranga ludoviciana*. It came back to the suet twice more and gave ample time for further study. The bird was in bright sunlight, about 20 feet from the window, and seen with 10X binoculars by both my wife and myself. She agreed that the wing bars were decidedly yellow, not white, and about 3/16" wide. Peterson says of it: "accidental, but as there are a score of records from Maine to Louisiana it should be watched for. A Tanager in winter might be this species." 117 69th Street, Virginia Beach, Virginia

ADDITIONAL DATA ON THE BREEDING OF THE TRAILL'S
FLYCATCHER IN VIRGINIA

JACKSON M. ABBOTT

The article by John W. Coffey in the December 1964 issue of *The Raven* does not mention a 1963 nesting record for *Empidonax traillii* in Virginia which was published in the January-March 1964 issue of *Atlantic Naturalist* (page 49). It is small wonder that this 1963 record has been overlooked since the locality as published merely states it as "Hunting Creek". Except for local birders, researchers using the *Atlantic Naturalist* would have no idea where the localities referred to actually are or what state they are in. This shortcoming in publishing records in the *Atlantic Naturalist* is recognized and will be corrected in future issues.

To clarify the 1963 record the following data is submitted. In the late spring of 1963 several persons reported seeing and hearing a Traill's Flycatcher at the edge of a dense thicket of weeping willow saplings on a new fill in Hunting Creek, which is at the extreme NE corner of Fairfax County, Virginia. The fill is at the northern boundary of the Belle Haven Country Club and is to be the site of two new fairways for the country club. Within half a mile of this spot I had seen and heard Traill's Flycatchers in late May and early June in 1950 and 1955 but did not find a nest. On 16 June 1963 I visited the willow thicket and found a pair of Traill's Flycatchers busily constructing a nest about 7 feet up in a willow sapling and about 20 feet in from the edge of the thicket. On 23 June a bulldozer had cleared a swath through the willow thicket and had also cleared away the nest tree. The Flycatchers built a new nest about fifteen feet from the first site and about 8 feet up in a willow sapling. By 4 July 1963 the nest was completed and the bird was incubating. On 21 July three young had hatched.

From mid-May through early July of 1963 I repeatedly saw and heard a Traill's Flycatcher in a narrow strip of willow saplings fringing a small marsh at the SE edge of the National Airport at the extreme east end of Arlington, Virginia. No nest was found. This site is about 2 miles N from the Hunting Creek site. It is interesting to note that between these two sites but on the

opposite shore of the Potomac River at the extreme S tip of the District of Columbia I found the first recorded nest of the Traill's Flycatcher for the District of Columbia. This, too, was in a thicket of weeping willow saplings fringing a small cattail marsh on the river shore at the Blue Plains sewage treatment plant. On 25 July 1959 a Flycatcher was brooding 2 eggs but on 5 August there was only one egg and the nest appeared to be abandoned.

1100 Doter Drive, Alexandria, Virginia

VSO BACK BAY FIELD TRIP, DECEMBER 1964

MRS. LUCILE NEWELL STILL

At Back Bay the morning of December 5, 1964, was mild, with low-lying clouds and fog. As the truck filled with VSO members started down the beach on the annual winter field trip, the early sun created a changing play of pearly color in clouds, fog, and waves. A school of porpoises rollicked off-shore, accompanying us southward. A lone Gannet, grounded by oil, flopped into the sea and rode the waves near shore. There were a few loons of both species and some clusters of scoters.

At Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge headquarters Manager Donald R. Ambrosen told us of the nutria and raccoon control programs now being carried out on the refuge for the protection of ducks and geese. He also showed the group a dead Razorbill picked up on the beach earlier that morning, and a dead Sooty Shearwater and a Leach's Petrel picked up several weeks before and kept in the freezer especially for us.

During a walk along the dikes we observed some 8 or 10 Common Egrets. Ducks were seen in fewer numbers than usual; there were an estimated 2500, mostly Black Ducks, Mallards and Pintails, and a few American Widgeon. A refuge staff member said that in the entire area ducks were late coming in this year, probably due to the unusually mild fall weather.

Snow Geese were present in large numbers variously estimated at eight or ten thousand, and they provided some of the best sights of the weekend by flying in small groups, low and toward the dikes on which we were walking, showing their striking black and white pattern against the lowering sky. Very large flocks rose and wheeled restlessly in the distance whenever hunters' shots off the refuge were heard. There were comparatively few Canada Geese, maybe five or six hundred, and no Blue Geese at all.

There were good numbers of White-winged, Surf, and Common Scoters, a few mergansers, but no grebes. Swamp Sparrows and Myrtle Warblers flitted in the bushes along the dikes, as well as several Savannah Sparrows and Short-billed and Long-billed Marsh Wrens. The most productive area for land birds was "down at the far end" of the dike system where a small splinter group reported a number of species not seen by the majority walking the dikes. There were no juncos, and surprisingly, no Boat-tailed Grackles and not many Redwings.

Rain began to fall at noon and increased during our afternoon walk on the open beach and through the dunes. There was no shorebirds on the ocean beaches other than occasional Sanderlings, and few birds were in evidence in the dunes.

Sunday morning at Craney Island was much colder, windy, and overcast. The water outside the breakwater was rough. On the sheltered water inside the breakwater we saw groups and pairs of Horned Grebes, some 250 to 300 in all; large rafts of ducks, including Canvasbacks, Blacks, Mallards, Pintails, Gadwall, Shovelers, American Widgeon, Lesser Scaup, Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Ruddy Ducks, Green-winged Teal, and Red-breasted Mergansers.

There were many Great Black-backed, Herring, Ring-billed, and Bonaparte's Gulls and Forster's Terns. A flock of Black Skimmers put on a fine aerial show over the mudflats. There were scattered skitters of shorebirds; among them a few Lesser Yellowlegs, dozens of Dunlin, some Sanderling, Semipalmated Sandpipers, Black-bellied Plover, just a few Turnstones—but none of the Purple Sandpipers we hoped to find.

High point of the morning for some of the group was a flock of 6 Snow Buntings observed on the ground and in flight. Ed Ames led the group unerringly to the grassy area in which these exciting birds were found. They were a new life bird for at least three of the members present.

The group broke up at the gates of Craney Island at noon. Heading back toward Washington on Route 17, from the car and without stopping, we sighted some 96 individuals of 9 species, including Bluebirds, Shrikes, Robins and approximately 50 Turkey Vultures in a roosting tree just north of Port Royal.

A fine weekend ended with a beautiful display of clear sunset color as back drop for the roost-bound birds and a new sickle moon.

1711 S Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

NEWS OF THE LOCAL CHAPTERS

New VSO Chapter Formed

A new local chapter was approved for affiliation at the October 1964 Executive Committee meeting. This chapter, with headquarters in Gordonsville, has been organized as the Piedmont Chapter of the Virginia Society of Ornithology. This becomes the twelfth chapter of the VSO, of which eleven are active. The Society anticipates the reactivation of the Turkey Sag Bird Club, one of the oldest in the state.

The chapter was formed with 10 charter members and indications that membership would grow steadily. The officers are William W. Waterman, President; Mrs. William H. Babcock, Vice President; Mrs. William W. Waterman, Treasurer; and William H. Babcock, Secretary.

The Piedmont Chapter plans an active program with frequent field trips. The Society expects this chapter will add to our knowledge of an area in which we previously have been without members and without records of migration, nesting, etc.

The VSO extends its warmest appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. William H. Babcock, whose efforts led to the formation of the chapter. Louise and Bill were formerly active members of the Northern Virginia Chapter and continue to attend meetings when time permits. We welcome this new chapter and stand ready to be of assistance in any way possible.

James W. Eike, Chairman, VSO Chapters Committee

Cape Henry Bird Club

At the December meeting the Cape Henry Bird Club installed the following new officers: President, Horace Derby; Vice President, Ronald W. Barr; Recording Secretary, Mrs. Jasper Brown; Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. Leamon L. Forrest; and Treasurer, A. F. Schaffhirt. Four new Board members were also installed, Miss Louise Bethea, Mrs. L. E. Burford, Mrs. David D. Green, and Mrs. C. Dodson Morrisette.

Club meetings are currently being held on the second Friday of each month at 8:15 p. m. in Room 213 of the Hughes Library, Old Dominion College. The Club is in addition sponsoring the Audubon Wildlife Tours at Northside Junior High School, Westmont Avenue and Granby Street, in Norfolk. The

last lecture in this series this year will be "Inherit the Wild" by D. J. Nelson and will be held on Friday, April 2, at 8:15 p. m.

An active field trip program is being held this year, with trips generally scheduled for twice a month. Trips scheduled for this spring include Stumpy Lake on April 17, Northwest River area on April 24, Dismal Swamp on May 8, and the Botanical Gardens on May 22. Further details on these and other trips may be secured from the Tripmaster, Mrs. L. E. Burford, 6049 Lake Terrace Circle, Norfolk, Virginia 23502. Visitors are welcomed to all meetings and field trips.—Mrs. L. E. Burford.

Lynchburg Bird Club

Noisy hammers and busy paint brushes in January and February mean that by March the Lynchburg Bird Club will be ready for the Bluebird nesting season, 1965. Encouraged by progress made during its first year on a continuing project to "Bring Back the Bluebird," the club begins its second season with plans hopefully enlarged.

Records kept on one-third of the 129 attractive nest boxes made and sold by the club in 1964 give positive reports that 63 young Bluebirds came off successfully. It is believed probable that the unreported two-thirds of the nest boxes did as well. While a few boxes were used by wrens and chickadees, none was reported as taken over by the Starling or House Sparrow.

Mrs. S. A. Bailey is chairman of the Bluebird project. The plan was given impetus by the enthusiasm of Dr. William Hooks, now of the Lynchburg College faculty, who told the Lynchburg group about the remarkable success of a similar project he worked on in northern Illinois.

A cautious beginning was made. Friends of the Bluebird responded to the passed hat with a few dollars. This working fund was used to reprint and distribute the Bluebird information leaflet prepared by Dr. T. E. Musselman of Quincy, Ill. Civic groups, garden clubs, Boy Scouts, hiking clubs, and sportsmen's clubs were canvassed and supplied with information on the needs of the Bluebird and the construction of nest boxes. The putting up of nest boxes was strongly encouraged: build your own boxes, or purchase from the Lynchburg Bird Club.

Box-builders of the club spent a good many winter evenings in the basement of a member who cheerfully housed the "housing authority" despite the fuss-and-muss. A local supplier furnished the pieces of the box used, cut to size, at 75 cents a box. Nails, glue, and paint added something to the cost of the boxes, which sold at \$1.50 each. About \$75.00 above expenses was cleared for the continuance of the project, which is expected to remain self-supporting. In addition to making boxes for sale to the public, this year the club plans to place up to 50 boxes in selected locations (where the birds are) in an experimental project.

A tight visiting schedule to be shared by club members will keep these nest boxes under close observation. It is hoped that the resulting detailed records will develop useful information and generate new ideas on how to "Bring Back the Bluebird."—Myriam P. Moore.

New River Valley Bird Club

The New River Valley Bird Club participated in the Blacksburg Christmas bird count on December 22 and increased the number of observers to a new high, thus permitting a more thorough coverage of the area than had been possible previously. Motion pictures of the Mourning Dove and the Bobwhite were presented at the October and January meetings, respectively. Dr. Henry Mosby spoke to the Club on "Legal Aspects of Bird Protection" at the November meeting, and Joseph S. Larson is scheduled to talk to the Club on "Mist Netting" at the February meeting. So far this year the meetings have

alternated between Radford College and Virginia Polytechnic Institute. A field trip along the New River is planned for February.

At its January meeting the Club decided to participate in the North American Nest Record Card Program. This program is being instituted by the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University under the direction of Olin S. Pettingill.—John W. Murray.

Northern Virginia Chapter

The Northern Virginia Chapter celebrated its tenth anniversary in November 1964. The event was commemorated at a meeting held on November 10 at the Falls Church residence of Mr. and Mrs. James W. Eike, where the initial organizational meeting was held in 1954. A feature of the celebration was the appearance of Dr. J. J. Murray as the principal speaker, with an illustrated talk on "Birding in Trinidad." Programs at other meetings on the fall schedule included a talk on the birds of Australia and a showing of slides, taken by Chapter members, illustrating recent VSO meetings and forays. A full program of meetings and field trips is planned for the spring.—R. J. Watson.

Roanoke Valley Bird Club

The Roanoke Valley Bird Club recently took action to cancel sponsorship of the Audubon Wildlife Films for the 1965-66 season. After much discussion at the Club meeting in early January, it was decided that the programs were too costly and that local response was not significant enough for the continued support of the Club.

To replace this part of the Club's activities a sort of educational program is planned. In this respect the Club hopes to have several meetings in the winter devoted to such subjects as Field Identification Marks, Bluebird Boxes, Birdwatchers' Quizzes, etc. These programs will be presented by qualified club members and outside speakers when available. Motion pictures will also be presented from time to time. All of these meetings will be open to the public.

Twelve Club members participated in the annual Christmas bird count with an all-day field trip on January 2. Forty-three species and 2467 individual birds were recorded.

Spring bird walks will soon be mapped to include forays to the Peaks of Otter on the Blue Ridge Parkway, Carvins Cove in Roanoke County, and Bent Mountain. Interested birders from outside the Roanoke area are invited to join these trips. The mountains in spring are delightfully full of life.—Dave Ochsner.

Rockbridge Bird Club

Probably the highlight of the year for the Rockbridge Bird Club was a trip on Sunday afternoon, October 18, to the Rockbridge Alum Springs as guests of Mrs. H. H. Bailey. Forty-seven members and their guests toured the grounds and visited the museum of natural history. The group had an opportunity to see the paintings and furniture as well as the extensive bird collection. Of particular interest was the extensive library on nature, especially ornithology. It was a memorable day and the largest number of people ever to participate in a Rockbridge Bird Club outing.

Under Dr. J. J. Murray's direction, the annual Christmas bird count at Lexington took place on December 26. This was a very successful count and totaled 55 species and 10,353 individuals. Thirteen observers participated in the count.

A very successful newsletter has been instituted under the editorship of Royster Lyle. This has proved very popular with the Club members. Plans for the spring include several field trips as well as a Bluebird nesting box campaign.—Royster Lyle, Jr.

REVIEWS

A New Dictionary of Birds, edited by Sir A. Landsborough Thomson, with 172 other contributors. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1964, 928 double-column pages, quarto, 16 color plates, 32 photographs, and many drawings, maps, and diagrams.

All who have tried to do any serious work in ornithology or who have any great curiosity about the birds of other lands will welcome this significant book. Up to now we have had to depend on a famous old book, "A Dictionary of Birds," by Alfred Newton. Although out of date in many respects, it is still very useful. Published in 1896 and carried out mainly by one man, it was a tremendous undertaking. While the new dictionary is edited by one man, there are many who have had a part in the writing.

This new work has nearly twice as much material as there was in Newton's book and includes many subjects not even thought of in Newton's time. It is indispensable to anyone with an interest in scientific ornithology. It would indeed be difficult to say too much in praise of its material. To us in this country its high quality is evidenced by the character of its thirty American contributors, among whom are such authorities as Amadon, Deignan, Eisenmann, Friedmann, Mayr, Murphy, Ripley, and Wetmore. Its 172 contributors are from all over the world, Asia and Australasia and Africa, as well as Europe and both Americas. The majority of them are British. Czechoslovakia and Russia beyond the iron curtain are represented, Israel, Kenya, Sarawak, and Surinam. There is, however, a rather strange shortage of German ornithologists, only four in the list being men now living in Germany. There are prefaces by the presidents of the B.O.U. and the A.O.U., R. E. Moreau and Austin L. Rand.

Full attention is paid to the birds of the United States and to ornithological work in this country. On page 504 some of the differences in usage in common names of birds in the two countries are noted.

There is no limit to the space that could properly be devoted to a review of this monumental work. In size it is impressive. This reviewer made a hasty estimate of over three quarters of a million words. There is no aspect of ornithology which is not covered, in some instances briefly but always competently. There are over 400 signed general articles, some of them taking only a page, others running to ten or more, as well as innumerable short notes. It is an encyclopedia of ornithology rather than a mere dictionary of birds. For example, a page is given to an analysis of the purpose, values, and limitations of breeding bird censuses. This is written, by the way, by P. A. D. Hollom, who with Peterson and Guy Mountfort produced "A Field Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe."

There is an eight page discussion of migration by the editor, with cross references to many other related articles, such as "ecology," "geographical distribution," "navigation," "radar," etc., etc. To take another example at random, "skeleton" is discussed to the extent of eight pages, with many drawings to make the subject clear. Practically every genus of birds in the world is treated.

Being a dictionary and thus self-indexed, there is no general index. There is a very complete index (21 pages) of generic names. The only question I have about the book is a mechanical one. Is the binding of sufficient strength for a book of nearly a thousand pages, weighing over five pounds?

J. J. Murray

Waterfowl Tomorrow, Edited by Joseph Linduska. Fish and Wildlife Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, Government Printing Office, Washington, 1964, xiv & 770 pages, profusely illustrated with maps, photographs, and drawings. Price, \$4.00.

Nowhere can a reader get more about waterfowl for his money. This is not a luxury book; there are no color plates; but it is well printed and illustrated with good photographs and attractive black and white drawings. The editor was formerly Chief of Game Management for the Fish and Wildlife Service. The artist, Bob Hines, was the designer of the 1946 Duck Stamp and of the four Wildlife Conservation Postage Stamps. The 103 writers of the 69 chapters represent the United States and Canada and are familiar with Mexico. They include professional ornithologists, research biologists, federal and state wildlife workers, and officials of sportsmen's organizations.

In the foreword, Stuart Udall, Secretary of the Interior, sets the tone of the book: "The time has come when men must choose what kind of permanent relationship they want to have with their land and her creatures." Every element of such a sound relationship is discussed in the book. It is not a field guide but a thorough treatment of the relations of waterfowl to the land and water, and of man to the waterfowl and to all the factors that affect their preservation. It is marked throughout by factual knowledge and by common sense. There is a great deal of interest to the person primarily concerned with bird watching.

It is impossible in our limited space to discuss or even to indicate the many points handled in this book. The changing conditions that make life difficult for waterfowl and the ways in which there may be at least a fair measure of protection are pointed out. The chief production areas are described and the five great flyways charted. Detailed analyses of the ways in which man, who has so greatly hindered, may now begin to help are offered. In the closing sections the chances for the future are outlined. The book is a first-rate encyclopedia of waterfowl conservation.

J. J. Murray

NEWS AND NOTES

CORNELL'S NEST-RECORD CARD PROGRAM. Beginning with this season the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University will operate a nest-record card program on a continent-wide basis, under the direction of Dr. Olin Sewall Pettingill. The Laboratory will provide cards and instructions to all individuals willing to cooperate. The observer will record the progress of each nest found on a separate card according to methods outlined by the Laboratory. If you are willing to share in this program on a large or small scale, write to Dr. O. S. Pettingill, Jr., Director, Nest-Record Card Program, Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14850. This will be a service to the work of the VSO as well as to this nest-record program.

C. C. STEIRLY: VIRGINIA FORESTER OF 1964. At the annual banquet of Virginia Forests, Inc., at Williamsburg in December Steirly was named Virginia's 1964 "Man of the Year in Forestry." He is district forester at Waverly of the Virginia Division of Forestry and widely known in forestry circles as well as in ornithological groups. As a long time member of the VSO, a leader of field trips, and writer for *The Raven*, Steirly is well known for his work in our group.

