

SCHENECTADY ADDS BOHEMIAN WAXWING AND FIELD SPARROW

Guy Bartlett
Compiler

The Bohemian waxwing and field sparrow were new birds on Schenectady's 40th annual Christmas Count, bringing the composite list to 103 species, plus one hybrid (flicker). There are also five species on near dates only, including this count's house finch. The December 21 lists included 49 species and about 5560 individuals.

The goshawk was the first on the count date since 1958. Six species showed new maxima: red-tailed hawk, 19 (was 12); horned lark, 258 (165); mockingbird, 5 (2); cardinal, 76 (36); pine grosbeak, 132 (71); and tree sparrow, 886 (880).

Libby Brown and Walt Sabin discovered the Bohemian waxwings on Ames Road, Altamont, and observed them from the car at 40 feet with 7X binoculars and 30X Balscope. "The birds were perched near the top of a poplar tree above multiflora rose hedge into which they dropped from time to time to feed on rose hips. Birds had bright wing bars, soft grayish underparts and reddish-orange undertail coverts. The black area around the face etc. also included a small black area just over the bill. Birds observed at least ten minutes. Still there 30 minutes later when we drove by again."

The field sparrow was an easy addition to the list. Peggy McGuirk had it regularly at her feeder for weeks in advance, and it was still there into 1969.

Of course, as "normal", the Rosendale Road-Niskayuna area, with 31 species, was heaviest contributor, and included a half dozen species on no other list. It could be that the group's nine hours and 14 miles afoot had something to do with it.

The record, in National Audubon Society form:
SCHENECTADY, N.Y. (42°45'N, 73°55'W) (15-mile circle centered at Lydius Street and Lone Pine Road, Town of Guilderland, to include all of Schenectady and Scotia, part of Albany, Mohawk River from Lock 8 to Mohawk View, tip of Indian Ladder, Watervliet Reservoir). December 21, 6:40 am. to 4:30 pm. Heavy overcast; temperature 25 to 35 degrees; wind west, 0-10 mph. Six-inch snow cover on ground, ponds frozen, streams partly open. Twenty-one observers in seven groups, plus feeding-station and home-area observers. 47 hours afield (22 afoot, 25 by car); 235 miles afield (31 afoot, 204 by car). Total, 49 species, about 5560 individuals. Seen in area during count period, but not on count day: yellow-bellied sapsucker, house finch.

SCHENECTADY CHRISTMAS COUNT - December 21, 1968

	T	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	X
Black Duck	30					30				
Goshawk	1		1							
Red-tailed Hawk	19	4	2	5	1	2	3	2		
Rough-legged Hawk	1				1					
Marsh Hawk	3							3		
Sparrow Hawk	8	3		2		2	1			
Ruffed Grouse	2		2							
Ring-necked Pheasant	7	1	2	3			1			
Herring Gull	6		1	5						
Mourning Dove	123	3	60	24		8	8	1	2	17
Barred Owl	1					1				
Belted Kingfisher	1	1								
Pileated Woodpecker	2		2							
Hairy Woodpecker	24	1	8		2	1		4	2	6
Downy Woodpecker	52	14	10	9	2	3	6	2	1	5
Horned Lark	258	8		150			100			
Blue Jay	142	50	16	5	2	22	25	6	8	8
Common Crow	534	50	36	327	3	45	48	20	5	
Black-cap Chickadee	190	10	63	23	6	10	22	15	8	33
Tufted Titmouse	12	2	3	1						6
White-breasted Nuthatch	44	6	7	4	2	7	3	1	6	8
Red-breasted Nuthatch	3	1							2	
Brown Creeper	6		4		1					1
Winter Wren	1		1							
Mockingbird	5					1	4			
Robin	4	2	1		1					
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1			1						
Bohemian Waxwing	6			6						
Cedar Waxwing	8	8								
Starling	1813	300	405	572	163	169	49	40	35	80
House Sparrow	625	200	65	58	6	41	50	40	65	100
Eastern Meadowlark	20			8			12			
Red-winged Blackbird	14		10	4						
Rusty Blackbird	2		2							
Common Grackle	2		1							1
Brown-headed Cowbird	6		3			1		1	1	
Cardinal	76	10	20	17	2	3	8		3	13
Evening Grosbeak	22	4		15						3
Purple Finch	7						4			3
Pine Grosbeak	132	60		20	6		4	42		
Common Redpoll	53	25	20	8						
Pine Siskin	10		10							
American Goldfinch	98	4	22	7	3	17	2	2	18	23
Slate-colored Junco	81	10	12	8		6	5		8	32
Tree Sparrow	886	150	188	258	40	118	120	6	3	3
Field Sparrow	1									1
White-throated Sparrow	11	1	6						3	1
Song Sparrow	54	2	20	2	1	16		8	3	2
Snow Bunting	153			128			25			
Total Species	49	27	31	27	17	20	21	16	17	20
Total Count	5560	930	1003	1670	242	503	500	193	173	346

SCHENECTADY HIGHLIGHTS

Group A - Guy Bartlett, Barry Havens. Watervliet Reservoir, Schenectady suburban. 7:30 am. to 3 pm. 2 hours afoot, 5 by car; 4

miles afoot, 20 by car. 27 species, 930 count; kingfisher, cedar waxwing.

Group B - Joe Hart, Harvey Spivak, Robert Yunick. Rosendale and River Roads from Niskayuna Landfill to Mohawk View, including Polak's feeder. 6:40 am. to 4:30 pm. 9 hours afoot, 1 by car; 14 miles afoot, 20 by car. 31 species, 1003 count; goshawk, grouse, pileated woodpecker, winter wren, rusty blackbird, pine siskin.

Group C - Libby Brown and Walt Sabin. Voorheesville, Guilderland Center, Altamont and Meadowdale. 7:45 am. to 4:15 pm. 1½ hours afoot, 7 by car; 2 miles afoot, 78 by car. 27 species, 1670 count; ruby-crowned kinglet, Bohemian waxwing.

Group D - Alice Holmes, Ethel Young. Scotia, and Campbell, Schermerhorn, Gordon and River Roads. 9am. to 1 pm. 2 hours afoot, 2 by car; 1½ miles afoot, 22 by car. 17 species, 242 count; rough-legged hawk.

Group E - Betty Hicks, Margaret and Byron Hipple, Mary Johnston, Mary Linch. Wade Road, Albany Airport, Karner, Fuller (Six-mile Waterworks), Wolf Road. 9 am. to 2:15 pm. 2 hours afoot; 3½ miles by car; 3½ miles afoot, 28 by car. 20 species, 503 count; black duck, barred owl.

Group F - Dr. and Mrs. F.P. Bundy. Saratoga County, Riverview Road through Vischer Ferry. 8 am. to 1 pm. 2 hours afoot; 3 by car; 2 miles afoot, 20 by car. 21 species, 500 count.

Group G - Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wernick. South Schenectady and Rotterdam to Lock 8. 8:30 am. to 1 pm. 2½ hours afoot, 2 by car; 2½ miles afoot, 16½ by car. 16 species, 193 count; marsh hawk.

Group H - Irene and Stephanie Podrazik. Central Park, Parkview Cemetery and environs. 10 am. to 12:30 pm. 1 hour afoot, 1½ by car; 1½ miles afoot, 6 by car. 17 species, 173 count.

Group X - Mr. and Mrs. B.D. Bedford, W.T. Cook, Roy O. Dunham, Esly Hallenbeck, E.F. and Mark Koch, J.M. Lang, Robert McCullough, Peggy McGuirk, Mrs. V.J. Schaeffer, Anne Yunick. Feeders; urban and suburban. 20 species, 346 count; field sparrow; and, during period, sapsucker and house finch.

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SOUTHERN RENSSELAER HAS RECORD COUNT

Monte Gruett
Compiler

Because of the enthusiastic participation of so many people in the field groups and at feeding stations plus a lot of cooperation from the weather department, and from the birds, our 1968 Southern Rensselaer County Christmas Count was nothing short or tremendous. The magnitude of this year's success can readily be seen by a few statistics. A total of 8939 birds of 57 different species was reported. Our two previous counts netted 44 species in 1966 and 47 in 1967. Because the Albany starling roost was included in the 1967 census, individual birds numbered 20,451 for that year. However, only 4701 "non-starlings" were counted compared with

5254 for this year. Our total of 57 species ties both the 40-year record of the Schenectady count and the 20-year record of the Troy count, both set several years ago.

Some interesting observations can be made when the figures of this year are compared with 1967. In many instances, birds observed this year but not last year, or birds seen in larger numbers this year are northern species which reach their southern winter limit near our area. Examples are the northern shrike, boreal chickadee, evening grosbeak, pine grosbeak, redpoll and pine siskin. There appear to be fewer winter lingerers this year such as flicker, robin and white-throated sparrow. Could it be that the birds know something about our coming winter weather which we don't?

Field birds such as pheasants, mourning doves and meadowlarks are definitely more numerous this year. On the other hand, blue jays, juncos and tree sparrows appear to be significantly fewer in number. Some unusual birds seen this year were the peregrine falcon, Bobwhite, boreal chickadee, northern shrike, savannah sparrow and Lapland longspur.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank all of you who participated for a very fine job and a record count.

KEY TO GROUPS

Group A - North Greenbush. Guy Bartlett and Harry Guyon.

Group B - Poestenkill. Bob and Nancy Brown.

Group C - Northwestern East Greenbush, Rensselaer. Bill and David Gorman.

Group D - Eastern East Greenbush, parts of Schodack and Sand Lake. Monte Gruett, Harvey Spivak and Peter Wickham.

Group E - Town of Sand Lake. Mrs. Fred Bordt and Walt Sabin.

Group F - Glenmont. Bob Kornis.

Group G - Western East Greenbush and western Schodack. Paul Connor.

Group H - Eastern Schodack and Nassau. Ed Reilly.

Group I - Feeder Reports. Total of 35 feeders.

The temperature on count day, December 22, was 26 to 36°; wind 0-5 mph., direction variable. Amount of snow on the ground was 6-10 inches of old stuff with some deeper drifts. Ponds and lakes were mostly frozen, but streams were largely open. The Hudson was open, but had some floating and drifting ice. The sky was overcast.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Miles Afoot</u>	<u>Miles By Car</u>	<u>Hours Afoot</u>	<u>Hours By Car</u>
A	-	43	-	5
B	-	43 (est.)	-	5 (est.)
C	7	50	4	6
D	6½	53	5	5
E	2	54	1	7½
F	4	20	3	1½
G	3½	45	5	5
H	3	47	1	6
Total	26	355	19	41

FEATHERS

JANUARY - FEBRUARY, 1969

SOUTHERN RENSSELAER COUNTY CHRISTMAS COUNT - December 22, 1968

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	Total
Mallard			4							4
Black Duck	2		30							32
Red-tailed Hawk	3	1	2	1	1		3	3		14
Rough-legged Hawk		1	1					1		3
Marsh Hawk								1		1
Peregrine Falcon				1						1
Sparrow Hawk	3		2	3		1	3	2		14
Ruffed Grouse			1	2		1		2		7
Bobwhite									1	1
Ring-necked Pheasant	30	3	2	13	2		13		13	76
Herring Gull			6			11	6			23
Ring-billed Gull			6			2				8
Mourning Dove	6	25	4	7	43	2	64	20	68	239
Screech Owl			1	1			1			3
Great Horned Owl				2		1		1		4
Belted Kingfisher	1					1				2
Yellow-sh Flicker								1		1
Pileated Woodpecker				1				2		3
Hairy Woodpecker		4	10	5	4	4	3	3	17	50
Downy Woodpecker	8	4	17	18	5	3	9	6	37	107
Horned Lark	42	25		101		15	104	150		437
Blue Jay	25	3	14	19	27	5	9	7	99	208
Common Crow	12	1	7	26	8	14	70	50	12	200
Black-c Chickadee	20	10	35	41	83	25	35	50	186	485
Boreal Chickadee									1	1
Tufted Titmouse			6			1	1		7	15
White-br Nuthatch	8	4	15	8	9	5	5	3	42	99
Red-br Nuthatch									3	3
Brown Creeper			2	1			1			4
Mockingbird									1	1
Robin		1							1	2
Golden-cr Kinglet			2	2	1					5
Cedar Waxwing			1	4		10				15
Northern Shrike								1		1
Starling	200	170	200	200	49	1500	1157	100	109	3685
House Sparrow	50	10	120	279	176	30	46	50	284	1045
Eastern Meadowlark		30			1		5	23		59
Red-winged Blackbird			2				16	1		19
Rusty Blackbird									2	2
Common Grackle						1	1			2
Brown-headed Cowbird		50	3	1		6	1	26	28	115
Cardinal	3		10	7		4	17	4	58	103
Evening Grosbeak		100	45	6	26	2	1	31	175	386
Purple Finch						1				1
Pine Grosbeak	4	15	3	6	15		2	17		62
Common Redpoll	5		5	75			17		18	120
Pine Siskin			1					20		21
American Goldfinch		2	22	9			14	14	84	145
Savannah Sparrow									1	1
Slate-colored Junco	10	1	10	20	4	8	11		76	140
Tree Sparrow	60	10	120	166	94	12	130	50	268	910
White-throated Sparrow							3		4	7
Fox Sparrow						1			1	2
Swamp Sparrow							1			1
Song Sparrow		1	9	6	2	1	8		6	33
Lapland Longspur								3		3
Snow Bunting				2				6		8
Total Species	19	22	34	31	18	27	31	30	29	57
Total Individuals	492	471	718	1033	550	1667	1757	648	1603	8939

TROY FEATURES WEATHER

Peter Wickham and Harvey Spivak

Co-compilers

The 1968 Troy Christmas Count, with 45 species recorded, was our lowest count since 1960. This deplorable result can be traced to a combination of cold, very windy weather and a shortage of field observers. The wind, for example, made it impossible to find owls before dawn. The afternoon, with wind gusts up to 30 mph., was an especially difficult time to find birds at feeders or in the field. Many observers noted that birds were much less in evidence around their feeders than they had been during the sleet and freezing rain of the previous day.

In spite of the difficult conditions of December 29, we still enjoyed the count, and feel able to make several interesting observations. Robins, waxwings, flickers and other migratory species for which the area is near the northern limit of their normal wintering range seemed absent, while northern finches, such as redpolls, pine siskins and especially pine and evening grosbeaks, were widespread. Starlings, which numbered over 4000 last year, totaled only 623 on this count. These fluctuations seem likely due to a scarcity of available natural food. Another change of interest is in the number of pheasants, which was extremely low last winter and which has returned to normal this year. Unusual species recorded included vesper sparrow and chipping sparrow, both at feeders.

We wish to thank each one of you for your participation and help in the Troy count this year, and look forward to a better count (with better weather!) next year.

TROY, N.Y. 42°50'N, 73°40'W (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, centered at River and Turner Roads in Schaghticoke). December 29; 6 am. to 4:30 pm. Overcast in am., clearing in late pm.; snow flurries in am.; temperature 34 to 20°; wind SW in am., 5-10 mph, changing to W in pm., 15-30 mph.; 6-8 inches of old snow with thick crust, only fast waters open. Seven observers in three parties plus 39 feeder reports. Total party-hours, 24½ (6 on foot, 18½ by car); total party-miles, 232½ (6½ on foot, 226 by car).

GROUP A - Tomhannock Reservoir, Tamarac Road and upland territory south of the Hoosic River and east of the Hudson. Pete Wickham, Harvey Spivak, Bill Gorman. 6am. to 4:30 pm., 5 miles afoot, 102 by car; 5 hours afoot, 5½ by car.

GROUP B - Hudson and Hoosic River valleys, Troy to Stillwater. Guy Bartlett and Benton Seguin. 7:45 am. to 2:15 pm.; 1 mile afoot, 64 by car; ½ hour afoot, 6 by car.

GROUP C - Northwest Quadrant (Saratoga County). Hazel and Francis Bundy, David Gurling. 8:30 am. to 3:45 pm.; ½ mile afoot, 60 by car; ½ hour afoot, 6 3/4 by car.

GROUP D - Feeder Reports. Total of 39 feeders.

Seen in area during count period, but not on count day: barred owl, white-throated sparrow.

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TROY CHRISTMAS COUNT - December 29, 1968

	A	B	C	D	TOTAL
Mallard	2	150			152
Black Duck	20	352			372
Scaup Sp.		1			1
Common Goldeneye		6			6
Red-tailed Hawk	3	3	2		8
Rough-legged Hawk	1	1			2
Sparrow Hawk	2	5	1		8
Ruffed Grouse	1				1
Ring-necked Pheasant	12	2		40	54
Herring Gull	3	4			7
Ring-billed Gull		4			4
Mourning Dove	27	16	20	77	140
Pileated Woodpecker		1		1	2
Hairy Woodpecker	8	2	1	30	41
Downy Woodpecker	12	2	5	49	68
Horned Lark	17	15	29		61
Blue Jay	11	8	19	136	174
Common Crow	161	20	14	2	197
Black-capped Chickadee	80	34	15	222	351
Tufted Titmouse				9	9
White-breasted Nuthatch	5	2	3	38	48
Red-breasted Nuthatch	3			4	7
Brown Creeper	2				2
Golden-crowned Kinglet	5				5
Northern Shrike		1			1
Starling	22	300	75	226	623
House Sparrow	110	200	268	798	1376
Red-winged Blackbird	3		1	2	6
Common Grackle			1	6	7
Brown-headed Cowbird	1	(4)		34	35
Cardinal	10	8	7	97	122
Evening Grosbeak	45	(58)		407	452
Purple Finch		(1)		5	5
Pine Grosbeak	22	69			91
Common Redpoll	9	3	46		58
Pine Siskin				4	4
American Goldfinch	22	76		17	115
Savannah Sparrow			1		1
Vesper Sparrow				1	1
Slate-colored Junco	1	(2)	3	132	136
Tree Sparrow	155	67	98	222	542
Chipping Sparrow				1	1
Fox Sparrow				2	2
Song Sparrow	7	1	1	17	26
Snow Bunting	41		40		81
Total Species	32	32	21	27	45
Total Individuals	823	1418	650	2579	5405

THE SWALLOW THAT NEVER WAS

Robert P. Yunick

Last July I received an interesting recovery report on a bird I had banded. According to the information on the recovery card from the Fish and Wildlife Service, a bank swallow (108-28170) I had banded at the glenville Landfill on Sunnyside Road on May 15, 1964 had been caught in a trap by a non-bander in Macon, Georgia on December 20, 1967. The bird was reported as dead. The card named the recoverer as B. Lundy.

This recovery interested me from several standpoints. First, it was only my second recovery of a bank swallow in over 4000 bandings. I had, however, recovered three bank swallows which other banders had banded, and all were New York derived. Secondly, the fact that this recovery was out of state was also of interest. Also, the AOU CHECK-LIST indicated that bank swallows should be long-departed from North America by December 20, so I was intrigued by this. Lastly, I wondered what kind of trap a bank swallow could be caught in.

I wrote to B. Lundy using the title "Mr." and explained that if he were she, I was very sorry, because the computer that fetched the information from the files gave me no clue as to B. Lundy's sex. I inquired about how long dead the bird was when found and how it was caught. This, I figured, would explain the late date. I also asked a number of questions including when bank swallows appeared and left Macon.

You can imagine B. Lundy's surprise at these questions when you read the following reply.

Dear Mr. Yunick,

I think I should tell you about myself first. I am twelve years old and live with woods in front of me and woods in back of me. I am usually surrounded with different kinds of animals all around the house. From sparrow to pileated woodpecker they're all around especially during winter.

Now about the bird. You call this bird a bank swallow but I call it a slate-colored junco at least that's what the book calls it.

I think you have the wrong idea about this bird's history. I will try to explain more clearly than before. I caught it in a trap which my father made for me. If you would like I will send you a picture of the trap and trigger.

The bird was not dead in the trap. I caught him in the trap and put him in a cage 2x2x4 feet. This being the first bird we caught. (I say we because my friend Al Fortney and I were partners in business) We kept him two weeks which was too long. The maid threw him out and the cat got him. We had already noticed the band on his leg and memorized it from bragging about it to our friends.

You said you were curious about how it got in Georgia. Actually there are hundreds of them every winter. We have two bird feeders in the backyard and the blue jays and larger birds scratch most of it on the ground. The juncos are always on the ground or on low limbs. I have never seen one over fifteen feet high off the ground.

The bait was ordinary bird seed I bought from the grocery store to put in the feeders.

I don't really know about you calling it a bank swallow and me calling it a slate-colored junco.

Thank you,

Bill Lundy (signed)

P.S. I read over the letter again to make sure I didn't miss anything and I found that I didn't tell you when it arrives in Macon. It usually arrives in the middle of November and leaves during February. I am male.

From his reply, I was convinced that Bill had a junco, but somewhere there was a mistake, because my records definitely indicated that 108-28170 was placed on a bank swallow. Suspecting a misread band, I checked and found that I had placed 108-28070 on a junco. Thus, I wrote Bill telling him that he must be correct about the identity of the bird, but to please check his record of the band number. I also cautioned him that these birds were protected by law and should not be trapped; and since he appeared to already have a keen interest in birds, he should contact some Macon birders to further his interest in birds.

Next came this reply.

Dear Mr. Yunick,

I have made the mistake about the bird. I asked Al about it and he had it written down and put it in his safe. The band number is 108-28070. Would you please send me some history from 108-28070? I would appreciate it very much.

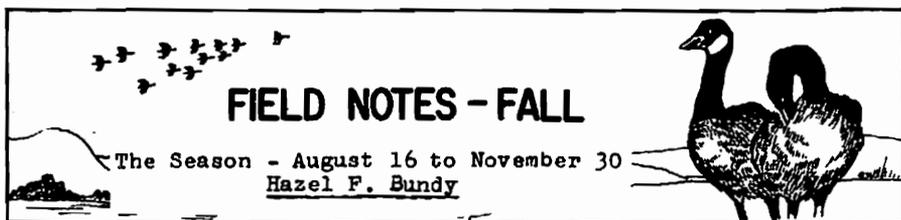
Yours truly,

Bill Lundy (signed)

With this, I wrote to Bill to tell him that I banded 108-28070 as an adult female slate-colored junco in my yard on May 4, 1964. As such, it was one of the last of the migrants passing through the area to its northern nesting grounds. His recovery of the bird indicated that Macon was the bird's wintering area.

I don't mind having the junco recovery, But I hate to scratch the bank swallow recovery. I may have to wait another 4000 bank swallows to get another!

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The last half of August was on the cool side, with rainfall for the entire month measuring 1.77 inches, 1.3 inches below the average. Daytime temperatures in September soared into the 70's and 80's, with the exception of three days. Rainfall was only 1.49 inches, 2.09 inches less than the average. A veritable summer still prevailed during most of October, with average temperatures above normal, and with its 2.18 inches of rainfall 0.59 inches less than the average. The first week of November was mild and pleasant, then much snow and rain arrived and continued for the remainder of the month. All data were taken at the Albany Airport.

In spite of the warmth of September and October, migration did not appear to be retarded. In fact, some species, such as the slate-colored junco and white-throated sparrow, arrived earlier than usual and in larger numbers than are expected on the early dates.

The waterfowl count appeared to be down, and some species were missing entirely, others represented by only one or two individuals. For examples, this was the third consecutive year in which no brant have been reported; the redhead was missed entirely; there were only two reports of canvasback; and only one ruddy duck was observed. Shore birds were rather well represented as to species, but in very small numbers.

As to land birds, some observers remarked on a decrease in the size of flocks of some species, such as tree sparrows. One observer stated that in general birds were far more abundant this fall than last, and supported his statement with the following: "Last year the bird yield at Vischer Ferry Operation Recovery (a banding station) was 45 birds per 100 net-hours. This year it was 60. Also, birds were noticeably more abundant in the yard at feeders in November this year versus last year." (RPY) The invasion by a large number of finches added much interest to the scene.

Of unusual note were reports on the following: common egret, common scoter, yellow-bellied flycatcher, Carolina wren, solitary vireo, orange-crowned warbler, dickcissel and house finch.

Observers cited more than once: (HFB)- Hazel Bundy; (L&VB)- Lee and Virginia Burland; (JB)- James Bush; (JC)- Juanita Cook; (RD)- Roland Drowne; (P&GE)- Paul and Georgia Erlenbach; (MWF)- Mabel French; (M&AG)- Murray and Alice Giddings; (EH)- Esly Hallenbeck; (BH)- Barrington Havens; (MK)- Marcia Kent; (CK)- Clarissa Ketcham; (RMcC)- Robert McCullough; (PMcG)- Peggy McGuirk; (MM)- Mary Mickle; (ER)- Edgar Reilly; (WBS)- Walton Sabin; (BRS)- Benton Seguin; (NS)- Natalie Snare; (HHS)- Harvey Spivak; (BW)- Beverly Waite; (PPW)- Peter Wlokham; (RPY)- Robert Yunick; (bsh)- Guy Bartlett, Benton Seguin and Barrington Havens.

Area compilers: Rena Dodd, Betty Laros and Clarissa Ketcham.

Abbreviations: (ad)- Alan Devoe Bird Club; AR Aloove Reservoir; BCM- Black Creek Marsh; CL- Collins Lake; EG- East Greenbush; (go)- Greene County Bird Club; Gr- Greenville; JL- Jenny Lake; Nisk- Niskayuna; NWW- Niskayuna Widewaters; RL- Round Lake; (sbc)- Schenectady Bird Club; SL- Saratoga Lake; SCR- Stony Creek Reservoir; TR- Tomhannock Reservoir; VFG- Vischer Ferry Game Management Area; WR- Watervliet Reservoir.