CORRECTIONS TO REPORTS ON NORTHERN FINCHES. Examination of some photographs of a "Pine Grosbeak" reported in Newport News last winter (*Raven*, 35: 42) reveals that the bird was instead a White-winged Crossbill, thus extending this latter bird's influx even farther into southeastern Virginia. One of the photographs was reproduced (with the incorrect identification) on the bottom of page 16 of the September 1964 issue of *Virginia Wildlife*.

WESTERN GREBE AT DULLES AIRPORT. A Western Grebe, the second sight record for Virginia, was found at a pond at Dulles Airport,

Loudoun County, on 14 October 1964 by Ira J. Abramson and John Wightman (*Atlantic Naturalist*, 19: 242). The bird was later seen up until 19 October by scores of Washington area observers, including J. M. Abbott, J. W. Eike, and Marcia Lakeman.

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE IN FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA. Charlton Ogburn, Jr., reports (in a letter to F. R. Scott) the sighting of a Swallow-tailed Kite near Oakton, four miles north of Fairfax, Virginia, on 17 April 1964. It was flying north at an altitude of about 130 feet. He studied it for some ten seconds with 8x glasses, noting the long and pointed tail and the dark on the underside of the flight feathers. He has formerly been familiar with the bird in the field in Brazil. There are only a few Virginia records for this bird.

RUFF AT ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA. An immature male Ruff was found at Hunting Creek, on the border of Fairfax County and Alexandria, Virginia, on 11 April 1964 (not 10 April as noted in *Audubon Field Notes*) by E. T. McKnight. The bird remained until 22 April and was seen by many other Washington area observers, including A. A. Baker, P. A. DuMont, Helen Goldstick, R. L. Pyle, F. G. Scheider, and R. L. Smith.

FLICKER NESTING ON THE GROUND AT HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA. David K. Mumaw of Harrisonburg has sent to the editor pictures of an unusual Flicker nest. It was located on the ground in a small vegetable garden eight miles west of Harrisonburg, Virginia. There were 7 eggs. One of the pictures shows the female Flicker within a few feet of the eggs. The nest was flooded out by a summer rain storm.

HOUSE FINCH IN CUMBERLAND COUNTY, VIRGINIA. Mrs. Florence H. Robinson saw a House Finch at her yard in Barnesville on 30 January 1965. She noticed it feeding with other birds where she had placed food in a cleared spot in the snow. "At first I thought it was a Purple Finch. But the color did not seem right and the new bird appeared more slender than the Purple. The head, upper chest, and shoulders appeared to be a rosy-red. There was strong streaking on the under parts."

HAWK MIGRATION STUDY. The "annual" hawk watch at Loft Mountain in Shenandoah National Park, which was held over the week end of 19 and 20 September 1964, fulfilled one of the predictions made for it in the Newsletter announcement of 10 August. The twenty or so participants who braved fog and heavy rains got excellent counts of other disappointed bird watchers but few if any hawks.

The rest of the migration study also suffered from poor weather as well as one of the earliest Broad-winged Hawk flights on record. Reports from Hawk Mountain indicated that the best flights of Broad-wings moved through southeastern Pennsylvania between 3 and 13 September. This may indicate that a large proportion of the flight passed through Virginia prior to the week end of 19 September. In any event, those who reported their observations from the central Virginia mountains had very few hawks, the best count being 21 Broad-wings at Reddish Knob on 26 September (Max Carpenter).

The Mendota Fire Tower on Clinch Mountain, on the Russell-Washington county line, was the only observation point that yielded any really useful results, thanks to the various members of the Tennessee Ornithological Society, who covered this site on 14 different days. Nineteen Broad-wings were seen here as early as 13 August, and the best count was 627 on 22 September.

FULVOUS TREE DUCKS IN VIRGINIA. Records of Fulvous Tree Ducks are steadily increasing in Virginia. Several were seen at Knotts Island, Back Bay, in January 1965 (*vide* Don Ambrosen, Refuge Manager). Louise

Bethea saw about 30 at Hog Island, James River, on 1 January 1965. Clyde Abernathy, Refuge Manager, said that they had been there for 3 days. Others were seen there by Mrs. Floy Burford and Mrs. Colgate W. Darden on 9 January 1965. At Elk Island, in James River, on the line between Cumberland and Goochland Counties, 6 were killed out of a flock of about 25 by Joe W. and James R. Bobbs of Richmond on 26 December 1964 (*vide* Henry S. Mosby). In sight of Hopewell, Prince George County, 6 were observed in November 1964, although identification was not positive (*vide* James F. McInteer, Jr.). McInteer has at the office of the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries a specimen shot at the Hopewell location early in January 1965.

UNUSUAL SEABIRD RECORDS IN VIRGINIA. The following dead birds have been sent by Mrs. Floy Burford to the U. S. National Museum for deposit: Leach's Petrel, picked up on the beach at Back Bay about 25 August 1964, first Virginia specimen; Sooty Shearwater, picked up at Back Bay about 15 March 1964; and a specimen of the Razor-billed Auk, picked up on the VSO Back Bay Field Trip, 5 December 1964.

GLAUCOUS GULL, INLAND. On 17 February 1965 F. R. Scott identified from the air at close range an adult Glaucous Gull flying with an immature Herring Gull in Upper Chippokes Creek (the border of Prince George and Surry Counties), just in from the James River. There was not a speck of black on it. Except for the Potomac River, this should be our most inland record.

FORSTER'S TERN IN LOUDOUN COUNTY, VIRGINIA. Robert W. Warfield (RFD 1, Hereford Hills, Germantown, Maryland) reports a sight record of the Forster's Tern on 6 October 1964. The bird was flying south-east parallel to the Potomac River. The identification was simple, since the bird was in fall plumage. This seems to be the first record for Loudoun County. Many Forster's Terns, he writes, have been seen this fall over the river or in Maryland.

LEAST TERN AGAIN AT LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA. Joshua Womeldorf reports a Least Tern on 2 October 1964 at his farm pond. This is the second record for this spot and for the Valley or Virginia.

LATE HUMMINGBIRDS AT LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA. Colonel and Mrs. Robert P. Carroll report extremely late hummingbirds at the syrup feeder at their home near V. M. I. There were 3 on 21 October and one on 27 October. The former late date for this area was 28 September, although Murray has one amazingly late date of 12 November 1956.

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER AT FARMVILLE, VIRGINIA. Dr. George Jeffers reports a Prothonotary Warbler at a bird bath in his yard at Farmville, Virginia, 26 July 1964.

WORM-EATING WARBLER BREEDING IN TIDEWATER VIRGINIA. Mrs. Dorothy L. Mitchell reports seeing a Worm-eating Warbler feeding young in her woods at Newport News on 16 July 1964. She saw the adult in the same small area at various times from 4 May to 23 September.

CERULEAN WARBLER BREEDING IN HENRICO COUNTY, VIRGINIA. F. R. Scott reports a Cerulean Warbler feeding a young bird on 21 June 1964 in the Chickahominy Swamp of Henrico County, just out of the Richmond city limits to the northeast.

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH IN WINTER IN VIRGINIA. A Northern Waterthrush was carefully noted on the grounds of the Congressional School on Sleepy Hollow Road, Fairfax County, Virginia, during the District

of Columbia Christmas bird count on 26 December 1964. The observers, W. S. Clark, Sylvia Johnson, and Enoch Johnson, had a long period of observation of this bird at close quarters, and Mr. Johnson submitted detailed notes of the observation. Johnson and Clark again observed the bird in the same area on 1 January 1965 and attempted unsuccessfully to trap it with mist nets. On 16 January Capt. and Mrs. Jack L. Kinsey found apparently the same bird in the same location. This seems to be the first winter record of this species in Virginia.

BLUE GROSBEAKS AT NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA. The Sydney Mitchells report Blue Grosbeaks in their yard at Newport News from 24 April to 6 August 1964. There were three different birds, an adult male (banded) and female and an immature male.

RED CROSSBILLS IN AUGUSTA COUNTY, VIRGINIA. On 11 November 1964 J. J. Murray, Jr., and H. G. M. Jopson saw 7 Red Crossbills (4 males, 3 females) on Chestnut Ridge, which runs down from Reddish Knob, in Virginia.

A LATE TOWHEE NESTING. R. J. Watson reports a female Rufous-sided Towhee feeding a young bird at Blacksburg, Virginia, on 7 September 1964.

WESTERN VARIETY OF JUNCO AT ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA. Arthur H. Fast trapped a junco on 20 November 1964 at Arlington which was identified by Wetmore as *Junco hyemalis cismontanus*, a western form of the Slate-colored Junco. Other occurrences of this bird in Virginia have been reported in recent years by Fast and others.

NEW VSO MEMBERS ENROLLED SINCE THE PUBLICATION
OF THE MEMBERSHIP ROSTER IN THE DECEMBER
1964 ISSUE OF THE RAVEN

Miss Barbara Brown
8214 Bowers Lane
Richmond, Va. 23227

Mrs. Ruth M. Brown
8214 Bowers Lane
Richmond, Va. 23227

Mr. Mitchell A. Byrd
College of William and Mary
Williamsburg, Va. 23185

Mr. John Wallace Coffey
508 Spruce St.
Bristol, Tenn. 37622

Mr. Horace C. Derby
9413 Cape View
Norfolk, Va. 23503

Mr. & Mrs. Middleton H. Dulaney
830 Knotts Creek Lane
Suffolk, Va.

Mrs. Emmett R. Elliot
Hampden-Sydney, Virginia

Mr. Gustav W. Hall
College of William and Mary
Williamsburg, Va. 23185

Miss Ida Harvey
Cullen, Va.

Miss Terrell Harvey
Cullen, Va.

*Mr. William W. Hopkins
P. O. Box 212
Irvington, Va. 22480

Mrs. William Lawson
Saxe, Virginia

Mrs. Robert W. MacAdoo
P. O. Box 1515
Pulaski, Va.

Mrs. E. H. Marrow, Jr.
210 Cromwell Ave.
Tarboro, N. C. 27886

Mr. Peter Russell Mehring
Covesville, Va. 22931

Mrs. Allen W. Moger
506 Jackson Ave.
Lexington, Va.

Mrs. C. G. Pembroke
4015 Hermitage Road
Richmond, Va.

Mrs. Dora S. Schuler
Route 6
Farmville, Va.

Mrs. Robert Sears
Charlotte Court House, Va.

Dr. Jack S. Shaver
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Waynesboro, Va. 22980

Mrs. Joseph C. Toth
301—53rd St.
Virginia Beach, Va. 23451

Mr. & Mrs. Freeman E. Williams
5910 Upper Brandon Place
Norfolk, Va. 23508

Dr. J. O. Watkins
29 Montgomery Drive
Spartanburg, S. C.

*Although Mr. Hopkins is listed in the December 1964 Raven his membership was effective January 1, 1965.

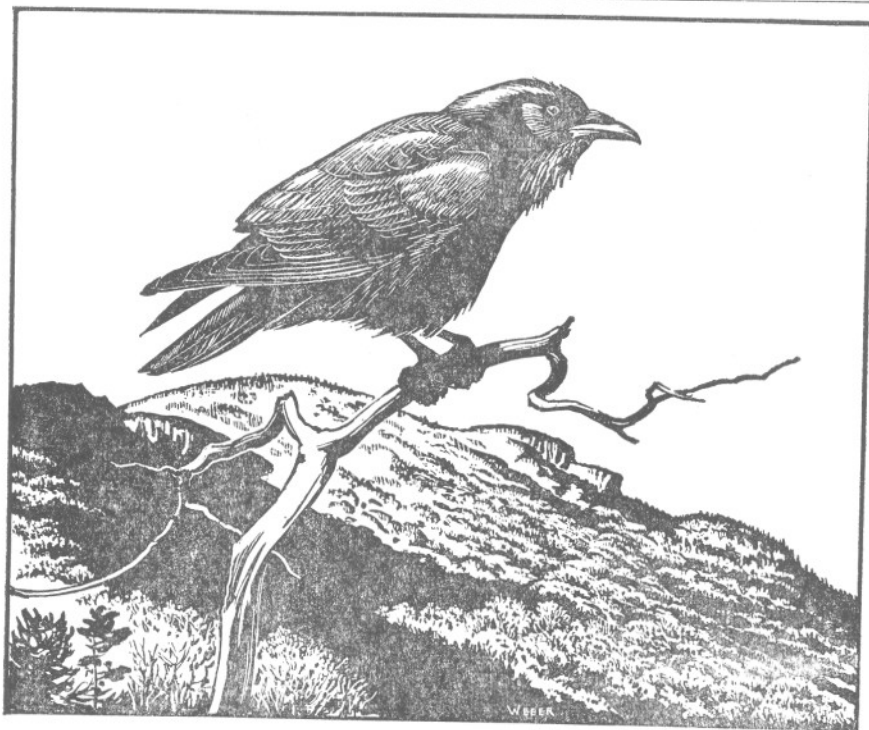
The Raven

JOURNAL OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY

VOLUME 36

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Courtesy of Walter Weber

CONTENTS

Bubo Virginianus	35
By Dwight R. Chamberlain	
Confusing Chickadee Songs in the Shenandoah National Park	37
By Charles E. Stevens	
The Second Mattamuskeet Trip	37
By Mrs. Myriam P. Moore	
The 1965 VSO Annual Meeting	38
By Robert J. Watson	
The Field Trips of the 1965 Annual Meeting	40
By J. J. Murray	
VSO Local Clubs, March 1965	41
VSO Resolution	42
Committees of the VSO, 1965-1966	43
Treasurer's Reports	44
New Members of the VSO	45
Review, by F. R. Scott	46
News and Notes	46
Actions of the Executive Committee	48
Recent Winter Wrens in Summer in the Shenandoah National Park	48
By Charles E. Stevens	

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

Activities undertaken by the Society include the following:

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

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

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

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

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

Those wishing to participate in any of the above activities or to cooperate in advancing the objectives of the Society are cordially invited to join. Annual dues are \$1.00 for junior members (students), \$2.00 for active members, \$4.00 for sustaining members, \$50.00 for life members.

OFFICERS OF THE VSO

President: MRS. JAMES W. WILTSHIRE, 201 Woodland Avenue, Lynchburg, Virginia 24503.

Vice-President: CHARLES W. HACKER, 218 Chesterfield Road, Hampton, Virginia 23361.

Secretary: ROBERT J. WATSON, 2636 Marcey Road, Arlington 7, Virginia 22207.

Treasurer: J. STEVEN THORNHILL, 2615 Fort Avenue, Lynchburg, Virginia 24501.

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Associate Editor (for clubs news, Christmas and other bird counts, field trips):
F. R. SCOTT, 115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond 26, Virginia 23226.

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The business and mailing address for *The Raven* is Box 57, Charlottesville, Virginia.

BUBO VIRGINIANUS

DWIGHT R. CHAMBERLAIN

Pound for pound (approximately four) the Great Horned Owl must rate as the most powerful bird of prey in Virginia. In Alaska, where bald eagles are more abundant than elsewhere, it is known to appropriate and utilize about 6 per cent of the eyries of our national symbol. Charles Broley, the famous eagle bander, has noted similar pirating in Florida.

But what a strange scientific name; and when regarding *Bubo virginianus* one wonders how it could relate to Virginia's fauna! Even translated, the mystery remains: *Bubo* (eagle-owl) *virginianus* (Virginia), or eagle-owl of Virginia. But an avian taxonomist would know at a glance that we are referring to the Latin classification of the Great Horned Owl, one of Virginia's most savage nocturnal raptors. (Best handy explanation of the name is that in 1788 when first classified by Gmelin, Virginia was much bigger and became a catch-all term for outlaws.)

Eagle-owl most adequately describes the only large dusky owl (nearly two feet in length) with conspicuous ear tufts ("horns") which hunts the wilder forested acres of the Old Dominion. It also has a very noticeable white throat-collar, which when silhouetted with its pointed horns against the evening sky gives it a cat-like appearance; hence its adopted local name "cat owl."

The Great Horned Owl is the larger of the only two common "hoot owls" in the United States. Virginia plays host to the Barred Owl also, a smaller bird without ear tufts, and a frequenter of swamps in contrast to the Horned Owl's preference for mature wood lots. The hooting of the Horned Owl is distinguished from the higher pitched utterances of the Barred Owl by being deeper and more resonant and consisting of three to six uninflected hoots. Those of the Barred Owl are usually eight-syllabled, and its series slurs downward to an uncanny ending. The Horned Owl also emits a cat-like squall often followed by dog-like yelps. A few observers would swear they have heard them scream not unlike the maniacal cries of a mental patient in the throes of hysteria.

Virginia now protects the Great Horned Owl along with all hawks and owls, *provisionally*, unless caught in the act of destroying personal property. However, these statutes are only the recent product of determined nature, bird, garden, and other informed groups. Some explanation of the Great Horned Owl's carnivorous and voracious feeding habits is necessary.

The horned owl is fully in parity with the fierce Gyrfalcon in its prowess as a hunter. Its principal food in Virginia includes insects, crayfish, meadow mice, deer mice, fish, chipmunks, rats, cottontail rabbits, muskrats, birds (even other *Raptors* included), squirrels, woodchucks, skunks (one of the few natural enemies of the stinker), poultry, grouse, quail, stray cats, and even young foxes. It also practices a strange feeding ritual when ordinary density of prey is exceeded in its range. It will often savor only the brains or other soft parts of its quarry, and has been known to sustain its young on these "owl's d'oeuvres."

Yet this owl should be judged according to individual ecological value and not by traditional prejudice and misunderstanding. For instance, in the West, the Great Horned Owl has become a useful ally of ranchers in extirpating the hordes of ground squirrels, prairie dogs, gophers, rabbits and harmful rodents which have infested their fields and ranges. The eminent scientist, Dr. A. K. Fisher, had this to say about his favorite subject: "The great horned owl does a vast amount of good, and, if farmers would shut up their chickens at night instead of allowing them to roost in trees and other exposed places, the principal damage done by the bird would be prevented."

An interesting question might be *where* and *how* does the Great Horned Owl capture its varied prey? The *where* is now known, thanks to recent research conducted by Frank and John Craighead, national authorities on birds of prey.

They have discovered that Great Horned Owls maintain an annual "home range" which could be defined as an "environmental niche or complex, meeting the biological requirements of the species throughout life." Therefore, unless sparcity of prey exists in a given range, adult Great Horned Owls usually *do not* migrate, but maintain their balance of life within their given quarter to half-mile radius home range.

How Great Horned Owls so accurately locate their quarry was revealed by Dr. Roger Payne's outstanding work at Cornell University which has revolutionized all former thought on this interesting facet of owl behavior. He has shown (for example, using the Barn Owl) that the ear openings on opposite sides of its head are asymmetrally placed, thus helping the owl pin point faint sounds in dim light. Coupled with these external adaptations, the Great Horned Owl also has very large cochleae, columellae, and eardrums—all co-ordinated into a hypersensitive auditory structure that most efficiently receives pitches around the same frequency as a squeaking mouse. This also accounts for its passing over a Ruffed Grouse drumming at night, the thundering of which extends downward below this owl's hearing range to 40 vibrations per second. Except for the latter anomaly, however, Dr. Payne tells us that the Great Horned Owl truly hunts by sound, and only polishes its marksmanship by sight as a nocturnal hunter. As a final perfection, velvety moth-like feathers muffle all sounds of its giant wings in flight, so that in addition to its acute hearing, the Horned Owl makes no warning sound in swooping down for the fatal clutch.

Paradoxically, Dr. Edward Broadman, Assistant Director of the Rochester, N. Y. Museum of Arts and Sciences, told me about one of his pet Horned Owls that exhibited even finer diurnal vision than his own. One sunny morning while reposing in his back yard, Dr. Broadman noticed his pet tilting its head to one side apparently following an object across the sky. After a thorough scrutiny of the heavens himself, the Doctor grasped his 9 x 35 binoculars and finally spotted a brace of jets moving across the sun, definitely inscrutable to his naked eye, but obviously discernible by the owl's. However, whatever controversy still exists over owls' sense of sight, it can be safely concluded that the Great Horned Owl and other species are capable of capturing prey on cloudy, moonless nights by sound alone.

The Great Horned Owl becomes domestic-minded very early in the season, and is probably Virginia's earliest nesting bird. Fresh eggs, two or three in number, have been deposited in an old hawk's or crow's nest, on a rugged hillside, in a hollow tree or on a shelf of a precipitous cliff between late January and early March. Their eggs are white, subspherically-shaped and measure approximately 2.22 by 1.80 inches. The incubation period is four weeks. The fluffy results are covered with white down turning to Ochreous buff, but are finely barred with dusky color as fledglings.

As a final tribute to a very handsome owl in which are combined distinct suggestions of truculence, scorn, threat, and defiance, I hope Virginia will afford its provisional protection indefinitely. After all, if Mother Nature had intended extermination, she would never have endowed our State with this vestige of the Appalachian wilds, the Great Horned Owl.

Blacksburg, Virginia

CONFUSING CHICKADEE SONGS IN THE SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

CHARLES E. STEVENS

While following the Appalachian Trail along the steep northwest side of Stony Man on 27 June 1964 Steve Calver and I were very much surprised to hear the familiar *two-noted* "fee-bee" song of the Black-capped Chickadee. Much squeaking shortly attracted a pair of chickadees about which no specific determination could be made as far as appearance was concerned. The birds would not give their "chickadee" call by which they could be further identified vocally, but perched silently and interestedly at close quarters. A thrown handful of gravel sent them into flight, but elicited only one "chickadee-dee-dee" call which was rather inconclusive. The birds were not heard from further.

This incident brought up the interesting question of why a chickadee would give the Black-capped song in known Carolina territory. The nearest summer Black-capped population to our present knowledge is about 35 miles westward in western Rockingham County. Aside from a not unexpected winter record for the Park, there are two puzzling "summer" records for the Blackcapped: 23 May 1942 near Camp Rapidan (J. R. Sydnor), and May 1947 (L. Y. Berg) at the Park headquarters (Wetmore, *The List of Birds of the Shenandoah National Park*, Shenandoah Natural History Assoc. Bull. No. 1, 1950). Carolinas singing their characteristic four-noted "su fee-su bee" have been heard throughout the Park and to the top of Hawksbill, although in a flock of obvious Carolinas at Furnace Spring near Skyland on 17 July 1964 there was a two-noted song given.

Is the two-noted song alone evidence enough to identify a chickadee as a Blackcapped? Or do some Carolinas sing it? Do these species on the borders of their ranges sing each other's songs? It is said they intergrade. I have heard two-noted chickadees sing in and near Charlottesville in winter (where we have no Black-capped records), but not heard them call, and heard a bird near Stuarts Draft, Augusta County, on 30 March 1963 sing the two-noted "fee-bee", but also give the typical fast high-pitched "chickadee-dee-dee" call of the Carolina. Black-caps give a slower and huskier "chickadee-dee dee" in their western Virginia territories in Rockingham, Augusta, Highland and Bath counties. Are some of the Black-caps which visit northern Virginia in winter identified solely by their two-noted song? I could not find any mention of the two chickadees singing each other's songs in the literature that I had available. Opinions or answers to some of these questions would be of interest in these pages.

615 Preston Place, Charlottesville, Va.

THE SECOND MATTAMUSKEET TRIP

MRS. MYRIAM P. MOORE

The 1965 Mattamuskeet Trip took place on 29-31 January. Despite unfavorable weather it was rated a happy success by the 49 participants. Sixty species were listed.

After dinner on Friday the trip leader, J. Steven Thornhill, outlined the schedule of events throughout the trip, he kept us informed about what to expect. A get-acquainted session Friday evening was graciously presided over by Mrs. James W. Wiltshire, VSO president, who welcomed and introduced all present. After a show of slides the evening was rounded off with the music of a talented group of young folk-singers.

Summoned early from our beds by the imperative tones of the big bell, Refuge Manager Willie G. Cahoon was on hand to help us load the refuge truck for the Saturday field trip. The Richmond Natural History Society took honors for attendance. The marshes were teeming with birdlife, but the poor light made all species appear drab. Four very gray-looking Great Blue Herons fanned away as we took the path along the eastern rim of the lake. Sparrows rose continually from the dry grasses beside the way, to drop again as suddenly out of sight, giving us an escort of Savannah, Song, Swamp, and White-throated Sparrows. Fox Sparrows had been seen earlier near the lodge, but no Field Sparrows were recorded for the trip list, although the latter are rated a common winter resident at the refuge. An uncommon winter visitor, the Slate-colored Junco, was on hand to greet that special friend of juncos, Dr. D. Ralph Hostetter.

Numbers of Canada Geese and Snow Geese, with a few Blue Geese, were visible in the distance. Pintails were plentiful, with a few Black Ducks and Canvasbacks among them. From Hal Swindell of the refuge staff we learned that there are more Pintails at Mattamuskeet than all other ducks put together.

A soaking rain hurried us back to the lodge at midmorning. Telescopes were set up at windows overlooking a canal. The Common Loon, American Coot, Mallard, Killdeer and Common Snipe were among the rewards of the window watchers. A Wood Duck made sport of swimming into and out of the picture. An otter taking a swim in the same canal later afforded a high moment. Seeking verification from staff members, we were told that although not a rarity at Mattamuskeet, the otter is shy and not frequently seen by visitors.

As soon as the rain slacked off in the afternoon, we were bound for nearby Swanquarter. From the end of the pier large rafts of Scaups and Buffleheads could be seen. Some specialties of Swanquarter particularly hoped for, the Oldsquaw and the Red-cockaded Woodpecker, eluded us. The Brown-headed Nuthatch was often seen, enabling Col. Bernard Thielen to fill a small vacant spot on his life list. Near the lodge, groves of cypress and pine and tangles of shrubbery and grasses sheltered a wealth of birds. Along the paths in this an Orange-crowned Warbler was seen. A Short-billed Marsh Wren and a Winter Wren were found. A late look at the marshes showed an American Bittern.

Mr. Robert Prescott of the refuge staff expressed regret about the unaccustomed snow, which seemed to be reaching blizzard proportions about bedtime Saturday evening, and lent substance to these words by opening the refuge shops on Sunday morning and aiding all who needed help in adjusting snow tires and chains for the trip home. The staff of the lodge was also thoughtful of our comfort. And our Trip Leader Thornhill received a hearty round of applause for a tough job well done.

9 Riverview Place, Lynchburg, Va.

THE 1965 VSO ANNUAL MEETING

ROBERT J. WATSON, SECRETARY

The 1965 annual meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology opened at 2:00 PM on 21 May 1965 at the Mountain Lake Hotel, Mountain Lake, Virginia. Mrs. James W. Wiltshire, President of the Society, introduced Dr. John W. Murray, president of the host organization (New River Valley Bird Club), who extended greetings to those attending.

The afternoon session was divided as usual into two halves, separated by a refreshment break. The first half consisted of informational talks on various aspects of ornithology, given by the following speakers:

"Ecological and Geographical Distribution of Mountain Lake Avifauna"—

Dr. J. J. Murray, Lexington

"The Anatomy of the Syrinx"—Dr. W. B. Gross, V.P.I.

"Vocalization in the Corvidae"—Dwight Chamberlain, V.P.I.

"Population Dynamics of the Wild Turkey in Virginia and Neighboring States"—Dr. Henry S. Mosby, V.P.I.

"Operation Recovery — Kiptopeke" — C. W. Hacker and W. P. Smith, Hampton

"The Pursuits of a Bird Bander"—Mrs. Dorothy L. Mitchell, Newport News

The four speakers on the second half of the program dealt with certain controversial aspects of the relationship between birds and men. The participants and their titles were as follows:

"Robin Populations and Insecticides"—Dr. John F. Mehner, Mary Baldwin College

"Bird Biology and Insights into Future Biotic Controls"—Dr. George W. Cornwell, Agricultural Extension Service, V.P.I.

"Feeding Habits of Birds Related to Agriculture, with Emphasis on Blackbirds"—Dr. Don H. Messersmith, University of Maryland

"Your Ecological Conscience"—David C. Ochsner, Assistant Chief Park Naturalist, Blue Ridge Parkway

There followed a lively period of questions and comments from the floor, which unfortunately had to be cut short because of the lateness of the hour.

At the evening banquet, attended by 114 persons, Mrs. Wiltshire introduced those presidents of the chapters who were in the audience and called on the members of each chapter to identify themselves. Attendance from the various chapters was as follows:

Cape Henry—2

Hampton Roads—7

Damascus—1

Lynchburg—11

New River Valley—9

Northern Virginia—10

Richmond—5

Roanoke Valley—16

Rockbridge—6

Members heard from President Wiltshire the gratifying news that the Society's membership has risen to 490 and is expected soon to pass the 500 mark.

A report by the Treasurer, J. Steven Thornhill, showing the Society in a healthy financial condition, was received and ordered filed as approved. Dr. Ruskin S. Freer read a resolution drafted by him and by Dr. James L. Chamberlain, in accord with a decision of the Executive Committee in March 1965, expressing the Society's opposition to a proposed dam on the Jackson River which will inundate the Gathright wildlife management area. The resolution had already been sent to the governor and to all the State's senators and congressmen.

James W. Eike reported for the Nominating Committee, which consisted of himself as chairman, J. J. Murray, and F. R. Scott. He proposed the following nominees:

President: Mrs. James W. Wiltshire, Lynchburg

Vice-President: Charles W. Hacker, Hampton

Secretary: Robert J. Watson, Arlington

Treasurer: J. Steven Thornhill, Lynchburg

Executive Committee:

Miss M. E. Stephens, Norfolk

Dr. Ruskin S. Freer, Lynchburg

Col. Bernard Thielen, Floyd

A motion to close the nominations was promptly carried, and the above nominees were declared elected.

Mr. C. S. Lewis introduced the speakers for the evening, Mr. and Mrs. Harry L. Crockett, of Phoenix, Arizona, whose beautiful colored film on "Arizona Birds" was well received.

Unfinished business was disposed of at a short session held at noon on Saturday after a lunch served on the grounds of the Mountain Lake Biological Station. A Courtesy Committee appointed by Mrs. Wiltshire the preceding day, consisting of Mrs. Hugh R. Rudd (chairman), Mrs. Frederick S. Whiteside, and Dr. James L. Chamberlain, submitted resolutions (cast partly in poetic form) expressing appreciation to all those responsible for the meeting, which were enthusiastically approved. Following a short discussion of forthcoming activities of the Society, President Wiltshire declared the meeting closed.

THE FIELD TRIPS OF THE 1965 ANNUAL MEETING

J. J. MURRAY

At the 1965 meeting of the VSO there were several field trips on 22 May. Because of the great variation in altitude in the territory covered and because of the fact that the lower reaches in this area are not well known ornithologically the group was divided into four parties. The lists of the two groups working on the mountain top from about 4000 feet to 4363 feet on Bald Knob are combined. These groups were led by D. H. Messersmith and J. W. Eike. A third group, led by G. M. Shear, surveyed the territory along New River near Pembroke at about 1700 feet. A fourth group, led by J. W. Murray, covered the Poverty Creek area in Montgomery County at about 1800 feet. Since these two groups working at the lower levels also listed the birds between Mountain Lake and Highway 460, their observations on the mountain side between 3800 and 2000 feet are combined in a mountain side list. The Poverty Creek area is in Montgomery County; all other observations are in Giles County. The four lists follow:

Mountain Lake, total of 55 species: Turkey Vulture, Broad-winged Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Least Flycatcher, Eastern Wood Pewee, Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Purple Martin, Blue Jay, Common Raven, Common Crow, Chickadee (identified as Carolina), Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Wood Thrush, Veery, Cedar Waxwing, Starling, Solitary Vireo, Rey-eyed Vireo, Black-and-White Warbler, Golden-winged Warbler, Parula Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Cairns's Black-throated Blue Warbler, Myrtle Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Black-poll Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Ovenbird, Hooded Warbler, Canada Warbler, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, American Goldfinch, Red Crossbill, Rufous-sided Towhee, Carolina Junco, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow.

The mountain slopes, total of 50 species: Turkey Vulture, Cooper's Hawk, Bobwhite, Turkey, Spotted Sandpiper, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Barred Owl, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Eastern Wood Pewee, Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Blue Jay, Common Crow, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Mockingbird, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Wood Thrush, Eastern Bluebird, Starling, White-eyed Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Black-and-White Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Golden-winged Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Cairns's Black-throated Blue Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Ovenbird, Lou-

A RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY

The Virginia Society of Ornithology, with a membership of 500 people throughout the State, is opposed to the construction of the Gathright Dam on the Jackson River north of Covington. At a time when there is a rapidly growing cognizance of the urgent need for preserving our few remaining unspoiled areas, when President Johnson's administration is urging the preservation of wild rivers, this administration at the same time is authorizing expenditures of hundreds of thousands of dollars for a study of the feasibility of this dam.

We are fully in agreement with the need for planning improvements for the James River Basin as a whole. We are also aware of the fact that modern soil conservation technology could regulate water supply without construction of dams. It appears utter folly to ruin forever such unique natural areas as Kincaid Gorge, Richardson Gorge, the Jackson River valley in the Gathright Game Management Area and Goshen Pass, products of natural processes through millions of years, to erect dams with an average life expectancy of only 60 years.

The argument is advanced by proponents of dams that improved water supply brings expanding industry. What becomes of a mushrooming industrial complex when the dam is no longer useful?

We cannot believe a proposed Gathright Reservoir will have recreational values for Bath and neighboring counties, claimed for it. The necessary draw-down for summer months will present a most unpleasant spectacle, judging by conditions in similar situations, with acres and acres of mudflats.

We question the statement that this reservoir can appreciably affect stream flow either in flood or drought in such a way as to benefit either Lynchburg or Richmond. Floods occur after heavy rainfall downstream from the Gathright Dam. The capacity of the James River from Covington to Richmond, we believe, is too huge for a Gathright Reservoir to maintain flow through the 90 days of each year usually affected by droughts. It appears incredible to us that the Back Creek and Jackson watersheds above Kincaid, comprising only 3% of the entire watershed of the James, could appreciably affect stream flow for the three or four months most likely to experience low volume.

It appears to us that the cost of providing adequate water supplies for Covington and its industries should be provided by that city itself, as in most other Virginia municipalities, instead of securing huge federal subsidies. We agree with an earlier statement of Senator A. Willis Robertson that current proposals constitute one of the worst examples of "pork-barrel" legislation.

It will cost millions to build a Gathright Dam, and many more millions to build a dozen more dams. It has been estimated that for this latter amount \$165.00 could be provided for effective, modern soil and water conservation practices for every acre in the James River watershed.

Mankind is in a mad rush to change the face of the earth in the name of Progress. Most of this activity is necessary, but also much is poorly planned. We cover the green earth with concrete, replace forests with subdivisions and shopping centers, with little regard for tomorrow's need for open spaces and natural areas. We are rapidly being awakened to another man's needs—the need for preservation of the few remnants of the Creator's work which are left to us.

COMMITTEES OF VSO, 1965-1966

Conservation: Dr. Ruskin S. Freer, Chairman

David C. Ochsner
Dr. Henry S. Mosby
W. F. Rountrey
Dr. R. J. Watson

Education: Dr. D. H. Messersmith, Chairman

Arthur H. Fast
Dr. John F. Mehner
Dr. Alexander Wetmore

Membership: Miss Betsy Stevens, Mrs. W. J. Nelson, Co-Chairmen

A. O. English
Mrs. Dorothy Mitchell
Mrs. Myriam P. Moore
John R. Withrow

Publicity: Royster Lyle, Jr., Chairman

Dr. D. J. Moore
Mrs. Mary Frances Morrisette
Col. Bernard Thielen
Mrs. Frederick S. Whiteside

Local Chapters: J. W. Eike, Chairman

Local Presidents of 11 Clubs (See List)

Research: Fred R. Scott, Chairman**Records:** Dr. J. J. Murray, Chairman

Dr. Ruskin S. Freer
Dr. John H. Grey, Jr.
F. R. Scott

Trip: Charles W. Hacker, Chairman

Donald Ambrosen
Paul S. Sykes
Walter P. Smith
Charles C. Steirly
J. Steven Thornhill

Representatives to Virginia Wild Life Federation

Paul S. Dulaney
Charles E. Stevens, Jr.
W. F. Rountrey (Director, V. W. F.)
Fred R. Scott (Director, V. W. F.)

Representatives to Nature Conservancy

Dr. Ruskin Freer
Mrs. James W. Wiltshire, Jr.

Representative to National Audubon Society

Mrs. Hawes Coleman, Jr.

Representative to Potomac Valley Conservation Council

Dr. Robert J. Watson

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 1964

CASH BALANCE 1 JANUARY 1964

General Fund	\$ 924.79
Publication Fund	907.94

 \$1,832.73

CASH RECEIPTS DURING 1964

Dues and Subscriptions	\$1,169.70
Publications	29.50
Annual Meeting	260.31
Interest on Publication Fund	36.58

 \$1,496.09

CASH DISBURSEMENTS DURING 1964

The Raven	\$ 650.95
Newsletters	117.47
Secretary's Expenses	20.20
Treasurer's Expenses	83.12
Expenses of Other Officers and Committees	20.00
Affiliations	107.50
Annual Meeting	397.21
Miscellaneous Expenses	5.00

 \$1,401.45

CASH BALANCE 31 DECEMBER 1964

General Fund	\$ 958.35
Publication Fund	969.02

 \$1,927.37
FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR FOUR MONTHS
ENDING 30 APRIL 1965

CASH BALANCE 1 JANUARY 1965

General Fund	\$ 958.35
Publication Fund	969.02

 \$1,927.37

CASH RECEIPTS DURING PERIOD

Dues and Subscriptions	\$1,132.00
Contributions	25.00
Publications	66.75
Supplies	24.00

 \$1,247.75

CASH DISBURSEMENTS DURING PERIOD

The Raven	\$ 173.00
Newsletters	23.21
Secretary	4.20
Treasurer	104.08
Other Officers and Committees	26.85

 \$ 331.34

CASH BALANCE 30 APRIL 1965

General Fund	\$1,263.01
Publication Fund	1,580.77

 \$2,843.78

Membership as of 15 May 1965: 25 Junior, 263 Active, 92, Sustaining, 4 Life, 9 Chapters and 5 Subscriptions. Total members—484.
Since the publishing of the names of new members in the March 1965 Raven, 21 new members have been enrolled.

NEW MEMBERS OF THE VSO

Ronald W. Barr
1150 Winburne Lane
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Mrs. Tida-Long Hawkins
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Lynchburg, Va. 24503

Mrs. Roger C. Hill
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BOOK REVIEW

The Bird Watcher's America, edited by Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr. Illustrated with 50 line drawings by John Henry Dick. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1965, 441 pages. List price, \$7.50.