LOONS - DUCKS

Common Loon: Oct 14 SL (bsh) to Nov 24 SL (EH,RMcC).
 Red-thr Loon: four reports of singles - Nov 3-24, two SL and TR.
 Horned Grebe: Oct 14 SL (bsh) to two Nov 30 NWW (HHS); max 25 Nov 23 SL (bsh).
 Pied-billed Grebe: only six reports - Aug 18 ten Old Pond, Chatham (JC) to Nov 3 CL (EH).
 Great Blue Heron: frequent reports - max seven Aug 18 and Oct 6 VFG (RPY); last Nov 9 SCR (HFB,PMcG).
 COMMON EGRET: reports from two locations - one Aug 18 and Sept 25 Old Pond (JC); two Sep 1, 2 and 8 NWW (HHS); one Sep 4 VFG (very near NWW) (RPY).
 Green Heron: few reports; max six Sep 15 WR (sbc); last Oct 12 Castleton (JC).
 Black-cr Night Heron: again only one report - Sep 13-17 Chatham (M&AG).
 American Bittern: reports from only two localities - one Aug 9 Castleton (JC); one Aug 17 and 30, and three Sep 4 VFG (RPY).
 Whistling Swan: one flock of 16 flying southeast over NWW Nov 30 (HHS).
 Canada Goose: from two Sep 14 NWW (HHS) throughout period; largest flocks - many hundreds Nov 17 Ghent (P&GE) and 500 Nov 19 Hillsdale (NS).
 Snow Goose: 30 Nov 17 Gr (go); 400 Nov 19 near West Lebanon (Don Foley); flock of 100+ feeding in a grain field near Kinderhook (Ken Fleischer).
 Gadwall: one report - Oct 20 SCR (EH).
 American Widgeon: in small numbers - 20 Oct 5 VFG (EH,RMcC,PPW) to one Nov 23 AR (sbc).
 Pintail: in small numbers from Aug 21 Old Chatham (L&VB) to Nov 10 TR (sbc); max 20 on Oct 13 SL (sbc).
 Green-w Teal: arr Sep 8 SCR (EH): last Nov 24 (mob); max 40 Nov 2 SCR (bsh).
 Blue-w Teal: last report Oct 27 SCR (EH,RMcC).
 Wood Duck: last Oct 24 CL, max 50 Oct 5 and 6 CL (EH,RMcC).
 Redhead: no report!
 Ring-n Duck: more than usual- from five Oct 27 Gr (CK) to two Nov 24 SL (bsh); max 35 Nov 10 TR (sbc).
 Canvasback: only two reports - one Nov 23 AR (sbc), and five Nov 24 SL (bsh).
 Scaup: Oct 14 SL (bsh) to end of period, both species identified during period.
 Common Goldeneye: arr Oct 14 SL (bsh); max 140 Nov 29 TR (HHS).
 Bufflehead: arr Oct 14 SL (bsh); max 40 Nov 16 SL (bsh).
 Oldsquaw: reports from three locations - SL Oct 14-Nov 24 (bsh, et al.); Queechy L Oct 28 (Ed. and Helen Long); and TR Nov 3 (PPW) and Nov 10 (sbc), max 11 Nov 10 TR.
 White-w Scoter: small numbers on four dates - from six Oct 14 SL (bsh) to two Nov 16 SL (PPW).
 Surf Scoter: 14 on Oct 29 Queechy L (MM,RD); one Nov 2 and Nov 16

SL (bsh).

COMMON SCOTER: an unusually large flock of 2000 Oct 22 Warner's L (fide WBS); a flock of 65 Oct 27 AR (PPW) and 16 Oct 29 and 30 Queechy L (MM, RD).

Ruddy Duck: only one - Nov 24 SL (bsh, EH, RMcC).

Hooded Merganser: arr late, Nov 3 SCR (EH) and Nov 3 TR (PPW); max 20 Nov 23 AR (sbc).

Common Merganser: arr Nov 2 (bsh); max 50 Nov 10 TR (sbc) and 50 Nov 16 RL (bsh).

Red-br Merganser: only two reports - one Nov 9 SL (HFB, PMcG); six Nov 10 TR (sbc).

HAWKS - OWLS

Turkey Vulture: reported into Oct (ad).

Sharp-sh Hawk: one only - Oct 24 Selkirk (Helen Budlong).

Cooper's Hawk: one Oct 7 and Oct 12 Castleton (JC) and one Nov 3 (EH).

Red-t Hawk: max seven Nov 23 (bsh).

Red-sh Hawk: one Aug 22 Chatham (M&G); six scattered reports in Oct and Nov.

Broad-w Hawk: only one report - Oct 10 Castleton (JC).

Rough-l Hawk: six reports; two very early - Sept 19 Chatham (M&G) and Sept 29 Ghent (P&E); max three Nov 29 Cocksackie (CK).

Marsh Hawk: four Aug 19 Berne (MK); many Sep and Oct reports, mostly from the southern areas.

Osprey: last Oct 13 SCR (EH, RMcC).

Pigeon Hawk: one Oct 6 VFG (RPY).

Sparrow Hawk: max ten, on a two-mile stretch of telephone wires, Aug 27 Berne (MK).

Bobwhite: throughout Aug at Castleton (JC); six Oct 19 near Cat-skill (JB).

Virginia Rail: only one locality - one hen and two young Aug 18 VFG, one or two seen occasionally thereafter until Sep 27 (RPY).

Common Gallinule: only four reports; max 11 on Oct 10, which was also the last date, Onderdonk L (Dr. Anna Perkins).

American Coot: reported by only one party - Oct 14-Nov 16, max 75 Nov 16, SL (bsh).

Semipalmated Plover: four reports from Aug 29 Gr (CK) to Sep 22 WR (EH, RMcC).

Killdeer: last Nov 16, max 40 Nov 3 WR (bsh).

Golden Plover: one Sep 29 WR (PPW); one Oct 9 WR (BW).

Black-b Plover: two Oct 9 WR (BW).

American Woodcock: to Oct 27 VFG (RPY).

Common Snipe: six reports; last - two Nov 5 (bsh).

Upland Plover: reported from only one location - generally three present to Sep 4 Nisk (RPY).

Spotted Sandpiper: last Sep 19 Gr (CK).

Solitary Sandpiper: seven reports - the last Sep 22 WR (EH, RMcC).

Greater Yellowlegs: to Nov 5 SCR and WR (bsh); max 16 Sep 15 WR.

Lesser Yellowlegs: reported in small numbers (max five), from Sep 2 Medusa Swamp (CK) to Oct 20 SCR (EH).

Pectoral Sandpiper: seven reports, all single individuals except for one report of five - Sep 7 WR (PPW) to Oct 20 SCR (EH, RMcC).

White-r Sandpiper: one Oct 20 SCR (EH, RMcC).

Least Sandpiper: seven reports; last Oct 6 WR (EH, RMcC).

Dunlin: one Sep 29 WR (PPW); and one Oct 9 WR (BW).

Dowitcher: one Sep 22 WR (EH, RMcC).

Semipalmated Sandpiper: found in four loctions; last Oct 20 SCR (EH, RMcC).

Western Sandpiper: one Sep 15 WR (WBS).

Sanderling: no report.

Glaucous Gull: one at north end of SL Nov 16 (BRS).

Bonaparte's Gull: only one - Nov 10 TE (sbc).

Yellow-b Cuckoo: only one report - Sep 12-23 Ghent (P&GE).

Black-b Cuckoo: one Aug 18 Castleton (JC); one Sep 15 (EH, RMcC).

Screech Owl: seemed more common than usual - reported from seven areas.

Great Horned Owl: reported from five areas.

Saw-whet Owl: good flight, with a total of five at VFG (four banded) - one Sep 14, two Oct 19, two Oct 27 (only one captured during previous years) (RPY).

GOATSUCKERS - STARLING

Whip-poor-will: one heard Aug 19, and one seen Aug 31 Berne (MK).

Common Nighthawk: last - four Oct 4 Castleton (JC).

Chimney Swift: last Sep 7 Karner (sbc).

Ruby-thr Hummingbird: seemed rather scarce, with a max of six on each of two dates - Sep 14 NWW (HHS), and Aug 31 VFG (RPY); last report somewhat early - Sept 24 Scotia (EH).

Belted Kingfisher: few reports.

Yellow-sh Flicker: last date Oct 17 Gr (CK).

Pileated Woodpecker: an average of two reports per month, several areas represented.

Yellow-b Sapsucker: only three dates; last, one imm Oct 15 Gr(CK).

Eastern Kingbird: last, rather late, Oct 12 Hillsdale (NS).

Great Crested Flycatcher: last, rather late, Sep 30 Nisk (RPY).

Eastern Phoebe: to Oct 26 (ad).

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER: a very unusual migration report of 11 (four adult, seven imm) banded in one morning Aug 24 (RPY), all birds identified and all measurements taken in accordance with paper by Phillips, Howe and Lanyon from BIRD-BANDING, 37, 153-171 (July 1966); only one banded during several previous years of banding; also, one Aug 31 VFG (RPY).

Traill's Flycatcher: last date - one banded Sep 21, and recaptured Sep 28 VFG (RPY).

Least Flycatcher: to Sep 7 VFG (RPY).

Eastern Wood Pewee: most disappeared by Sep 13; one late report of Oct 1-3 Castleton (JC).

Tree Swallow: last Sep 15 VFG (EH, RMcC).

Bank Swallow: last Sep 10 Chatham (M&AG).

Rough-w Swallow: to Aug 9 Ghent (P&GE).

Barn Swallow: to Sep 15 (EH, RMcC).

Cliff Swallow: Aug 23, adults feeding young which were fairly well grown Gr (CK); last Sep 8 NWW (HHS) and VFG (PPW).

Black-c Chickadee: unusually numerous and migration heavy; max 105 reported by one observer only, mid-Oct (PPW).

Red-br Nuthatch: migrants widely reported, with many feeder reports first Aug 23 Nisk (RPY).

House Wren: last, two Oct 4 Loudonville (MWF).

Winter Wren: six reports - from two Sep 15 Nisk (Monte Gruett, WBS, PPW), to Oct 14 S. Schodack (JC) and Queechy L (Ed. and Helen Long).

CAROLINA WREN: one, identified by song and sight, Sep 8, in a new area, Galway L (Mildred Crary, Marie Bedford, John Harrison).

Long-b Marsh Wren: last Sep 22 BCM (EH, RMcC).

Catbird: regularly to Oct 27 (RPY): one in yard in Nov Gr (CK).

Brown Thrasher: last Oct 27 Ghent (P&GE).

Wood Thrush: last Oct 25 Gr (CK).

Hermit Thrush: from Sep 8 NWW (HHS) to Nov 23 AR (sbc).

Swainson's Thrush: scarcer than the past two years, five banded

between Aug 30 and Oct 5 (RPY); other reports - one Sep (PPW); seen to Oct 16 at nesting area JL (BH).
 Gray-ch Thrush: more reports than usual; five scattered areas; from Sep 21 Ghent (P&GE) to Oct 24 Gr (CK).
 Veery: last Oct 9 Ghent (P&GE).
 Eastern Bluebird: reported from southern areas to Oct 29, with seven on that date near Catskill (JB), and a max 17 Oct 12 Gr (CK).
 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: a very late report, two months later than any previous record - two Oct 25 two miles west of East Durham (Vernon Haskins).
 Golden-cr Kinglet: first two Oct 5 Nisk (RPY); throughout period; max 30 Nov 3 (PPW).
 Ruby-cr Kinglet: fewer than usual; Aug 26 Castleton (JC) throughout period.
 Water Pipit: reported widely, from Sep 15 when eight were seen at WR (sbc) to Nov 16 WR (bsh); an impressive flock of 100+ was observed feeding in a rye field Nov 11 near Schodack (JC).
 Cedar Waxwing: no large flocks noted; small flocks (ten or so) reported frequently.

VIREOS - WARBLERS

Vireos: Yellow-thr: only one report - Sep 19, 21 Ghent (P&GE).
 SOLITARY: four reports, after an absence of fall reports for two years - Sep 8 NWW (HHS); Sep 20 JL (BH); Oct 5 VFG (PPW); Oct 7 Loudonville (MWF).
 Red-e: most disappeared by Sep 24; one, unusually late, Oct 9 Loudonville (MWF).
 Philadelphia: one Sep 8 W. Ghent (GE).
 Warbling: to Sep 20 Gr (CK).
 Warblers: reports on 28 species, more than for the past two years.
 Black-and-White: more than usual - Aug 18 Castleton (JC) to Sep 26 Nisk (RPY).
 Golden-w: two reports (no fall ones for several preceding years) - one banded Aug 18 VFG (RPY); one Sep 9 Ghent (P&GE).
 Blue-w: two reports (no fall ones for several years) - one Aug 18, 26 Castleton (JC); one Sep 9 Ghent (P&GE).
 Tennessee: one Sep 7 Karner (sbc); one occasionally visiting a bird bath JL Sep 25-Oct 2 (BH).
 ORANGE-CR: first fall report since 1964 - one banded Oct 13 VFG (RPY).
 Nashville: sparse reports, on two dates close together - one Sep 21 VFG (RPY); one Sep 24 Ghent (P&GE); and one Sep 24 JL (BH).
 Parula: four reports, more than usual - Sep 7 Karner (sbc) to Oct 11 Ghent (P&GE).
 Yellow: to Sep 18 Castleton (JC).
 Magnolia: Aug 31 NWW (HHS) to Oct 6 EG (PPW).
 Cape May: only report - two Sep 7 Karner (sbc).
 Black-thr Blue: Sep 1 NWW (HHS) to Oct 9 Ghent (P&GE).
 Myrtle: decidedly scarce, with the banding total only 13 compared to last year's 70 and 1966's 42 VFG (RPY); Aug 26 Castleton (JC) to Nov 12 Ghent (P&GE).
 Black-thr Green: Sep 7 Karner (sbc) to Oct 25 Loudonville (MWF).
 Blackburnian: two reports - two Sep 7 Karner (sbc); and JL Sep 20, Oct 1 (BH).
 Chestnut-s: two - Sep 7 Karner (sbc), and two Sep 20 JL (BH).
 Bay-br: five reports - from two Sep 7 VFG (RPY) and Karner (sbc) to Oct 1 when one visited a pool JL (BH).
 Blackpoll: Sep 1 VFG (RPY) to three Oct 12 EG (PPW).
 Pine: only fall report since 1966 - an unusual observation of one

occasionally visiting the feeder and bathing in the pool to Oct 4 JL (BH).
 Prairie: a rare fall record - one banded Aug 31 VFG (RPY).
 Palm: one, identified as a yellow palm banded Aug 17, four to six weeks early (RPY): a few others to Nov 10 TR (sbc).
 Ovenbird: to Oct 1 Alplaus (HFB).
 Northern Waterthrush: 12 banded VFG from Aug 17 to Sep 21 (RPY); one Sep 21 Gr (CK).
 Connecticut: more reports than usual; a very early report of one Aug 10 near Nassau (ER); one Ghent Sep 21 (P&GE); one VFG Sep 21 (RPY); and the latest Oct 14 Castleton (JC).
 Mourning: a rare fall report - one banded Aug 31 VFG (RPY).
 Yellowthroat: last Oct 13 near SGR (HFB).
 Wilson's: five reports - from Sep 1 NW (HHS) to Oct 12 VFG (RPY).
 Canada: to Oct 13 RL (sbc); max nine Aug 24 VFG (RPY).
 American Redstart: to Sep 20 VFG (RPY).

BLACKBIRDS - SPARROWS

Bobolink: last Sep 29 Schodack (L&WB).
 Eastern Meadowlark: max 25 Sep 27 Gr (CK).
 Orchard Oriole: an unusual report of one Aug 25 Nisk (HHS); one remained at Castleton to Sep 2 (JC).
 Baltimore Oriole: several reports - last Sep 10 Scotia (EH).
 Rusty Blackbird: Sep 15 VFG (EH, RMcC) to Oct 30 Gr (CK); common to mid-Oct (RPY).
 Scarlet Tanager: last Oct 15 Gr (CK).
 Cardinal: one reported in a new location - Nov 3 L George (fideMK).
 Rose-br Grosbeak: to Sep 28 VFG (RPY).
 Indigo Bunting: last Oct 11 Chatham (M&AG).
 DICKCISSEL: one imm, carefully documented, Gr Oct 9 (CK).
 Evening Grosbeak: many reports all through the region, beginning Oct 8 Scotia (EH).
 Purple Finch: frequent reports.
 HOUSE FINCH: a startling and unprecedented report of 20 (eight imm males, seven imm females, four ad males and one ad female) taken at a feeder in a yard in Nisk and banded in the period from Nov 9 to Nov 30; these birds usually appeared in small numbers; a max of 12 unbanded came to the feeder Nov 29; generally, they seemed to appear in bigger numbers when the weather was unsettled.
 Pine Grosbeak: reports typical of a good finch year - in fair numbers and from many localities; first appearing were two Nov 3 Taberton (PPW) and five Nov 3 Gr (CK); max 20 Nov 24 (bsh).
 Common Redpoll: two reports - Nov 2 and Nov 5 SL (bsh) and two Nov 16 SL (PPW).
 Pine Siskin: frequent reports, after few reports for two years; first Oct 12 Gr (CK); max 20 Nov 3 Taberton (PPW).
 Sparrows: Rufous-s Towhee: last - two Oct 26 Berne (MK).
 Savannah: reported from only two areas; last two - Oct 10 Castleton (JC) and Oct 18 Gr (CK).
 Grasshopper: first fall report since 1962 - to Oct 5 Castleton (JC).
 Vesper: throughout period.
 Slate-c Junco: migrants somewhat early - first Sep 11 EG (PPW).
 Tree Sparrow: arr Oct 20 Scotia (EH).
 Chipping: to Oct 23 JL (BH).
 Field: last Nov 14 (MM).
 White-cr: arr Sep 21 Gr (CK); last Nov 11 Gr (CK); at the VFG banding station this species "continued a four-year decline with a take of five, down from a max of 25 in 1965." (RPY)

White-thr: seemed appreciably more common, the first appearing Sep 5 EG (PPW), with the max numbers the second weekend in Oct.
 Fox: First Aug appearance ever recorded - one Aug 10 near Nassau (MG, ER, W. Blewett); other somewhat early reports - one at a feeder Sep 21 Ghent (P&GE), and seven at a feeder in Castleton Sep 27 and remaining for a few days (JC): many last part of Oct and through Nov, to Nov 28 Gr (Alice Stevens).
 Lincoln's: more abundant than any previous year at banding station with 31 banded Sep 14-Oct 13 VFG (RPY).
 Swamp: more abundant; through Oct VFG (RPY).
 Song: good numbers, with max 75 Oct 13 VFG (RPY).
 Snow Bunting: first, three Oct 27 Basic Reservoir (PPW); reported from eight areas in flocks usually numbering approximately 50; max 75 Nov 10 TR (sbc).

* * * * *



MONTEZUMA'S SANDHILL

SBC had two sandhill cranes to observe in 1967. The first, which attracted many observers, was feeding regularly in a cornfield and roosting in a nearby open field about two miles east of Whitehall, Washington County. The overall gray color, dull red patch on the forehead, large size, long legs, piercing resonating call, and flight pattern were among the field marks noted by the many observers. The bird, present from mid-February to April 16, was the subject of Walt Sabin's article (FEATHERS, Vol. 29, No. 4, p.73).

The second report for the year was of a young bird in a plowed cornfield on Gibson's farm, five miles north of Kinderhook, Columbia County, from November 12 to 19, and seen by many Alan Devoe and SBC members.

In late October, 1968, Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge had its first sandhill crane since 1948. It was observed by many, for rare-bird alerts were sent out by Cornell, Elmira, Rochester, Syracuse and Buffalo, among others. Concerning the fate of that one, we quote from the December issue of THE GOSHAWK, of Genesee Ornithological Society of Rochester:

"The sandhill crane at Montezuma was first seen on Sunday, October 20. It was seen at the refuge every day thereafter through Thursday afternoon, October 24, of the same week, when it took off in a westerly direction and was assumed to have disappeared.

"However, on Saturday, November 9, it returned and was seen by Clayton Hardy, Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge manager. On Thursday morning, November 14, it was found in the middle of East

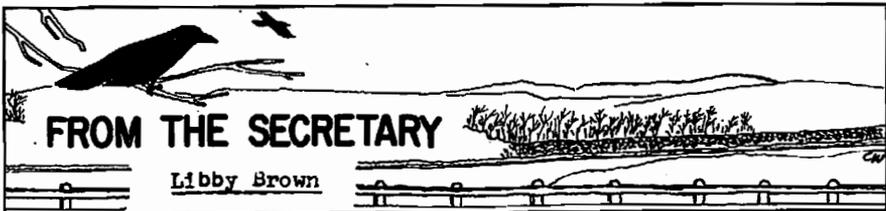
Tyre Road, west of the refuge, by Richard Brand of Tyre. The crane was alive, but one wing had been shattered by shot. It was taken to the refuge and then to Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and to the College of Veterinary Medicine, where it was anesthetized and its wing bone pinned with a stainless-steel pin, and its wound dressed. George Archibald, a graduate student at the Laboratory of Ornithology, who was working on a special research project concerning sandhill cranes, then took over its care. According to Archibald, the bird is an adult male greater sandhill crane, probably from the small breeding population in Michigan and Wisconsin.

"Early in the week, the crane was allowed to go outside and feed with two smaller hand-raised sandhill cranes Archibald had acquired from Alberta, Canada, for use in his research project. However, despite all the good care it was given by Archibald and the concerted efforts of the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine and the Laboratory of Ornithology, the bird became listless on Tuesday, November 19, and died that night. A sad ending for a magnificent bird who happened to make the mistake of wandering a little off course, and in so doing became a target for a thoughtless man with a gun."

WESTERN PROBLEM

There is ample evidence that a large proportion of the reports of western sandpiper in the Niagara Frontier region are in fact misidentifications of other species. Such numbers of erroneous reports misrepresent the true status of this sandpiper here. Differentiations from certain other species are largely differences in degree, however, thus making it almost impossible to write acceptable verifying accounts of sight observations. Considering that the statisticians are charged with the final responsibility for the accuracy of the Buffalo Ornithological Society bird records, therefore, henceforth in most cases records of western sandpiper will be accepted only if: (1) the specimen is collected and presented in good condition to one of the statisticians, or (2) a readily identifiable colored photograph is presented, or (3) the finder can show the living wild bird, which must be a fairly typical - not borderline - example of the species, to one of the statisticians. Observers are, of course, urged to try to obtain valid records of this species for the BOS.

--from THE PROTHONOTARY, Sept. '68



CHRISTMAS MEETING ENJOYED BY ALL

The Christmas meeting of SBC was held on Monday, December 9, 1968 at 8 pm. in the Pine Room of the First Methodist Church.

Pete Wickham announced that if anyone had available black-and-white habitat photographs suitable for John Bull's forth-

coming book on birds of New York State, see him about it.

The Christmas counts for Schenectady, Troy and Southern Rensselaer were discussed and organized.

Ed Koch, a member of the club, who had learned wood carving from his grandfather, gave a program which included both an exhibit of many of the birds and animals he has carved and a demonstration of his tools and some of the techniques of wood carving. Examples of his work ranged from realistic and colorful representations of some of our songbirds such as chickadees, cardinals and evening grosbeaks to imposing carvings of a swan, Canada goose, ruffed grouse and a large decorative gilded eagle.

He also displayed some more abstract carvings, in which the wood had been left unpainted with a lovely wax finish, and a couple of entirely free-form pieces, whose relationship to birds might be left to the imagination of the beholder.

Ed's work impressed us all with his love of his subjects, a feeling for the potentials of various kinds of wood he used and a painstaking attention to accuracy and detail.



SANDGROUSE PHENOMENON CONFIRMED

Cornell University ornithologists have proved that an African bird uses its feathers as a sponge to carry water to its young in one of the world's driest deserts.

Tom J. Cade, research director at Cornell's Laboratory of Ornithology, and Gordon L. Maclean, a graduate student, reported they watched sandgrouse in the Kalahari Desert in South Africa soak themselves at a waterhole, fly to their young and permit them to "strip" the water from their feathers with their beaks.

Until now, scientists had labeled this ingenious method of transporting water a myth. All the recent acknowledged sources on bird habits deny that the sandgrouse uses this method of carrying water.

"This remarkable method of delivering water was reported in captive sandgrouse more than 70 years ago, but scientists doubted its accuracy," Cade said. "Our observations should dispel all doubt as to how the sandgrouse transport water to their young."

The ornithologists made their observations on the Namaqua (Nam-AH-kwa) Sandgrouse, one of 16 species. The sandgrouse is about the size of a pigeon and has short, stubby legs and dense feathering.

"We found," Cade said, "that the male's abdominal feathers have a special capacity to absorb and hold water like a sponge. Probably only those species living in water-scarce regions use this method of carrying water, which is unique among birds."

To soak his feathers, the male wades into the water until it touches his abdomen and then squats down and rocks his body up and down. Meanwhile, the bird shakes out its feathers so that water is soaked into them. The whole soaking process may last more than 15 minutes.

The distance the male can transport water to its brood, which he leaves in charge of his mate, depends on how quickly he can reach them before the water evaporates in the hot, dry desert air. Once he reaches his hiding brood, the male stands upright, fluffs out his feathers and permits the young to take the water from his feathers.

WHOOPIING CRANE POPULATION: 50 WILD, 18 CAPTIVE

With this year's migration to the Texas wintering area apparently complete, the world's population of wild whooping cranes is a record 50, reports the Interior Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife.

The rare birds spend the winter at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge or adjacent Matagorda Island, south of Austwell, Texas. Of the 50 whoopers, six are young-of-the-year - easily distinguished by some buff coloration of head, neck and wings.

Forty-nine whoopers arrived between October 13 and November 25; a lone adult showed up on December 14, just a week before the latest arrivals ever recorded at Aransas.

The count, made by aerial survey, exceeds last year's record of 48 (39 adult and nine young). Wild whoopers numbered just 15 in 1941, exceeded 30 in 1947 and topped 40 in 1964.

There are presently 18 of the birds in captivity, 12 at the bureau's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center near Laurel, Maryland. All but two of the Patuxent birds are from egg pickups in the Canadian wilds the past two years involving United States and Canadian biologists. Of the five cranes hatched successfully from the 1967 expedition, three remain in good health. One died of a dietary problem in 1967. The fifth, which died last month, is being given a pathological examination by specialists at Patuxent and the University of Maryland to determine cause of death.

Of ten chicks resulting from the 1968 expedition, two died from disease and one from injury last summer. The other seven remain in good condition. Other captive whoopers are at zoos in San Antonio and New Orleans.

SCHENECTADIAN WINS NATIONAL CONSERVATION AWARD

David L. Newhouse of Schenectady has been selected as one of the 20 of the 1968 winners of an American Motors Conservation Award. The awards are presented annually to 10 professional and 10 non-professional conservationists for dedicated efforts in the field of renewable resources.

In announcing the 1968 winners, Roy D. Chapin, Jr., chairman of the board of American Motors said:

"A nation's prosperity can only be based on its natural wealth, on its food-producing top soil, on its ample supplies of unpolluted water, and on its soil-building, water-storing forests and rangelands.

"Without these kinds of wealths of abundance, together with our mineral assets, America could not have been brought to her present level of prosperity.

"And since we, like all other business and industrial enterprises are beneficiaries of that prosperity, all of us are indebted to the professional and citizen conservationists who work to see that the foundations of prosperity remain sound."

Dr. Newhouse, president of the Adirondack Mountain Club, Inc., was selected for his work in behalf of continued constitutional protection of the New York State Forest Preserve, and a state policy of conservation and protection of natural resources and scenic beauty. It is expected that provisions of a strong Natural Resources and Conservation Article which he promoted will be adopted by the legislature, despite the fact that the proposed new constitution was defeated.

ENCLOSED MAILING

With the mailing of this issue is included the notice of the annual meeting to be held February 24, 1969 at the First Methodist Church. The evening's program including Dr. Reilly's talk on his Russian tour should be most interesting. Be sure to come and bring a friend.

Also included is the 1968 index prepared by Guy Bartlett, whom I thank for his cooperation in preparing it. RPY
(Issue assembled January 19, 1969)

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CLUB VOTES NAME CHANGE

Libby Brown
Secretary

SBC's annual meeting was held on February 24, 1969 at the First Methodist Church in Schenectady. About 65 people attended. Sixteen new members were accepted into the Club and those new members present were introduced to the meeting.

The treasurer and program committee chairmen presented their financial reports, and Bob Yunick extended his thanks to all who had helped with FEATHERS in the past year.

Lois Norton, chairman of the youth activities committee, reported that the Club was receiving many invitations from schools for speakers to give talks on birds. She appealed for more volunteers to help with this program.

The chairman of the nominating committee, Bob Yunick, presented the slate of officers:

President: Peter P. Wickham
Vice-president: Samuel R. Madison
Secretary: Elizabeth S. Brown
Treasurer: Elizabeth Macauley
New Directors: Walton B. Sabin ('71)
Mary Healy ('71)

As there were no additional nominations, one ballot was cast for the slate.

Pete Wickham then announced that the officers and board of directors had been negotiating for purchase of a property for a sanctuary. The property contains over 100 acres and is located centrally to Albany, Schenectady and Troy. It is largely wooded and seems an ideal site for a sanctuary. He expects that negotiations may be completed before the next annual meeting.

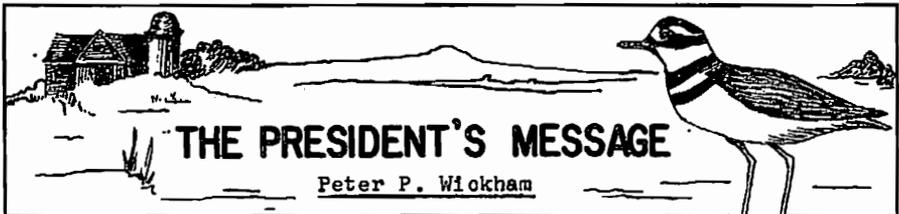
The subject of the proposed name change was introduced. After considerable discussion it was voted that the Club's name be changed; then a motion was made and carried that the first half of the name be "Hudson-Mohawk" and finally that the entire name be Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club. The meeting later empowered the board of directors to change the name to Mohawk-Hudson Naturalists if such action were deemed necessary to our reincorporation as an educational, non-profit organization.

The president read an expression of appreciation of Eleanor Byrne's many years of service on the program committee and presented a gift for her.

After the business meeting was adjourned, Edgar M. Reilly of the New York State Museum in Albany presented a fascinating account with slides of his recent tour of Asia. His itinerary included Lake Baikal in Siberia - the seventh largest lake in the world - which has recently been threatened by pollution from pulp mills; staying in a house boat in Kashmir; and visits to India, Ceylon, Thailand and Japan, which he described as one of the cleanest countries he had ever seen.

Refreshments were served by Mrs. McGuirk and Mrs. Sabin.

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Most of us connected with the Club for any length of time felt a pang of regret at the annual meeting when the Club membership voted to change the name of our organization from Schenectady Bird Club to Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club. For all of us, this was associated with our many warm memories of SBC field trips, meetings and programs, and it seemed an era was at an end.

Upon reflection, however, there seems no reason to grieve. On the sturdy foundation and varied program that devoted members of SBC have built over the past thirty years, we now have a Club composed of many members from Albany, Rensselaer and Saratoga counties as well as from Schenectady County, and serve an even larger area; a Club with a rapidly expanding program for introducing people - young and old - to birds and nature in general through our Audubon film series, the work of our youth activities committee, and our extensive field trip program; a Club with an outstanding bimonthly periodical covering local wildlife in general, and birds in particular, in interesting and authoritative fashion; and a Club which now appears on the verge of obtaining an extensive sanctuary, with the additional new vistas of nature study, education and enjoyment which this would offer to our membership and the general public.

In short, I believe we can and should look forward with enthusiasm to many more pleasant outings and friendships within our newly named organization, and with pride to an increasing relevance to this whole area of upstate New York in the field of education in and enjoyment of our natural world -- a new era with the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club!

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TOWARD A BETTER BLUEBIRD HOUSE

Wayne H. Davis

I have been experimenting with various designs of bird boxes

trying to build one that bluebirds will use but that house sparrows will not. I have been disappointed when I found that even the boxes I had built with a 3" x 3" inside diameter and placed four feet above the ground in a Minnesota pasture were taken over by these pests. This year I have been trying several radical designs, some of which show promise. However, I have also come up with success with a remarkably simple and inexpensive box which I think may be of interest. A painted half-gallon milk carton makes an ideal bluebird house! The birds seem to choose these in preference to my wooden boxes, and the house sparrows do not seem to be interested in them. Apparently they are too open or lighted inside, due to the thin paper wall, to be satisfactory for the house sparrows.

Unpainted cartons are readily used by the bluebirds, but they weather quickly and are displeasing to the eye. However, a coat of barn paint or house paint makes a carton an attractive house which weathers excellently. Cartons which have weathered two Minnesota winters are in as good shape as my wooden boxes. The milk cartons have a hard plastic coat to which paint sticks well; there is no flaking or peeling.

I nail my boxes to a tree or post. If one wants to band the young, the nails should be toed in from the sides instead of through the top flaps. The top can be opened and then re-closed with paper clips.

Last summer I had a dozen boxes on a Minnesota farm and raised more than a brood per box. The only one in bluebird habitat that was not used by this species produced a brood of tree swallows. One box that was in the woods was used by house wrens.

I find that the best site for these boxes is on a tree trunk. I place them about six feet above the ground, as high as I can easily put them and easily check the contents. Of course the tree must be free of lower branches, so that the house is in the open, well away from the foliage. I find fence posts less satisfactory because cattle and horses molest the boxes and predation seems more frequent at lower sites.

Here is an opportunity for people with no carpentry skill to run a productive line of bluebird houses, at a cost of practically nothing.

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Reprinted from EBBA NEWS, Vol. 31, No. 6, p. 271
November-December, 1968.

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CHRISTMAS COUNT SUMMARY

Guy Bartlett

Schenectady in a matter of 40 years of Christmas counts has amassed totals of 103 species and 171,472 individuals. Also in its records are one hybrid (flicker), and five species seen only during the count period but missed on the day itself. Two identified subspecies (prairie horned lark and greater redpoll) were also count-

ed in earlier listings. Its maximum one-year count of species is 57 in 1963.

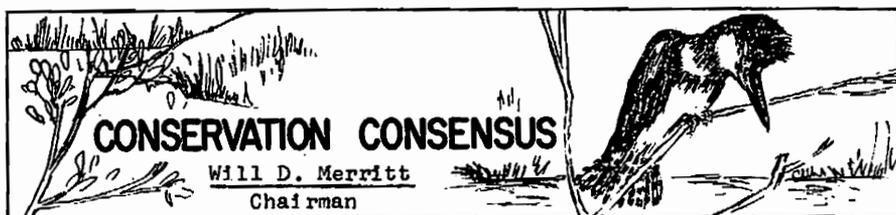
Troy in 20 consecutive years has had 98 species and 84,615 individuals. Also included have been one hybrid (mallard-black duck), one subspecies (Kumlein's gull), and two species on near dates only. Its maximum species count was 57 in 1965.

Southern Rensselaer County is too young a count for much of a story, but in three years the totals are 67 species and 36,970 individuals. Included is one species, osprey, on neither of the other lists. Its maximum count is 57 species in 1968.

The composite list for the three areas includes 120 species, plus two hybrids, plus five species on near-dates only, plus three identified subspecies. In the following list of 125 species and two hybrids, "s" represents Schenectady, "t" represents Troy, "r" represents Rensselaer and "-" shows near-dates only. The list:

Common Loon	t	Virginia Rail	s
Red-throated Loon	-	American Coot	str
Red-necked Grebe	-	Killdeer	str
Horned Grebe	s	Common Snipe	s
Pied-billed Grebe	str	Glaucous Gull	t
Great Blue Heron	s	IceLand Gull	t
American Bittern	-	Gr. Black-back. Gull	-t
Canada Goose	str	Herring Gull	str
Mallard	str	Ring-billed Gull	str
Black Duck	str	Mourning Dove	str
Pintail	t	Screech Owl	str
Green-winged Teal	t	Great Horned Owl	str
American Widgeon	t	Snowy Owl	s
Wood Duck	s	Barred Owl	str
Redhead	t	Long-eared Owl	s
Ring-necked Duck	t	Short-eared Owl	str
Canvasback	t	Belted Kingfisher	str
Greater Scaup	t	Yel-shaft. Flicker	str
Lesser Scaup	t	Pileated Woodpeck.	str
Common Goldeneye	str	Yel-bel. Sapsucker	s r
Barrow's Goldeneye	t	Hairy Woodpecker	str
Bufflehead	s	Downy Woodpecker	str
Oldsquaw	str	Blk-bk. 3-t. Wapckr.	s
White-w. Scoter	t	Eastern Phoebe	s
Hooded Merganser	str	Horned Lark	str
Common Merganser	str	Blue Jay	str
Red-br. Merganser	str	Common Crow	str
Goshawk	s r	Blk-c. Chickadee	str
Sharp-shinned Hawk	str	Boreal Chickadee	str
Cooper's Hawk	str	Tufted Titmouse	str
Red-tailed Hawk	str	White-br. Nuthatch	str
Red-should. Hawk	str	Red-br. Nuthatch	str
Rough-legged Hawk	str	Brown Creeper	str
Bald Eagle	str	Winter Wren	str
Marsh Hawk	str	Carolina Wren	s
Osprey	r	Mockingbird	str
Peregrine Falcon	str	Catbird	s
Pigeon Hawk	-	Brown Thrasher	str
Sparrow Hawk	str	Robin	str
Ruffed Grouse	str	Hermit Thrush	str
Bobwhite	s r	Eastern Bluebird	str
Ring-nk. Pheasant	str	Gold-cr. Kinglet	str
Gray Partridge	s	Ruby-cr. Kinglet	s r

Bohemian Waxwing	s	Amer. Goldfinch	str
Cedar Waxwing	str	Red Crossbill	st
Northern Shrike	str	White-w. Crossbill	st
Starling	str	Rufous-s. Towhee	str
Myrtle Warbler	st	Savannah Sparrow	tr
Yellowthroat	s	Vesper Sparrow	st
House Sparrow	str	Slate-colored Junco	str
East. Meadowlark	str	Oregon Junco	str
Red-w. Blackbird	str	Tree Sparrow	str
Baltimore Oriole	s r	Chipping Sparrow	st
Rusty Blackbird	str	Field Sparrow	str
Common Grackle	str	White-cr. Sparrow	-t
Brown-hd. Cowbird	str	White-thr. Sparrow	str
Cardinal	str	Fox Sparrow	str
Dickcissel	s	Swamp Sparrow	str
Evening Grosbeak	str	Song Sparrow	str
Purple Finch	str	Lapland Longspur	str
House Finch	-	Snow Bunting	str
Pine Grosbeak	str	(Mal-blk hybrid)	t
Common Redpoll	str	(Flicker hybrid)	s
Pine Siskin	str		



The recently proposed Gooley dam in upstate New York is a topic of concern for all of us. This dam, proposed to supply water to New York City, would be located just below the confluence of the Hudson and Indian rivers northeast of the town of Indian Lake. We are familiar with the reservoirs in the Catskills; the idea of one in the Adirondacks is startling. Economically it is not unattractive, however. The Hudson River would serve as the aqueduct and the water would be pumped from the Hudson at New York's existing pumping station. At present the pumping at Hyde Park must be curtailed during low-flow periods. A certain flow is needed to prevent brackish water in the lower Hudson from moving up stream. If pumping is continued at these times the brackish water would move up stream and threaten Poughkeepsie's water supply, also drawn from the Hudson. Release of water from Gooley dam to increase the flow in the Hudson would prevent this. It sounds like a good idea. The dam would be relatively inexpensive and no aqueduct is necessary.

BUT, is it the best solution? What is involved? The proposed dam would create a lake of 16,000 acres, requiring many acres of Forest Preserve. It will necessitate relocation of Newcomb, as the present town would be flooded. Several lakes will be flooded and a 10-12-mile stretch of a "wild river" would be destroyed. The reservoir is being touted as a recreational area. With a drawdown of 50 feet, large expanses of mud flats would appear, not conducive to boating or fishing. These are of course minor points if New York City really needs this water. Fortunately other sources of water are available.

The loss of water from broken mains has been estimated at half the supply of one of the present reservoirs. New York City water is not metered and the charge for water is very low. It is estimated that by just repairing the mains and metering, a 20-percent saving in water, 260 million gallons per day, could be made. Subsurface water, from wells could be used. Water could be treated and reused. A barrier dam across the lower Hudson would prevent salt water from moving up stream and allow more pumping at Hyde Park. Desalination is a possibility. A very long-range and far-out solution involves Canadian waters from James Bay.

The facts that a fair chunk of the Forest Preserve would be destroyed, that a "wild river" would be tamed and recreational areas now in use and a town would be flooded require a reassessment of the whole problem. All the alternatives must be considered carefully. Do we want New York City to take over part of our heritage because they find water conservation politically unpleasant?

What is the future of this proposal? The Hudson is not protected under the federal "Wild Rivers Bill." There is some doubt that a referendum is necessary for New York City to take over part of the Forest Preserve. A bill has been introduced in the Assembly by Clarence D. Lane to prevent building any dams on the upper Hudson. This bill is supported by, among others, Clark C. Wemple of Schenectady and Fred Droms of Rexford.

What can we do? Inform ourselves and write to our elected representatives, Gov. Rockefeller, our Assemblymen and Senators and to the New York Water Resources Commission, c/o Conservation Dept., Albany 12226.

An informative booklet containing further information can be obtained from: The Adirondack Hudson River Association, P.O. Box 193 Schenectady 12301. The September-October 1968 issue of ADIRONDAC, a publication of the Adirondack Mountain Club, Gabriels, N.Y. 12939, is available for 50 cents. This issue contains an article on the proposed dam. Most of the information in this report was obtained from these two sources.

(Editor's note: Since the above article was written, a bill to prevent dam construction on the upper Hudson passed unanimously in the Senate, and without dissent in the Assembly. It awaits the governor's signature, and you are urged to express your views on the matter to him.)



"Every summer when we go to our camp, the same robin comes to meet us and sits on our car. My dad says we shouldn't hurt it."
 "My grandfather has cows and a bird sits on the cows' backs. What kind of a bird is that?" "I saw some canaries flying in a field."

These profound statements came from three six-year-olds in a

first-grade classroom, who knew that some birds were different from others....but whose knowledge stopped there. As I showed the Club's new slides I watched them absorb what I was saying and I knew they were learning about birds.

This, briefly is what the youth activities committee is currently doing - interesting the young in bird watching. To date, five Club members have spoken at the following schools:

Poestenkill Elementary	Martin Luther King Elem.- Sch'dy
Haskell Elementary- Troy	Sand Lake Elementary
Westmere Elementary	Boght Hills

also

Latham Junior Garden Club Schenectady Brownies
Poestenkill Girl Scouts

We expect to cover many more school systems before the winter season is over, and in the early spring we will undoubtedly return with slides of the warblers and other spring and summer birds.

If anyone is interested in using these new slides or if anyone is willing to speak somewhere, please call President Peter Wickham (477-6345) or Lois Norton (235-0978).

Once again it is time for the Club's century run. This year the children of the area will conduct their ninth annual spring bird count on that same day, and it should be a good one.

The youth activities committee has spoken and showed bird slides to about 850 children in various schools of the tri-city area, and at the same time left bird check-lists to be filled out and returned through the Rensselaer Junior Museum of North Troy.

Any SBC members who would like their children to take part in this count may get check-lists from the museum. Alternately, have the kiddies send in a plain sheet of paper listing the birds they saw on May 17, and location of same. The childrens' names and the results of the count will be published in a booklet which will be available at the museum. This count is a joint effort of the Rensselaer County Junior Museum and SBC and the museum thanks SBC for its help in making it successful each year.

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GULL BANDING ON THE VINEYARD

Robert P. Yunick

Off the southeast coast of Massachusetts lie the vacation islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. Both may be reached by ferries which carry cars, supplies and passengers. From Woods' Hole, it takes 45 minutes to get to the Vineyard, while Nantucket is two and one-half hours or 30 miles at sea. Beside being enchanting, uncrowded vacation spots rich in early American lore, these islands are biologically unique with their dunes, moors, heaths, salt ponds and sandy beaches. Ecologically they represent home to various terns, gulls and barn and short-eared owls. It was the colonies of nesting gulls that brought us to their shores.

It all began one rainy day in September, 1964 at Island Beach, New Jersey. There, while banding at the Island Beach Operation Recovery Station, I met Margaret and Bill Pepper of Philadelphia. It seems that at slack moments caused by the necessity of having to eat, or wait out bad weather, banders always have plenty of banding experiences to talk about. Bill's descriptions of catching gull chicks on the dunes, and the interesting recoveries - some involving demands from South American missionaries for rewards for reporting the bands, or some from individuals who read the band number at a garbage dump aroused my interest. Here was a new experience and an opportunity to combine pleasure with pleasure. The family could swim and I could band gulls.

Thus, on Saturday July 10, 1965 with reservations for a cottage and ferry made months earlier, we packed everybody and nearly everything into the car and departed for Woods' Hole. In a little over four hours we were at the wharf, in the fog, awaiting a delayed ferry for the Vineyard. After some anxious moments we learned that despite the fog there would be a docking and sailing. At sea we were forced to stop at one point to allow passage of an unseen craft ahead of us that the ferry's radar screens had detected. It was a chilly ride in the cold fog, so we sought shelter below deck. At Vineyard Haven we were met by the Peppers. They had provided us with much advance information about the island and the gulls. Now and for the coming week they gave us invaluable information about beaches, restaurants, sites to see and the locations of the gull colonies, beside graciously accompanying us to a number of these spots.

On Sunday we did our first touring of the island - in the rain. The first thing that impressed us was the lack of crowding and the resulting slower pace of activity. It took a couple of days to get used to after the ride on the Mass. Pike and Routes. 128 and 3. The beaches were remarkably uncrowded in marked contrast to our experiences in Maine, New Hampshire and Cape Cod, not to mention Jones Beach or the Jersey shore. The Vineyard has a resident population of about 6500 on its 150 square miles. This swells to about 40,000 in the summer, but even at that it has only a little over half the population density of New York State.

Among the places we visited that day were the lobster hatchery and Lobsterville. The hatchery is at Oak Bluffs and possibly is the only one of its kind. Here we saw tanks of breeder stock that dwarfed the usual super-market variety of lobster. Ten-pounders were common and some were bigger. There were numerous trays of newly hatched lobsters about an inch in length. We learned to our surprise that it takes six years for a lobster to become legal size for taking by fishermen. Lobsters and steamed clams were a prominent part of our diet for the next week.

Lobsterville is near Gay Head at the southwest corner of the island. Here we strolled the beach in a drizzle and had our first look at the Lobsterville gull colony. Having never seen a gullery before, this was quite an experience, because I really didn't know I was in it. I had imagined young gulls running everywhere and there was none, however, an huge cloud of noisy, swooping adults hung overhead in umbrella fashion. Finally I located some empty nests of grass and knew I was in the colony. The air was full of hundreds of herring gulls and their "ha'-ha-ha" calls. Blended into this was the hoarse, gruff calls of the great black-backed gulls.

As I penetrated the colony, I finally began to see young gulls running on the dunes well ahead of me. On the dunes nearby were shrubs full of young black-crowned night herons watching attentively. At this point I couldn't wait to get back with my bands.

The next day dawned crystal clear, beautiful and so clean after the rain. We beat a path to Lobsterville. Anne and the children partook of the beach on the salt pond adjacent the colony while Margaret, Bill and I chased gulls and herons. The Lobsterville colony is rolling dune country with a fair amount of knee- to waist-high grass, blue berry, wild rose, bayberry and varying heights of beach plum. Liberally scattered about was poison ivy from the ankle-high version to the chest-high shrubs so common of the coast. Where vegetation was sparse or nonexistent, there was soft sand to make the going tough. The grass was still wet and our pant legs were soon soaked. Because of the abundance of cover, the gulls had a tendency to run without showing themselves. They were very difficult to find. The pastures were always greener up ahead, for there were always gulls going over the next dune. I did considerable running and caught little for all the effort.

The night herons were even worse. Their nests were clumped here and there in stands of beach plum about three to five feet high. At every stand where nests existed, the shrubs were full of inquisitive young and some elegantly attired adults. As I approached, the adults beat a hasty retreat. Those young that could barely fly struggled from bush to bush, while the majority of young waited and watched. Then as I came near, they would dive into the cover and run for all they were worth until they wedged into a tight spot amid the tangles, well hidden from above. When they dove for cover I had to charge after them breaking my way through the sharp beach plum, wild rose or poison ivy. Most of them were not visible and could be followed only by the moving vegetation. Occasionally one would hang up in the thick cover and by reaching down through the poison ivy or needle-like vines, I had hold of a clumsy green leg. The gawky youngster came out with much kicking, thrashing and excitement. Occasionally a recent meal would be regurgitated. After a fuss, the band was applied and the bird released. Soon all was quiet and no amount of walking through the cover would flush a young heron. I would leave the cover and go out on the grass for gulls, and shortly the beach plum thicket was once again adorned with clumsy young herons weighing down the branches.

Their nests were crude affairs of twigs and grass, and quite flat. Here and there were unhatched blue eggs, and in only one nest did I find a young bird too young to band. Occasionally a nest had one or two dead young in it. The mortality in these colonies must be considerable. Predators cannot help but be attracted to such seemingly easy pickings. However, it surprised me when I flushed a harrier and found that it had been feeding on a mouse amid all these helpless young. Perhaps eating mice is easier than fighting off a cloud of irate gulls. The gulls did not especially mind the harrier's presence. Nonetheless, there were dead gulls, both young and adult, scattered about. A number of young showed head wounds and may have been killed by other gulls as they transgressed territorial limits.

Most of the young gulls were downy and about the size of pigeons. The older chicks that were feathered usually headed for the beaches and took refuge in the water. Every once in a while

I came upon a bird almost ready to fly and there would ensue a merry chase. If we were headed down wind, it was no contest, because I could outrun the bird. But if it were upwind, the bird stood an even chance of escape. It would take off half running, half flying and either tire and try to hide, or hit an updraft and be lofted up several feet allowing it to flap laboriously to safety. If I gave up the chase, the bird settled quickly and hid. I would take a minute or two to catch my breath and proceed.

A real surprise came when I scared a black-back from hiding. After I learned to recognize them, I could tell them immediately by their browner color, black-tipped tail and huge size. These young were two and one-half feet long with a remarkable wingspread. They could run rapidly and most of them were almost capable of flight. I ran the hardest to catch these. I don't know whether it was because they were fewer in number, differently marked or so paradoxical that I paid special attention to them. They were so big and clumsy that they looked remarkably easy to capture, yet everytime I tripped one by grabbing its leg or pinned one into the soft sand after a lengthy chase under a broiling sun, and applied the band as my chest heaved to catch my breath, I knew the satisfaction of having worked to catch my quarry. More than one proved to be too much of a match for me, especially when it headed up wind.

At one point, Bill and I flushed an adult snowy egret, but failed to locate a nest. Then later in another clump of beach plum Bill found a nest and let me have the young provided I could catch them. That proved to be something. The young egrets preferred to hide in the branches and in this case the growth was impenetrable. Finally by pushing into the tangle as far as I could, thereby working the birds to the far side, I ran rapidly round the clump to the far side, and was able to grab two young snowy egrets. They were a sight. As yet they were not totally feathered, so their green skin showed. Their plumes were snowy white. The climbing ability of these youngsters amid the tangles was remarkable. The egret nests were similar to those of the black-crowned night heron except that they were made solely of twigs and were roughly 10-12 inches in diameter. It was a real treat to have these egrets and herons so handy near ground level, because normally they nest in high shrubs and one has to climb to get them. In addition, the snowy egrets were newly arrived on the scene. It is only in most recent years that they have nested at Lobsterville.

Because of the time and energy spent catching the elusive black-backed gulls and night herons, I did not do very well with the herring gulls. By about noon I was beat and welcomed lunch. We ate on the beach. A check of the bands showed that I had banded 19 herring gulls, five black-backs, two snowies and 16 black-crowns. I had bruised, scratched and bloody legs to prove the effectiveness of the beach plum thickets as shelter to these young birds.

When we returned to our cottage, a shower was necessary to remove the poison ivy extract, perspiration and sticky sun tan lotion. Boy, did it feel good! The sun had been very hot and fortunately the sun tan lotion applied at the start of the day had come in handy.