Dr. Pettingill is perhaps best known to Virginia ornithologists for his studies on the Black Skimmer and Clapper Rail at Cardwell's and Cobb's Islands, Virginia, in 1933. To thousands of students, on the other hand, his *Laboratory and Field Manual of Ornithology*, first published in 1939, stands out as his most important work. For the vast majority of birdwatchers, however, his fame lies in a much more mundane and nontechnical area, as the author of the birdwatchers' Baedekers, the *Oxford Guides to Bird Finding*, and the many articles on the same theme in *Audubon Magazine*.

This book carries the idea of a bird-finding guide a bit further. Forty-four different naturalists have written short, original essays (about 2500 words each) about the birdwatching areas they know best, each introduced by a short biographical sketch of the author by Dr. Pettingill. Many of these authors are well-known—Allan D. Cruickshank ("Down East in Maine"), Alexander Sprunt, Jr. ("Bull's Island, South Carolina"), Roger Tory Peterson ("The Pribilofs"), George Miksch Sutton ("The Black Mesa Country of Oklahoma"), Maurice Broun ("At Hawk Mountain Sanctuary")—and Virginians will be particularly interested in the essays by Joseph James Murray on "The Great Dismal Swamp" and Maurice Brooks on the "High Cheat of West Virginia." All of these essays are quite readable, and many of the authors do a credible literary job also, no little achievement considering the limits of their assignments.

Those expecting this to be a complete guide will be disappointed, though the book was never intended to be this. For example, except for the Dismal Swamp, there is no mention of the many famous birding areas in Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, or South Jersey. As a potpourri for the armchair birdwatcher, however, it can provide many hours of delightful entertainment and would undoubtedly suggest many possible future trips for the reader.

The binding appears adequate, though some will undoubtedly object to the "modern" color combinations of the binding and the printing on the backbone. There is an apparently quite complete index of all the birds mentioned in the text subindexed as to state. This could prove quite useful to some readers.

F. R. Scott

NEWS AND NOTES

VSO MEMBERSHIP. Our membership list, with those who joined at the Annual Meeting, has just about reached the 500 mark.

ZIP NUMBERS. All members are asked to send their Zip numbers to Miss Gertrude Prior, Sweet Briar, Virginia.

DATE USAGE IN THE RAVEN. Contributors are asked to follow the usage now adopted in *The Raven* for dates; e.g., 15 January 1965, and not January 15, 1965, and 15 January, when the year is not listed.

MARK CATESBY FILM. Colonial Williamsburg has produced an interesting film on Mark Catesby, *The Colonial Naturalist*. It will be handled by Modern Learning Aids, 3 East 54th Street, New York 22, N. Y. Those who desire to purchase or rent the film may do so through this agency.

TAPE RECORDINGS OF THE VSO MEETING. Mr. J. H. Clemer, P. O. Box 1684, Roanoke, Virginia, made a tape recording of all talks at the

Mountain Lake meeting. Those who would like to purchase a reel of one talk or of all should get in touch with him.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ORIENTAL TOUR. The American President S.S. Lines has instituted a "bird-watching cruise" from San Francisco to the Orient, via Hawaii, sailing September 23rd., and returning October 30th. It will be conducted by Alexander Sprunt, Jr. Local ornithologists will meet and accompany the group at the various ports-of-call. The ship involved is the "President Wilson".

Lectures will be given each day, or evening, while the ship is at sea, by Dr. Sprunt. Movies and slides will illustrate the talks. The complete itinerary, cost and other details are now being made up and should be ready by June.

Inquiries regarding all details may be addressed to—

American President Lines,
International Bldg.
601 California St.
San Francisco

CORRECTION. The first listing in the index on page 76 of the issue for December 1964 should be "Moore, Mrs. Myriam P."

SEABIRD RECORDS. Mrs. Burford's identification of the seabirds listed on page 28 of *The Raven* of March 1965 have been confirmed by a representative of the U. S. National Museum.

FULVOUS TREE DUCKS AT LEXINGTON. Royster Lyle, Jr., found two Fulvous Tree Ducks at Big Spring Pond, 7 miles west of Lexington on 3 April 1965. Murray checked the identification with him the same day. Both ducks remained until 6 April, and one until 17 April.

FULVOUS TREE DUCK AT NORFOLK. Two boys caught one at Wiloughby on 11 February 1965. It was shown by Mrs. Mary Frances Morrisette at a Norfolk Bird Club meeting and then released.

CERULEAN WARBLER AT NEWPORT NEWS. Coastal records of this bird are few. Mrs. Sydney Mitchell saw one in her woods at 596 Harpersville Road, Newport News on 18 April 1965.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE AT BRISTOL IN WINTER. J. Wallace Coffey saw a female Baltimore Oriole at Mrs. William Collin's feeding station in Bristol, Virginia, on 12 March 1965. The bird had been in the neighborhood since December.

EVENING GROSBEAKS IN DICKENSON COUNTY, VIRGINIA. Wallace Coffey reports that Robert Quillen saw 6 Evening Grosbeaks near Haysi, Dickenson County, Virginia, on 18 December 1964. This is interesting both because of the scarcity of these birds this past winter and of the scarcity of bird records from this county.

BLUE GROSBEAKS AT NEWPORT NEWS. Mrs. Sydney Mitchell reports this bird at her home in Newport News on 23 days, from 24 April to 30 July 1964. There were three different birds: adult and immature males and a female. She banded and photographed the adult male. She also saw one at Fort Eustis on 5 and 6 August and 18 September.

ACTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee of the VSO met in Williamsburg on 13 March and took action as follows:

1. Approved proposals by Mr. J. Steven Thornhill, the new Treasurer, to revise the Society's fiscal records and the methods of maintaining them.
2. Established a deadline of 30 April each year for renewal of memberships. Those who fail to submit their dues by this date, after receiving a warning, will be dropped.
3. Selected Chincoteague, instead of Wachapreague, as the site for the 1965 Eastern Shore trip, to be held in August.
4. Agreed to seek wide distribution in Virginia of a television program on birds prepared by Mr. Arthur Fast, of Arlington, for broadcast over educational channels in the Washington area.
5. Reappointed Dr. J. J. Murray as Editor of *The Raven* and Mr. W. O. Lewis as Publisher for another year.
6. Authorized replenishment of the supply of VSO armbands, the original stock being nearly exhausted.

RECENT WINTER WRENS IN SUMMER IN THE
SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

CHARLES E. STEVENS

Following the discovery of the Winter Wren in summer in the Shenandoah National Park by Alexander Wetmore and W. M. Perrygo on 12 June 1949 there have been a few other reports of it, including several by the VSO Summer Foray. All observations appear to have been made on some part of either Hawksbill (4049 ft.), where the species was first seen, or on Stony Man (4010 ft.). These two eminences, the highest in the Park, harbor several interesting plants on their summits, such as the boreal *Potentilla tridentata*, or three-toothed cinquefoil, and the mountain clubmoss (*Lycopodium selago*), which is the most primitive living vascular plant. The scattering of balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*) on Hawksbill and adjacent Crescent Rock is well known and represents its only occurrence in Virginia.

My first observation of this wren in the Park was on 27 June 1964 when, along with Steve Calver, I saw a singing bird on the north face of Hawksbill by the Appalachian Trail. Its loud, brilliant, tinkling song was a pleasure to hear on this familiar trail.

On a return trip on 17 July I began at daybreak on the north side of Hawksbill, where a wren was heard near the Trail at 3600 ft. elevation, and as I climbed the steep rocky wooded face to the summit another wren was singing at 3900 ft. The vegetation on this side of the mountain is made up mainly of gnarled birches, striped maple, and mountain maple with an understory of wild hydrangea and other shrubs amidst the moss-covered detritus.

Later in the day a Winter Wren was heard singing in mixed hardwoods just below Crescent Rock at 3400 ft., which point is a mile northeast of Hawksbill. Lastly a wren was seen scolding and singing repeatedly in the hemlock grove at 3400 ft. below Furnace Spring, to bring to four the number of singing birds heard during the day. This spring is beside the Appalachian Trail immediately north of Skyland and on the west flank of Stony Man.

A visit at dawn to Hemlock Spring on 27 June 1964 failed to reveal a wren where Wetmore had heard one on 16 July 1950. This likely location is beside the Skyline Drive on the east side of Stony Man and resembles the Furnace Spring habitat. Possibly there is a larger Winter Wren population summering in the Park than was previously realized, and examination of steep wooded north-facing slopes of some of the other high Blue Ridge peaks might disclose more birds.

The Raven

JOURNAL OF THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY

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Courtesy of Walter Weber

CONTENTS

A Preliminary Survey of Scott County, Virginia	51
By J. J. Murray and John H. Grey, Jr.	
Nesting Study of Cedar Waxwings at Mountain Lake, Virginia	53
By A. L. Whitt, Jr.	
Role of Woodpeckers in the Control of Southern Pine Beetles In Virginia	55
By C. C. Steirly	
Brown Creeper Nesting in Giles County, Virginia	59
By Homer C. Mumaw	
Unusual Behavior of Catbird and Black Snake	60
By Mrs. Floy C. Burford	
Blue Ridge Foray	61
By Bernard Thielen	
News and Notes	62

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

Activities undertaken by the Society include the following:

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

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

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

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

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

Those wishing to participate in any of the above activities or to cooperate in advancing the objectives of the Society are cordially invited to join. Annual dues are \$1.00 for junior members (students), \$2.00 for active members, \$4.00 for sustaining members, \$50.00 for life members.

OFFICERS OF THE VSO

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A PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF SCOTT COUNTY, VIRGINIA

J. J. MURRAY AND JOHN H. GREY, JR.

It will be remembered that at the 1964 Annual Meeting of the VSO certain areas in Virginia were marked out for special study. The writers have chosen the Lee-Wise-Scott area. In the September 1964 issue of *The Raven* we reported on a four-day preliminary survey of Lee County on 1-4 June 1964. In 1965 we spent four days, 24-27 May, in Scott County. We spent most of the daylight hours in the field and drove considerable distances at night, listening without success for owls. J. Wallace Coffey of Bristol spent the morning of 26 May with us. He also covered 41 miles in the county on the night of May 25 without seeing or hearing a bird.

We took only one brief trip into the higher part of the county, when in the late afternoon of 25 May we visited a fishing lake near the Wise County line. Here we listed two Belted Kingfishers, a Parula Warbler, two Ovenbirds, and 3 Scarlet Tanagers, the latter bird being seen nowhere else in the county.

Basing at the Scott Motel at Gate City, we covered most of the roads in the lower parts of the county. Since we were especially interested in tracing any possible Mississippi Valley influence we worked almost exclusively on the valley floor, mainly at elevations from 1200 to 1500 feet. Gate City is about 1400.

Scott County is bordered in a straight line along its longest side on the south by Tennessee, and otherwise from east to west by the four Virginia counties of Washington, Russell, Wise, and Lee. With Wise and Lee it makes a great triangle pointed west between Kentucky and Tennessee. It is in the Mississippi River drainage, its two main streams being the Clinch River, running southwest through the center of the county, and the North Fork of Holston River, across the southeast corner. Its territory is like that of Lee except for having considerably more high mountain country. The valleys are not wide. There is more industry than in Lee, but apparently the county is less prosperous agriculturally. There is at the same time less open pasture and less big forest than in Lee. The country is varied and attractive. There are few bodies of water of any size, except for several artificial fishing lakes in the mountains. As in Lee, there are few towns of any size. Gate City and almost adjoining Weber City, with smaller Clinchfield, and half a dozen villages make up the urban population.

In our four days in Scott County we listed 75 species, as compared with 72 species in the same length of time in Lee County. This was entirely in Carolinian territory, with the exception of the Scarlet Tanagers found on our one brief excursion into Alleghenian territory. No Mississippi Valley influence was detected. We collected two male Common Grackles to see whether they might show any tendency toward the Bronzed Grackle but were informed by Dr. Alexander Wetmore that they were just like grackles collected at Lexington.

The most interesting event of the trip was the discovery that Traill's Flycatchers are common at places in this area. We missed them the first three days because we had not gone to the right places in the early morning. We followed a road along the North Fork of Holston River in the late afternoon of 26 May without hearing one, but located five singing males in the same stretch early the next morning. They were singing on the south side of the river, across from Route 614, scattered in a stretch of a mile northeast of Highway 23. Later we heard three farther up the North Fork and across the river from Route 689, two of them about half a mile northeast and one about a quarter of a mile southwest of Highway 421. While there were small patches of alders in this area, the birds were singing not in alder thickets but in growths of small willow trees. C. O. Handley, Jr., found a singing Traill's (listed as Alder) Flycatcher in a dry habitat near Ewing in Lee County on 19-22 June 1962 (*The*

Raven, 1962, 4, 4-5). Our records seem to indicate that Traill's Flycatchers may be common in this whole area of Southwest Virginia.

As seems to be the case in any area worked, there were some puzzling situations. Hawks and vultures were quite uncommon. In fact, we saw no Black Vultures in Scott, although there is no doubt that they occur there. Southwest Virginia seems ideal for Sparrow Hawks, but we saw none in Scott and only three in Lee. Killdeers are very scarce in both counties. We can see no explanation of the absence of Nighthawks in Lee and their scarcity in Scott. Whip-poor-wills seem remarkably scarce. None were heard in open country, and only a few even in the foothills. Why the Crested Flycatcher was not found in Lee and only once in Scott is a puzzle. More puzzling still is the fact that we did not see a White-breasted Nuthatch in Lee and only one in Scott. Almost as strange is the fact that we did not see a House Wren in either county, although they presumably nest there. This is not related to the presence of Bewick's Wrens, as they are very scarce in Lee and none were seen in Scott. Happily, Bluebirds were found to be fairly common in both counties. Only one Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was seen in Scott. Shrikes are scarce in both counties. According to Wallace Coffey, they have only recently come into this region. Although Sycamore Warblers might be expected and although there is plenty of suitable habitat, we found none in either county. Little territory suitable for Swainson's Warblers was seen in Scott. The lower regions of Scott seem rather dry. Quite surprising was the scarcity of Ovenbirds in Scott, only one being seen in the lower areas and two in the high country. We found them only fairly common in Lee.

Certain species seem to be more common in Scott than in Lee: Acadian Flycatcher, Yellow Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Orchard Oriole, Common Grackle, Redwinged Blackbird, Indigo Bunting, Goldfinch, and Song Sparrow.

Seven species were seen in Lee and not in Scott: Black Vulture, Sharpshinned Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Chuck-will's-widow, Tree Swallow (possibly a belated migrant), Bewick's Wren, and Hooded Warbler. Ten species were seen in Scott and not in Lee: Hooded Merganser, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Nighthawk, Hairy Woodpecker, Crested Flycatcher, Traill's Flycatcher, White-breasted Nuthatch, American Redstart, and Baltimore Oriole.

Handley (*The Raven*, 1962, 4, 4-5) listed three other species in Lee: Solitary Vireo (listed as Blue-headed), Blue Grosbeak, and Vesper Sparrow. This makes a total of 85 species for the two counties in summer. Additional breeding species will certainly be found in the higher parts of the two counties.

In Scott County we found the following 36 species common to abundant: Bobwhite, Mourning Dove, Flicker, Eastern Kingbird, Acadian Flycatcher, Eastern Wood Pewee, Barn Swallow, Blue Jay, Common Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, Catbird, Wood Thrush, Eastern Bluebird, Starling, White-eyed Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Yellow Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Yellowthroat, Yellow-breasted Chat, House Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Redwinged Blackbird, Orchard Oriole, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, American Goldfinch, Rufous-sided Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

The following 19 species were fairly common: Turkey Vulture, Chimney Swift, Belted Kingfisher, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, Traill's Flycatcher (in one area), Rough-winged Swallow, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Yellow-throated Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Louisiana Waterthrush, Kentucky Warbler, American Redstart, Scarlet Tanager (only in high country), Summer Tanager, Grasshopper Sparrow.

The following 20 species were uncommon to rare. They are listed, with the numbers seen by days, 24 to 27 May. Green Heron, 1-1-2-0; Wood Duck, 0-1F-2 a pair-0; Hooded Merganser, 0-0-0-1M; Cooper's Hawk, 0-0-1-0; Red-tailed Hawk, 0-0-1-0; Killdeer, 2-0-0-0; Yellow-billed Cuckoo, 1-1-1-0; Black-

billed Cuckoo, 0-0-0-5; Whip-poor-will, 0-2-0-0; Nighthawk, 1-0-0-0; Ruby-throated Hummingbird, 0-1-1-0; Hairy Woodpecker, 0-0-1 (carrying food)-0; Great Crested Flycatcher, 0-1-0-0; Purple Martin, 1-2-0-0; White-breasted Nuthatch, 0-0-1-0; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 0-0-1-0; Loggerhead Shrike, 1-0-2-0; Parula Warbler, 0-0-1-0; Ovenbird, 0-0-1-0; Baltimore Oriole, 1-1-0-0.

6 Jordan Street, Lexington, Virginia;
P. O. Box 445, Williamsburg, Virginia

NESTING STUDY OF CEDAR WAXWINGS AT MOUNTAIN LAKE VIRGINIA

A. L. WHITT, JR.

The altitude of the study area, Mountain Lake, Virginia, is approximately four thousand feet above sea level. This area is a partly cleared, level mountain top which makes up the main campus of the Biological Station of the University of Virginia. The overstory is mainly large white oak trees, with some black oak and a few white pines scattered about. The understory is mainly of laurel, rhododendron, other shrubs and young seedling.

This study concentrated on four pair of Cedar Waxwings and in three of these four it is certain that the pair formation had already taken place by 12 June 1965, when the study began. This pairing remained permanent throughout the period of observation, 12 June to 14 July, for each of the four pairs under observation.

Little courtship display was observed in this study. The mated birds would take short flights together which may have been courtship behavior since no other explanation for these short flights could be determined. On several occasions the males were seen going through their hopping behavior or display, soft calling by both sexes was heard, and the males were seen passing food to the females which they promptly ate. This food consisted of insects gleaned from the nearby trees. Mating of paired birds was only observed once during the entire time of the study. On 13 June, when a third bird attempted to join a mating pair, he was immediately driven out of the territory by the mating male.

The size of the territory seemed to be very small, in that the two most widely separated nests were not over one hundred yards apart, while another nest was only twenty-three yards from a third nest. It appeared that the nesting tree was almost the entire defended territory. On 29 June a third bird, a male, kept entering the nest territory of pair number one, and each time he was promptly driven out by the nesting male, who remained perched above the almost completed nest. There were never any warning calls from either bird nor was there any physical contact by either on any of these drives.

In nest building it appeared that both birds selected the site. All of the nests were placed fifteen to thirty feet up in the trees, ten to fifteen feet out on the lateral branches and usually at the fork of two branches. Two of the nests observed were in white oaks, one was in a black oak, and one in a white pine tree. Two of the nests observed fell from the tree before completion.

The sexes seemed to spend equal time in gathering materials for the nest. Often they would fly out and back together carrying nesting material. The female spent more time inside the cup during the construction than did the male, who remained perched above the nest on a dead twig.

The nest materials consisted of a few small sticks, pine needles, plant fibers, fallen oak flowers which were gleaned from nearby roof tops, and cotton which the investigator supplied. The birds seemed to show preference for the cotton, as they began to use it as soon as it was placed in a nearby tree or on the

ground near the nesting tree. They refused, however, colored yarn string placed in the same area as the cotton.

One pair of birds made four attempts before building a successful nest. The first nest, built 12 June to 16 June, was deserted. The next two nests, built 17 June to 20 June and 21 June to 25 June respectively, fell from the trees. The fourth attempt, built in a white pine, 26 June to 30 June, was successful and still active with a clutch of four eggs at the end of this study.

Most of the work on the nests started about 6:30 A.M., slowed down during the middle of the dry, hot days, and then resumed later in the afternoon. Perhaps the materials became too dry to work properly during the middle of the day because on two occasions when the weather was damp and humid a pair worked twelve hours on a nest. The time required for completion was from four to six days.

It was impossible to determine the exact time that the eggs were laid except for one pair observed, where the eggs were always deposited between 8:45 A.M. and 11:00 A.M. and where four eggs were laid in five days. In two observations, the first egg was laid on or one day prior to the completion of the nest because the birds worked on the nest one full day after the deposition of this first egg. Nest one had four eggs, nest two had five, nest three had four, and nest four already had three young nearly ready to leave the nest when discovered. The size of the eggs was 15 mm wide at the large end and the total length was 20 mm. The egg color was a slate gray with darker, almost black spots concentrated at the larger end.

The male bird stayed very near the nest while the female deposited the eggs, and often gleaned insects to feed to her while she remained on the nest during this period. The female seemed to do all of the incubation of the eggs. No male was ever seen on any of the nests, nor did one stay near the nest during this period except to feed the female.

For the first three or four days of incubation the male would fly to a tree near the nest and give a low call. The female would respond immediately by leaving the nest and joining him for food. Upon joining the male, she would crouch and go through a wing-fluttering behavior while calling, very much like that of an immature bird. The male of one nest fed the female in this manner ten times in four hours one afternoon. This off-the-nest feeding was not observed by Putnam in his five year study of the Cedar Waxwing but it has been reported by others (*The Life History of the Cedar Waxwing*, Loren S. Putnam, *The Wilson Bulletin*, 1949, Vol. 61, 3, 141-182). After the third or fourth days of incubation, the male came directly to the side of the nest (no calling now by male) and the female would open her mouth and beg for food (no wing-fluttering as formerly reported). The male would regurgitate small red berries and feed her five or six at each feeding.

While on the nest the female spent a great part of her time preening her feathers and turning the eggs. A few times she would close her eyes for a very brief time. Most of the time, however, she remained very alert and watched ants and other insects as they crawled about on the leaves and branches near the nests. She would react to sudden noises and often raise her crest. These observations were made through a 30 power spotting scope. Early in incubation, the female remained on the nest most of a four-hour afternoon watch. She left the nest a total of twenty-four minutes, most of this time was in order to be fed by the male, which amounted to ten feedings in four hours. Each feeding took approximately one minute. During this four-hour period she left the nest once for seven minutes and again for nine minutes. Later in incubation, on 9 July, the same bird in the same length of time and the same period of the day was not off the nest even for a second. However, the male fed her on the nest nine times during this period. Although some of the nests were deserted no predation or parasitism by cowbirds were observed in this study.

It is difficult to summarize this incomplete study of only four weeks of some-

what discontinuous observation. Of seven nests observed only four reached completion; one had three fledglings, and another was abandoned at about the day of incubation. This desertion could have been due to a visit with a ladder to the nest the day before it was abandoned. Two nests remained in active incubation on 14 July 1965. Although Putnam has done a fairly complete study of the Cedar Waxwing much could still be learned from a very detailed study of these beautiful birds.

Associate Professor of Biology,

Eastern Kentucky State College, Richmond, Kentucky

(Paper submitted in Ornithology Course at Mountain Lake,
Virginia, 1965.)

ROLE OF WOODPECKERS IN THE CONTROL OF SOUTHERN PINE BEETLES IN VIRGINIA

C. C. STEIRLY

It is not very often that professional insect control men put a great deal of reliance on birds as a major means of control, although a number of ornithologists have extolled the virtue of birds as control agents (10). During the past several years a serious outbreak of the southern pine beetle (*Dendroctonus frontalis*) in central and parts of eastern Virginia has caused widespread and heavy losses, and has been a great concern of foresters, lumbermen and timberland owners. In most of the central region the pine species include short-leaf pine and Virginia pine. From Chesterfield County east the loblolly pine has been attacked.

This insect like most forest insects has been endemic in the state for many years with occasional widespread outbreaks assuming epidemic proportions and causing increasingly greater economic loss. In the present outbreak timber losses have been particularly heavy in Buckingham, Cumberland, Prince Edward, Charles City, Amelia, Powhatan, Nottoway, Chesterfield, Gloucester and Mathews Counties, with isolated outbreaks in several eastern counties, including the Eastern Shore. In North Carolina serious attacks have been destroying vast areas of pine timber in both the Piedmont and Coastal Plain province, several in the latter being alarmingly close to the Virginia line. In 1964 the attacks were much heavier than usual and they were much more widespread, beetle activity extending well into the winter season.

The beetle causing the trouble is one of many kinds of bark beetles of the Family *Scolytidae* which attacks virtually all of the coniferous species of North America. The Genus *Dendroctonus* contains species that are particularly deadly to such major timber trees as the spruces, Douglas fir, western white pine, ponderosa pine, in addition to the southern pines and it also includes several species attacking southern pines which are of minor importance (6). Other common bark beetles attacking pines in Virginia include three species of the Genus *Ips* whose attacks are sporadic, localized and not extensively damaging, although total loss caused by the *Ips* species can be reckoned in hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The Southern pine beetle completes its life cycle beneath the bark of the several southern pine species. Eggs are laid in small niches within the inner bark. Upon hatching the larvae tunnel and feed within this vital tissue of the tree, pupating within the bark and eventually emerging as winged adults which promptly infest other trees (1).

Having as many as five generations a year the increase in population is something in the neighborhood of one thousand per cent causing it to devastate whole stands of timber in a relatively short period of time. Associated with the

attacks of the beetle is the fungus *Cerostomella pini*, or blue stain of which the southern pine beetle is a vector, and which is introduced into the woody tissues of the tree. Here it upsets the tree's water and nutrient cycle by blocking the tracheals and of course hastening the death of the tree. Furthermore the blue stain fungus causes a heavy degrade in lumber salvaged from infested trees thus further contributing to the economic loss. The exact relationship of the fungus to the beetle is as yet unknown (1).

Control measures employed by foresters include prompt action in felling and utilizing infested trees (6) and those within fifty feet of the infested area. Normally if applied at the proper time, this method of control is effective when followed up by periodic inspection. This type of cutting is designated as sanitation cutting (8). In remote areas or where an economic cut cannot be obtained the practice is to fell the infested trees and spray them with BHC. Needless to say the attacks call for a great deal of pre-mature cutting. Cutting budgets of managed forests, such as the State Forests, have been drastically upset, calling for revision of the technical management plans.

Evidence of attack is readily at hand owing to the presence of numerous pitch tubes or crusted resinous exudations which normally are of a yellowish coloration. Tiny holes, resembling small bird shot, in the bark also indicate to the trained observer that the brood has emerged. Once the tree is completely dead the bark beetles will have departed, their places being taken by a host of secondary insects which thrive on dead and rotten wood.

The foliage of infested trees turns a reddish brown and infestations are easily located and mapped from the air. Virginia Division of Forestry personnel employ airplane patrols as a means of locating and mapping outbreak areas for development of operational control plans.

During the particularly heavy infestations noted in the winter of 1964-65 foresters, landowners, loggers and woodsmen reported considerable evidence of woodpecker activity in the infested area. Many of these people could not of course positively identify the species of woodpecker involved although a great many reports of the more obvious Pileated Woodpecker came to the attention of the writer in official correspondence, at professional meetings, etc. The widespread accounts of the activity of the species gives the writer the impression that the Pileated is far more common in the Virginia pine forests and adjacent hardwoods than most bird students heretofore have believed. In fact the Superintendent of the Pocahontas State Forest in Chesterfield County, a particularly heavily attacked area, advised that he located new outbreaks in the vast pine stands therein by listening to the calls and rappings of the Pileated and following them up for the purpose of mapping in areas to be treated. Hoyt (7) suggests that Pileated pairs restrict themselves to territories embracing an entire wood lot, at least in central New York State.

The work of the woodpeckers is very obvious for they practically denude the tree bole of its bark leaving the rather bright newly exposed wood apparent for quite some distance down through the woods. The tops during the winter still retain their green coloration. The writer's first encounter with the present bark beetle attack occurred in northeast Surry County (Bacon's Castle) where on 3 February while on a routine inspection of a pine stand he observed a number of heavily infested trees, each with much of the bark stripped off. At that time snow was on the ground and great masses of chipped off bark were lying on top of the snow, attesting to the recentness of the work. Examination of the material revealed that the woodpeckers were larger than the Downy. Later the writer made a census of a 14 acre stand of 110 year old loblolly pine in this area which indicated the presence of woodpeckers as follows: Downy 4, Red-bellied 2, Pileated 1, and Sapsucker 1. Downy woodpeckers were actually seen "working over" areas of tree boles from which much of the rough exterior bark had been pried off. On all subsequent visits to this area during February and March about the same proportions of the species were found. In

fact the Pileated was present on every occasion and it must have contributed enormously to the destruction of the insect and of the bark removal. It must be noted here (and the writer has made it a point to emphasize this to laymen) that the bark removal did no harm since the very presence of the beetle in the tree had sealed its doom.

Forest insect control authorities of the Division of Forestry had considered the practical value of woodpeckers in reducing the population of the bark beetles in 1962-63. Thus in early April 1965 the writer was detailed to the Cumberland and Prince Edward State Forests to attempt a direct study of the woodpeckers there and to try to get information of a census nature. In the meantime the writer had reviewed the literature (2, 4, and 5) and contacted F. R. Scott of the Virginia Society of Ornithology Research Committee for detailed information on the distribution and abundance of the species of woodpeckers in central and eastern Virginia. It was admitted that the VSO records along this line were very meagre although Scott did a prodigious amount of research in all available literature, citing one of the writer's articles in the Raven (14), a pine forest breeding bird census which did not report the presence of any woodpecker at that season.

Heavy infestation areas on the Cumberland and Prince Edward Forests were visited in early April but it was concluded by the writer that the woodpeckers had more or less ceased work in the pine forests and had withdrawn to the hardwood forests where perhaps a better choice of food was becoming available with the advent of the spring season. In one particular area on the Cumberland a Red-bellied and a Sapsucker were observed in the adjacent hardwood forest, while none were seen in the pine area. In a similar observation of enormously ravaged timber on the Prince Edward one Hairy and four Downy Woodpeckers were seen working in the upper stems of pines heavily denuded of their bark. These did not seem to have been enough to have done the bark chipping in this rather large area, and the conclusion was again reached that the bulk of the winter woodpecker population had either withdrawn to the hardwood area where ample nest sites were available, or had migrated northward; certainly this had been the case with the Sapsucker, although it must be admitted that there is no positive evidence that this species had contributed to the control work. Its persistent presence in the Bacon's Castle infestation areas furnishes circumstantial evidence that it too was contributing to the control effort. Flickers were seen in or near the two state forest areas but did not seem active.

As in all dependence on birds for controlling insects there is the possibility that the woodpeckers were destroying many of the larvae of the red-checked beetles which is an important predator of the southern pine beetle. Woodpecker destruction of such useful insects probably is quite heavy as these larvae are quite large and perhaps more palatable.

The woodpeckers "work" the infested trees from about six or seven feet above the ground upward. They do not waste time or effort in the lower section apparently because here the beetles are often "pitched out" in forest entomological parlance; that is the tree's normal production of resin is often enough to prevent the development of broods.

Knight (8), working with the Englemann spruce beetle in Colorado, developed a technique of assessing the value of woodpeckers in reducing bark beetle populations by fastening wire screens around sections of infested trees. This prevented the woodpeckers from attacking the beetle broods in that section of the tree. Subsequent counts of beetles per square foot of bark section indicated that the woodpeckers had been effective control agents. The same technique was applied in fire attack areas on the Cumberland, Buckingham and Prince Edward Forests with results as follows:

No. of beetles per sq. ft. of bole area where woodpeckers were excluded—6.
No. of beetles per sq. ft. of bole area where woodpeckers could work—42.

In official Division of Forestry correspondence the estimate is that woodpeckers removed 85.55% of the beetle population. All climatic factors and biological factors reduced the beetle population 90.5%.

The climatic factor of most importance is temperature especially during the winter months (1). It will be recalled that rather mild weather prevailed during the early part of the winter of 1964-65. When cold weather prevailed the woodpeckers had denuded infested trees of much of the bark, which is of course an excellent insulation, thus exposing larvae and pupae not consumed for food to the rather cold temperature or to possible desiccation.

Ornithological literature consulted (2, 4, and 5) did not reveal much that would throw light on this problem of economic ornithology. Such works of course gave valuable information on the habits of the several species but details regarding bark beetles other than general statements were lacking. Implications were that woodpeckers were most useful.

Several foresters have recorded instances where bird populations have increased considerably in stands under heavy attack from defoliating insects (16 and 9). Recent work in Manitoba by forest entomologists (3) also points to the effectiveness of birds in controlling the larch sawfly. There is a tendency in modern silviculture to place more and more emphasis on the forest as a biological organism than to treat it as a mere assemblage of valuable timber trees (8 and 13). Strangely enough there are very few foresters who have more than a casual interest in ornithology. As Darwin has said "our ignorance is immense".

The pure pine forest, so economically desirable, is more vulnerable than mixed or more naturalistic stands to attack from insect and disease (11) owing to the presence of a more varied population of animals especially insect predators of injurious forest insects. Actually this would be true of birds also; the mixed forest is more attractive to them. In the areas investigated by the author, none of the pine forests were too far from areas of hardwood timber, usually bottomlands, where ample nesting sites were available to woodpeckers.

In general it might be said that the combined effect of biological factors (including woodpeckers in the front rank), climatic factors, and the control efforts of professional foresters have at least prevented millions of dollars of timber losses without resorting to dangerous chemicals. The BHC treatment mentioned above is strictly localized and not of the aerial spray type which has brought the wrath of conservationists on the heads of foresters in the west, north and Eastern Canada.

It has been gratifying to note in conversation with landowners, lumbermen, timber cruisers and woodsmen a general praise of woodpeckers.

Ornithologically much work needs to be done along this line. As yet the specific role of the various woodpeckers has not been ascertained for detailed localities. Next to nothing is known of specific woodpecker population densities by timber types (forest habitats) in winter and in summer in Virginia. Stewart and Robbins (15) do give some information on localized populations in Maryland. VSO members residing in the counties mentioned in this paper have a fertile field of investigation in studying specific woodpecker populations in winter and in summer in the several forest habitats (17). Already the writer is convinced that the Pileated woodpecker must be fairly common, much more than the VSO records might indicate. There is, of course, paucity of knowledge concerning the seasonal fluctuation of the Downy and Hairy woodpecker populations, to say nothing of the Red-bellied, which is fairly common in the hardwood forests, but we do not know how much more common in winter than in summer. Perhaps Christmas counts would throw some light on the subject, but the writer has little faith in their scientific value since the big effort is to compile as large a list as possible with but little attention being given to individuals.

In a piece of ornithological work such as this the value of a series of winter and breeding bird population studies would be of inestimable value (17).

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District Forester, Waverly, Virginia

BROWN CREEPER NESTING IN GILES COUNTY, VIRGINIA

HOMER C. MUMAW

On 22 June 1965 the ornithology class at Mountain Lake Biological Station, under the direction of Dr. J. J. Murray, visited White Pine Lodge on a field trip. The elevation at White Pine Lodge is about 3200 feet.

At about 10 A.M. Frank Thompson announced that he had seen a Brown Creeper. This was a new sighting for the group and soon everyone was looking for the bird. Two Brown Creepers were finally sighted. The question then was asked, "Do these birds nest here?", to which Dr. Murray answered, "If you had asked me yesterday I would have said you probably wouldn't even see them here. But since they are here at this date they are likely nesting." He then challenged the class to find the nest. Most of the group scattered into the grove of pine

trees where the bird was first seen. I had noticed that the birds had made several flights across the small clearing where we were standing so I simply remained standing where I was. When a Brown Creeper flew into the grove a few minutes later I followed its flight carefully to a piece of loose bark on a small pine and discovered the nest.

The nest was situated about 30 feet up in a dead white pine tree. The tree had a diameter of about 7" at the base and of about 4½" at the nest. The nest was placed behind a piece of bark which had become loosened along one edge and was pulled away from the trunk. The loose piece of bark was about 18" long. The nest was built snugly between the bark and the trunk, about midway from top to bottom, or about 9" from the top.

For the next half hour I kept a record of the frequency of flights. Time intervals between visits to the nest varied from two to 18 minutes during that period. Also during that time I decided the birds were carrying nest material instead of food as we had at first thought. The bird always entered the space behind the bark from the top, often pausing momentarily before entering, but leaving abruptly without any delay after emerging.

On 23 June A. L. Whitt and I returned to White Pine Lodge to take some pictures and make further observations of the Brown Creepers. The sky was mostly cloudy and the pictures turned out poorly. The birds were active and made frequent trips to and from the nest while we were there. Upon careful observation with a 32X telescope we decided the birds were gathering gauzy material, probably spider webs. One bird was seen picking this material out of patches of lichens on the pine trees. This material was probably being used to line the nest, indicating that the nest was nearly complete.

On 9 July I had opportunity to visit White Pine Lodge again. I was disappointed to find the nest in a precarious position, as the large piece of bark, behind which the nest was situated, was hanging obliquely from the tree. Evidently during a heavy rain, of which there had been several early in the week, the bark was loosened.

No Brown Creepers were seen around the nest during several hours I spent in the area. It was assumed that the nest was deserted. A two-foot stick thrown from the ground completed the severing of the bark from the tree and it fell to the ground with the nest intact within it.

The foundation of the nest was of small sticks (similar in size to those used by a House Wren), next were several inches of pine needles, and finally the nest itself composed of softer fibers, soft strips of bark lining, spider webs and a few feathers.

While this pair of Brown Creepers was not successful with this nest, it is quite probable that others are successful here. It is hoped that subsequent observations may produce records of successful nests of Brown Creepers in this area.

Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia

UNUSUAL BEHAVIOR OF CATBIRD AND BLACK SNAKE

Mrs. FLOY C. BURFORD

On 1 June 1965 at 4:10 PM I noticed a Catbird acting in a most unusual manner. It was walking and hopping in a circle about 18" in diameter. It would spread both wings, then tail, and continue to go around and around. At first I assumed it was in search for insects to feed its young in a *Photenia* tree about 15 feet away, but it never attempted to peck at anything and never made a sound, just kept going in the clock-wise circle and spreading tail and wings. I watched this for 10 minutes and left to finish some letter writing. At 4:25 PM I again looked to see what was happening. It was the same procedure as be-

fore, going in the clock-wise circle. A Brown Thrasher flew down but only stayed a minute, then flew into the fig tree nearby. I was only 60 feet from the Catbird. I got my binoculars, but could see nothing in the grass, so I sat down and continued to watch. The constant circling and spreading of wings and tail kept up. At times the bird seemed to stumble as though it was about to fall, then would straighten up and continue in the circle.