We learned that a couple of other banders had a beach bug and

were planning an afternoon exploration of the south beach at Kattama. There we met Mabel Gillespie of Glenolden, Pa. and Grace Meleney of White Plains, N.Y. Both are long-time banders and summer residents of the Vineyard who have banded many gulls and terns. Mabel's son from California drove the bug over the dunes. It was not a very fruitful banding trip, for the mortality in this colony had been very high. There were many decaying gull eggs left unhatched in the nests, as well as numerous dead young. This colony differed from Lobsterville in that it was quite level atop a broad dune at the ocean's edge and had beach grass as its only cover. We banded exceedingly few gulls. Nonetheless, it was an interesting ride.

The following day when we went swimming at the state beach at Sengekontacket near Oak Bluffs, I happened upon three flightless piping plovers and banded these. Here I found a colony of common and least terns. These birds protected their nests and young with considerably more vigor than did the gulls at Lobsterville. The terns had a very raspy alarm call. They would hover overhead and swoop to attack an intruder always from the back and with great rapidity. These attacks involved raking one's scalp with their bill inflicting a painful tap. They could draw blood and, I had been told, cause headaches from the severity of their blows. I found their attacks very bothersome, not so much because of the pain involved, but because of the element of surprise.

I never knew when one would attack next, and while I was concentrating on locating a nest or photographing one, it was very distracting to have these terns attacking. They came in from about 20-25 feet into the wind, hit my scalp, banked sharply upward, stalled, rolled over and came in again. It was a matter of either wearing a cap stuffed with paper or carrying the camera case atop my head, so as not to be struck directly.

(To be continued)

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CAPE ANN - PLUM ISLAND

JANUARY 25-26

Looking across Cape Ann's salt marshes, we were reminded very much of March. Late January here was a surprise. Grass was snow-free and soggy and made sounds as we walked over park lawns. The ocean looked dull-colored and wild as usual, but the marshes were ochre and red-brown with a pleasing touch of green. Where were the snow banks, the bitter cold and winds that many of us know from previous experience at the Cape? Eighteen people began a weekend of bird watching with this pleasant note.

I toted along my standard winter bird-watching paraphernalia, but the warm Saturday made some of the clothing unnecessary. It

wasn't until Sunday that the climate resumed its customary winter temper.

One of the weekend's most interesting sights was that of an eared grebe and two or three horned grebes in a telescopic field at once. One of the two parties of bird watchers was treated to this extraordinary view under optimum conditions. The soiled appearance and light "ear spot" of the eared grebe were obvious to all.

Sharp eyes picked a particularly white bird out of a flock of a few thousand gulls at Brace's Cove. By comparing his size to the similarly built herring gulls, we were able to announce the presence of the weekend's first Iceland gull. The fact that the Iceland gull was no larger than the many gulls around him gave him away.

The other group of bird watchers was excited about the highlight of their Saturday - a Brunnich's murre. Lucky! the rest of us were frustrated all weekend in unsuccessful attempts to locate another alcid.

Sunday we attempted to ignore weather much colder than that of the previous day and locate more birds as a single group.

Snowy owls were at Plum Island and Salisbury Beach and two distant Barrow's goldeneye kept us busy for a long time at the Merrimack River in Newburyport. The goldeneye were so far from shore that only careful, patient watching led to their recognition. The distance plus the goldeneye habit of suddenly popping below and above the water's surface made identification a challenge.

At the entrance to Parker River National Wildlife Refuge there was a sight that was novel for everyone. A flock of thirteen longspurs was perched on telephone wires! No one there could remember ever seeing longspurs sitting on anything but pastures and lawns. Cars passed us often, each time chasing the birds into flight, but whenever the disturbances were gone they were back on the wires.

Sunday's other surprises included a glaucous and two Bonaparte's gulls, a Northern shrike and a fine look at a dark-phase rough-legged hawk.

--Harvey Spivak

WARREN COUNTYFEBRUARY 8

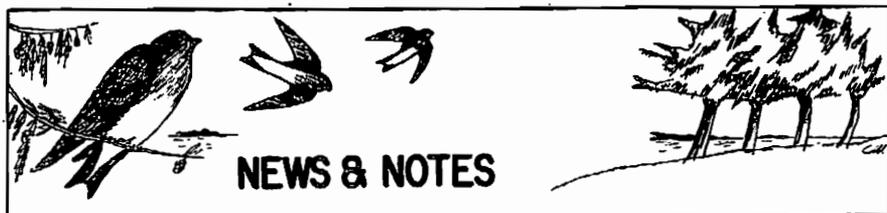
When our little group assembled at Latham Center in the morning, this expedition looked like a meeting of the records committee, since the only participants were the members of that committee - Hazel Bundy, Monte Gruett, Walt Sabin and me. Nonetheless, we willingly gave up business for pleasure, and enjoyed a lovely sunny winter's day on the back roads of Warren and extreme southern Essex County. The weather and views were spectacular - the birds spectacularly scarce! Chickadees (75) and blue jays (40) were everywhere, but other species were few and far between. Our only finches - a single redpoll and several evening grosbeaks - were in the village of Schroon Lake - and we didn't see any of the strictly northern species we'd hoped to see.

Still, we had a fine view of three ruffed grouse at point-blank range, and another of a golden-crowned kinglet foraging in a tiny pine tree at shoe level, as well as glorious vistas of snowy trees

and hills, and sparkling fresh air. Our final list of 18 species included a pileated woodpecker and three species of hawks - all seen along the Northway.

--Pete Wickham

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OF SUPERSTORES AND CENTURY RUNS

As many of you know, I'm an avid and enthusiastic "birder." My wife Louise is reasonably interested in birds but retains perhaps a more balanced perspective. On the other hand, she loves nothing more than a good shopping expedition. One evening, while discussing these twin passions - birding and shopping - it occurred to us (amusingly) how similar they are.

For one thing, as experienced birders know, there is a proper time (and place) for looking for any species; one doesn't spend a June afternoon in the woods looking for snow buntings, but instead a January or February day in the fields of Meadowdale. In the same way, one doesn't go looking for mittens and snow suits for the children just any old time; one chooses a time when the stores have just received their stock of such items for the season - probably September.

Of course, it isn't the predictable - comforting as this is - that lends the spice to birdwatching (shopping) -- it's the unexpected rarity (bargain) that really excites the birder (shopper), that bird (product) which had never been there before (or, at least, not in such beautiful plumage) ... and might never be there again!

The culmination of all this for the birder is the century run. For us this is usually about mid-May when bird migration is at its peak around here. It frequently involves considerable pre-planning, followed by a day of hectic dashes between Meadowdale, Niskayuna, Vischer Ferry, Indian Ladder, etc. to roll up as large a list as possible. For the shopper, the analogous event would be a shopping spree including all the biggest stores of the area -- a chaotic day of visits to Colonie Center, Lathan Circle, Two Guys, Westgate, etc. -- perhaps in late January, when the big sales season (migration) is in full swing!

Louise and I suspect that other preoccupations might prove just as analogous. Think up your own similarities - it might give you some chuckles too.

--Pete Wickham

ONLY 20 YEARS FOR TROY?

It might seem as though there have been more than 20 consecutive Christmas counts at Troy, starting with that of December 31,

1949. Actually there was an experimental trip two years earlier, but that one did not meet Audubon count specifications, and was not submitted there for publication. Attention was focused entirely on the Hudson River itself, and only a dozen species were listed. In the following year, with arrangements all made for full coverage, there were the two-day rains, the floods, power and phone lines down, roads and bridges washed out -- and state police and local constabularies blocking most roads.

There have been many other "earlier" Christmas counts in the general Mohawk-Hudson area. In December, 1900 Frank M. Chapman, editor of BIRD-LORE, issued a call for a new kind of Christmas hunt -- a bird census. There were a few, and by later standards brief, Christmas censuses reported in the January, 1901 issue of BIRD-LORE.

It was not until Christmas, 1905 that a count was reported from eastern New York. It is short enough to quote complete: "Gloversville, N.Y.--Time, 10 am. to 12m. Crow, 2; Goldfinch, 14; Chickadee, 11. Total, 3 species, 27 individuals.--Charles P. Alexander." Back in those days house sparrows were not counted.

Next were two counts in one year, 1912, for Saratoga Springs. Only seven species showed in total.

Clarence Houghton of Albany was the first to regularly report for a local area. He, and sometimes Dr. Joseph S. Lawrence, reported annually 1916 to 1923 inclusive and 1927 for an area "west of Albany." The 1916 report contained "Starling, 100 (one flock, an unusual sight in this section." Starlings were missing in his 1918 list.

Schenectady was only one year later with its first report. Central Park, and sometimes Vale Cemetery and Woodlawn, was investigated by Walter S. Phylo in 1917, 1919 (first starlings) and 1921, and by Edgar Bedell in 1923.

Before moving to Schenectady Mr. Bedell had published records for Waterford in 1920 to 1923 inclusive. His first starlings were in 1921. Waterford was also included in reports date-lined Troy, 1925 and 1926, by H.S. Hasbrouk and Howard H. Cleaves.

Douglas Ayres, Jr. of Fort Plain is the real record-setter. His first report was for 1918. Except for 1929, he has been in each count since then. His first starling, a loner, was in 1920.
--Guy Bartlett

INVITATION

According to a recent survey by a midwestern university, our young people are suffering a serious hearing loss from the noises common to today's living. Rock and roll music is one of the worst "ear offenders" and can be compared with a jet plane taking off; a pneumatic drill; industrial machinery, etc.

These noises register roughly 122 decibels on a sound level meter. Normal sound ranges between 50 and 80 decibels. Why not join us on a spring field trip soon and leave the noise of the city behind? We guarantee the bird calls to be easy on the ears!

--Heidi Norton



ELEANOR BYRNE HONORED

At the annual meeting President Pete Wickham called the Club's attention to the devoted service that Eleanor Byrne has given the Club. Subsequently at the March meeting of the board of directors Eleanor was presented a gift in appreciation of her efforts.

For over five years Eleanor was co-chairman of the program committee responsible for the promotion and sale of tickets to the Audubon wildlife films sponsored by SEC. During her tenure, her efforts and those of the people assisting her, contriouted greatly to the success of the film series.

From that success came the financial profits which are the oasis of the Club's financial assets today.

For her enthusiastic interest in the Club, her untiring efforts and the benefit derived from these, we thank her.

WATERFORD MUSEUM

Those of you interested in early Americana will find interest in the Waterford Historical Museum and Cultural Center. Since its dedication in 1966, the museum has been housed in the Hugh White homestead in Waterford. It is open from 2 to 4 pm. on Saturday and Sunday.

The museum sponsors classes, lectures, field trips and exhibits on local history, fine arts and crafts.

It has published a pamphlet describing the Waterford Flight - the series of locks in the New York State Barge Canal (formerly the Erie Canal) which lifts boats from the Hudson to the Mohawk. The pamphlet describes the route one may take to view this engineering feat.

For further information on the museum, please call 237-9854, or SEC member Dr. Paul Grattan, 237-0661.

COMING EVENTS

The following field trips are coming up in the near future:

- May 17 - CENTURY RUN: join a group or form your own for coverage of your favorite areas in our 11-county area. For information call Bob Yunick, 377-0146. Mail your reports to him at once at 1527 Myron Street, Schenectady 12309.
- May 24 - BIRDING AT SLACK'S: on Ridge Road. Nancy will lead a

search for warblers on her property. Meet at Slack's on Ridge Road 0.8 mile north of Church Road. Early birds at 6:30, late birds at 8:30 am. Coffee for the early birds. Coordinator, Nancy Slack, 377-7422.

May 25 - **LOVERS' LANE:** on its first try last year, it was one of our best, with quite a variety to offer. Meet at Bob McCullough's house, 393-0474, at the junction of West Glenville Road and North Road at 8:30 am.

June - **BREEDING BIRD SURVEY:** call Monte Gruett, 477-6246, for details. An observer may need a recorder or driver.

(Issue assembled April 26, 1969)

Ry

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PUBLISHED BY HUDSON-MOHAWK BIRD CLUB, INC.

CENTURY RUN HAS 159 AND ADDS SURF SCOTER

Guy Bartlett
Compiler

Highlighting the 159 species of the 24th consecutive Century Run of Saturday, May 17, were three surf scoters, a male and two females on Galway Lake; the composite list is now 228 species plus two hybrid warblers. Also of more than passing interest were western sandpiper, previously recorded only in 1962, and the first cerulean warbler since 1963. On the negative side were the yellow-breasted chat which was missed for the first time since 1956, green-winged teal and common tern which were included in each of the four preceding counts, and barred owl.

There were 48 observers in 10 groups, with 100-plus totals by five groups - one of 122, two of 113 and two of 105. Observations extended from 3:30 am. to 9:30 pm. Temperatures ranged from 50 to 80°F. The weather was mostly fair and mild, clear in the morning but with some cloudiness, wind, and occasional light rain after 2 pm. in some sections. Foliage was well advanced, even in the north, where black flies were vicious.

Thirty-two species were on all ten lists. They were: mallard, black duck, mourning dove, downy woodpecker, crested and least flycatchers; tree, bank and barn swallows; blue jay, crow, chickadee, white-breasted nuthatch, catbird, wood thrush, veery, starling, warbling vireo, yellow and chestnut-sided warbler, yellowthroat, redstart, red-winged blackbird, Baltimore oriole, grackle, cowbird, tanager, cardinal, rose-breasted grosbeak, goldfinch, white-throated and song sparrows.

Nineteen species, including evening grosbeak, were seen by all except one group: sparrow hawk, gallinule, killdeer, spotted sandpiper, chimney swift, flicker, kingbird, phoebe, house wren, brown thrasher, robin, red-eyed vireo, bobolink, meadowlark, evening grosbeak (found by only one group in 1968), towhee and chipping, field and swamp sparrows.

At the other extreme, 29 species were recorded by only one group, and these are indicated in the group summaries.

SUMMARY - The 10 Groups and 48 Participants

Group A - Peggy McGuirk and Hazel Bundy; 4:30 am. to 9 pm. Vischer Ferry GMA, Stony Creek Res., Central Park, Look 7, Mis-kayuna Widewaters, Round and Saratoga lakes, W. Glenville, Pine Barrens, Black Creek marshes. 105 species - black-bellied plover.

Group B - W.D.Merritt and R.P.Yunick; 5 am. to 12 noon.

Vischer Ferry GMA. 51 species, including 131 birds of 34 species banded - yellow-bellied flycatcher, Lincoln's sparrow. The list of captured birds: 1 hummingbird, 2 downy woodpeckers, 1 yellow-bellied flycatcher, 3 Traill's flycatchers, 2 least flycatchers, 1 blue jay, 11 catbirds, 5 wood thrushes, 4 Swainson's thrushes, 5 veeries, 1 starling, 1 warbling vireo; warblers - 1 Nashville, 19 yellow, 2 magnolia, 2 black-throated blue, 1 chestnut-sided, 3 blackpoll, 16 northern waterthrushes, 6 yellowthroats, 4 Canadas, 7 redstarts, 2 red-wings, 4 Baltimore orioles, 1 grackle, 1 cowbird, 1 scarlet tanager, 2 cardinals, 3 rose-breasted grosbeaks, 2 pine siskins, 10 goldfinches; sparrows - 1 white-crowned, 1 white-throated, 2 Lincoln's and 4 songs.

Group C - Benton Seguin and Guy Bartlett; 5 am. to 8:30 pm. Davignon, Efner, Jenny, Saratoga and Round lakes, Saratoga Battlefield, Stony Creek Res. Vischer Ferry GMA, Locks 6 and 7, Niskayuna Widewaters, Karner, Mead and Black Creek marshes. 105 species brown creeper, Cape May and pine warblers, Henslow's sparrow.

Group D - Nancy Slaak, Judy and Douglass Allen, Lois and Douglas Norton, John and Steve Fuller, Helen Arnold, Betty Hicks, Mary Johnston and Mary Lynch; 5:15 am. to 9 pm. 113 species - bobwhite, black-billed cuckoo, olive-sided flycatcher, tree sparrow.

Group E - Esly Hallenbeck, Gus Angst, Bob McCullough; 6 am. to 4 pm. Collins Lake, Hennessey Road, Black Creek Marsh, Balltown Road, Swaggertown Road. 91 species - Canada goose, western sandpiper, yellow-billed cuckoo.

Group F - David Harrison and John Steadwell; 4:30 am. to 6 pm. Galway Lake, Scotia and vicinity. 82 species - surf scoter.

Group G - Lillian C. Stoner (compiler), Helen Budlong, Eleanor Byrne, Lucy Dean, Teddy Demski, Helen Moore, Helen O'Meara, Stella Novak, W.L. Peterson, Gladys Samuels, Stephen Schryver, Clara Belle Scott; 7 am. to 5 pm. Washington Park and Cary Road in Albany, Meadowdale, Selkirk and south of Albany to Van Wie Point on Hudson River. 80 species - rusty blackbird.

Group H - C.W. Huntley, P. Kilburn, J. Maras and W. Murphy; 5 am. to 4 pm. Vischer Ferry, Indian Ladder, Black Creek, Pine Barrens. 78 species.

Group I - Paul Connor, Bill Gorman, Monte Gruett, Harvey Spivak, Pete Wickham; 3:30 am. to 9 pm. Vosburgh, Meadowdale, Indian Ladder, East Greenbush, Schodack, Taborton, Niskayuna and Saratoga areas. 122 species - least bittern, red-breasted merganser, coot, white-rumped and semipalmated sandpipers, screech owl, bluegray gnatcatcher, cerulean warbler and orchard oriole.

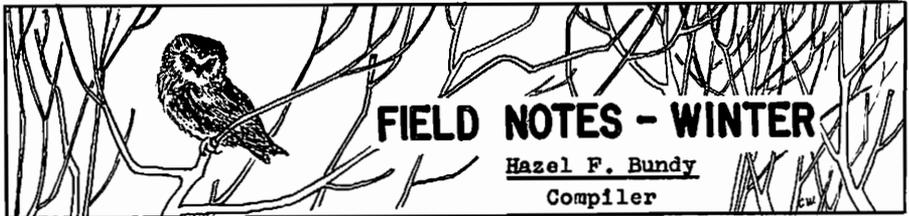
Group J - Dr. Hollis Ingraham, Dr. Robert Kornis, Samuel Madison, Carl Parker, Walton Sabin; 4 am. to 9:30 pm. Black Creek Marshes, Indian Ladder, Watervliet Res., Karners, Craig School, Niskayuna Widewaters, Stony Creek Res., Saratoga Lake and vicinity, Saratoga Springs. 113 species - common merganser, greater yellowlegs, great horned owl (one also reported, however, by Beverly Waite), cliff swallow.

* * * * *

CENTURY RUN -- MAY 17, 1969 -- 159 SPECIES

Common Loon	a c	ij	Downy Woodpecker	abcdefghijkl
Pied-billed Grebe	c	i	Eastern Kingbird	a cdefghij
Great Blue Heron	a d		Great Cr. Flycatcher	abcdefghijkl
Green Heron	ab	defghi	Eastern Phoebe	a cdefghij
Least Bittern		f	Yel-bel. Flycatcher	b
Amer. Bittern	a cd f	ij	Traill's Flycatcher	bcd hij
Canada Goose	e		Least Flycatcher	abcdefghijkl
Mallard	abcdefghijkl		Eastern Wood Pewee	a de ghij
Black Duck	abcdefghijkl		Olive-s. Flycatcher	d
Blue-winged Teal	a ode	hij	Horned Lark	a cd f i
Wood Duck	abcd f	ij	Tree Swallow	abcdefghijkl
Surf Scoter	f		Bank Swallow	abcdefghijkl
Hooded Merganser	a d	j	Rough-winged Swallow	a cde g ij
Common Merganser		j	Barn Swallow	abcdefghijkl
Red-breasted Merganser		i	Cliff Swallow	ijkl
Turkey Vulture	e	j	Purple Martin	a cde ij
Red-tailed Hawk	a cde g	ij	Blue Jay	abcdefghijkl
Broad-winged Hawk	d fg	i	Common Crow	abcdefghijkl
Osprey	cd	j	Black-cap. Chickadee	abcdefghijkl
Sparrow Hawk	a cdefghi	j	Tufted Titmouse	a d g
Ruffed Grouse	a cdef	ij	White-br. Nuthatch	abcdefghijkl
Bobwhite	d		Red-br. Nuthatch	cd f ij
Ring-necked Pheasant	a cde	ghij	Brown Creeper	c
Virginia Rail	a cde	i	House Wren	a cdefghij
Sora	de g	j	Winter Wren	cd j
Common Gallinule	abcde	ghij	Long-b. Marsh Wren	a cde ghij
Amer. Coot	i		Mockingbird	a c efg i
Semipalm. Plover	a	i	Catbird	abcdefghijkl
Killdeer	a cdefghi	j	Brown Thrasher	a cdefghij
Black-bellied Plover	a		Robin	a cdefghij
Amer. Woodcock	a de	ij	Wood Thrush	abcdefghijkl
Common Snipe	a d	j	Hermit Thrush	bc ghi
Upland Plover	a ef	hij	Swainson's Thrush	b h
Spotted Sandpiper	a cdefghi	j	Veery	abcdefghijkl
Solitary Sandpiper	cd f h		Eastern Bluebird	a cdefg ij
Greater Yellowlegs		j	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	i
Pectoral Sandpiper	a	g	Ruby-cr. Kinglet	a e g i
White-r. Sandpiper		f	Cedar Waxwing	d f ij
Least Sandpiper	a ef	i	Starling	abcdefghijkl
Semipalm. Sandpiper		i	Yellow-thr. Vireo	a cde hij
Western Sandpiper	e		Solitary Vireo	c e g i
Herring Gull	a cde	ghij	Red-eyed Vireo	a cdefghij
Ring-billed Gull	a cd f	ij	Warbling Vireo	abcdefghijkl
Black Tern	d	ij	Blk-&-White Warbler	a cd f hij
Mourning Dove	abcdefghijkl		Worm-eating Warbler	de hij
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	e		Golden-w. Warbler	a cd fghij
Black-billed Cuckoo	d		Blue-w. Warbler	cde hij
Screech Owl		i	Tennessee Warbler	a cdef hij
Great Horned Owl		j	Nashville Warbler	bc ef ij
Whip-poor-will	a d f	ij	Parula Warbler	a c i
Common Nighthawk	a efg	ij	Yellow Warbler	abcdefghijkl
Chimney Swift	a cdefghi	j	Magnolia Warbler	bcd e ij
Ruby-thr. Hummingbird	abcd	ghij	Cape May Warbler	c
Belted Kingfisher	d fgh	j	Blk-thr. Blue Warbler	abcd f hij
Yellow-sh. Flicker	a cdefghi	j	Myrtle Warbler	a cd fghij
Pileated Woodpecker	c	g ij	Blk-thr. Green Warbler	a cd f hij
Yel-bel. Sapsucker	c fg	i	Cerulean Warbler	i
Hairy Woodpecker	a c efg	ij	Blackburnian Warbler	a cde ij
			Chestnut-s. Warbler	abcdefghijkl

Bay-br. Warbler	a de ij	Cardinal	abdefghij
Blackpoll Warbler	ab d hij	Rose-br. Grosbeak	abdefghij
Pine Warbler	c	Indigo Bunting	a cde ij
Prairie Warbler	d h j	Evening Grosbeak	abdefg ij
Ovenbird	a cdef hij	Purple Finch	a cdefg i
No. Waterthrush	abcd f hij	Pine Siskin	b i
La. Waterthrush	c j	Amer. Goldfinch	abdefghij
Yellowthroat	abdefghij	Rufous-s. Towhee	a cdefghij
Wilson's Warbler	a d ij	Savannah Sparrow	a cd ij
Canada Warbler	abcd f hij	Grasshopper Sparrow	d j
American Redstart	abdefghij	Henslow's Sparrow	c
House Sparrow	a cdef hij	Vesper Sparrow	a cd g j
Bobolink	a cdefghij	Slate-colored Junco	c ghi
Eastern Meadowlark	a cdefghij	Tree Sparrow	d
Red-winged Blackbird	abdefghij	Chipping Sparrow	a cdefghij
Orchard Oriole	i	Field Sparrow	a cdefghij
Baltimore Oriole	abdefghij	White-cr. Sparrow	ab defg ij
Rusty Blackbird	g	White-thr. Sparrow	abdefghij
Common Grackle	abdefghij	Lincoln's Sparrow	b
Brown-h. Cowbird	abdefghij	Swamp Sparrow	abcde ghij
Scarlet Tanager	abdefghij	Song Sparrow	abdefghij



FIELD NOTES - WINTER

Hazel F. Bundy

Compiler

Altogether it was a rather "average winter", although it seemed harsh, perhaps due to the almost continuous ground cover after mid-December. On Dec 15 there was an eight-inch snow, and about nine additional inches fell during the remainder of the month. December was colder than usual, with the result that much snow remained, and the minimum ground cover was four inches Dec 15-30. Temperatures for January were slightly below normal, those for February and March about normal. Jan, Feb and Mar were drier than usual, with precipitation in Mar only about one third the average amount. Ponds and lakes were still largely ice-bound at the end of Mar.

In general, the past winter was a very poor one for birding. However, there were several bright spots in the overall picture. Red-tailed, red-shouldered and rough-legged hawks were much more numerous, with an unusually high percentage of the dark phase rough-legged (bsh). There was a notable increase in the number of barred owl reports. Northern shrikes were noted three times as frequently as usual. The starling population declined markedly.

Bohemian waxwings and pine grosbeaks furnished the greatest excitement, with several observers having the opportunity to view the former, and many the latter species. Other unusual species included glossy ibis, peregrine falcon, glaucous gull, varied thrush, hoary redpoll and Oregon junco.

The following observations reflect the negative factors. The

number of blue jays decreased considerably. The cedar waxwing population was extremely low. Evening grosbeaks, in good supply earlier, apparently exhausted local food supplies and moved south. Purple finches were scarce. Very few half-hardies, such as robin, red-winged blackbird, common grackle and white-throated sparrow, remained through the winter.

Observers cited more than once: (GA)- Gustave Angst; (GB)- Guy Bartlett; (HFB)- Hazel Bundy; (L&VB)- Lee and Virginia Burland; (J&BB)- James and Barbara Bush; (JC)- Juanit Cook; (P&GE)- Paul and Georgia Erlenbach; (MLG)- Murray Gardler; (EH)- Ealy Hallenbeck; (BH)- Barrington Havens; (CK)- Clarissa Ketcham; (SM)- Samuel Madison; (WDM)- Will Merritt; (P&M)- Philip and Mary Mickle; (ER)- Edgar Reilly; (WBS)- Walton Sabin; (HHS)- Harvey Spivak (PPW)- Peter Wickham; (RPY)- Robert Yunick; (bsh)- Guy Bartlett, Benton Seguin and Barrington Havens.