I walked down nearer and saw a 3½ foot black snake coiled up and in striking position, but the bird was still circling the snake. I walked to the edge of the circle near the snake, and the Catbird even hopped on the toe of my shoe three times in its rounds. I never heard the bird utter a sound. The snake did not turn its head; looked only in one direction. I know I should have waited to see the outcome, but I was anxious to relieve them of their hypnotic-like state, so I reached down and caught the snake by the back of the head and released it in some low shrubs on the edge of the lake. When I returned the Catbird was still in the same place just standing very still. I reached down to pick up the bird when it seemed to notice me for the first time, even though I had tried to "shoo" the bird away from the snake. It flew a few feet away, then up into the fig tree. Has anyone seen this kind of behavior? Bird and snake were so completely absorbed in each other that they paid me no attention whatever.

The snake was very thin and I do not believe it had fed on the baby birds. The nest was too high for me to investigate.

At 6:10 PM the Catbird was carrying food to the nest, so I know baby birds were still in the nest.

6049 Lake Terrace Circle, Norfolk, Virginia

BLUE RIDGE FORAY

BERNARD THIELEN

A special characteristic flavor of the annual Blue Ridge Foray was preserved this year. The dates were 18-20 June. Skyland's Hepburn Cottage "as in the past" (to quote the *Newsletter* announcement) was the command post. How long the Virginia Sky-Line Company will continue to provide the somewhat hard-scale amenities of Hepburn is questionable: two years ago Jim Eike noted that 1963 "was perhaps the last time." Those sturdy ones quartered there this year may have wished it had been so; a dead mouse found in the common-room on Friday morning had undoubtedly frozen to death, according to Charlie Hacker. Most foray participants, however, billeted in modern cottages near by, enjoyed motel-type comfort.

Thursday-night arrivals plowed in through dense fog, but Friday morning came clear and pleasantly cool. Most of the expected thirty-odd species—but no remarkable additions—were observed on the pleasant walk down White Oak Canyon to the lunch stop above the spectacular waterfalls. Numbers of individuals (and nests) seemed down from previous years, however, and this was the consensus of experienced observers through the whole week end. But three Barred Owls were seen on the fire road—one more than in 1963. And near Big Meadows Lodge the Ravens were unusually active. A Ruffed Grouse was seen with young, as was also noted last year. An old hand with Black-capped Chickadees was "certain" he heard their (basically) two-note whistle more than once (*before* seeing Charles E. Stevens's piece in *The Raven* for June 1965).

A late-afternoon walk around Little Stony Man produced no additional bird species, but the botanical display, including an exceptionally fine flowering of mountain laurel, was noteworthy. That evening Mitchell Byrd showed some most interesting slides at Hepburn Cottage, featuring recent banding operations on the Eastern Shore.

On Saturday the group took the Lewis Falls trail, coming out at Big Meadows for lunch. Again numbers of birds seemed subnormal, although few expected species were entirely absent. Warblers included Chestnut-sided, Canada, Parula, Blackburnian, Pine, Black-throated Blue, Ovenbird, and Louisiana Waterthrush. As at Mary's Rock in 1963, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak nest was discovered immediately above the trail with the male singing while taking care of the brooding chores. Less happy findings included several nests disrupted, apparently by predation, causing speculation as to whether avian or mammalian predators on a rising population curve might be at least partly responsible for the seeming decrease in numbers of passerine birds. On the other hand, the potential of unfavorable weather and perhaps the exposure of migrant species (especially) to pesticides cannot be discounted.

In the afternoon a small party took the trail to Fishers Gap while others explored the Big Meadows area. Vesper Sparrows, Barn Swallows, and a House Wren were among the species noted on Big Meadows. Mitchell Byrd located two adult Woodcock. Sally Nelson performed the probably unprecedented feat (in VSO circles, at least) of returning to Skyland from Fishers Gap on foot via the Appalachian Trail. That evening Helen Goldstick, with an able assist from Arthur Fast, illustrated her Carribean trip. And Charlie Hacker followed with some slides provided by his son which showed something of the technical work Carl is doing with birds in Texas.

Those remaining on Sunday morning had a go at the Hawksbill trail and were rewarded by two Winter Wrens in extended song (*vide* another Charles Stevens article in THE RAVEN for June) plus a Red-shouldered Hawk and three Broad-wings.

Floyd, Virginia

NEWS AND NOTES

ZIP NUMBERS. All members are asked to send their Zip numbers to Miss Gertrude Prior, Sweet Briar, Virginia.

LARK SPARROW IN SUSSEX COUNTY, VIRGINIA. C. C. Steirly observed a Lark Sparrow for sometime and at close range on 26 July 1965 on an extensive grassland (small town golf course) near Waverly in Sussex County.

DEADLINES. Attention is again called to the fact that deadlines for material for *The Raven* fall on the 15th of February, May, August, and November.

NEST CARD PROGRAM. The North American Nest Card Program is winding up the 1965 nesting season, and many cards have already been returned. There are still many cards in the hands of the individual recorders, however, and these should be returned to us as quickly as they are completed. We are preparing the data for transferral onto IBM cards, and a large bulk of material is needed for the first run, to be started soon.

The Raven

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Courtesy of Walter Weber

CONTENTS

The Breeding Behavior of the Rose-breasted Grosbeak	67
By Anne K. Mester	
Blue Grosbeak Nest near Mountain Lake	70
By Mrs. Harvey Shreve, Jr.	
The 1964 Operation Recovery at Kiptopeke Beach	71
By F. R. Scott	
Unusual Sight Records near Radford, Virginia	74
By M. Kathy Klimkiewicz	
Peregrine Falcon in Mt. Rogers-White Top Saddle	76
By Bernard Thielen	
Western Grebe Seen for Third Time in Virginia	77
By M. Kathy Klimkiewicz and J. W. Akers	
VSO Assateague Trip, August 1965	77
By Mrs. W. A. Rothery	
Reviews	78
Audubon Films in Virginia, Spring 1966	80
News and Notes	80
VSO Membership, December 1965	82
Index to Volume 36, 1965	91

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

Activities undertaken by the Society include the following:

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

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

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

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

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

Those wishing to participate in any of the above activities or to cooperate in advancing the objectives of the Society are cordially invited to join. Annual dues are \$1.00 for junior members (students), \$2.00 for active members, \$4.00 for sustaining members, \$50.00 for life members.

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THE BREEDING BEHAVIOR OF THE ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEEK

ANNE K. MESTER

Introduction. The purpose of the following study was to observe as much as possible of the breeding behavior of a pair of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*). The study consisted of observations on the nest of one pair of the species from 12 June to 25 June 1965 located in the woods near the University of Virginia Mountain Lake Biological Station. I watched the nest with a pair of 7 x 35 binoculars from a sitting position 85 feet east of the nest, in a small clearing in the woods surrounded by shrubs and small trees. During prolonged periods of watching, in afternoons and early evenings, I tried to sit motionless; in the mornings and sometimes parts of the afternoons and evenings I made spot checks by walking to within 66 feet of the nest to observe which member of the pair was there. No special methods were used in my observations.

I wish to acknowledge the help of the Brooks Bird Club from West Virginia in locating the nest, and to thank other members of the ornithology class at the station for contributing their observations.

Environment. The station is located in the Allegheny Mountains of southwestern Virginia, in Giles County, at an elevation of 3850 feet on Salt Pond Mountain. The wooded ridge of which the Salt Pond Mountain site is a part is on top of the divide between the Atlantic and Mississippi drainage areas. The actual site of the nest studied is about 30 yards northeast of the laboratory building of the station campus, in a small peninsula of deciduous forest between the building mentioned and a parking lot. The small section of forest is dry and fairly thick, with many small trees and shrubs and a few large trees. Predominant trees and shrubs are red maple (*Acer rubrum*), white oak (*Quercus alba*), black oak (*Quercus velutina*), black gum (*Nyssa* sp.), serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*), chestnut (*Castanea dentata*), sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), and black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*); also a low shrub belonging to the heath family (*Ericaceae*). A gravel road surrounds the area on two sides; a large gravel parking lot is on one side. The area has frequent showers and thunderstorms; day temperatures range in general from the low 60's to the mid-80's, night temperatures from the low 40's to the 60's. The only other animal life I observed directly in the area were several chipmunks, Chipping Sparrows, Carolina Juncos, and several other birds passing through. Evidence of deer was seen in the cropped tops of shrubs, particularly sassafras.

Territory. I was unable to estimate any sort of territorial boundaries for the pair. The male was observed singing once on the nest and in a large white oak 50 feet from the nest. No others of the species were heard singing or seen from my observation point. The only sort of defense of territory, or perhaps only of the nest, was agitated perching and flying to within 10 feet of me, accompanied by a sharp metallic chipping which sounded like "eek," which the female and male demonstrated on many occasions.

Nest. The nest was discovered by the Brooks Bird Club on 13 June 11-12 feet up in a small white oak (height approximately 15-17 feet, diameter breast high 7 inches) 67 feet 9 inches from the gravel road and approximately the same distance from the parking lot. It was located on a branch 2½-3 inches in diameter about half way up in the foliated area of the tree, in a relatively clear space on the branch, although it was well covered within 6-12 inches from above and the sides by leaves. It was easily visible at several spots along the road.

The nest was a statant cupped structure supported from underneath by the branch. The rim stood firmly upright and formed a half-bowl with no

arching of the sides. The entire nest was woven loosely enough to see through it from underneath. The nest was basically of three parts: the open cup $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches deep x $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches diameter, a rather tightly woven, relatively neat cup $2\frac{3}{4}$ " deep x $4\frac{3}{4}$ " diameter, predominantly of small hemlock twigs, and a very messy arrangement of larger twigs, some of which were a kind of thorny briar, woven into, around, and under the neater cup and extending in many directions. Some of the outermost twigs were wrapped around and under the branch, seeming to be the main support of the nest. The entire structure was $3\frac{1}{2}$ -4" deep x $8\frac{1}{2}$ -9" in diameter.

Eggs and Incubation. The pair was already incubating when the nest was found. On 14 June I observed two eggs and one tiny bird in the nest; I could not tell whether or not it was a Cowbird, but later observations confirmed that it was not. I had to climb to the top of a step ladder (approximately 4' 6" high) and pull the nest down about a foot to look into it. The eggs were blue-green, heavily mottled with brown, slightly larger than a robin's egg. The young bird had its eyes closed and was nearly naked and dark gray, with a bit of white down on its head and back.

Both sexes participated in incubation. I only observed the nest for two days before any young were hatched; during this time I never observed a change-over at the nest. On one occasion when I approached the tree closely, the male, who was incubating, flew off and began flying to several nearby trees, chipping very sharply. This same chip was given by both sexes during the entire study when they were disturbed. However, the female did not move when she was approached the same way. On another occasion when the male was incubating, two people began setting up a camera from the road. One reflected sunlight from a mirror into the nest, and the male again flew off and began chipping. The female approached after several seconds and also chipped and acted in an agitated manner, flying around the vicinity. She took over the chipping; neither went to the nest while we remained watching; 15 minutes later the female was incubating.

I concentrated on spot checks of the nest from the road, and therefore do not know how long each sex remained on the nest at any one time. However, on 14 June there were four change-overs in $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours (8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.). Except for the occasion mentioned above, the nest during these two days was never unoccupied. At dusk the female was incubating; this may imply that she stayed during the night. On 12 June it was reported (Fairman Cumming, member of ornithology class—personal communication) that the male was singing on the nest.

Development of the Young. I observed the young altricial birds twice during the study, once as mentioned above, and once on 24 June, one day before their fledging. At that time the three birds were well covered with the beginnings of brown feathers, with some whitish down still on their heads and backs. I observed them from the ground by means of a mirror attached to a long stick; consequently I could not examine them closely.

Parental Care. The three eggs present at the time of my first observation all hatched. Both sexes shared in brooding the young, although the female was encountered at the nest more frequently than was the male. Beginning on 16 June I began observing inattentive periods which seemed to last for 15 minutes or less. Again I never observed a change-over at the nest; I never remained at my observation spot longer than two hours without leaving for five or ten minutes and then returning. I found that neither bird would switch for the other while I was there; rarely would either even fly off the nest. During both incubation and brooding, the parents sat very low in the nest, with head up looking out and tail flat. None of the male's rose breast showed. He was recognized by his black head and larger beak; she was brown with a white and brown striped head and smaller beak. Neither ever faced me

directly, but probably spotted me with the monocular vision of right or left eye. I saw the female turn in the nest only once; I never saw either bird turn the eggs. Several interesting observations follow:

- 16 June. Between 2:05 and 3:15 p.m. the female brooded; during this time the male came and began chipping loudly very close to me three different times. I left at 3:25; at 3:40 he was quietly brooding.
- 18 June. At 10 a.m. I surprised the female just as she was about to feed the young. As soon as she knew I was there she flattened herself almost straight at the edge of the nest (she was not in it) and remained quiet and motionless until I left. At 1:30, the female was on the nest. Forty minutes later she began to chip softly from the nest. The male, with food, chipped loudly near me 6 minutes later. At 2:20 all chipping stopped. The female resumed soft chipping at 2:27, which lasted for about 15 minutes, at intervals of 3-6 seconds. At 2:45 the male, with food in his beak, flew to a branch 20 feet above the nest, chipping loudly. He flew to another branch about 20-30 feet to the south of the nest, still chipping, and left at 3:09. The female began soft chipping again; at 3:15 she would alternate a loud with several soft chips. It appeared that she was quite anxious to leave the nest, but she was perhaps afraid to.
- 21 June. The above situation was repeated during an hour of watching, from 7:17 to 8:15 p.m. During his loud chipping the male once sang a short song. At 7:56 the female became very agitated, chipped loudly and moved around the nest several times. She was noisier than the male.
- 23 June. In the morning I observed down sticking up in the nest.
- 25 June. The young had been fledged. The nest was completely empty. I never saw the male again, but on this date the female acted somewhat differently. I observed the site from my spot across the road and from behind the laboratory; at each spot she followed me around and chipped quite loudly at intervals of about five minutes. She sometimes had food in her beak, seen twice to consist of insects and plant material, perhaps seeds. Previous to this date the food I saw appeared to be only plant material; however, this may not be the case.
- 26 June. In the morning I again heard the same kind of noise from the female. I saw no young birds. Several members of the class reported that in the afternoon they observed a male, female, and young birds (no report of how many) in the woods northeast of the parking lot. The parents again chipped loudly when people approached. Since no more activity of any kind was observed around the nest site and since no other Grosbeaks had been heard nearby throughout the course of the study, it was inferred that this was probably the same family that I had been watching.

Conclusion. These Grosbeaks, being located along a heavily frequented route between the station and the parking lot, were disturbed often by people and cars. They also seemed aware of my presence most of the time. The great deal of disturbance perhaps led them to get the young birds into the forest as quickly as possible; also, my presence seemed to affect the length of time they would stay on the nest and the fact that no change-overs occurred while I was watching them. Perhaps the sitting bird gives a soft chipping signal when he or she wishes to be relieved; however, the chipping seemed to be more of an alarm note. Also, when the male approached with food, I could not tell whether it was partially or wholly for the young birds, or perhaps for the female. In any case, watching from behind a blind would probably have produced much better results. Also, a more complete picture of breeding behavior would necessitate watching the birds before or at pairing time until the young fledglings were independent.

I tried to raise a very young fledgling that had been deserted by another pair of parents, that was found near the station's volleyball court, but the attempt did not succeed; the bird died very shortly after it was taken to my cabin and fed.

307 West Chicago Avenue, Westmont, Illinois.

BLUE GROSBEAK NEST NEAR MOUNTAIN LAKE

MRS. HARVEY SHREVE, JR.

On the afternoon of 16 June during the Brooks Bird Club's 1965 foray week at Mountain Lake, Virginia, Ralph Bell, Jack Linehan, Norris Gluck, Constance Katholi and I watched a male Blue Grosbeak singing on a fence along route 601, three miles north of Newport, Giles County.

It appeared to be carrying food, though singing repeatedly. From the brush beneath his perch the female appeared. At once the male dropped into a low hickory sprout just below the fence. To investigate the possibility of a nest it was necessary to climb the roadside bank through a deep, lush tangle of growth. In order to disturb the site as little as possible, only one of us went up. The hickory sprout was three feet high and the nest was placed in it about eight inches from the ground, completely concealed by poison ivy and hickory foliage. It contained two nestlings that looked to be about a day old. The site was viewed from the road by Brooks Bird Club members during the next few days. Both the male and female carried food and the male sang repeatedly within a few feet of the nest. On 19 June the nest was photographed by Jack Linehan, who reported that the young were doing well.

The territory for this pair was immense. Singing posts were located one-fourth mile to the west and more than a mile to the east along the road. It extended at least five hundred yards to the north across a field. We wondered if such an oversized territory is required at the edge of a species' range because of scarcity of preferred food, or if the big area is used simply because it is available due to lack of competition from other Blue Grosbeaks. The territory was predominantly hay fields with orchard grass. The steep roadside bank was grown over with poison ivy, dewberry, Japanese honeysuckle, and a few shrubs. The nest site was partially shaded by a thirty foot locust tree. The elevation for the area is 1952 feet.

The field was shared by Grasshopper Sparrows, Field Sparrows and Indigo Buntings. One day an Indigo Bunting perched on the fence within a few inches of the Blue Grosbeak, providing an interesting comparison in size. The Blue Grosbeak was a life bird for many of us.

P. O. Box 311, St. Albans, West Virginia.

(Editor's note. I wrote Mrs. Shreve to ask her whether she was sure about the territory used, or whether the bird was moving widely because of observers. She answers: "I have talked to George Hurley, Mr. and Mrs. Shearer, Norris Gluck and Connie Katholi, who were present on the first day, and their impressions of the size of territory were the same, with the exception of N. Gluck, who thought it may have been a quarter of a mile shorter. Hurley and Shearer first saw the male a mile to the east and followed it to the nest area when there were no other BBC people around.)

THE 1964 OPERATION RECOVERY AT KIPTOPEKE BEACH

F. R. Scott

For the second consecutive year a banding station was run at Kiptopeke Beach, Virginia, in cooperation with *Operation Recovery*, a cooperative banding program to study bird migration in the fall by use of Japanese mist nets. The station was in operation for 16 days during 1964 from September 26 through October 11. Six different banders were on hand for varying periods of time, Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Mitchell (11 days), Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Smith (11 days), C. W. Hacker (9 days), and F. R. Scott (4 days). There were many visitors to the station, some of whom assisted in the banding work, especially J. E. Ames, Jr., W. E. Thomson, Jr., and Mrs. J. E. Guthrie. The banders are especially appreciative of the cooperation of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and Tunnel District and Mr. Leon R. Johnson, Chief Engineer, who allowed the use of District property for this project.

The results of the 1964 operation were far superior to those of 1963 (see *Raven* 34: 53-55, 1963). Whereas only 216 birds of 41 species were banded in 7 days in 1963, the totals in 1964 were 1660 birds banded of 61 species in 16 days. The results are shown in detail in Table 1. At the bottom of the table the word *repeat* refers to a bird previously banded during the period, and *net-hours* is defined as the summation of all the daylight hours each net was in operation. Thus if two nets were each run for a full 12-hour day, the total net-hours would be 24. *New birds per 1000 net-hours* measures the efficiency of the trapping and is the best indicator of the relative number of birds actually passing through the area.