Area compilers: rena Dodd, Betty Laros and Clarissa Ketcham.

Abbreviations: CM- Castleton Marshes, Emb- Embought; Gr- Greenville; Mdale- Meadowdale; NWW- Niskayuna Widewaters; Nisk- Niskayuna; SL- Saratoga Lake; SS- Stockport Station; SCR- Stony Creek Reservoir; VFG- Vischer Ferry Game Management Area; WR- Watervliet Reservoir; (hmbc)- Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club record Christmas Counts; (adcc)- Alan Devoe (Chatham). Dec 28; (gcc)- Greene Co, Dec 29; (scc)- Schenectady, Dec 21; (srcc)- Southern Rensselaer Co, Dec 22; (toc)- Troy, Dec 29.

LOONS - DUCKS

Common Loon: three SL Dec 1 (bsh); two Mar 26 Hudson R (ER).
 Red-throated Loon: one picked up in field in Rotterdam Dec 29 and later released at Delmar Game Farm (Chet Griffith).
 Horned Grebe: ten Dec 1 SL (bsh); first spring Mar 26 Hudson R (ER).
 Pied-billed Grebe: first spring Mar 19 (P&E).
 Great Blue Heron: one injured observed Dec 1 Galway L (Mildred Cray); one wintered Medusa Swamp, first reported Jan 27 (CK), seen occasionally thereafter by several observers; Mar 29 in two areas - WR (bsh) and NWW (HHS).
 Green Heron: one very early report - one Mar 24 Malden Bridge (ER).
 GLOSSY IBIS: one adult seen in flight near Amsterdam Mar 26, "characteristic flight and bill well observed" through 10x50 binocular and telescope (MLG).
 Canada Goose: no Dec reports; earliest spring - 20 Mar 18 Emb (JB); max 500 Mar 27 (ER) and 475 NWW Mar 29 (bsh).
 Last fall reports of migrant ducks: one green-winged teal, three ring-necked duck, 75 common goldeneye, 35 bufflehead, three old-squaw, and 30 common merganser Dec 1 (bsh). Christmas Counts indicated mallards and black ducks present in slightly higher numbers than in the previous year. The Annual Duck Count Jan 12 recorded 143 mallard, 417 black duck, one pintail, four common goldeneye, one hooded merganser and one common merganser.
 Spring duck reports: most species arr five or six days later than in previous year. Mallards and black ducks appeared Mar 16 lower Hudson R (PPW); an estimated 100 mallards and 2000 black ducks lower Hudson R Mar 22 (hmbc).
 Pintail: arr CM Mar 15 (JC), max 50 Mar 22 lower Hudson R (hmbc).
 Green-winged Teal: first reports - one Feb 22 Mohawk R (bsh); 11 Mar 19 SS (PPW).
 Blue-winged Teal: first spring - ten Mar 15 CM (JC).

Am. Widgeon: a few Mar 19 SS (MM,PPW); max 25 Mar 30 NWW (MLG).
 Shoveler: one Mar 22 SS (hmbo); one Mar 29 Emb (JB); three Mar 30 NWW (MLG).
 Wood Duck: arr Mar 15 CM (JC).
 Ring-necked Duck: earliest - CM Mar 15 (JC); other reports from Mar 20, with max 60 Mar 30 NWW (MLG).
 Canvasback: arr Mar 22- 20 SS (hmbo).
 Scaup: arr CM Mar 15 (JC); other reports Mar 23 on, with max 100 Mar 29 Emb (JB).
 Common Goldeneye: two Feb 8 upper Hudson R (bsh); max 20 Mar 31 SS (MM).
 Bufflehead: arr Mar 28 NWW (EH, Marie Bedford).
 Hooded Merganser: first Mar 15 CM (JC); max 15 Mar 30 VFG (hmbo).
 Common Merganser: earliest - two Mar 16 SS (PPW); max 70 Mohawk R Mar 30 (GB,BH).
 Red-breasted Merganser: first reported Mar 22, from three areas.

HAWKS - OWLS

Turkey Vulture: first spring Feb 21 Catskill (J&BB).
 Goshawk: one Dec 21 (scc), one Jan 23 Mdale (HHS); five from Mar 14 to Mar 30 (MLG,bsh).
 Sharp-shinned Hawk: four scattered reports from Dec 2 to Mar 17 (JB, MLG,SM).
 Cooper's Hawk: four singles - Jan 30, Mar 16,17,22 (CK,JB,MLG,hmbo).
 Red-tailed Hawk: throughout period; many reports of six per day by single observers; total of Christmas Counts in five areas was 65, as compared to 53 in previous year; a definite invasion during Feb, as evidenced by the following - 14 Feb 2, 17 Feb 8, 20 Feb 16, 17 Feb 21, 16 Feb 22 (bsh).
 Red-shouldered Hawk: six winter reports, and six singles Mar 19-30, twice as many as two previous years.
 Rough-legged Hawk: many reports from many observers; max 12 Jan 25 Schoodack (L&VB), and 15 Feb 22 (bsh).
 Bald Eagle: one Dec 23 near Surprise (Joseph Kruppenbacher).
 Marsh Hawk: reported Dec 21 (scc), Dec 22 (srcc), Jan 5 Chatham (MM) and Mar 28 Old Chatham (ER).
 Osprey: two Mar 30 Gr (Marianne Werner).
 PEREGRINE FALCON: one Dec 22, for the second consecutive year on the (srcc).
 Bobwhite: one Dec 22 (srcc); eight Dec 20-31 Greene Co (fide JB), and Jan 1-6 at a feeder in Catskill (CK).
 Am. Coot: 50 Dec 1 SL, and one Dec 14 SL (bsh).
 Ring-necked Pheasant: considerable increase - several reports, max 18 Feb 6 Nisk (GA); 172 on a total of five Christmas Counts. (27 the previous year).
 Killdeer: first spring Mar 9 Catskill (JB); many from Mar 18.
 Am. Woodcock: first spring Mar 18 near Rexford (WDM).
 Common Snipe: first spring Mar 22 near Rexford (WDM).
 GLAUCOUS GULL: one Mar 19 SS (PPW).
 Great Black-backed Gull: arr Feb 23 lower Hudson R (WBS,SM); common early Mar SS (PPW).
 Herring Gull: few in Dec; early migrants - six Feb 23 (WBS,SM); common early Mar.
 Ring-billed Gull: eight Dec 22 (srcc), and four Dec 29 (tcc); many Mar reports.
 Screech Owl: two Dec 22 (srcc), seven singles Jan 5 to Mar 5.
 Great Horned Owl: reported from six or seven localities; Jan 30 nesting New Concord (J&M Gunn).
 Snowy Owl: only two - one (gcc), and one Feb 11 Ghent (M.Kern).
 Barred Owl: six reports during period - an appreciable increase

over one report for each of the two previous years.
 Short-eared Owl: only two - one Feb 1 near Catskill (J&BB); one near NWW Mar 30 (HHS).
 Saw-whet: a total of four - one late Dec near Troy (Mr.&Mrs. John Murphy); one Jan 24 Schenectady area (Mr.&Mrs. Albert Getz); two found dead in Town of Durham Mar 14 and 17 (Vernon Haskins).

GOATSUCKERS - STARLING

Belted Kingfisher: a few wintered; spring arr mid-Mar.
 Yellow-shafted Flicker: several winter records; small influx noted from Mar 29 on.
 Pileated Woodpecker: reported consistently through period from several areas; max three Dec 2 Gr (CK).
 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one on (scc); one male appeared at Nisk feeder for fifth or sixth consecutive year - Dec 15, 25 and into early Jan, and one female late in Jan (RPY); spring arr - two Mar 29 Old Chatham (ER).
 Hairy Woodpecker: numbers appearing about the same.
 Downy Woodpecker: also, approximately constant.
 Eastern Phoebe: first spring Mar 17 Ghent (P&GE).
 Horned Lark: common, especially in early winter; max 200 Jan 11 Castleton (JC).
 Tree Swallow: first Mar 27 - five SCR (HFB), and Gr (CK).
 Blue Jay: appear to have decreased - several observers commented on the scarcity; total of five Christmas Counts was 713, as contrasted with 1403 for the previous year.
 Common Crow: migrants from Feb 21 (PPW).
 Boreal Chickadee: one at feeder near W. Sand Lake Dec 22 (srcc).
 Tufted Titmouse: appeared to be just about constant in numbers.
 Brown Creeper: reported occasionally.
 Winter Wren: one Dec 21 (scc); one Mar 29 Old Chatham (ER).
 Carolina Wren: one Dec 7, Feb 8, 9 and Mar 12 Chatham (MM, PM).
 Mockingbird: population holding about the same.
 Catbird: one winter report - Dec 1-5 at feeder near Gr (CK).
 Brown Thrasher: one at feeder in E. Greenbush Feb and Mar (fide PPW); one Ghent Mar 19 (P&GE).
 Robin: a few wintered, with no large flocks reported; migrants began to appear about Mar 19; common by Mar 27.
 VARIED THRUSH: a male appeared Jan 21 at the feeding station of Mr. and Mrs. John McCreight, Hudson Falls, and was a daily visitor thereafter, until at least Feb 17 (fide Harold Burrell).
 Eastern Bluebird: again a few wintered in Greene Co and Columbia Co; probably spring migrants Mar 20 Gr (CK), Mar 23 Catskill (JB), and two Mar 23 Old Chatham (ER).
 Golden-crowned Kinglet: sparse reports from four areas.
 Ruby-crowned Kinglet: one Dec 21 (scc).
 Water Pipit: 12 Mar 26, eight Mar 27 Gr (CK); four Mar 30 SCR(SM).
 BOHEMIAN WAXWING: an unprecedented number of reports, five in all. Six Dec 21 (scc); 20-30 Jan 28 Nisk (RPY); eight Feb 1 E. Greenbush (PPW et al.); 15 Feb 8 a few miles north of North Troy (bsh) and six Feb 19 Medway (CK, Irene Irwin).
 Cedar Waxwing: very scarce; eight Dec 21 (scc); 15 Dec 22 (srcc); five scattered reports of 4-6; 27 Jan 15 Berne (Marcia Kent).
 Northern Shrike: a total of four on Christmas Counts; additional reports many more than usual, with two Dec, four Jan, seven Feb and seven Mar.
 Starling: toatls on each of the five Christmas Counts diminished markedly, the population appearing to have decreased by more than 50 percent.

VIREOS - SPARROWS

FEATHERS

MAY - JUNE, 1969

- Eastern Meadowlark: Christmas Count total was high with 86; first spring Mar 16 Catskill (JB).
- Blackbirds: Mar 17 and 18 marked the widespread arrival of red-winged blackbirds and common grackles, somewhat later than usual.
- Baltimore Oriole: one very early - Mar 30 Old Chatham (ER).
- Rusty Blackbird: earliest Mar 20 Gr (CK); max 40 Mar 24 Old Chatham (ER).
- Brown-headed Cowbird: an Albany roost built up steadily through the winter to a max of 2500 in late Feb and early Mar (PPW).
- Cardinal: Christmas Count total almost double that of the previous year.
- Dickcissel: one Feb 20 Gr (Harry Ketcham).
- Evening Grosbeak: present in fairly large numbers through Dec; disappeared gradually, with only occasional reports thereafter.
- Purple Finch: very scarce; small Christmas Count total of 14; scattered reports of only 1-3 thereafter.
- House Finch: dwindled in Dec at Nisk feeder, with the last observed Dec 23 (RPY).
- PINE GROSBEEK: widely reported throughout period by many observers in many areas; Christmas Count, including a flock of 60 (scc), was 326; flocks of 10-15 often seen; other max 35 Dec 11 Gr (CK), and 35-40 Jan 5 (L&VB).
- HOARY REDPOLL: one Mar 7 Poestenkill (Robert and Nancy Brown); two Feb 23 Schenectady (Robert and Shirley Phillips) - all individuals described as being very white and appearing strikingly different from common redpolls.
- Common Redpoll: abundant, with large flocks of more than 100 reported at several feeders, as well as other reports.
- Pine Siskin: present throughout period - several feeder reports, max 20 Alplaus (fide HFB).
- Am. Goldfinch: common.
- Red Crossbill: two near Chatham Jan 15 (Murray Giddings).
- White-winged Crossbill: one at feeder several days in Jan Old Chatham (John and Mary Hillen).
- Rufous-sided Towhee: two Dec 29 (goc); two feeder reports - pair Dec to Jan 6 Earlton (Lillian Halloran), and one throughout Feb and Mar Nisk (GA).
- Sparrows: Savannah: one Dec 22 (srcc); one Dec 29 (tcc); one Mar 2 upper Hudson (bsh); two Mar 29 Old Chatham (ER); one Mar 30 (BH,GB).
- Vesper: one Dec 29 (tcc); one Jan 5 Schodack (L&VB).
- Slate-colored Junco: frequent feeder reports, scarce elsewhere; migration weakly evident last week on Mar.
- OREGON JUNCO: one "pink-sided" described as follows: "Gray hood, especially gray underneath, but with brownish feathers in the gray on the back of neck and head, back quite brown, underparts clear white, sides with a very noticeable rusty or pale orange wash, at least $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in width, contrasting with hood and wing color," at feeder E. Greenbush (PPW).
- Chipping: one Dec 29 (tcc); first spring Mar 22 E. Greenbush (Monte Gruett).
- Field: several winter feeder reports.
- White-crowned: four Dec reports; two Mar 2, in song, WR (bsh).
- White-throated: wintered in low numbers.
- Fox: 14 Christmas Count total (none previous year); migrants from Mar 20; max 60 near SCR Mar 30 (hmbc, mob).
- Swamp: first spring Mar 19 Ghent (P&GE).
- Lapland Longspur: four reports Dec 22, max five Sugar Hill Rd near Rexford (EH, R. McCullough); one Jan 12 (hmbc).
- Snow Bunting: throughout period, usually in small flocks up to 25; two large flocks - 180 Dec 25 Mdale (bsh), and 150 Feb 26 Gr(CK).

1969 FEDERATION MEETING

Lillian C. Stoner

Delegate

The members of the Cortland Bird Club not only planned well, but they successfully carried out all the plans to make the 22nd annual meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs of May 22-25, 1969 at Cortland a very successful meeting.

Upon registering we each received a large blue folder with two bluebirds pictured on the cover. Inside the folder there were helpful maps and the Federation program in the club's publication called THE CHICKADEE. Also in the folder were three beautiful pictures, 9½ by 12½, in color. My folder contained the following pictures: bobwhite, scarlet tanager and American redstart with a yellow-throated warbler. These were reproductions of paintings done by Arthur Singer.

Max Wheat, conservation chairman, presided at the well attended conservation meeting on Friday evening at the Holiday Inn, which was the headquarters for the convention. Max Wheat retires this year as chairman of the conservation committee. He has done such an efficient job, not only on this committee for years, but in informing members of conservation bills in the legislature.

Our president, Dr. David Peakall, spoke briefly as he welcomed us to this Federation meeting. He was followed by two other speakers who had been listed for this meeting.

The officers and delegates from 30 clubs attended the Saturday morning council meeting.

Dorothy McIlroy, who retires at this time as editor of THE KING-BIRD, reported that about 600 copies of each issue had been mailed out. She announced that Joseph W. Taylor of Rochester will serve as the new editor. Mrs. McIlroy received a vote of thanks for all her work. She has served as editor since January 1, 1965.

Ed Somers read his report as treasurer and Ken Niven in reporting on the budget for 1970 said that there was a slight increase in most items for next year so that the budget totaled \$3325.

There was quite a little discussion about a gift toward the purchase of Eldorado Shores, which is a Nature Conservancy project. We had been told more about this at the conservation meeting, when Dr. Fritz Scheider of Syracuse presented a slide talk on this area. He explained the slides which had been prepared by Dr. Walter Spofford. He told how this is about the only remaining natural shoreline on Lake Ontario. Many species of shore birds were pictured feeding at the edge of the water, some of these are seldom seen in any other part of the state. Financial help is needed now to complete the purchase of this desirable naturalist area. Over \$30,000 of the \$36,000+ needed has been collected by Nature Conservancy.

A motion was made and seconded that the Federation contribute \$100 to the Eldorado Shores project. An attempt to increase the contribution to \$260 (which is ten percent of the uncollected a-

mount) did not pass but the original motion for \$100 passed. A motion was also made and seconded that the Federation contribute \$25 to the Hudson Scenic Preservation Society, and was not passed, but referred to the conservation committee.

The reward for finding fledgling hawks in the nest, not only red-tailed but hawks of all kinds, was increased to \$10 for the property owner and \$5 additional to the club of the one who discovered the nest. Send information to Herbert Saltford, Poughkeepsie.

Dick Sloss, by-laws committee chairman presented the amendment which had previously been sent to all clubs. This pertained to the Internal Revenue requirements for the continuation of the corporation's tax-exempt status. This amendment of the certificate of incorporation was voted on and passed.

A suggestion came from the following committee of Dick Sloss, Allan Klonick and Harold Mitchell that we consider appointing three regional vice-presidents or regional directors. They would not necessarily be expected to advance to the presidency, but would be expected to keep in touch with the clubs in their territory and help them in any way that they could. This might stimulate more interest and activity in the clubs. Advance notice of this idea will come to clubs so that they can instruct their delegates how to vote on this at the next council meeting.

Ruth Williams, membership chairman, presented names of two new clubs and a list of new members who wished to join the Federation, all were voted in as members.

After some discussion it was decided to continue the affiliation with both the National Audubon Society and Wildlife Conservation Council.

Max Wheat's report was accepted with especial emphasis that the Federation is opposed to thermal pollution.

The following nominating committee was appointed: Ruth Williams, Ken Niven and John Bull.

An invitation was extended by the North Country Bird Club for the next annual meeting of the Federation. This 1970 meeting will be held at Watertown in September.

The following new officers were elected for 1970:

President -	Dr. E. M. Reilly, Jr. Old Chatham 12136
Vice-president -	Mrs Alice Ulrich 193 LaSalle Avenue, Buffalo 14214
Cor. Secretary -	Miss Ada Carter Morrisville 13408
Rec. Secretary -	Mrs. Mary Ann Sanderlin 505 Bay Road, Webster 14580
Treasurer -	Edward M. Somers Box 7273, Capitol Station, Albany 12224

The council meeting adjourned at 1 pm. from the auditorium of the Science Building on the campus of the State University of New York at Cortland. Immediately preceding the afternoon meeting a group picture was taken in the auditorium. Exhibits of birds, fishes and mammals were on display in the foyer outside this room and in nearby lecture rooms and laboratories of the Biology Department.

Dr. John A. Gustafson presided at the afternoon paper session at which the following program was presented:

1. Effects of DDT on Birds, with Special Reference to the Blue Goose (Chen caerulescens). -Michael Harvey
2. Breeding Range Extension of Goshawk and Evening Grosbeak in New York State. -John Bull
3. Some of our Common Birds Seen in Distant Lands. -Lillian C. Stoner
4. Natural Areas of Long Island and Long-range Planning. -Edgar M. Reilly
5. The Last Remnant of the Hempstead Plains. -A.J. Dignan
6. The Problem in America. -Martin Borko
7. Early American Writers and Birds. -Maxwell C. Wheat, Jr.

At the banquet which was held in one of the college buildings, toastmaster Dr. Gustafson first introduced Mr. Richard Jones, the president of the university who cordially greeted and welcomed us as did Mrs. Janet Greenfield, president of the Cortland County Bird Club.

Dr. David Peakall told some of the business that had been done at the council meeting, as the recording secretary's minutes were not read. Among those in attendance that Dr. Peakall mentioned were Winston Brockner and his wife who now live in Colorado, but formerly lived in Buffalo when he and Dr. Gordon M. Meade started the Federation.

The John Elliott award of \$50, which is given for the best article in last year's KINGBIRD was presented by Dr. Reilly jointly to Dr. Allen Benton and Herbert Tucker for their article, "Weather and Purple Martin Mortality in Western New York."

Dr. Allen Keast of Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, who was the speaker at the banquet gave a very interesting talk with a 40-minute film and colored slides on the subject "Desert Australia." He is an Australian-born naturalist, and the author of several books on Australia and its wildlife. He spoke of the aboriginies, and of birds including the coastal parakeet, and of the dingo, wallaby and kangaroo, and also something of the growth on the desert.

Brief Protestant and Catholic services were held early Sunday morning at Holiday Inn before groups formed for field trips. On our homeward journey, we watched Dr. Gustafson band a bluebird which he had taken out of one of the many bluebird boxes the Cortland club had put up in one area for its bluebird project. We

also stopped at Sherburne at the place that was formerly called a State Game Farm, but now is completely changed. It is now named to honor the former director and is known as the Roger Nature Education Center. This is the first New York State Conservation Department Nature Center. Superintendent Weeks spoke at the main building in which he told something of this 500-acre nature center, which is open to visitors. The many picnic tables and nature trails, as well as the ducks on the pond and other birds seen and heard were of interest to great numbers of people who came here to enjoy the beautiful center.

I was again glad to serve as one of the delegates at the annual meeting of the Federation. As you know we are entitled to three delegates from the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club, so I hope that more of you will be able to attend next year's meeting in Watertown.

* * * * *

GULL BANDING ON THE VINEYARD - II

(Continued from the March-April issue)

Robert P. Yunick

I mentioned the terns to Grace Meleney and she told me that she had banded them in that colony for many years and had had some 15-year returns as well as recoveries below the equator. She revealed a very neat way to catch the adults and let me borrow four of her traps. Next morning, Anne wanted to explore some of the local shops, so I drove to Sengekontacket and banded terns. I could not locate any of the least tern nests, and had to settle for common terns.

Their nests were on the ground in the soft sand amid a very sparse, low grass cover. The sand was liberally sprinkled with shells - mostly scallops. In shallow depressions, sometimes crudely lined with a few twigs or grass, were two eggs very much like herring gull eggs, but smaller. After I found several nests I placed the chicken-wire baskets measuring about 4x14x20 inches over them. Each basket was propped with a light twig facing with the wind. When the traps were set, I returned to the car and watched. Shortly the terns began returning and some settled on their nests. They landed into the wind and payed little attention to the propped open end of the basket. Since terns take off into the wind, my appearance from the car caused them to get off the nest into the wind bringing them to the back of the basket. The jiggling of the delicately supported basket caused the twig to fall away and the birds were trapped. Simple indeed - provided the terns cooperate.

This sounds very easy and effortless, but it took most of the morning to catch five common terns. In the hand these birds were very attractive. It is a rare opportunity to inspect in the hand a creature which in its lifetime travels millions of miles in migration and its daily quest for food. The long pointed wings, swallow-like tail, black cap, delicate grey mantle, black-tipped red bill and fiery red-orange tiny webbed feet were all distinctive. One cannot help but admire them. A band was applied and then with a guttural croak and several strong pumping sweeps of its powerful wings, this aerial master was once more in its element, free

to roam the world's oceans. (Since Part I appeared in the last issue, notice has been received from the Fish and Wildlife Service that one of these very same terns mentioned above was recovered near New Amsterdam, British Guyana - my first South American recovery!).

On Thursday we spent part of the day at Katama swimming in the surf. While there I took a five-mile walk to and from Norton's Point. I went through a small herring gull and common tern colony. Only a few gulls were caught. The highlight was the sighting of a short-eared owl. The bird fluttered by obviously struggling with its prey, and settled across the inlet apparently returning to a nest. This intrigued me, because Mabel and Grace had banded three young short-ears in this area. I marked the spot of the downed bird.

When we were leaving, I drove round the inlet to where the owl had gone down. I parked the car and walked the beach grass toward the water. I came to the dune edge and peeked over and there peeking back at me from inside a duck blind was short-ear! I stood not knowing what to do, as this bird in its inimitable way tried to stare me down with its intent piercing gaze. Figuring that it was an immature, I decided to run at it and try to capture it. Well, I was too late - about a week too late, for the bird, though clumsy, was able to fly and it made a cumbersome, but effective escape. Inside the blind was a nest and two freshly killed meadow voles. The earlier heavy prey apparently had already been devoured.

The most interesting and memorable banding took place on Friday.. All week we had talked about going to Muskeget Island - halfway between the Vineyard and Nantucket. However, a lack of convenient boating arrangements and rumors of gull control measures on Muskeget made us decide on something closer and surer. We decided on Cape Poge. Unfortunately Bill had been put out of commission by an injured knee that necessitated crutches and later surgery. He surely hated to miss Cape Poge.

We gathered at Mabel's about 9 am. where Mabel, her son and grandson, Grace and her two nephews and I piled into the Jeep wagon and drove to Edgartown. At the pier amid a splash of expensive yachts we boarded the "On Time", a barge that shuttled across the channel that separated the Vineyard from Chappaquiddick Island to the east. The fare was 10¢ per person, 50¢ per car and 75¢ for horses. Double rates applied from 7:30 pm. to midnight, and \$2 per car from midnight to 7:30 am. Here was another of the island's quaint spectacles.

On Chappaquiddick we drove a paved road to a dirt cut off and finally onto the dunes. Here we went into four-wheel drive and ground our way through the soft sand that at times was almost axle deep. Finally we saw gulls overhead. We had to stop to cool the engine. Overhead the gulls swarmed and the air was full of their excited chatter. It was music to our ears. On the ground there were gulls running everywhere, but as soon as we stopped and got out, the running young disappeared quickly.

It was a magnificent day. The sky was cloudless and intensely blue. A gentle east breeze offered comfort from the sun. The banding here was entirely different from that at Lobsterville. The dunes were open with sparse clumps of juniper, cedar, beach plum and areas of beach grass. Due to a lack of continuous cover,

and the hot sun on the sand, the young gulls tended to hide under the low shrubs, so that one walked from clump to clump and searched underneath. Occasionally there were tangles of wild rose and poison ivy and these held gulls also. Of course, if one wanted them, there were some runners as well, and one could get all the exercise one wanted pursuing these. This I did until I learned to stalk the hiding gulls. I found that this was the secret of the experienced people I was with. I had wondered all week how these retirees managed to get as many or more gulls than I did, and I never saw one of them running. Although having a nephew or a grandson gathering gulls helped one's totals, it still stood that the slow easy approach produced results and led to less fatigue in the hot sun.

Everyone had gulls because they were so numerous. Sometimes I caught three or four in a clump. Manipulating the bands with four gulls at hand was a problem, but having too many birds is usually a pleasant problem.

It was easy to tell the boundaries of the colony, because as one came near the edge, the young gulls not only became harder to find, but the umbrella overhead thinned out and the noise level subsided. This colony had only herring gulls. Its mortality appeared very low and there were very few unhatched eggs. There were numerous nests on the dunes mostly beneath cedars and junipers. Apparently the colony had had a successful season.

Back at the Jeep we drove further up the cape until we came to the Cape Poge light. To my surprise we found cottages on what I thought was a deserted cape. Two cottages were occupied. Here the dunes were more heavily covered with beach grass and knee-high poison ivy, with occasional clumps of beach plum. The gulls hid in the grass and we almost stepped on a number of them. We knew there were black-backs present by their hoarse calls amid the chorus of hundreds of herring gulls - a chorus so loud that a person 50 yards away could not hear another's shouts. On the beach were groups of regally attired adults. We combed the same general area under the umbrella over and over again finding unbanded gulls where we had just been. These gulls sat very tightly. We had agreed to band only the right leg so that one need only check that one leg to see whether a gull was already banded. Some of the gulls sat so tightly that one could pull out the right leg, affix the band and put the leg back under the bird without the bird moving. All bands had to be placed rightside up to make it easier for subsequent telescope viewers to read their numbers at piers and garbage dumps. This telescope technique leads to a considerable number of recovery reports. It's difficult enough to do without having to stand on one's head to read an upside down band.

We ate lunch and at this point I learned that the one can of soda I had brought was going to be wholly inadequate. Already I was very thirsty and used the beverage sparingly to wash down my lunch. We drove around the hook of the cape to a large salt pond. Here we encountered well developed brush standing four to five feet tall, large clumps of wild rose and generally thicker habitat. We found even more black-backs at this colony. I chased a number of them and caught fewer than half those I pursued. This final burst of vigorous exercise coupled with my thirst and exposure to the sun were enough to exhaust me. At about 2-2:30 I quit - I couldn't move. I marvelled at how my 60 or 70-year old companions continued until about 3:15, while I lay in the Jeep

out of the sun. I had to keep myself from thinking about water, for I found myself swallowing hard and wanting to grab anything near me and drink it regardless what it was. It must be horrible to die of thirst.

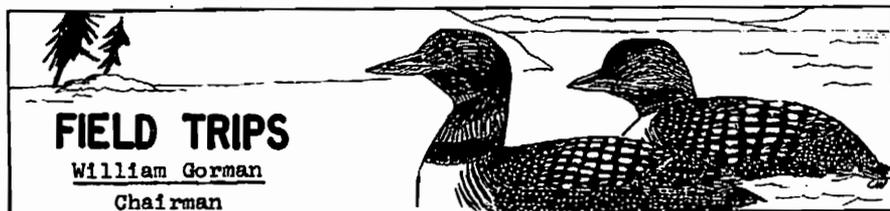
On the way back we flushed several short-ears from the heaths, but found no nests at the flushing sites. We stopped once more at the first colony and caught a few more herring gulls. My take was 156 birds of which 132 were herring gulls. I had the most birds, but Grace and her nephews exceeded my herring gull take by about ten. Again I had to hand it to this former school teacher. Years of experience had taught her how to pace herself at this game and this was an experience I'd long remember, because my thirst burned stronger than ever. By now my sunburn was beginning to get to me also. Despite the greasy lotion, the sky had been so clear and the sun so brilliant that I was well done. There was more to gull banding than met the eye. In reality it was a survival test.

We struggled back along the dunes to the dirt road and to the ferry. Once back on the Vineyard we headed for the nearest drug store. How precious the wet stuff looked. I downed two sodas and two glasses of water like it was going into a dry sponge. In a half hour back at the cottage, I downed four more drinks and soaked up a welcomed shower. I regreased myself with suntan lotion.

We had dinner with the Peppers, and from my color one would think that I was the lobster on the menu. We capped off our stay with a visit to the Gay Head cliffs to watch the sunset illuminate the beautiful multicolored clay cliffs that rise out of the sea. We basked in the afterglow of a certainly memorable day and vacation. The sky was still cloudless. It had been beautiful. We bid the Peppers farewell at their lodging and headed for our cottage. More water was consumed. In four hours my fluid intake had been over five quarts.

We bedded the children, packed and collapsed into bed. Next morning we were on board the 6:30-am. ferry bound for home. After a most pleasurable week in the open clear places listening to the wind and gulls we had to once again acclimate to traffic and all the other advantages and marvels of civilization. Perhaps the many happenings of the week helped tranquilize our journey home on the limited-access highway. At 1 pm. we were home and it was all over, but the unpacking and the memories.

(At some future date - banding on Nantucket and some additional experiences on the Vineyard.)



FIELD TRIPS

William Gorman

Chairman

it certainly foiled the waterfowl, to say nothing of the would-be bird watchers. Both lakes were completely frozen over except for a few patches of open water, furnishing further evidence of our late spring. The rain and fog added to the difficulties of the trip.

A total of only 21 different species was seen. Seventeen ducks were counted - mallard, common goldeneye and common merganser. All of which must have set some kind of dubious record for this trip. No unusual species were encountered except for the six persistent but bedraggled observers.

-Sam Madison

VOSBURGH SWAMPAPRIL 19

Vosburgh Swamp is in a mile-long depression nestled among low hills near the west bank of the Hudson River about 25 miles south of Albany. A round-trip walk of about a mile and a half, skirting the northeast edge of the marsh, and also passing through woods and fields and along the edge of the river, is apt to turn up a long and varied bird list in the spring of the year. On our scheduled date, though, we were accompanied by spring showers, which developed into a steady downpour during the latter part of the walk, producing poor conditions for bird watching.

Nine observers showed up and we did manage to find 40 species of birds, including Canada goose, seven species of ducks, osprey and common gallinule. There may have been brant far out on the river, but the visibility was too poor to be sure. A nice sight was a group of early swallows, all quite tame, flying back and forth low over a small pond: 20 tree swallows, six rough-wings and one barn were in the group.

-Paul F. Connor

CHRISTMAN SANCTUARYAPRIL 27

Christman Sanctuary lived up to its name on Sunday, April 27th when the group found the neighborhood dogs safely inside and only birds and birders present. Only the common residents - no blue-birds - were enjoying the feeders. We wanted to see what might be on the ponds, so we walked along the tracks. Red-wings were balancing on sprays of pussy willow, song and swamp sparrows sang from the brush and ruby-crowned kinglets played tag high in the trees.

Capping a bare dead trunk was a large bird. Even at a distance it did not sit like a hawk and scopes proved it to be a green heron. It was a good view, but he was so quiet that we were glad to find another in motion. This one flew from the swamp into a tree, walked the branches, extending his neck as he searched the ground for his breakfast. The light was just right to observe all his actions and the beauty of his markings. Our attention was then divided between absorbing the lively song of a brown thrasher while we decided that the hawk was an immature red-tail. Later he was joined by an adult whose tail flashed red as he wheeled in the bright sky. Water was high in the ponds, and mallards, blacks and wood ducks took off at our approach.

Probably each of us had wondered if a train would come as we were busy with our scopes. In the distance one was heard and we move discreetly to the siding to await its passing. The breeze and dust of its motion were not conducive to counting the cars, but it was a long one! The birds were disturbed only momentarily and settled down again.

As we turned back, a pileated woodpecker flew overhead but too far away to afford a good view. Too often we see where he has been, so to know he is still in the area was rewarding. A towhee had been heard as we walked, but no one could spot him. As the list was being taken, there sat a handsome male beside the parked cars. Our list totaled 35 species with no large number of any one kind, so spring had not really arrived despite the beauty of the day.

We were sorry if some people were confused by the transition to Daylight Time! We hoped they were afield somewhere even if they had not joined us for the day was too beautiful to be missed. The group included Gus Angst, Ruth Bates, Ed, Emmy, Bruce and Mark Koch, Betty Hicks, and we were happy to welcome two new members: Douglass and Judy Allen and their guests, Peter and Dianne Leeds.
-Betty Hicks

BIRDBANDING AT VISCHER FERRY

MAY 10

A cold and blustery May 10 did not deter 23 eager bird watchers from showing up at Vischer Ferry where Bob Yunick and Will Merritt were banding such bright spring arrivals as Baltimore orioles, rose-breasted grosbeaks, wood thrushes and various warblers. Birds and banders put on their usual excellent performances: the rose-breasted grosbeak, when described as a "biter" obligingly took a chunk out of the bander's finger. The kids, young and old, were rewarded with the treat of holding a bird on its back in their hand, and the adult audience was advised on some of the subtler points of bird identification such as the short tenth primary on the warbling vireo and the notched sixth primary on the least flycatcher. There was even a first for Bob Yunick (in the nets, that is), a yellow-throated vireo, which one club member (name withheld on request) identified as a chat.

On one of his trips from the nets, Bob came back with a "bee bee kook" - abbreviated for black-billed cuckoo, we soon learned. This bird was either quite unafraid of humans or else lethargic with the cold; it rested cooperatively in the palm of the hand for photographing and even perched obligingly on a pair of binoculars raised to a bird watcher's eyes.

For those who took the time to glance at the sky, an osprey, red-tailed hawk and two blue-winged teal were seen. Other highlights among the banded birds included a brown thrasher, ruby-crowned kinglet, yellow, magnolia and myrtle warblers, plus northern waterthrushes, yellowthroats and redstarts, and a white-crowned sparrow.
-L. Brown

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THE 1969 CONVENTION IN CORTLAND

Harvey Spivak

Delegate

With only 1500 breeding bald eagles left south of the Canadian border, it scares many people to think the number of eagles is still rapidly declining. Only half as many active nests as there were in the 40's remain today. The Audubon Society's slogan,

"Don't shoot any big brown bird," does not seem to be catching on very well. About two-thirds of the dead bald eagles found recently had been shot. Furthermore, almost all the victims of guns were less than one-half year old.

It was with these discouraging remarks and with a well made film about the bald eagle that Stanley Quickmire, the Audubon Society's northeast field representative, concluded the first meeting of the convention of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs. This Friday night conservation meeting included discussions of a bill restricting the sport of falconry and the program to save Eldorado Shores. About \$30,000 out of a required \$56,000 has been raised to acquire a fine piece of shore line on Lake Ontario.

Saturday afternoon was devoted to an interesting technical paper session. The papers included a report by Michail Harvey of Cornell about predation on blue goose eggs, and a talk on "Some of our Common Birds Seen in Distant Lands" by Lillian Stoner.

John Bull spoke of the range extensions of goshawks and evening grosbeaks. Surprisingly, evening grosbeaks were almost unknown in New York State before 1947. Since then, the nesting of these birds has become a commoner and commoner occurrence in this state. Goshawks now seem to be replacing Cooper's hawks because the Cooper's hawk feeds on insectivorous birds (flickers and others) and thereby receive a great concentration of pesticides. Goshawks, on the other hand, eat grain-consumers (such as quail) and are not so affected by poisons.

All of Sunday (rainy, unfortunately) was given over to field trips to Sapsucker Woods and other nearby areas.

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PLEASE DON'T FEED EVENING GROSBEAKS

There was a time when evening grosbeaks were a comparatively rare species hereabouts, but it appears now that that time is becoming - or already has become - but a happy memory. For the once rare species is becoming so abundant that, instead of a curiosity, it is rapidly achieving the status of a pest, to be classed, in my opinion, in the same general category with pigeons, starlings, house sparrows, cowbirds and others like them.

It is my experience that, when the evening grosbeaks take over at a feeding station, most of the more desirable species are crowded out. Consider my camp feeder, for example. A rough est-

imate indicates the grosbeaks cost me somewhere between one and five dollars in sunflower seed to feed five or ten cents' worth to chickadees, purple finches etc. When the grosbeaks are joined by the ubiquitous cowbirds, there's little left for me to do but give up feeding.

Prejudiced? Of course I am. I don't just love all wildlife; I have my favorites, and I prefer them to what I consider less desirable things. Few bird lovers nowadays like pigeons or house sparrows, but they are birds - where draw the line? My own conclusion is simple: when a species becomes so abundant or parasitic that it interfere with my enjoyment of a natural balance of wildlife, it's a pest and should be treated as such.

-Barry Havens

OCEAN-FRONT PRESERVE FOR NEW YORK?

Secretary Hickel has scored a "first" in the proposal that a National Recreation Area be created around New York harbor. It would be the Federal Government's first major urban recreation center and would take in most of the remaining beach and marshland along the area's ocean-front from Queens, Brooklyn and Staten Island in New York to Sandy Hook in New Jersey. Much of the proposed acreage is already publicly owned.

The general proposal clearly merits conservationists' support. Among other things, federal status could help protect some of these unspoiled areas from threats now hanging over them. There is a plan to put public housing on undeveloped Breezy Point, Queens, and there is pressure to extend Kennedy airport's runways into the city's prized Jamaica Bay Sanctuary.

On the other hand, the wrong kind of recreational development could be destructive too. Whereas a sandy beach may be able to withstand mass recreation uses, fragile Jamaica Bay's best recreational use will remain just what it is today - a wildlife sanctuary.

-Audubon CONSERVATION GUIDE

LONG PROTEST

Many people outside the area don't realize that oil is still leaking and causing ocean pollution in the Santa Barbara area. Some rare elephant seals on San Miguel island now have been found dead, lying in pools of crude oil. So to Santa Barbara the issue of drilling is still very much alive and California's Senator Alan Cranston has a petition from some 100,000 residents of the area, asking a drilling halt. It's so long that it reaches from his office to the Senate Interior subcommittee hearing room.

And on another front, DDT and the other "hard" pesticides should be banned across the country within the next three to five years. That's the personal view of an assistant secretary of the Interior, Leslie L. Glasgow. He then told a Senate subcommittee hearing a couple of weeks ago that he thought the Interior Department would favor a ban but he couldn't speak officially as yet. We trust public opinion now will indicate that it is time for Interior and Agriculture as well to start working toward a ban.

-Audubon CONSERVATION GUIDE

NEXT ISSUE

Material for the next issue is needed before July 19. Please forward articles or notes on your birding experiences to the editor. If you have a favorite birding area that you would like to introduce to others in the Club, why not write an article on it.

(Issue assembled June 15, 1969)

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AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS 1969-70

Hazel F. Bundy
Program Co-chairman

Our Audubon Wildlife Film series has been set for the coming season, with all the films to be given at the Niskayuna High School auditorium. Although it became necessary to hold the last film last year at a different school, we have every expectation that all plans will work out as scheduled this year.

Ruth Bates, co-chairman, is in charge of ticket sales again this year. Mary Healy has agreed to undertake to be our "publicity agent", a post which Anne Yunick filled so capably last year. We appreciate very much the many hours these members are willing to devote to this program. And we want to thank the other people too numerous to be named, who have helped with the many necessary details.

Here is the schedule:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Title</u>
Wed., Oct. 1	Howard L. Orians	For Generations to Come
Wed., Oct. 22	Earl L. Hilfiker	Southwest Holiday U.S.A.
Wed., Feb. 18	Alvah W. Sanborn	Allagash Country
Thurs. Mar. 26	Eben McMillan	Central California's Coastal Plain
Wed., Apr. 29	Robert W. Davison	The Vanishing Sea

Each member of HMBC will again receive publicity and an order form several weeks before the first film. We hope you will order tickets for the series, and indeed hope also that you will urge friends to attend. We would like to increase our number of subscribers if possible, and would appreciate any help that any of you can give toward this goal. As before, admission is by season ticket.

The following members will be glad to have phone calls in regard to tickets: Ruth Bates, 439-4695 (after school hours); Esly Hallenbeck, 346-8579; Mary Healy, 346-2757; and Anne Yunick, 377-0146.

* * * * *



As some of you know, this is my last report - a sort of fare-well address as your president. By the time this message reaches you, I shall be about 1000 miles west of here, getting set to teach (about chemistry, not birds!) at Coe College in Cedar Rapids Iowa. Because this is my last report, and therefore somewhat special, I will cover more ground than in some of my previous reports to you.

To begin with, THE bird club - OUR bird club - the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club - has changed a great deal in the seven years I have known it. The membership has approximately doubled. The acquisition of a sanctuary - while still incomplete - seems near reality. The number of field trips has about doubled and a fine start has been made in acquainting young people with nature through a revitalized youth activities committee. The number and experience of our observers has increased tremendously since 1962, as has our knowledge of the entire 11-county area we think of as "home" to Hudson-Mohawk birders. Two activities which have changed somewhat less - the publication of FEATHERS and our Audubon nature film series - continue to do an excellent job in stimulating all of us and drawing us together as members of the HMBC.

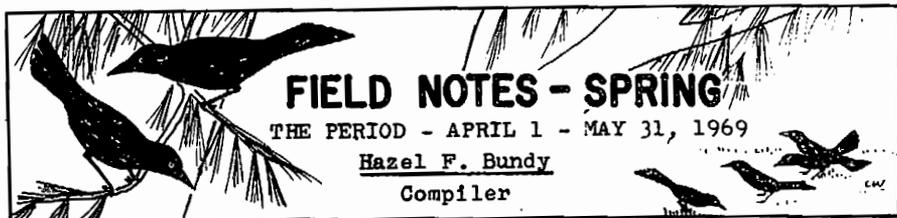
Perhaps the most astonishing thing is that dues over the same seven years have NOT changed at all! All of this has been possible only through the efforts of some very diligent and dedicated members - friends of ours who have been willing to put in time and energy on behalf of their love of nature - and the bird club. We owe these friends a great debt of gratitude.

Our greatest need at this time is for other members to become involved - to work on some of our present projects or to begin new ones. There is so much that needs doing! As a starter, both the editor of FEATHERS and the program committee chairman have expressed a desire to retire soon from their positions after several years of meritorious service above and beyond the call of duty. We need replacements. The youth activities program has an active slide presentation program going, but needs additional people willing to present it. The field trip committee needs suggestions on new field trips to offer, and needs members willing to assist in planning or leading field trips. We need members to work on better publicity for our club to the 250,000 or so area residents who do not know there is a local bird club. We need members to work individually or to assist our conservation committee in speaking out on local and national conservation issues. We need members willing to encourage friends whom they know are interested in nature and in birds to become new members. And so on..... Put your hands and mind to work in the direction in which your heart lies.

It has been a great privilege and pleasure to have served as your president these past two years. It has been even more of a privilege - and fun - to have met so many of you as friends, to have shared in common experiences in the lovely country around us, and to have learned so much from it and from you.

Thank you all.

* * * * *



The average temperature for the month of April was about normal. However, temperatures fluctuated widely: the first three days were cooler than usual; the next two weeks brought beautiful summer-like weather with warm, dry days; then came a week of below-average temperatures, with a heavy rainfall of 1.65 inches on the 22nd and 23rd; warm, sunny weather prevailed during the last few days. Total rainfall was 0.74 inches more than average (Albany Airport weather data). May was generally warm, and drier than usual, with 0.72 inches less rainfall than average.

The early warmth produced foliage at an unusually early period, for the second consecutive year. With few exceptions the major migration movement could be described as "average". Waterfowl moved through faster than usual, and were disappointingly absent on the day of the Century Run, May 17. Notable pluses included large numbers of migrating blackpoll warblers and a very good flight of slate-colored juncos. The late and heavy finch migration brought large numbers of evening grosbeaks, and numerous common redpolls and pine siskins. On the minus side - it seemed to several observers that the warbler migration, with the exception of the blackpolls, was incredibly poor. However, judging from the data available, the following warblers were reported a little more frequently than in the previous year: magnolia, black-throated blue, blackburnian and prairie, with the numbers of reports of other warblers about the same.

The highlight of the period was a Wilson's phalarope, the first ever recorded in this area. A report of a red-bellied woodpecker was the second ever reported in the area. Other observations of particular interest were a large flock of brant at an early date, a black-bellied plover and two willet.

Observers cited more than once: (GA)- Gustave Angst; (GB)- Guy Bartlett; (HFB)- Hazel Bundy; (L&VB)- Lee and Virginia Burland; (J&BB)- James and Barbara Bush; (JC)- Juanita Cook; (PC)- Paul Connor; (P&GE)- Paul and Georgia Erlenbach; (M&AG)- Murray and Alice Giddings; (MLG)- Murray Gardler; (MDG)- Monte Gruett; (EH)- Esly Hallenbeck; (CK)- Clarissa Ketcham; (MK)- Marcia Kent; (E&HL)- Edward and Helen Long; (RMCC)- Robert McCullough; (PMcG)- Peggy McGuirk; (WDM)- Will Merritt, Jr.; (P&MM)- Philip and Mary Mickle;

(ER)- Edgar Reilly, Jr. (WBS)- Walton Sabin; (BRS)- Benton Seguin;
 (HHS)- Harvey Spivak; (PPW)- Peter Wickham; (RPY)- Robert Yunick;
 (bsh)- Guy Bartlett, Benton Seguin and Barrington Havens.
 Area compilers: Rena Dodd, Betty Laros and Clarissa Ketcham.

Abbreviations: AR- Alcove Reservoir; BCM- Black Creek Marsh;
 CM- Castleton Marsh; CP- Central Park; EG- East Greenbush; Gr-
 Greenville; IL- Indian Ladder; Mdale- Meadowdale; NWW- Niskayuna
 Widewaters; Nisk- Niskayuna; RL- Round Lake; SL- Saratoga Lake;
 SCR- Stony Creek Reservoir; VFG- Vischer Ferry Game Management
 Area; (gobc)- Greene County Bird Club record; (hmhc)- Hudson-
 Mohawk Bird Club record.

LOONS - DUCKS

Common Loon: observed throughout period in several areas; last
 report May 30 SL (bsh).

Red-throated Loon: only one - Apr 27 SL (GB,BRS).

Red-necked Grebe: only one report - May 6 SL (GB,BRS).

Horned Grebe: max seven Apr 23 (GA); last May 6 SL (bsh).

Pied-billed Grebe: max 30 Apr 27 SL (GB,BRS); last report - a
 total of three May 17 Vosburgh and BCM (mob).

Double-crested Cormorant: one report - seven Apr 19 Lock 6
 Mohawk R (GB,BRS).

Great Blue Heron: seemed scarce; few reports.

Black-crowned Night Heron: three heard May 23 VFG (RPY).

American Bittern: seemed scarce; first report Apr 20 (bsh).

Least Bittern: only one - May 17 Vosburgh (PPW et al.)

Mute Swan: one Apr 8 RL (GB,BRS).

Canada Goose: max. - three flocks of 300+ Apr 29 Castleton (JC);
 last May 17 (GA,EH,RMcC).

BRANT: an unusually early report of 85 Apr 14 SL (MLG).

Snow Goose: five Apr 2 NWW (MLG); one Apr 6 BCM and one RL Apr
 8 (GB,BRS).

Mallard: a female with eight young May 30 SCR (GB,BRS).

Gadwall: a pair Apr 18 SCR (WBS); three Apr 20 SL (BRS, GB); two
 Apr 27 SCR (GB,BRS).

Pintail: throughout Apr; max 35 (MLG).

Green-winged Teal: max 125 NWW Apr (MLG); seen to May 3 (bsh),
 with the latest report of one May 22 CM (PPW).

American Widgeon: reported into May, last two May 12 SCR (PPW).

Shoveler: reported from Apr 1-20, with the max ten Apr 5 NWW (bsh)
 one report SL - pair Apr 6 (MLG).

Wood Duck: more numerous than usual; female and 12 ducklings on
 lawn May 20 Canaan (Gertrude Mapes).

Redhead: three Apr 4 and one Apr 6 NWW (MLG).

Ring-necked Duck: max 100 SCR (EH,RMcC); last Apr 27 (bsh).

Canvasback: missed entirely!

Scaup: both species observed, the greater to May 6, and the lesser
 to May 30 (bsh).

Common Goldeneye: last report - May 6 (bsh).

Bufflehead: last observation - three May 15 AR (PPW).

Oldsquaw: eight Apr 27 SL, and four May 6 SL (GB,BRS).

White-winged Scoter: one Apr 27, and four May 6 SL (GB,BRS).

Surf Scoter: one male, two females May 17 Galway L (David Harrison,
 John Steadwell).

Common Scoter: one May 6 SL (GB,BRS).

Ruddy Duck: six Apr 5 Collins L (EH); one Apr 20 AR (CK).

Hooded Merganser: Apr max 25 SCR (MLG); a female with eight young
 observed May 24 SCR (GB,BRS), and again May 28 (PPW).

Common Merganser: several Apr reports, with max 95 NWW (MLG);

last May 17 (WBS, et al.).
 Red-breasted Merganser: several Apr reports; last - May 17
 (MDG, et al.).