Banding success was affected by many variables other than the number of birds in the area and the number of net-hours, the weather having the most severe effect. High winds made the nets tight, and birds would either see the billowing nets in time to avoid them or would simply bounce off. Cloudy days were generally more productive than sunny days, since the nets were far more visible in sunlight than in shade, and during rainy periods the nets had to be furled. The best bird flights, such as that on October 1, usually occurred following the passage of a cold front and a shift of the wind to a northerly direction. The size of the bird had a decided effect on its chances of being trapped once it encountered the net. Larger birds (Sharp-shinned Hawks, Brown Thrashers) often could work their way out of the net before a bander could reach them. Small birds, such as the smaller warblers, would often simply flutter against the net without hitting it hard enough to get caught or would pass through the netting. The kinglets were particularly bad about the latter.

The most abundant bird trapped was the Swainson's Thrush, with 254 individuals banded, followed by the Blackpoll Warbler (220), Catbird (200), Gray-cheeked Thrush (174), and American Redstart (106). If the station had been opened either earlier or later in the fall, it is evident that the species totals would have changed drastically. Since so little quantitative data are available on the fall land birds here, it is difficult to comment with authority on the normal or abnormal nature of the figures in the table. Previous field work, however, has shown that many fall transients arrive along the coast much earlier than farther inland, so early records like the White-throated Sparrow on September 26 and the Brown Creeper and Ruby-crowned Kinglets on September 28 might be expected. The Blackburnian and Tennessee Warblers are certainly rare on the coast, and the numbers of Bay-breasted and Connecticut Warblers were definitely a surprise. Five birds which were banded in 1963 were trapped again during the 1964 operation, 4 Carolina Chickadees and one Cardinal. All of these were, of course, resident birds, not transients.

Table 1. Banding results at the Kiptopeke Beach, Virginia, station during September and October 1964. Banders present each day are indicated below by the following code: a, C. W. Hacker; b, Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Mitchell; c, F. R. Scott; d, Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Smith.

Date	September				October							Total					
	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11
Sharp-shinned Hawk		3			1	1	1				5	1	3	2	2	2	21
Yellow-billed Cuckoo					3	1	9	6			1				1		21
Black-billed Cuckoo					2	1					1		1				5
Yellow-shafted Flicker	1								2				5				8
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker							1										1
Downy Woodpecker				2										1			3
Great Crested Flycatcher				1													1
Eastern Phoebe															1		1
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher							1		1								2
Least Flycatcher									1			1					2
Empidonax (sp. ?)	1																1
Eastern Wood Pewee															1		1
Blue Jay																	1
Carolina Chickadee								1	1								3
Tufted Titmouse				1													1
Brown Creeper			1								6	15	11	2	4	2	41
House Wren					1												1
Carolina Wren		1									3						4
Catbird	5	2				59	37	11	21	14	22	9	3	1	1	15	200
Brown Thrasher	3	3	1	1	1	2	1	1			4	4				1	22
Wood Thrush	1					1	1										3
Hermit Thrush											2	2	2			2	8
Swainson's Thrush	99	22	12	8	6	27	7	6	5	4	21	8	18	2	7	2	254
Gray-cheeked Thrush	29	4	2	7	4	45	2	4	4	1	25	6	20	4	5	12	174
Veery	9					13			1		2	1			1		27
Golden-crowned Kinglet											2	7	8	2		3	22
Ruby-crowned Kinglet			2					2			8	5	8	2	2	8	38
Red-eyed Vireo	4	1	2			7	3	2	1	1	2	1			1		23
Philadelphia Vireo						1											1
Black-and-white Warbler	3			3		7	6	4	4	2	3	1			1	2	36
Worm-eating Warbler				1													1
Tennessee Warbler								1							1		2
Nashville Warbler								1					1				2
Parula Warbler						1			1	2	2		1		1		8
Yellow Warbler											1						1

Magnolia Warbler	6	1	2	15	3	3	7	1	3	1	3	1	3	45			
Cape May Warbler						1	2	4						7			
Black-throated Blue Warbler	2	1	2	27	3	3	9	2	9	4	3			68			
Myrtle Warbler									2	5	2		3	2			
Black-throated Green Warbler									1	1			2	4			
Blackburnian Warbler						1								1			
Bay-breasted Warbler	1		1	3	12	1								18			
Blackpoll Warbler				3	3	102	65	2	8	5	10	2	4	220			
Western Palm Warbler			1	1	1	3	2	1	3	4	2	4	6	28			
Yellow Palm Warbler										1	2		1	4			
Ovenbird	15	3	1	1	17	6	1	3	1	4		3	4	60			
Northern Waterthrush	2				7	2	1		1	1		1		15			
Kentucky Warbler				1										1			
Connecticut Warbler	5	1			6	2	1	1	3					20			
Yellowthroat					12	1		13	3	1				32			
Yellow-breasted Chat							1							2			
Hooded Warbler										1				2			
American Redstart	8	2	3	1	1	45	6	7	10	6	9	2	3	106			
Scarlet Tanager					1					1				2			
Cardinal	1		3	5	2						1			12			
Indigo Bunting					1			3		1	1			8			
Rufous-sided Towhee				1						2	2	3		12			
Slate-colored Junco										4	1	1	2	9			
Field Sparrow														1			
White-crowned Sparrow											2			2			
White-throated Sparrow	1				1					1	1	4	1	10			
Swamp Sparrow												3	1	6			
Song Sparrow										2	1	6	1	11			
<hr/>																	
Total new individuals	196	43	27	39	31	313	198	126	95	53	157	97	121	22	64	78	1660
Total species	18	11	9	17	15	25	21	23	21	16	32	28	27	10	23	28	61
Repeats	1	2	2	2	5	2	2	4			6	3	1	2	3		35
Total net-hours	128	168	140	249	252	139	149	163	67	21	168	160	158	164	150	87	2363
New birds per 1000 net-hours	1531	256	193	157	123	2252	1329	773	1418	2524	935	606	766	134	427	897	702
Prevailing winds	SE	SE	S	SW	SW	NE	S	N	S	NE	NE	NE	NE	NE	N	N	
Banders	abd	abd	ad	acd	acd	acd	ad	abd	abd	b	bc	b	b	b	bd	bd	

The two Palm Warblers, although considered only different races of the same species, are both listed in the table, since they are considered to be fairly easily separable.

Several other projects in addition to banding were undertaken when time permitted. In cooperation with the Bird Banding Office of the Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife, a special attempt was made to age and sex and to secure wing-chord measurements of 7 species, Red-eyed Vireo, Magnolia Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, Yellowthroat, and American Redstart. For identification purposes, some measurements were also taken of Connecticut Warblers (to separate them from the Mourning Warbler), Gray-cheeked Thrushes (for subspecific determination), and *Empidonax* flycatchers. Only 5 of the latter were caught, and 4 of these were clearly distinguishable by a combination of measurements and color characteristics. Some visual observations were also made of the observed diurnal migration of birds over the banding station. Some of the more interesting records were 12 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks on October 1, 300 Yellow-shafted Flickers on October 3, and 77 Sharp-shinned Hawks and 25 Sparrow Hawks on October 6.

It is difficult to generalize about this project since there has been little previous work of this type to compare it with. It is hoped, however, that the project can be continued and expanded in future years. Ideally, the project should be expanded to cover at least two months, but this is probably a vain hope because of the lack of qualified banders who could spare the necessary time.

115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond, Virginia 23226

UNUSUAL SIGHT RECORDS NEAR RADFORD, VIRGINIA

M. KATHY KLIMKIEWICZ

On 2 May 1965 between 6 and 10 a.m. J. W. Akers, C. P. Stone, and the writer sighted two Double-crested Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) along the New River below the Claytor Lake Dam (Pulaski County). Dark coloration, a long-snake-like neck, a stout bill with a decurved tip, and a light throat patch distinguished these birds as Double-crested Cormorants. The lack of a white area near the base of the bill and the upward tilt of the bill as the birds swam further substantiated the identification. This is the third sighting in Montgomery County (last record, 28 April 1940) and the first in Pulaski County.

Yellow-crowned Night Herons (*Nyctanassa violacea*) were sighted in Montgomery County on 27 July 1965 and 1 August 1965 between 6 and 7 a.m. on the Virginia Polytechnic Institute duck ponds by Akers, J. Gearhart, Klimkiewicz, J. M. Persicano, and P. Yencer. R. Dietrich, J. W. Murray and Stone confirmed the identification. The immature Yellow-crowns were larger than the Green Herons (also present at the ponds). The yellowish legs were longer than those of the Black-crowned Night Heron. The greenish bill was very stout and the eye was reddish-brown. The top of the head and the back were slaty grey. The remainder of the body was streaked with brown. The white specks in the wings and on the back were small, producing a speckled effect rather than a spotted effect as found in the Black-crowned Night Heron. There was a white edge on the shoulder and arm. The bird stood feeding with body and neck extended. The feet and part of the legs extended behind the body in flight, which is characteristic of this species. This is the first sighting in Southwest Virginia.

Akers and Stone observed an American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) in a small, heavily vegetated cove at Claytor Lake State Park (Pulaski County)

on 16 November 1964 at 4:30 p.m. The bird was flushed by the observers' approach and flew across the cove revealing the black in the outer part of the wing. The white throat and the black marks on the neck were very distinctive of this species. This is the first Pulaski County record, although the American Bittern is an uncommon migrant and winter visitor in Montgomery County.

On 28 February 1965 and 1 March 1965 in the late afternoon Akers, Klimkiewicz, D. N. Larkin, and Stone sighted a White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta deglandi*) on the New River below the Claytor Lake Dam. The bird was a dusky brown with white wing patches (female or immature). It also had two buffy patches on the face. The bill was distinctive of the scoter group. This is the second sighting in Pulaski County (Messersmith, *et al.*, *Raven*, 34:36). The Scoter is a rare winter visitor in Montgomery County (last record, 9 January 1945).

Akers, C. Dickinson, and Klimkiewicz sighted three female or immature Surf Scoters (*Melanitta perspicillata*) on Claytor Lake (Pulaski County) on 6 November 1965 at 10:30 a.m. Stone confirmed the sighting in the late afternoon. The birds were a dull brown. There were two buffy patches on the side of the head. The bill was typical of the Scoter group. The Scoters spread and flapped their wings several times showing the wings to be totally without white. The top of the head was darker than the rest of the body. This is the first record for Southwest Virginia.

A Common Gallinule (*Gallinula chloropus cachinnans*) was sighted on the New River above the Claytor Lake Dam at Hiwassee (Pulaski County) on 10 October 1964 at approximately 1:30 p.m. by Akers, Dickinson, Klimkiewicz, and Stone. At first glance, it was thought that the bird was an American Coot, but the white on the flanks and the deep pink frontal shield were distinctive of the Common Gallinule. The bird was also not as dark as the Coot. This is the first record for Pulaski County. The Gallinule is an uncommon migrant in Montgomery County (last record, 9 July 1956).

On 28 August 1964 at approximately 6:30 p.m. a Semipalmated Plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) was observed on the second of three small farm ponds along Route 114, about one mile east of the New River Bridge in Radford (Pulaski County). Akers noted that the bird was considerably smaller than the Killdeer which was also present on the pond. The bill was small and yellow with a black tip. This Plover is a rare migrant in Montgomery County (last record, 5 May 1954). It is the first sighting in Pulaski County.

Akers, Klimkiewicz, Murray, and Stone observed a Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*) on the second farm pond described in the above paragraph. The plover was observed from 3 September 1964 to 23 September 1964. The bill was long, stout and black. The legs were greyish. White extended without a break from the base of the bill to behind the eye. The back was a lighter brown than that of the Killdeer which regularly frequent the pond. A Wilson's Plover was again sighted on 27 September 1965 at Saltville, Virginia (Smyth County) by Akers, Dickinson, Murray, B. Spillman, and Stone. The plover was with a large flock of Killdeer on the mud flats of a brine lake. These are the first sightings for Pulaski and Smyth Counties, and the first inland record since August 1887 (Robinson, *A Check-List of the Birds of Virginia* by J.J. Murray, 48).

(A Brewster's Warbler (*Vermivora leucobronchialis*) was seen by Akers, Klimkiewicz, and Stone on 2 May 1965 and 9 May 1965 in the early morning. The area, swampy, heavily vegetated, and overgrown with horsetails, is about a quarter of a mile east of the Arsenal on Route 114 (Montgomery County). The bird had the black eye line and was distinctly white below with a yellow "band" across the breast. The wing bars were yellow. There was no black throat patch. The Brewster's was found to have the song of the Blue-winged Warbler (Murray). It was noted that the Brewster's seen on 11-14 May 1963

in Blacksburg was singing the Golden-winged Warbler's song (Messersmith and Murray). The Brewster's is a rare spring visitor in Montgomery County (last record, 14 May 1963). It should be noted that the Brewster's Warbler is a hybrid, not accepted in the A.O.U. Check-List.)

Radford College, Radford, Virginia

PEREGRINE FALCON IN MT. ROGERS-WHITE TOP SADDLE

BERNARD THIELEN

Considering the Peregrine Falcon's catastrophic decline, a recent sighting on Mt. Rogers seems noteworthy, even though Pettingill wrote only a few years ago that "Duck Hawks . . . may be seen regularly" from both Rogers and White Top.

On 19 September 1965 at 3:30 p.m. a group from New River Valley Bird Club, coming down from Mt. Rogers summit, was approaching Route 600 in the saddle between Rogers and White Top. It was hot and humid with no noticeable wind and was sunny in our vicinity although cumulus clouds towered in the distance and there were signs of far-off shower activity. The elevation where I was, in advance of the main party, was 4600 feet.

Bill Akers and Douglas Shear were about a hundred yards behind me, just emerging from the mountainside woods onto the rocky pasture. The rest of the group (unfortunately, as it turned out) were still three or four minutes' walk back up the mountain. I heard Akers call "Peregrine!" and turned to see a large falcon (larger than Crows flying in the vicinity) sailing over Akers' head in my general direction at a height of about a hundred feet. I noted the sudden silence and dispersal of the Crows.

With the sun behind me and 8x40 Zeiss glasses in hand I could see the falcon's white throat, pale underparts, and large talons; then as it approached me, it veered to its left (south) on set wings, giving me the "football helmet" head markings. Holding its southward course it sailed off, dropping well below us as the terrain sloped away, disappearing eventually against the background of a distant mountain. Mostly it sailed on set wings, but occasionally it gave three or four quick "double-jointed" wingbeats. We had the bird under observation for perhaps three minutes.

As to the "uncharacteristic" flight described above, Bent says of the Peregrine: "I have read that it seldom soars, but I have often seen it do so; I have seen it sail, or soar, for a long distance on horizontal wings and spread tail, with little or no wing movement, rising, falling, or turning at will."

I have observed Peregrines in this country (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) and, under falconers' control, in Europe (*F. p. peregrinus*). The bird we saw on Mt. Rogers was a Peregrine Falcon, Bill Akers realized at once, although he had never seen one before.

Shortly after the falcon disappeared (I believe on the basis of size that it was a falcon in the falconer's technical sense—a female) a Broad-winged Hawk flew over and sailed off in the same general southerly direction. This is indeed slender evidence of a hawk migration in progress; nevertheless it seems probable that the Peregrine was migrating, despite the rather early date. Quoting Bent again: "There appears to be very little regularity in the seasonal movements of this species".

Floyd, Virginia

WESTERN GREBE SEEN FOR THIRD TIME IN VIRGINIA

M. KATHY KLIMKIEWICZ AND J. W. AKERS

On 24 January 1965 on a cool drizzly overcast morning at approximately 9:00 a.m., we arrived at Claytor Lake State Park in Pulaski County. As we scanned the lake, a large bird was noticed off the point on the West shore nearest to the Ranger Station. At this time the bird was approximately 150 yards away. At first glance it appeared to be a Red-necked Grebe (*Podiceps grisegena*); but upon closer inspection, it was discovered that the bird was a Western Grebe, *Aechmophorus occidentalis* (Lawrence).

The grebe was larger than the Red-necked Grebe. It was also compared in size to a Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps podiceps*) which was only a few yards in front of the Western Grebe. The head and neck pattern was distinctive—black on top of head and back of the neck, blending with the gray-black back. The cheeks, front and back of the eyes and underside and sides of the neck were snow white, blending into the grey and white mottled back and wings. The yellow, upturned bill was somewhat longer and more pointed than either that of the Horned or Red-necked Grebe. The bird was riding high in the water and the neck was long, slender and slightly curved. We watched the grebe for approximately 30 minutes. J.W. Akers and Mrs. Connie Stone sighted a Western Grebe again at 12:30 p.m. on the same day on the opposite shore of the lake. The sky was still partially overcast. Therefore, a 60X telescope was used to view the bird. The same afternoon, D.E. Marvin and D.J. Moore, Assistant Professors of Biology at Radford College, confirmed our find.

At approximately 8:30 a.m. on the cloudy morning of 7 February 1965, we found a Western Grebe in the same area of the Lake, only a few yards off shore. On 27 February 1965 on a clear sunny day, M.K. Klimkiewicz and D. N. Larkin sighted a Western Grebe in the same area at approximately 3:30 p.m. On both of these visits the bird was riding low in the water with his neck in a deep S-shaped curve.

This is the first record of *Aechmophorus occidentalis* in southwestern Virginia. There are two other records for Virginia, one on the York River in December 1963 (Scott, 1964, *Raven*, 35:46) and the other at Dulles International Airport in October 1964 (Abramson and Wightman, 1964, *Atlantic Naturalist*, 19:242).

Radford, Virginia

VSO ASSATEAGUE TRIP, AUGUST 1965

MRS. W. A. ROTHERY

Somebody likes us birdwatchers! This was obvious August 21 at Chincoteague. The sky was azure blue, the clouds were white puffballs, the sun was warm and caressing, the sea breeze was delightfully refreshing, the bugs were at a minimum, and the light was good for observing the abundant birds. The day was ideal with temperatures in the middle 80's and comparatively low humidity. Our group consisted of 36 people representing bird clubs from six areas of the state; Northern Virginia, Cape Henry, Piedmont, Hampton Roads, Richmond, and Lynchburg. Also, there were two professors from Penn State, Drs. S. B. Guss and L. Jackson, and Mr. and Mrs. Ed Marrow from North Carolina. We were happy to welcome our visitors.

Upon arriving Friday afternoon, some of us enjoyed a delightfully invigorating ocean swim while others took a quick inventory of the birding possibilities

for Saturday. Accommodations were scattered about town with most people staying at the Lighthouse Inn Motel. It was comfortable enough except for the sparse water supply. Gus Rothery found it distressing to be soaped for a shower and find no water in the tap. It was alarming to find Charlie Hacker foaming at the mouth, until we realized the water had cut off mid tooth-brushing.

Mealtime with 35 extra people seemed to shake up the cook and service was slow. Grace Wiltshire was pressed into waitress service. After dinner we were enchanted by some remarkable films shown by Connie Darden. The courtship displays of the Yellow-crowned Night Heron were especially fascinating.

Before 9 a.m. on Saturday we each went our separate ways to check various areas. Some scouted the causeway between the mainland and Chincoteague and found birds scarce. Others went to the north of the island to locate Oystercatchers. At 9 o'clock we formed a caravan to Assateague Island. Our first stop was at the Nature Trail. This area of pine woods and marshland produced a variety of land birds, the most spectacular of which was an accommodating immature Red-shouldered Hawk patiently waiting for all to see. From the Nature Trail, we proceeded to the causeway across "A" Dike, to the beach, and later in the day out on some of the impoundments. We were to see the great number of Cattle Egrets following the famed Chincoteague ponies. The unusual numbers of Kingbirds caused comment. A late nesting House Wren in a loblolly pine stump was a surprise, and four Brown-headed Nuthatches were pleasing to those from northern Virginia. Tree Swallows on the telephone wires appeared to be our most abundant bird, although there was a good supply of Snowy Egrets and Louisiana Herons. We counted 30 to 40 Glossy Ibis which put on a good flight show for us. A group of immature Black-crowned Night Herons stirred up arguments as to their identity, as did the variety of small shore birds.