HAWKS - OWLS

Turkey Vulture: max 15 Canaan (AG).
 Goshawk: one Apr 5 Chatham (ER); one Apr 6 Saratoga (MLG).
 Sharp-shinned Hawk: singles on four dates - Apr 12 NWW (bsh),
 Apr 23 Kiskatom (J&BB), May 17 (J&BB) and May 30 Catskill (PFW).
 Cooper's Hawk: four scattered reports.
 Red-tailed Hawk: max nine Apr 4 (MDG).
 Red-shouldered Hawk: more migrants reported than for the past two
 springs.
 Broad-winged Hawk: last one May 27 EG (MDG).
 Rough-legged Hawk: last one Apr 24 Chatham (M&AG).
 Bald Eagle: one imm May 6 SCR (GB, BRS).
 Marsh Hawk: reported from four areas, including a pair carrying
 nesting material May 31 Mdale (bsh).
 Osprey: last one May 26 Catskill (JB).
 Sparrow Hawk: max 18 Apr 8 (GB, BRS).
 Bobwhite: reported from two areas in May.
 Virginia Rail: first Apr 12 BCM (bsh).
 Sora: first reports - Apr 26 (bsh), and two Apr 27 CM (PC).
 Common Gallinule: arr Apr 19 Vosburgh (hmhc); max 25 May 25
 Vosburgh (PPW).
 American Coot: few reports - Apr 4 Gr (Clare Ketcham) to May 17
 (PC et al.).
 Semipalmated Plover: one May 17 VFG (HFB, PMcG); three May 17 CM
 (PPW, et al.); eight May 20 and one May 24 CM (PPW).
BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER: one May 17 VFG (HFB, PMcG).
 Common Snipe: max 17 Apr 6 (HHS).
 Upland Plover: reported from three areas, including a new locale,
 EG Airport (PPW).
 Spotted Sandpiper: arr Apr 20 (bsh).
 Solitary Sandpiper: first one Apr 23 Kiskatom (J&BB); many May
 reports up to May 17 (mob).
 WILLET: two May 4 Ghent (P&GE).
 Greater Yellowlegs: arr Apr 19 Coxsackie (J&BB); last May 30
 Glenville Landfill, Scotia (RPY).
 Lesser Yellowlegs: Apr 19 (bsh) to May 11 Mdale (hmhc); few re-
 ports.
 Pectoral Sandpiper: reported on only one day, May 17, by two par-
 ties.
 White-rumped Sandpiper: May 17 (MDG, et al.).
 Least Sandpiper: reported from three areas May 15; max 30 May 17
 CM (PPW); last May 29 CM (PPW).
 Semipalmated Sandpiper: six May 17 (Bill Gorman et al.).
WILSON'S PHALAROPE: first ever for the area - located and identi-
 fied May 23 AR (WBS, et al.), described as having a long slen-
 der bill, gray back, dark neck stripe and unmarked wings.
 Great Black-backed Gull: last Apr 14 Castleton (JC).
 Bonaparte's Gull: Apr 13 to May 15 (bsh); max 16 Apr 23 (GA).
 Common Tern: Apr 20-May 24 (bsh).
 Black Tern: May 17 near Chatham (P&GE); May 17 (mob).
 Yellow-billed Cuckoo: May 17, 24 and 25 (hmhc).
 Black-billed Cuckoo: arr May 1 Glenville (EH); reported from six
 areas during May.
 Screech Owl: reports from Columbia Co, Greene Co and EG.
 Great Horned Owl: reports from five observers in five localities.
 Barred Owl: only one report - Apr 9 Chatham (ER).

Short-eared Owl: two Apr 19 and three Apr 20 Coxsackie (J&BB).

GOATSUCKERS - STARLING

Whip-poor-will: first heard May 15 SCR (HFB).

Common Night Hawk: first reports May 17 (mob).

Chimney Swift: first report - Apr 30 Spencertown (M&W Ulmer).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: arr Apr 27 (gebo).

Pileated Woodpecker: reported from approximately ten different areas.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER: second time ever to be recorded in the area - observed daily from Apr 27 to May 4 at Peters' residence near Gr (Mr & Mrs George Peters, CK, Madeline Rundell).

Red-headed Woodpecker: one May 10 Scotia (EH).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: several reports Apr 10-12; through May.

Eastern Kingbird: earliest Apr 26 Ghent (P&GE).

Great Crested Flycatcher: arr May 4 (PPW); numerous May 10-15.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: one May 15 Canaan (E&HL); May 17-24. - five banded VFG, a new spring record for the banding area (WDM, RPY).

Traill's Flycatcher: May 17 (mob) to May 25 Glenville (hmbo).

Least Flycatcher: first report - May 1 Catskill (JB).

Eastern Wood Pewee: arr May 15 Castleton (JC).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: May 13 Ghent (P&GE); May 17 (Betty Hicks, et al.).

Tree Swallow: nesting at VFG about five days behind last year, but still ahead of 1967 Or 1966 (RPY).

Bank Swallow: Glenville Landfill colony of about 360 holes double that of last year; Hetcheltown Road colony of 100 destroyed by excavating (RPY).

Rough-winged Swallow: one pair on early date of Apr 6 Ballston Spa (MLG); second report - six Apr 19 Vosburgh Swamp (hmbo).

Barn Swallow: arr Apr 12 Gr (Marianne Werner).

Cliff Swallow: arr Apr 29 Gr (CK) and Apr 30 Catskill (J&BB); nesting AR dam (MDG,PPW).

Purple Martin: 12 appeared Apr 24 at nesting site Glenville (RMcC); also reported near Saratoga (PPW,bsh).

Brown Creeper: seems scarce.

House Wren: general influx Apr 25-May 1.

Winter Wren: recorded once in April - Apr 15 Castleton (JC); several May reports - to May 17 (mob).

Carolina Wren: one May 23 S. Bethlehem (WBS).

Long-billed Marsh Wren: arr May 11 Mdale (hmbo).

Catbird: an unusually early report of Apr 9 Chatham (ER); many from May 2 on.

Brown Thrasher: report of one Apr 10 at the Wilson M. Powell Wildlife Sanctuary (P&GE) possibly a wintering bird; later reports beginning Apr 21 Gr (CK).

Robin: seemed scarce, with only eight banded in yard in Nisk compared to 17 in 1968 and 19 in 1967 (RPY).

Wood Thrush: a very early report of one Apr 9 Malden Bridge (George Woodward); other reports from Apr 21.

Hermite Thrush: arr Apr 9 - Nisk (RPY), and Malden Bridge (George Woodward).

Swainson's Thrush: early report of two Apr 28 in the Helderbergs (GA); others from May 10 VFG (WDM,RPY) to May 29 Hillside (JC).

Veery: early report Apr 30 (MM); several May 10 and 11.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: arr Apr 27 Gr (CK); subsequently, reports from three other areas.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: last seen May 15 Ghent (P&GE).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: from Apr 6 (bsh) to May 17 (mob).

- Water Pipit: more than usual - several Apr reports; a few May reports, with the last one May 16 Ghent (P&GE).
 Cedar Waxwing: only one Apr report - several Apr 9 Chatham (ER); still scarce the first part of May, with many reports during the last third of the month; abundant in late May, with 50 on many days (PPW).
 Shrike: one, species undetermined, Apr 1 Nisk (HHS).

VIREOS - WARBLERS

- Vireos: Yellow-throated: first one May 3 Ghent (P&GE); two banded May 10 VFG, the first ever banded in five years of banding in that area (RPY,WDM).
 Solitary: arr Apr 26,27 (four reports); last date May 17 (five reports).
 Red-eyed: first two reports - May 10 (bsh), and May 11 Castleton.
 Warbling: first one May 1 Schodack (L&VB).
 Warblers: Black-and-White: first reported Apr 27, 30 Gr (CK); max eight May 4 (PPW).
 Worm-eating: May 17 IL (mob); May 20 Ghent (P&GE).
 Golden-winged: arr May 7 Catskill (JB); reports from at least seven different areas through remainder of May.
 Blue-winged: first observed May 2 Gr (CK); reported by more observers and in more areas than in previous two years; one May 18 near Petersburg, elevation about 800 feet, seemed in unusual locale (PPW).
 Tennessee: first reports May 17 (mob), max six (HHS et al.); only other report - May 24 Glenville (hmbo).
 Nashville: arr Apr 26 Schodack and Chatham (L&VB,ER); last May 25 (bsh).
 Parula: May 3,4 (PPW); two May 4 CP (hmbo); three reports May 17 the last.
 Yellow: arr Apr 27 (RPY,bsh).
 Magnolia: first reported Apr 26 Ghent (P&GE), unusually early; several reports during May, with the last date May 31 Taborton area (MDG,et al.).
 Cape May: from May 9 Scotia (EH) to May 24 (bsh).
 Black-throated Blue: appeared Apr 26 when several were seen at Chatham (ER); a few more reports than previous year.
 Myrtle: arr Apr 18 Cannaan (E&HL); migration peaked May 2 and 3, as evidenced by max 25 May 2 (GA), and 33 banded May 2, 44 banded May 3 VFG (WDM,RPY); throughout May.
 Black-throated Green: first reports - one May 4 CP (hmbo), and three May 4 (PPW); throughout month.
 Cerulean: at usual locale Schodack Island May 16 (PPW); also one May 17 IL (Bill Gorman, et al.).
 Blackburnian: first seen May 3 (bsh); max 25 May 31 Taborton area (PPW,et al.).
 Chestnut-sided: arr May 6 (bsh).
 Bay-breasted: first reported by six groups May 17; last date May 24 (bsh).
 Blackpoll: first seen May 17 (mob); many more reports than previous year; a total of six banded VFG, as contrasted to a max of two any previous spring, represents a new max and corroborates observations that this species was very common this spring (WDM,RPY).
 Pine: two reports - one May 13 Catskill (JB); one May 17 (GB,BRS).
 Prairie: arr May 3 Karner Pine Barrens (bsh); subsequently reported from at least seven different areas.
 Palm: several reports - Columbia Co Apr 11 (P&GE), May 1,5 (E&HL); Greene Co Apr 11,12,21 (CK,J&BB) and May 1,3 (CK); only one re-

port in addition to the two southern counties - one banded May 2 VFG (WDM,RPY).
 Ovenbird: arr Apr 28 Gr (CK).
 Northern Waterthrush: arr May 3 (bsh) and VFG (WDM,RPY); migration apparently peaked May 17, when 16 were banded VFG (WDM,RPY).
 Louisiana Waterthrush: first reported Apr 27 (bsh).
 Yellowthroat: reported frequently after first date, Apr 29 Gr (CK).
 Yellow-breasted Chat: one May 3 and two May 31 BCM (bsh); one banded VFG May 11, the first ever banded there (WDM,RPY).
 Wilson's: several reports May 17; last - May 24 Glenville (hmbo), and May 24 VFG (WDM,RPY).
 Canada: arr May 5 Ghent (P&GE); migrants to May 28 VFG (PPW).
 American Redstart: arr early - Apr 29 Gr (CK).

BLACKBIRDS - SPARROWS

Bobolink: arr very early date, Apr 9 Chatham (ER); second report also somewhat early - Apr 29 Gr (CK).
 Red-winged Blackbird: banding numbers continued decline begun last year (RPY).
 Orchard Oriole: reported from usual locale - Castleton May 5 (JC).
 Baltimore Oriole: from Apr 26 Chatham (ER); many reports May 2-4.
 Rusty Blackbird: max 52 Apr 5 Schodack Center (PG); last May 17.
 Scarlet Tanager: arr May 4 CP (hmbo).
 Rose-breasted Grosbeak: first report - one banded May 2 VFG (WDM,RPY).
 Indigo Bunting: arr early date - May 4 CP (hmbo).
 Evening Grosbeak: large numbers of returning migrants appeared in Apr; thr flocks in May were spectacularly large, as reported from several areas; for example, 556 were banded in one yard in Nisk from May 1-16, and from May 1-6 "the entire neighborhood rang from dawn to near dusk with the calls of hundreds of these birds" (RPY); last report - May 28 EG (PPW).
 Purple Finch: throughout period; max 18 Gr Apr 30 (CK).
 House Finch: two new areas - one male appeared Apr 9, 10 at feeder in Westerloo (Dr. Perkins); one male in song was observed Apr 20 CP (BRS); two old areas - pair Apr 28, and one male in May Nisk (GA); two males and one female seen on different dates, sometimes singly from Apr 23 to May 31 Nisk (RPY).
 Pine Grosbeak: a small flock of six or eight, including two males, well observed, feeding on catkins in an ash tree, Ghent, May 14-16 (P&GE).
 Common Redpoll: several reports; last Apr 26 Guilderland (PMoG); max 50 in yard in Nisk Apr 3 (RPY).
 Pine Siskin: numerous reports; most plentiful middle of Apr. to middle of May; last May 18 (PPW).
 Rufous-sided Towhee: arr Apr 6 Ghent (P&GE).
 Sparrows: Grasshopper: reported from Greene Co, Columbia Co, Mdale and near SCR.
 Henslow's: one area only - May 17 Mdale (GB,BRS).
 Vesper: arr Apr 6 (bsh).
 Slate-colored Junco: migrants very numerous; big influx Apr 9-12, max 225 Apr 9 Berne (MK); next big movement Apr 21-23 (RPY).
 Tree: last two reports - May 17 (Betty Hicks et al.) and (E&L Lane).
 Chipping: max 17 May 1 Berne (MK).
 White-crowned: Apr 16 Hillsdale (Natalie Snare) to May 23 Schodack
 White-throated Sparrow: many reports from Apr 10; max 25 May 1 Berne (MK); migrants still moving May 17 (PPW); last May 24 VFG (WDM,RPY).
 Fox: max 15 Apr 14 (one singing) SCR (HFB); last Apr 27 (PMoG).
 Lincoln's: more reports than usual - Apr 9 Chatham (ER); Apr 20

intermittently to May 17 Ghent (P&GE): eight banded May 9-23 VFG (WDM,RPY); two banded May 18 Clifton Park (WDM).

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CENTRAL PARK

MAY 4

A clear, crisp morning greeted 12 birders for the May 4th trip through Central Park. Although it was too early for most warblers, the parula warbler announced its presence with its burry song, rising in sequence and then ending with an abrupt drop. Other warblers included the Nashville, black-throated blue, myrtle and black-throated green.

Among the 39 species logged were an early indigo bunting, a soaring red-tail, and a tufted titmouse with its "Peter-Peter-Peter" song.
--B.R. Seguin

SARATOGA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

JUNE 29

This was one of those perfect June days - with beautiful sunshine, pleasant temperature and a slight breeze. It was a joy to be out-of-doors. Only one member, Bob McCullough, joined the leader for this exploration. There were lovely views from various spots in the park, but this loveliness did not distract us too much from the more pressing business at hand - listening to, and looking for birds. We took advantage of a good opportunity to study the savannah sparrow carefully and to listen to its song and the same for the indigo bunting, and others. A sparrow hawk hovered protectively near two young perched in a tree, and noisily protested our presence. There were many memorable moments.

Although no unusual species turned up, we were rewarded by hearing and seeing 46 different species. We urge everyone to visit this interesting park - for its historical interest as well as for good birding.
--Hazel Bundy

BLACK MOUNTAIN

JULY 12

We arrived at the foot of a trail ascending Black Mountain, near Lake George, several minutes ahead of our 10 o'clock deadline. As we got out of the car we heard sounds we would not re-encounter until after we hiked to the summit of the mountain and climbed down to the road again. The familiar chipping sparrow trill emanated from a little dot on a telephone wire some distance down the road and an arresting melody came from the field sparrow nearby. Goldfinches played all around us.

Hazel Bundy, Monte Gruett, Pete Wickham and I were joined by Dick Phillion - a person just beginning to explore bird watching.

His bewilderment at our abilities to identify birds with unheard of names using a mere glimpse or inaudible notes as clues brought laughs. It led to a period of reminiscing at lunch about our own clumsy discoveries of the new sights and sounds of birds.

The hike up Black Mountain was a lesson on bird species and their habitat preferences. The chipping sparrow, field sparrow and others disappeared as we left the road, which was bordered by woods and brushy fields. We began to follow the trail into the woods and heard the only two purple finches to be recorded that day. Dick was offered more hints than he could keep track of on how to recognize the various warblers that were singing here: mainly chestnut-sided, ovenbird, yellowthroat and redstart. At the foot of the mountain we also spent some time listening to the least flycatchers, wood thrushes and veeries.

As we climbed, changes in avifauna were obvious. Chestnut-sided warblers, yellowthroats, redstarts and least flycatchers thinned out and disappeared soon after the trail began to climb steeply. Later, veeries and wood thrushes became less numerous, to be replaced by hermit and Swainson's thrushes. Later we were treated to a continual chorus of these cool-weather thrushes while we were eating lunch on the mountain top.

As we proceeded upward, the sounds of black-throated green warblers and sapsuckers became common. Before long, we all learned the pattern of the sapsuckers' drumming: a series of vigorous thumps which quickly became slow and retarded.

The maple and beech gave way to spruce and pine and new colors and sounds entertained us. Winter wrens were giving forth their lively, rambling songs and Canada warblers tested the sensitivity of our ears with confusing songs, the patterns of which defy description. Near the very top of the mountain came some of the most exciting moments of the day. Northern nesting warblers were darting about the tree tops. Searching for those elusive little birds above our heads brought about a sensation in the back of my neck strongly reminiscent of certain spring and autumn mornings of the past. Ouch! However, our efforts were richly rewarded. In a single small area we found black-and-white, Nashville, magnolia, myrtle and blackburnian warblers.

At the summit near the fire tower (which was unoccupied because of a day-long fog), we found about a half dozen golden-crowned kinglets. One which Pete and I saw lacked bright coloration on the crown. Pete suggested that this might indicate that kinglets nest in the immediate vicinity.

Just as we were about to begin our descent, we noticed a sound which seemed to be a cross between that of the wood pewee and crested flycatcher. But the two-noted call did not have all the qualities of either of these species. After some time a tentative verdict - yellow-bellied flycatcher - was reached. Later, listening to recorded songs of this bird, we felt confident that the judgement had been correct.

So, down we went, leaving behind magnolia warblers and Swainson's thrushes and finally returning to the realm of the chipping sparrow and goldfinch.

--Harvey Spivak

* * * * *

1968 REVIEWED

A total of 241 species was reported from our eleven-county area in 1968, which marked it somewhat better than 1967 when 238 species were recorded. Those species seen in 1968 but not 1967 were: cattle egret, black-crowned night heron, glossy ibis, pigeon hawk, American golden plover, black-legged kittiwake, saw-whet owl, black-backed three-toed woodpecker, boreal chickadee, Bohemian waxwing, pine warbler, western meadowlark, pine grosbeak, lark bunting and Harris' sparrow.

Species seen in 1967 but not in 1968 were: snowy egret, blue goose, common teal, sandhill crane, whimbrel, sanderling, Iceland gull, varied thrush, yellow-throated warbler, painted bunting, white-winged crossbill and sharp-tailed sparrow.

Both lists contain about the same number of accidentals. Thus it might appear that the improvement shown during 1968 was due largely to the influx of northern species during the past winter, i.e., boreal chickadee, Bohemian waxwing and pine grosbeak.

--Monte D. Gruett

ARE THERE TWO?

I ran across an interesting article in the July 7th issue of the NEW YORK TIMES dealing with a study of the song types of the Traill's flycatcher. I have been aware for some time that Traill's flycatcher had two songs - "fitz-bew" (my interpretation is "fix-it") and "wee-bee-o" (to me "fah-bee-o" with the accent on the "bee"). Sometime during the past few years, Guy Bartlett pointed out to me that some people believed that there were two species instead of one. Since then I have been keeping a "rough track" of where I heard these two songs and offer the following:

1. Both "fitz-bews" and "wee-bee-o's" are found in the alder growth along the south shore of the Mohawk River. One favorite spot of the "fitz-bews" is the alder growth adjacent to the ponds just east of the bridge to Niska Isle.
2. With one exception, I have never heard "fitz-bews" north of the Mohawk River. The exception was one bird recorded this year in the alder growth about one mile east of the Vischer Ferry Game Management Area. From here north, I have recorded "wee-bee-o's" along Moe Road, at Round Lake, Saratoga Lake, Lake George, Lake Pleasant and Lewey Lake, but nowhere in these areas have I run across a "fitz-bew".

In the future, I shall keep more accurate record of these Traill's flycatcher observations.

--B. R. Seguin

A FAREWELL.....

This summer HMBC bade farewell to two families within its ranks, as the bread winner in each of these families headed for new employment in academe.

Bob and Carol Wernick have settled at Oswego where Bob will be teaching at the State University. Before being consumed by the rigors of his return to graduate school for his Ph.D., Bob was a member of the board and several committees. Carol has been involved with the youth activities committee; and as I am sure you are well aware is the very capable artist responsible for the drawings that liven each issue of this publication. We wish them well in their new venture and thank them for their interest and help to the Club, and to FEATHERS in particular.

Pete and Louise Wickham, as mentioned earlier, are heading for Iowa. Pete has been one of HMBC's most ardent supporters, and has contributed great amounts of time and effort most outstandingly as records and field trip committee chairman, as a member of numerous other committees, and most recently as president. He has also been instrumental in providing ideas for the improvement of FEATHERS, and in seeking interesting articles for its pages. His birding zeal has no doubt worn off on more than one individual, and he has helped considerably to bring new birders into the fold. Hopefully Iowa will have many new experiences to challenge his quest for new birds. Certainly all of us who have benefited from his many efforts will miss his important contribution to the ideals of the Club, and wish to thank him for taking so keen an interest and making so significant a contribution. --RPY

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HMBC RULED TAX EXEMPT

Samuel R. Madison

President

The application made on behalf of the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club by its board of directors for ruling that it is a tax-exempt organization under the federal internal revenue code has been favorably acted upon. The Club has been officially notified by the district director that it has been determined that Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club qualifies as an educational and charitable organization and is exempted from the payment of federal income taxes. Based upon the determination letter issued by the district director, the State of New York holds that we are also free from the imposition of all sales taxes.

This ruling will have great impact upon HMBC's future. It means that property may be donated to our Club and the donor may claim the value of the property donated as a charitable deduction on his federal and state income tax returns. In this way we hope to acquire property for the creation of a sanctuary and for other corporate purposes. In fact, gifts may be made to HMBC by anyone for any of its corporate purposes and the amount of the gift may be taken as a charitable deduction. Furthermore, any Club member making a payment to the Club of dues in excess of the minimum required to be an active member may likewise claim such dues as a tax deduction.

Anyone who wishes to learn more about this matter should feel free to call me at any time. Your board is highly pleased with having obtained this important tax determination and expects it will enable our Club to be of greater service to the community in the future.

* * * * *

CLUB BIDS PRES. WICKHAM FAREWELL

Walton B. Sabin

As you read this Pete Wickham will be located in Cedar Rapids, Iowa engaged in teaching duties in the Chemistry Department of Coe College.

Some of you were aware of this change by virtue of the President's Message in the last issue of FEATHERS and by notice in the May-June issue. This notice advocated a large turnout for the Cherry Plain field trip on July 27 to give Pete due recognition for his services to the Club over the last years, and to wish him

well in his new endeavors. Because of the uncertain weather, a smaller number turned out than was anticipated, but was no less enthusiastic in their expressions of gratitude and cheer. On behalf of the board of directors and the membership at large, Vice-president Madison presented Pete with a copy of E.M. Reilly's AUDUBON HANDBOOK OF AMERICAN BIRDS as a token of our appreciation and friendship.

In as much as Pete will no longer be able to fulfill his duties he was succeeded by Vice-president Madison. The board of directors elected Bob Yunick to be vice-president and Monte Gruett to replace Bob as a member of the board. All three positions are filled until the next annual election in February as provided in the by-laws.

Under Pete Wickham's leadership, the Club has continued to progress. Some of the achievements have been the changing of the Club's name to Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club, which more truly represents the Club's interests and membership; the reincorporation of the Club to provide for gifts, donations, legacies, etc., for which the donor could appreciate a tax advantage; and the exploration of possible sanctuary sites with the imminent consummation of successful negotiations for a 110-acre sanctuary in the Town of Niskayuna. No small part of the success of this endeavor has been due to Pete's sincere efforts.

No expression of our appreciation for Pete's contributions to the furtherance of the aims of this Club would be complete without mentioning our sincere affection for his fine family - Louise, his wife, and Mark and Nancy, their children.

Our new president is no newcomer to us. In fact he served as president for one term in 1967 immediately preceding Pete. Sam Madison has been a member since 1948, drew up the first incorporation, including the by-laws, and has been a member of the board of directors for a number of years. He also performs the duties of Club counsel without charge.

He is continuing where Pete left off in negotiating for the Club sanctuary. By the time of the annual meeting, it is hoped that the Club will be the new owner of the 110-acre sanctuary. The Club is indeed fortunate in having Sam as its president at this time.

* * * * *

MEETING REMINDER

Don't forget to make a point of attending the Christmas meeting to be held MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, at 8pm. at the First Methodist Church in Schenectady. Also, try to participate in as many of the Christmas counts as you can. Contact the count compilers to offer your assistance.

SCHENECTADY - Saturday, December 20, 1969
SOUTHERN RENSSELAER - Sunday, December 21, 1969
TROY - Saturday, December 27, 1969

A BIRD TRIP TO MEXICO

Lillian C. Stoner

Are the Mexican birds different from the ones we see here in New York State? Yes and no is my answer. Mexico may have the southern type while we have the northern type of the same species, so they look a little different from our birds; yet some of our birds migrate through Mexico and some even stay there for the cold season of winter.

Mexico is such a big country with varied climate and topography of high mountains, plateaus, deserts, streams, rivers, woodlands and coastal areas, so the 907 species of birds reported for Mexico are found in different types of habitats.

There were eleven of us on the January 21-28, 1968 trip which was sponsored by the Florida Audubon Society. We flew from Tampa, Florida via Yucatan to Mexico City where we had to get off for ticket and baggage inspection. The entire trip including the above-mentioned hour stop at customs took about five hours.

After spending the night in Mexico City, our group took reserved seats on a double decker bus and rode four hours northwest over a beautiful superhighway for 210 miles via Queretar to San Miguel de Allende. En route we saw different kinds of vegetation and very few birds.

The seisal plant (century plant) growing wild and also in rows where it had been planted, and many kinds of cactus, were seen in different places. There were some trees and much mesquite growing wild on the land along the highway. To us it seemed like desert country. However, grapes were seen sometimes near a few houses or a small village. It made me wonder just what food birds could find, and really there were not many birds seen on this northbound bus trip.

Our destination was San Miguel because our two leaders C. Russell Mason and Nina Steffin, both staff members of the Florida Audubon Society, had been instrumental in recently starting an Audubon Society known as the San Miguel de Allende Audubon Society in Mexico. This is one of the 42 Audubon and Natural History Societies of Florida.

This newly formed group, made up mainly of United States and Canadian citizens who are living in Mexico, had planned field trips and quite a little entertainment for our five-day stay in this colonial town.

On our first field trip we were taken in private cars about 50 miles to a big reservoir where ducks by the hundreds were seen. There were blue-winged, green-winged and cinnamon teals, masked ducks (these latter two not commonly seen in our New York area), lesser scaup, redheads, ruddy ducks and many pintails and several other kinds of ducks.