Weary and footsore, Grace found it difficult to evoke enthusiasm from us at our after-dinner meeting. We did manage to make up the bird list of 91 species. We also discussed ideas for future trips and the schedule of events already planned, and then dragged ourselves off to bed to build energy for another day.

Alas! This was not to be. By 8 a.m. Sunday morning, a fine drizzle had graduated to a full-fledged downpour, and we reluctantly conceded that birding would be impossible. As we said goodbye, we congratulated ourselves on our good fortune on Saturday.

Box 105, Route 2, Lorton, Virginia

REVIEWS

The Appalachians, by Maurice Brooks. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1965, xvii and 346 pages, illustrated with photographs and with drawings by Lois and Louis Darling. \$6.95.

Maurice Brooks has given a notable start to a new series, *The Naturalist's America*. Few men know this Appalachian country as he does. He was born in it; he has tramped it from Gaspe to Georgia. His heart is anchored in the West Virginia hills but his feet have wandered widely through all these mountains. He will talk about them at any pause in the conversation, talk with enthusiasm and always with interest to his hearers. He is a favorite speaker at VSO gatherings. He knows our Virginia country—Highland County, Mountain Lake, Burke's Garden, Mt. Rogers.

Naturally he is enthusiastic about West Virginia. A member of a family long connected with the State and with the study of its natural history, he

knows every foot of it. The book is of particular interest to this reviewer. It was in West Virginia that I got my first training in preaching and in mountain climbing. One of those friends of early days on Lost River, Arthur Wood, later Supervisor of Monongahela National Forest and now gone to his reward, is worthily praised in this book.

The author seems to reach a climax of delight when he writes about noble Gaudineer Knob and its vesper chorus of northern thrushes, although fascinating Cranberry Glades runs it a close second. At the same time he takes pains to point out the less spectacular but equally remarkable aspects of the shale barrens so common in the rain shadow areas of these mountains. The book is a study of many phases of this Appalachian country, its history and people and folklore, its flowers and birds and mammals and reptiles. He is concerned about them all, though one seems to detect a primary interest in the salamanders that have reached their climax in unglaciated Appalachia. While the focus of interest in the book is natural history, there is much about the customs of the people who settled Appalachia; there are vivid descriptions of many mountain areas; there are pleas for the preservation of its forests and its wildlife.

The book is illustrated with first-class photographs, some in color, and with delicate drawings by the Darling pair. One otherwise lovely view across a rail fence in the Smokies is hurt by an excess of blue in the printing. Two other small errors may be mentioned. One (page 86) is in the name of this reviewer's father-in-law, which should be Charles G. and not Alexander Vardell. The reference in the index to the grass-pink should be for pages 120-121, not 20-21.

The writer covers the various scenic aspects of this whole region, from the rugged boreal areas in the far North, through the glaciated country, to the balds and high peaks of the South. As a good biologist, he points out the fact that it is not easy to fit the birds of the southern Appalachians into a neat scheme, for here one finds boreal and austral species living in close proximity.

This is a book which everyone interested in Appalachia should own and read and re-read.

J. J. Murray

Introduction to the Outdoors, by Ben Osborn. Audubon Naturalist Society of the Central Atlantic States, Inc., Washington, D. C., 1965, 34 pages.

While there is much general information in this booklet and some of the bibliographies are nation-wide, the material is particularly related to the territory around Washington and in the Middle Atlantic states. The first section, Outdoor Living, is full of helpful suggestions about living in the field: clothing and shoes for the woods, first aid planning, what to do when lost, consideration for the land owner, and bibliography for hiking and camping. There follow various lists of guides for areas, for plants, mammals, birds, insects, ferns, fungi, rocks, etc. A section treats of ecology, climate, and soils; and another discusses possibilities for outdoor recreation in inhabited areas. A final chapter provides a specialized bibliography and a list of natural history and conservationist organizations.

The treatment in this booklet is admirable. Not meant for one quick reading but for continual reference, it will be especially useful to VSO members.

J. J. Murray.

Audubon Films in Virginia, Spring 1966

Norfolk. Presented by the Cape Henry Bird Club. Northside Junior High School, Westmont Ave. and Granby St. 8:15 P.M.

February 4, Tidewater Trails, Charles T. Hochkiss.

February 26, Nature's Plans & Puzzles, C. P. Lyons.

April 22, Nature's Ways, William J. Jahoda.

Williamsburg. Presented by Clayton-Grimes Biology Club. Ballroom, Campus Center, William & Mary. 8:00 P.M.

February 7, Tidewater Trails, Charles T. Hochkiss.

February 28, The Right to Live, C. P. Lyons.

April 6, Village Beneath the Sea, Harry Pederson.

Charlottesville. Newcomb Hall. 8:00 P.M.

February 27, Nature's Plans & Puzzles, C. P. Lyons.

April 21, Nature's Ways, William J. Jahoda.

Lynchburg. Randolph-Macon Woman's College. 7:30 P.M.

February 8, Wilderness Trails, Charles T. Hochkiss.

March 8, Inherit the Wild, D. J. Nelson.

Kingsport, Tennessee. Civic Auditorium. 7:30 P.M.

February 3, Inherit the Wild, D. J. Nelson.

February 23, The Right to Live, C. P. Lyons.

March 26, Missouri Northwest, Roy Coy.

Washington, D. C. (Audubon Lectures, independent series). Natural History Museum, 5:15 P.M. and 8:30 P.M.

February 15, The Bahamas - From Top to Bottom, Harry Pederson.

March 10, Bird Neighbors, two British films by Christopher Mylne.

April 19, Africa's Vanishing Wilderness, Arthur C. Twomey.

May 10, The Faraway Falklands, Olin S. Pettingill.

NEWS AND NOTES

CORRECTION. In the September issue a typographic error in the article by C. C. Steirly escaped both the writer and the editor. On page 57 the figures given for the effectiveness of the woodpeckers destroying bark beetles in the bark were reversed. The last two lines should read as follows: "No. of beetles per sq. ft. of bole area where woodpeckers were excluded—42. No. of beetles per sq. ft. of bole area where woodpeckers could work—6."

ANNUAL MEETING. The 1966 VSO Annual Meeting will be held at the Hampton Tunnel Motel, Willoughby Spit, Norfolk, on 18-19 February, with the Cape Henry Bird Club as host. The Executive Committee Luncheon will be at 12:30 p.m.; registration at 1 p.m.; afternoon program at 2:30; banquet (\$3.50) at 7; and field trip on Saturday.

HANDLEY'S RETIREMENT. Charles O. Handley, Sr., has retired as Director of Research for the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources. He was a charter member of the VSO, its Vice-President for the first four years, and its President for the next two. He has given 43 years of service in wildlife research, five years with Stoddard on the Bobwhite, eighteen years with the Virginia Commission, and the rest of the time with the West Virginia Department.

FUTURE FIELD TRIPS. Skyland, 17-19 June; Eastern Shore, 13-14 August; Back Bay, 3-4 December; Mattamuskeet, 28-29 January, 1967.

VSO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FIELD TRIP. In connection with the meeting of the Executive Committee at Monterey on 16 October 1965 a field trip was made in the western part of Highland County, on which 37 species were listed, including the following: Raven, 2; Black-capped Chickadee, 2, and probably others; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 5; Pine Siskin, about 50, with other large flocks across the West Virginia line; Red Crossbill, 1.

LITTLE BLUE HERON AT PEAKS OF OTTER. An immature bird was seen by Louise Bethea at the lake at the Peaks of Otter lodge, 9 August 1965.

AUTUMN 1965 HAWK COUNTS. Loft Mountain, 18 September, 9:30-1:30, (Robert J. Watson et al.): Turkey Vulture, 22; Black Vulture, 7; Red-tail, 7; Red-shoulder, 3; Broad-wing, 419; Osprey, 1; unidentified, 8. Hump-back Rocks, 20 September, 9:00-2:00, (J. J. Murray, Rev. & Mrs. Grant Simmons): Pigeon Hawk, 1; Raven, 2; a few Turkey Vultures. Peaks of Otter, 25 September, 1:00-3:00 p.m. (J. J. Murray et al.), Turkey Vulture, 3; Red-tail, 4; Red-shoulder, 7; Cooper's, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 1; unidentified in distance, 5; Raven, 4. Thunder Ridge and Sunset Field, 25 September, 1:00-3:00 p.m., (A. O. English et al.): Red-tail, 9; Red-shoulder, 10; Marsh Hawk, 2; Osprey, 1; Duck Hawk, 5; unidentified, 12. Purgatory Mountain, 25 September (Dr. William Hook et al.): Red-tail, 3; Red-shoulder, 4; Broad-wing, 2; Sharp-shin, 3; unidentified, 14. Purgatory Mountain Fire Tower, 29 August to October 17 (Mrs. Myriam Moore et al.): Sharp-shin, 6; Cooper's, 1; Red-tail, 21; Red-shoulder, 16; Broad-wing, 696; Marsh Hawk, 2; Osprey, 9; Accipiters, otherwise unidentified, 7; Buteos, otherwise unidentified, 38; unidentified, 5.

RUFFED GROUSE EAST OF BLUE RIDGE. C. O. Handley (*Raven* 6: 1, July-August, 1935) indicated that the Ruffed Grouse, at least as late as 1935, was still found locally on parts of the Piedmont in Virginia. In the last 30 years or so, however, there has been an almost complete absence of reports in *The Raven* of this species east of the Blue Ridge, which is perhaps not surprising considering the dearth of field observers on the Piedmont. Two birds reported during the 1964-65 Christmas bird counts (Fort Belvoir and Warren—*Raven* 36: 7-18, 1965) were the first reports in some time. Several other interesting observations have now come to light.

While in Cumberland State Forest, Cumberland County, on 6 and 7 April 1965, C. C. Steirly heard Ruffed Grouse drumming several times near the Willis River. Mr. F. S. Campbell informed F. R. Scott that on the James R. Goodloe Hunt Club properties in western Buckingham County, a number of Ruffed Grouse were shot in the fall of 1964, and others were flushed by dogs and seen during the preceding spring.

One of the most interesting reports received was from J. M. Abbott, who indicated that the game warden at Quantico Marine Corps Base in Prince William and Stafford Counties reported that 81 Ruffed Grouse had been shot there in the 1964-65 hunting season. Abbott believes this report to be perfectly valid and indicates that birdwatchers have not worked this area at all. The terrain there is excellent grouse habitat, a rolling, wooded area with lots of laurel and even hemlock.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD AT NORFOLK. On 10 April 1965 an immature male Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) was seen at a bird feeder at the home of Mrs. Eleanor Woods in Algonquin Park in Norfolk, with several Brown-headed Cowbirds. West of the property is a salt marsh bordering a finger of the Elizabeth River. Mrs. Woods called Mrs. Colgate W. Darden, Jr., on 11 April concerning this bird. On this date Mrs. Darden and Miss Eugenia Scott observed the bird and made some color motion pictures of it. The following day Mrs. Darden and I located the bird

in a pine tree on the adjoining property. The bird was very still at this time, while resting with 10 or 12 Cowbirds. Upon our return about 40 minutes later the bird flew into a nearby magnolia tree and perched on a limb in good view and began uttering a raucous call. The call was very unmusical, but the apparent effort to erect the feathers of the throat and breast and the spreading of the wings and tail just before giving the call, was most rewarding. The bird seemed to prefer the company of the Cowbirds in preference to the Common Grackles and Redwings in the nearby marsh. Almost everyone in The Cape Henry Bird Club observed the bird, and many photographed it. The bird was last seen on 25 April 1965, by Mrs. Darden. Floy C. Burford, 6049 Lake Terrace Circle, Norfolk.

BLACK TERNS ON NEW RIVER. J. W. Akers saw two Black Terns at Jackson's Ferry on New River in Wythe County on 1 August 1965. He watched them for nearly an hour.

PARTIAL ALBINO ROBIN. John Wallace Coffey reports a partial albino Robin on 1 April 1965 in Bristol, Virginia. The bird was "primarily white on the back, wings and rump. The head had much white mixed with some darker feathers as did the tail. The breast and belly were the typical reddish-chestnut color of the adult bird."

MOURNING WARBLER IN GLOUCESTER COUNTY. An adult Mourning Warbler was seen and heard in Gloucester County where Route 610 crosses Bland's Creek on 30 May 1965 by Mrs. M. B. Peacock and her son Dan. She had banded three in fall plumage. This bird was in full breeding plumage, "black crepe, no eye ring, gray head—every detail perfect."

RED CROSSBILLS ON WHITE TOP, VIRGINIA. On 13 and 14 August 1965 Tom Wieboldt and Peter Mehring saw three male, two female, and two juvenile Red Crossbills on White Top in the red spruce forest on the south to southeast slope of the mountain. "The fact that we observed flocks flying about on both these days led us to think that there were more than we listed, although we could not confirm this."

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INDEX TO VOLUME 36-1965

- Abbott, Jackson M., Additional Data on the Breeding of the Traill's Flycatcher in Virginia, 20
- Akers, J. W., see Klimkiewicz and Akers.
- Audubon Films in Virginia, Spring 1966, 80
- Blackbird, Yellow-headed, at Norfolk, 81
- Blackbirds, 16 (Lynchburg, high count)
- Bluebird, 8 (Christmas Counts)
- Bunting, Snow, 22 (Back Bay)
- Burford, Mrs. Floy C., Unusual Behavior of Catbird and Black Snake, 60
- Carlson, Carl W., Black-headed Gull and Little Gull Seen from Chesapeake Bridge, Virginia, 18
- Chamberlain, Dwight R., *Bubo Virginianus*, 35
- Chickadee, Black-capped, 5 (Highland County), 37 (song)
- Christmas Counts, 7
- Church, Mrs. Herbert M., Jr., Harris' Sparrow: New Bird for Virginia, 19
- Cormorant, Double-crested, 74 (Radford)
- Creeper, Brown, 59 (nesting)
- Crossbill, Red, 7 (Highland County), 29 (Augusta County), 82 (White Top)
- Crossbill, White-winged, 26
- Duck, Fulvous Tree, 27, 47
- Eagle, Golden, 7 (Fort Belvoir)
- Finch, House, 27 (Cumberland County)
- Flicker, 27 (nest on ground)
- Flycatcher, Least, 5 (Highland County)
- Flycatcher, Traill's, 20
- Gallinule, Common, 75 (Radford)
- Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray, 6 (Highland County)
- Grackle, Boat-tailed, 9 (high count)
- Grebe, Red-necked, 15 (Fort Belvoir)
- Grebe, Western, 26 (Dulles Airport), 77 (Pulaski County)
- Grey, John H., Jr., see Murray, J. J.
- Grosbeak, Blue, 29 (Newport News), 47, 70
- Grosbeak, Evening, 47 (Dickenson County)
- Grosbeak, Pine, 26 (correction)
- Grosbeak, Rose-breasted, 67
- Grouse, Ruffed, 81 (east of Blue Ridge)
- Gull, Black-headed, 18
- Gull, Glaucous, 28 (inland)
- Gull, Little, 18
- Handley, Charles O., Sr., 80 (retirement)
- Hawk Counts, 27, 81
- Heron, Black-crowned Night, 16 (winter, Rockingham County)
- Heron, Little Blue, 81 (Peaks of Otter)
- Heron, Yellow-crowned Night, 74 (Blacksburg)
- Hummingbird, Ruby-throated, 28 (late dates)
- Junco, Western Slate-colored, 29 (Arlington)
- Kite, Swallow-tailed, 27 (Fairfax County)
- Klimkiewicz, M. Kathy, Unusual Sight Records near Radford, Virginia, 74
- Klimkiewicz, Kathy, and J. W. Akers, Western Grebe Seen for Third Time in Virginia, 77
- Mester, Anne K., The Breeding Behavior of the Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 67
- Moore, Mrs. Myriam P., The Second Mattamuskeet Trip, 37
- Mountain Lake, 53, 67, 70
- Mumaw, Homer C., Brown Creeper Nesting in Giles County, Virginia, 59

- Murray, J. J., Reviews, 25, 78; Field Trips of the 1965 Annual Meeting, 40
Murray, J. J., and John H. Grey, Jr., A Preliminary Survey of Scott County,
Virginia, 51
News and Notes, 26, 46, 62, 80
Oriole, Baltimore, 47 (winter at Bristol)
Owl, Snowy, 16 (Lynchburg)
Petrel, Leach's, 21, 28, 47
Plover, Wilson's, 75 (Radford)
Raven, 5 (concentration)
Razorbill, 21, 28, 47
Richardson, Frank C., Western Tanager: New Bird for Virginia, 20
Rothery, Mrs. W. A., VSO Assateague, Trip, August 1965, 77
Ruff, 27 (Alexandria)
Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied, 5 (Highland County, summer)
Scoter, White-winged, 75 (Radford)
Scott County, 51
Scott, F. R., Review, 46; The 1964 Operation Recovery at Kiptopeke
Beach, 71
Shearwater, Sooty, 21, 28, 47
Shreve, Mrs. Harvey, Jr., Blue Grosbeak Nest near Mountain Lake, Vir-
ginia, 70
Sparrow, Harris', 19
Sparrow, Lark, 62 (Sussex County)
Sparrow, White-crowned, 9 (Little Creek)
Steirly, C. C., 26, 62, Role of Woodpeckers in the Control of Southern Pine
Beetles in Virginia, 56; Correction, 80
Stevens, Charles E., The Mourning Warbler and Other Summer Birds of
Highland County, 3; Confusing Chickadee Songs in the Shenandoah Na-
tional Park, 37; Recent Winter Wrens in Summer in the Shenandoah Na-
tional Park, 48.
Tanager, Western, 20
Tern, Black, 82 (New River)
Tern, Forster's, 28 (Loudon County)
Tern, Least, 28 (Lexington)
Thielen, Bernard, Blue Ridge Foray, 61; Peregrine Falcon in Mt. Rogers-
White Top Saddle, 76
Thrasher, Brown, 8 (Christmas Counts)
Thrush, Hermit 5 (Highland County), 8 (Christmas Counts)
Towhee, 29 (late nesting)
Veery, 6 (Highland County)
VSO: Annual Meeting, 1965, 38; Chapters, 22, 41; Committees, 43; Executive
Committee, 48; Field Trips, 21, 40; Financial Statement, 45; Membership,
30, 45, 46; Resolution on Jackson River, 42.
Warbler, Brewster's, 75 (Radford)
Warbler, Cerulean, 28 (breeding in Henrico); 47 (Newport News)
Warbler, Golden-winged, 6 (Highland County)
Warbler, Magnolia, 6 (Highland County)
Warbler, Mourning, 3, 82 (Gloucester)
Warbler, Worm-eating, 28 (breeding in Tidewater)
Waterthrush, Louisiana, 6 (Highland County)
Waterthrush, Northern, 28 (winter)
Watson, Robert J., The 1965 VSO Annual Meeting, 38
Whitt, A. L., Jr., Nesting Study of Cedar Waxwings at Mountain Lake, Vir-
ginia, 53
Woodcock, 4
Woodpecker, Red-headed, 8 (Christmas Counts)
Wren, Winter, 5 (Highland County)