On the following day they took us to different habitats where we saw mainly land birds. This trip ended at noon at a famous hot

springs resort, Taboada, where some of the group enjoyed a swim in one of the pools. The temperature of the water in one pool was 94° and in the other pool it was 104°F. A swim in a hot water pool was said to be very relaxing and the curative water was advertised as good for nerves, rheumatism, skin and circulatory diseases. This popular health resort and motel is about five miles from San Miguel. Here at noon we were treated to a big luncheon in a beautiful dining room which was in one of the large buildings. This big room was unusual because at one end there was a live tree which came through a hole in the floor.

San Miguel is located in the state of Guanajuato. So on another trip, we went by chartered bus to see the city of Guanajuato, the capital of this state. This was a round trip of about 80 miles over well paved roads. However, there were many sharp or hairpin turns as we climbed to the highest point of 9000 feet. Of course we made many stops to look for birds. En route we saw several large churches decorated with much gold. Some trees and shrubs were seen along the way, but especially at the highest place we saw many big oak trees where we stopped to eat our hotel-prepared lunches. An American robin was heard and seen by those who went into the bush area at this high place, while several of us watched the turkey vultures soaring above us, and also observed the two gray-breasted jays that were fairly close to us. These birds are sometimes called Mexican jays, and in appearance they more closely resemble the scrub jay, which was also listed on this trip, and which we find in certain places in Florida.

As we came near the city we passed yards where there were many fruit trees in bloom - remember this was in late January and we were now up to 7000 feet. There were pear, apple and peach trees and also sizeable plantings of grapes.

The city of Guanajuato is an old silver and gold-mining town set in steep hills. It was reported that some of the old abandoned mines had recently been reopened and that now they were being reworked again. A panoramic view shows that the city Guanajuato is a densely populated city as there are so many buildings in it. The cobblestone streets are very narrow. One street is so narrow that it is called "Callijou de la Besa" meaning "Street of the kiss," which is said to be narrow enough for a person on one balcony to lean across and kiss a neighbor on a balcony across the street.

It seemed good to see the sparrow hawk and mockingbird and even the house sparrow. We saw the red-shafted flicker on two days and the loggerhead shrike on five days.

The Inca dove was my first bird as I saw it on the ground looking for food at a bus stop in Mexico City. This terrestrial bird was seen daily and reported to be common in much of Mexico below 7000 feet. It is only 7½ inches long while the mourning dove, which we saw later on two trips, is 11½-12½ inches long.

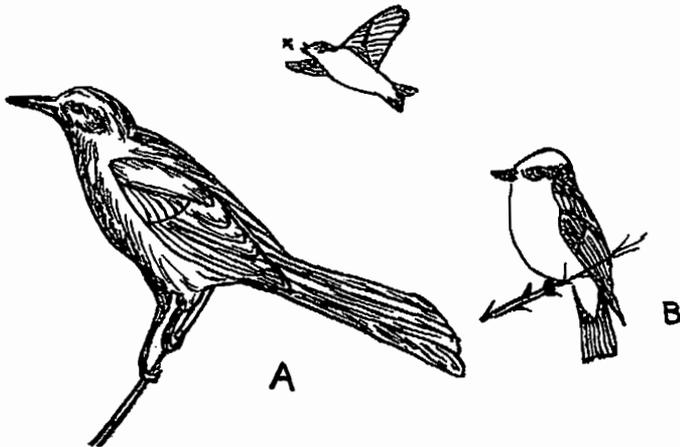
I was sorry to miss the roadrunner which people in the first car saw, but I well remember seeing this rightly named bird years ago both in Texas and California.

One of our group saw one broad-billed hummingbird in a park in San Miguel. Since it was winter we missed recording any of the 40 some kinds of hummingbirds reported for Mexico.

A new bird to me was the golden-breasted woodpecker. When it was first noticed in a tree, several of us thought it was the yellow-bellied sapsucker as it clung to the trunk of the tree.

The black phoebe is the same size as our phoebe but smaller than Say's phoebe. Both of these flycatchers were seen on four trips.

Daily our list included the vermilion flycatcher. This beautiful small five-inch flycatcher needs to be seen and heard to be appreciated. The crown and underparts of the male are bright red (in the black-and-white sketch with this article the white area should be bright red) and the back and wings are black; the female is duller in color and more difficult to identify. This bird has a short quick call, and a pleasing twittering courtship song, which is frequently heard when it is perched temporarily on a telephone wire. It may then quickly dart off for an insect and return to rest briefly on the wire again.



A - Boat-tailed Grackle

B - Vermilion Flycatcher

I am indebted to Mr. Guy H. Goodman, former president of the Sarasota Audubon Society, for the sketches. The grackle is black in color, and the flycatcher has bright red crown and underparts with black wings and back.

Cassin's kingbird was listed daily, but the Eastern and Western kingbirds were recorded only on one trip. We saw no crows, but each day we saw the common raven and on three days the white-necked raven.

Of the four kinds of wrens seen, the most spectacular one was the cactus wren which is $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length. It has a curved bill and a long tail.

The myrtle warbler with four yellow spots and the Audubon warbler with five yellow spots and a yellow throat were two members of the warbler family on our list.

The dark-backed goldfinch and the brown towhee which is brown

and looks more like a brown thrasher were new to me. Then the lark sparrow, seen sometimes in Florida, was interesting to watch as it flew about the weeds in a desert area on a rather hot day and repeated its beautiful musical song.

Two species were heard and seen every evening as they came in to roost for the night in the trees in the park near our hotel. These were the boat-tailed grackle and bronzed cowbird. Near sundown hundreds and hundreds of these birds could be heard and seen as they flew in and settled in the trees in this beautifully clean and trimmed public park. There were beds of flowers and odd-shaped trees in this park and a bandstand in the center. It is a block square in size.

What makes this park so unique and attractive to both man and birds are the 40 well trimmed Indian laurel trees. These trees are about 35 feet high. They look sort of top heavy as the trunks are short and the leafless lower branches end up in a big spherical top which is a mass of leaves. This big rounded top is about two feet high and 15 feet in diameter. It is flat on the top and bottom. There is also a tall slender tree in the corner of the park. When the birds fly in at night many will light first in the tall tree, then fly into the flat-topped Indian

laurel where they can hide in the mass of leaves. When I first heard these noisy birds I said, "Oh! some one must have a mynah near here," as the whistle sounded like that of caged mynahs that we often saw in restaurants, however, I soon learned that this species gave the two-whistle note as well as other guttural chattering sounds. We never heard this mynah-like whistle from the boat-tailed grackles that are so common in Florida.

This large blackbird measures 16 inches in length; the male has a glossy purplish black back while the wings and tail are sort of glossy green. The tail is long and wedged shape and it is often held at an angle. The female is smaller and brownish in color.

The bronzed cowbird is seven inches long. Its bill is longer than that of the brown-headed cowbird that we see here. Both sexes have the inflatable ruff on the back of the neck. These two species chatter and talk together for some time before they settle for the night. They don't seem to mind the bright electric light or the people talking and sitting on the benches beneath the trees. These birds roost here from about November to sometime in March.

The population of San Miguel de Allende is about 18,000 and while it is 6400 feet in elevation, it is said to have a fairly comfortable climate the year round, as its setting is in the foothills.

There are many fine churches here and one especially I mention is the Indian-Gothic church near the above-described interesting park.

The Instituto Allende founded in 1938 is located in a restored palace. This beautiful art institute building has an exhibit gallery, work and classrooms. Students come, often from a distance. They numbered over 1000 in 1967.

The narrow cobblestone streets are difficult to walk on and it is difficult for cars to pass on these very narrow streets.

Some of the beautiful, big old stone mansions were built by Spanish silver barons. Each house had well kept big gardens in the back. One we visited had 1500 kinds of orchids in a nursery. Another eight-bedroom house was for rent at a high price but which included four regular servants. The high brick walls around the flower gardens often had many colored geraniums growing on the side of the wall clear up to the top of the wall. The flowers were beautiful in all the gardens.

Trips to the institute and the houses were part of the entertainment that Mrs. George Birkenstein, president of the local Audubon society, and her committees arranged for us. They did much to make our stay in San Miguel enjoyable.

After our return to Mexico City by bus on the sixth day we had only part of the afternoon to see this big city which is at an elevation of 7000 feet and has a population of seven million people. Many of our group visited the National Museum of Anthropology which is said to be the newest and the most magnificent museum of its kind in the world. It has many prized masterpieces in this huge block-long museum building.

The New Chapultepec Park is a sizable natural history park next to the institute. Several of our group located additional birds here. The compiled list of birds for the trip was 110.

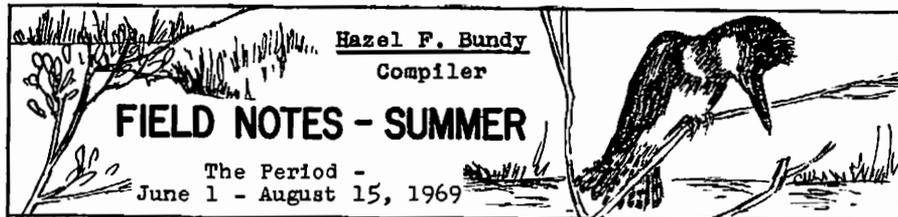
I enjoyed going to University City to see the Buildings of the big National University of Mexico. 16,000 students were enrolled here. The highly decorated library building was especially interesting, as the outside walls of this big building were completely covered by mosaic work depicting indian legends of the founding of Mexico. This mosaic work was done by the renowned artist O'Gorman. He had used small colored stones to make up the various designs of horses, men, buildings, etc. The emblems were so colorful and beautiful, and they could be plainly seen from the street.

Riding back to Mexico City I saw new apartment buildings and the big stadium that was being built for the coming (October) olympics, as well as the palace and many high buildings in this large city.

I especially enjoyed the ride to the airport the next morning on the wide street, which in places is eight lanes wide. So seldom did we see such a wide downtown street here.

After the airplane left Mexico City on our homeward bound trip we had glimpses of snow-capped mountains in the distance. We had enjoyed other scenic views as well as the people who we met and the new birds that we had seen in Mexico. We had learned to frequently say, "Gracias," in this Spanish-speaking country, so we end this article by saying, "Gracias," to the members of the San Miguel Audubon Society in Mexico and to the two capable leaders of this eight-day Florida Audubon Society bird trip.

* * * * *



In general, this past summer could be described as very wet, and slightly cooler than average. Rainfall in June amounted to 5.3 inches (data taken at Albany Airport), 2.05 inches greater than the average. Rainfall in July was reported as 5.08 inches, 1.59 more than the average.

Sixteen breeding bird surveys were run for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service during the month of June and the first part of July, an increase of one over the number run in 1968. The following observations are based on 15 of these surveys. The seven observers and their assistants compiled a list of 103 species. Dropped from our 1968 compilation of the 25 most abundant species (figures taken from the BBC totals) are the tree swallow (less than 50 percent of last year's total), house wren (decreased from 171 to 107), and yellow-shafted flicker (a relatively small decrease); added are bank swallow, ovenbird and field sparrow. As in previous years, more than a quarter of all birds counted on all surveys were red-winged blackbirds and starlings (this year 29 percent).

There were very few late spring migrants reported. Many fall migrants were moving at the beginning of August - notably warblers and flycatchers. With the exception of the least flycatcher, all flycatchers were on the move August 2, ahead of an incoming cold front.

Perhaps as a result of the lower water level maintained at Vischer Ferry Game management Area during the summer, breeding activity in that area apparently decreased, as evidenced by the following observations: green herons were scarce during June and July - more common in August; the usual nesting waterfowl (mallards, black ducks, wood ducks and blue-winged teal) were extremely scarce; no Virginia rails, sora nor common gallinule were seen, usually one pair of each is present (RPY).

The only highlights of the period were a prothonotary warbler and a Kentucky warbler.

Observers cited more than once: (GB)- Guy Bartlett; (HFB)- Hazel Bundy; (PC)- Paul Connor; (P&GE)- Paul and Georgia Erlenbach; (MLG)- Murray Gardler; (EH)- Esly Hallenbeck; (C&HK)- Clarissa and Harry Ketcham; (WDM)- Will Merritt, Jr. (WBS)- Walton Sabin; (BRS)- Benton Seguin; (HHS)- Harvey Spivak; (PPW)- Peter Wickham; (RPY)- Robert Yunick.

Area compilers: Rena Dodd, Betty Laros and Clarissa Ketcham.

Abbreviations: Gr- Greenville; JL- Jenny Lake; Mdale- Meadowdale; Nisk- Niskayuna; NWW- Niskayuna Widewaters; SCR- Stony

Creek Reservoir; VFG- Vischer Ferry Game Management Area; BBC-breeding bird census.

LOONS - DUCKS

Pied-billed Grebe: 1 ad and 6 young Jun 8 Medusa Swamp (CK).
 Double-crested Cormorant: 1 Jun 8 Delmar Game Farm pond (WBS).
 Great Blue Heron: seemed scarce - max 6 Aug 15 VFG (RPY).
 Common Egret: 1 Aug 14 NWW (HHS); 1 Aug 15 VFG (RPY), probably the same one.
 Green Heron: max 6 Aug 15 VFG (RPY).

HAWKS - OWLS

Cooper's Hawk: 1 Jul 19 Wolf Hollow (HHS) - only accipiter report.
 Red-shouldered Hawk: 4 reports from 3 widely separated areas.
 Broad-winged Hawk: reports from 3 scattered areas; also, a total of 4 on the BBC's.
 Bald Eagle: 1 imm late afternoon Jun 12 SCR (MLG); 2 imm about 1 hour later SCR (HFB).
 Osprey: only report - 1 Jul 7 JL (GB).
 Bobwhite: Jun 22 Ghent (W&K Applegate); Jul 15 Mitzeskill (Rena Dodd).
 Virginia Rail: 1 report - Black Creek Marsh end of Jun (BW).
 Common Gallinule: 1 report - Black Creek Marsh end of Jun (BW).
 Upland Plover: Jun 21, Jul 31, Aug 1 and 12 Colonie (HHS); 6 Jun Argyle BBC (PPW); 4 July 5 Albany Airport (BW); 2 young banded Jul, max 3, last Aug 6 Nisk (RPY).
 Greater Yellowlegs: 1 Jul 4 Schodack Center (PC).
 Least Sandpiper: 1 Jul 20 VFG (RPY).
 Semipalmated Sandpiper: 3 Jul 20 SCR (BRS).
 Black Tern: 1 in mature plumage Jul 20 SCR (BRS).
 Yellow-billed Cuckoo: again a total of 3 on the BBC reports; additional reports from six areas.
 Black-billed Cuckoo: a total of 4 on the BBC reports; also 5 scattered reports.
 Screech Owl: 1 Jun North Easton BBC (Bill Gorman).
 Great Horned Owl: reported from 4 areas.
 Barred Owl: max 3 Jun 26 JL (GB) - only report.

GOATSUCKERS - STARLING

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: increasing during Aug, max 3 Aug 15 VFG (WDM,RPY).
 Pileated Woodpecker: reported from 3 areas; also 1 on each of 3 BBC's.
 Red-headed Woodpecker: 1 Jun 22, 28 Gr (CK,HK).
 Great Crested Flycatcher: 2 migrants banded Aug 2 VFG (WDM,RPY).
 Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: 6 ad banded Aug 2-9 VFG (WDM,RPY).
 Olive-sided Flycatcher: several sites JL area (GB); 2 Jun South Horicon BBC (BRS); 1 Jul 13 Warrensburg BBC (WBS).
 Tree Swallow: due to the low water level at VFG, many of the boxes were made accessible to predators along the shoreline and these nests were destroyed; 9 out of 35 were lost; the number of eggs per clutch was low (3.0), but the fledging success was high on those eggs which did hatch (82 percent); most fledging occurred in mid-Jun, later than usual; the last clutch fledged on Jul 22 (RPY).
 Bank Swallow: colony of 200+ near Schodack (PC); 2219 banded in May, Jun and Jul at four colonies - Clifton Park, Glenville, Halfmoon Landfill and Hetcheltown Road; the Glenville colony

which was worked for the sixth year, was markedly improved over last year with about double the hole count - 356 holes of which 290 were believed active; the Halfmoon colony was banded this year for the first time; it consisted of 400-500 holes; the Hetcheltown Road colony was a re-nesting after the original colony of about 100 holes was dug out by excavators; the colony back stronger than it started with about 219 holes of which 181 were believed active (WDM,RPY).

Purple Martin: colony of 16 departed from W. Glenville Aug 15 (Robert McCullough) - an increase of only 4 during the summer.
Brown Creeper: 1 imm banded Aug 9 VFG - very early (WDM,RPY).
Winter Wren: increasing at JL (GB).
Cedar Waxwing: "dozens" Jul 27 and into Aug Schodack Center (PC); large numbers in Aug VFG, with groups of 50+ common (WDM,RPY).

VIREOS - WARBLERS

Solitary Vireo: seems to be increasing - reported from 4 usual nesting areas; also 9 Jun S. Horicon BBC (BRS); 1 Jul 13 Warrensburg BBC (WBS).

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER: 1 ad male in magnificent plumage caught on the north side of a mist net in a lane set in very thick, low, valley habitat, banded Aug 2 VFG (WDM,RPY) - the first fall record (3 previous spring records), and the first record for Saratoga County.

Tennessee Warbler: 1 Jul 31 Warrensburg BBC (WBS); 1 imm banded Aug 2 VFG (WDM,RPY).

Yellow Warbler: migrating Aug 1 and 2 VFG (RPY).

Myrtle Warbler: apparently increasing - 13 on a total of 3 BBC's; also reported from 3 additional areas.

Bay-breasted Warbler: late spring migrant Jun 8 W. Glenville (EH).
Blackpoll Warbler: late spring migrants - Jun 1 Gr (CK); Jun 8 NWW (HHS).

Prairie Warbler: reported from 2 areas in Jun - Gr (CK) and Karner Pine Barrens (HHS).

Ovenbird: migrants banded - 2 Aug 2 and 1 Aug 9 VFG (WDM,RPY).

Northern Waterthrush: 1 banded Aug 9 VFG (WDM,RPY).

Louisiana Waterthrush: 1 Jul 19 Wolf Hollow (HHS); 1 at JL (GB).

KENTUCKY WARBLER: 1 observed carefully and heard singing for a week in mid-Jun in a swampy, wooded spot in Altamont (BW, Florence Rogers).

Mourning Warbler: 1 imm banded Aug 9 VFG (WDM,RPY); former nesting site at Black Pond near JL abandoned (GB).

Yellow-breasted Chat: 1 Jun 12 near SCR (MLG); 1 Jul 4 Mdale (HHS).

Canada Warbler: 1 early migrant banded Aug 2 VFG and 1 Aug 15 (WDM,RPY).

BLACKBIRDS - SPARROWS

House Sparrow: total number on BBC reports down almost one-third from previous year.

Orchard Oriole: Jun 18-28 Schodack (L&V Burland) and Ghent (P&GE).

Baltimore Oriole: migrating Aug 2 VFG (RPY).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: migrating Aug 2 VFG (RPY).

House Finch: 1 pair Jun 11-13 Nisk (Patrick Kilburn).

Grasshopper Sparrow: reported from a new area - 1 Jun 12 near SCR (MLG); 3 Jun 13 near SCR (HHS).

Henslow's Sparrow: 1 Durham BBC (CK); 2 Medusa BBC (Jim Bush).

White-throated Sparrow: 1 Jun 21 Karner Pine Barrens (HHS) - unusually late; strong evidence of breeding found at VFG, at an

elevation of less than 200 feet in the Mohawk valley (RPY) - an unusual nesting situation.

* * * * *



RARE BIRD ALERT

The records committee is reorganizing and reactivating the Rare Bird Alert (RBA). The aim of the RBA is to make reports of rare species seen in our area rapidly available, by means of the telephone, to all those who are interested so that these species may be seen and verified by as many birders as possible. This is not meant to be just a faster version of the records published under field notes in FEATHERS, but is meant for those who wish to go to look for a rarity, which for this particular purpose we are defining as a species which has never been, or which is infrequently mentioned in our field notes.

If you are actively interested and would like to be included in the RBA, please telephone Hazel Bundy at 374-8635 within the coming week, if possible. If you identify a species that you believe might be a candidate for the RBA, please telephone one of the following people: Bob Yunick, 377-0146; Walt Sabin, 439-1144; Ed Reilly, 757-2444; Monte Gruett, 477-6246; or Hazel Bundy.

Examples of rarities in the past few years include the sandhill crane, painted bunting and varied thrush. It is always exciting for our area to have a rare visitor - let's share the news with each other.

--Hazel Bundy

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club began its youth activities with a bang this season when a woman called us requesting some help with bird study for her sons. She had five of them all preparing for Eagle Scout and they needed the nature study merit badge. Bob McCullough took them on a field trip and helped them to meet the scout requirements. Bob is also speaking on birds at a Cub Scout pack meeting this month in Scotia.

Jeanne Chenette, Katherine Bordt and I shall conduct a station on bird study at the Rensselaer County Conservation Field Day conducted by the county 4-H officials. Six hundred children are expected to attend this year.

Mrs. Milford Becker, Mrs. Monte Gruett, Mrs. John Todd and Mrs. Will Merritt have been added to our list of volunteers who will lecture in elementary schools with our bird slides. Mrs. Bob

Brown, Mrs. Fred Bordt and Mrs. Norbert Chenette are also speakers. From February to June, 1969, we showed the slides to over 2000 children. This year we will speak to many many more thanks to these volunteers.

Doug Norton has loaned us 80 wildflower slides he took. These are also available to any group wishing to see them. --Lois Norton

Editor's note: My apologies to our very active youth activities chairman, Lois Norton, for accidentally omitting her from the listing of committee chairman in the directory that was mailed with the last issue.

My apologies also for the tardiness of this issue. An extremely busy fall made it difficult to find the time to sit down at the typewriter. The November-December issue is in preparation, and should be in the mail shortly. It will include the field trip schedule for 1970.

Please take note of the enclosed dues and meeting notice and save the treasurer the bother of having to contact you personally by remitting your dues as soon as possible. --RPY

(Issue assembled November 16, 1969)

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FOUR DECADES OF CHRISTMAS COUNTS

Guy Bartlett

For the 41st consecutive time, birds are to be counted in the same Schenectady local area during the Christmas holidays. The area is a circle of 15 miles diameter that includes the top of Indian Ladder, Meadowdale Marshes, Watervliet Reservoir, Locks 7 and 8 of the Barge Canal, Vischer Ponds and Niskayuna Widewaters, Rosendale Road and Schenectady's Central Park, Albany's Fuller Road and Karners, to mention some of the favorite winter birding areas. The day will be Saturday, December 20.

Quickly summarizing the 40 Christmas Counts already made - including the ten which predated organization of Schenectady Bird Club - more than 170,000 individuals of 103 species have been recorded. In addition there have been one hybrid (flicker) and five species on near dates only. Only 10 species have been found in all years; and 19 have been seen in only one year each.

Twenty-two species have been seen in all of the most recent 10 years. Eighteen of the 40-year list were not recorded in the last 10 years, including six not seen for 20 years.

Maximum counts are the 57 species in 1963, and the 8469 individuals in 1967.

Few if any trends in winter bird population can be drawn from the local summaries, not only because specific areas have not been covered annually under non-varying conditions but also because the area has become so much more urbanized and "cleared." However, and probably resulting from the changes wrought in the area, starlings and house sparrows are increasingly abundant, and crows fewer. Together they account for seven of every ten birds counted. Also of interest are tufted titmouse, mockingbird and cardinal, regular now and practically unknown here not too many years back.

Explanation of Tables

Table I shows 40-year averages, highs and lows for species and individual counts, weather conditions, mileages and hours.

Table II summarizes the 40 years of Schenectady Christmas Counts, and details the trips for 1959-1968. Complete details of all the 30 most recent trips have appeared in January issues, page 1 of FEATHERS. A 25-year summary of the counts was published in FEATHERS, Vol. 16, No. 12 (December, 1954), and a 30-year summary in Vol. 21, No. 12 (December, 1959). The far columns show the 22 species that were seen in all of the most recent ten years, and the 18 species (O) not seen in any of them. Of these 18, six (Ø) were not recorded in 20

years.

Table III gives relative abundance, shows that the starling, crow and house sparrow accounted for 40, 20 and 10 percent, or a combined 70 percent of the 40-year total of 171,472 individuals. The table lists 37 species, with total 40-year counts of 100 or more.

Table IV lists the 19 species which in one or more years have had a count of 100 or more individuals.

Table V gives the number of years recorded and shows only 10 species seen all 40 years. At the other extreme, 19 species have been seen in only one year, and 11 in only two years.

Table VI shows the 97 members and guests who have participated, either afield or at feeding stations, in the last 10 years. The numbers following names include total count participation including 1958 and earlier.

TABLE I -- FORTY-YEAR MAXIMA, MINIMA AND AVERAGES

<u>40-year Averages</u>	9½ hours per count; 26° (averaging 20° for low and 32° for high of day); 22 observers in field; 48 party-hours (32 afoot, 16 by car); 187 party-miles (40 afoot, 147 by car); 37 species; 4285 individuals.
<u>40-year Totals</u>	103 species and one hybrid (flicker), plus five species on near-dates only; 171,472 individuals; 1909 party-hours afield; 7490 party-miles (1615 afoot, 5875 by car).
<u>Maxi-Mini Species</u>	57 species in 1963; 18 species in combined lists of 1929.
<u>Maxi-Mini Totals</u>	8469 in 1967; 1029 in combined trips of 1929.
<u>Duration of Trips</u>	From 8½ to 11 hours.
<u>Temperature</u>	From -22° in 1942 to 62° in 1957.
<u>Observers Afield</u>	From five in 1930 to 43 in 1947.
<u>Party-hours</u>	From 14 in 1929 to 76 in 1938.
<u>Miles</u>	On foot, from 13 (1929) to 76 (1947) By car, 20 (1929) to 242 (1965) Total, 33 (1929) to 301 (1947)

Year	40-year Totals		1959-1968										None Each 10Yr 10Yr
	No. Yrs.	Total Count	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	
December	43	298	26	26	23	23	21	26	26	24	23	21	
Number of Observers			12	12	23	21	24	20	29	22	21	21	
Number of Parties			5	7	6	6	6	6	8	8	7	8	
Party-hours, Total	76	1909	34	37	35	51	43	37	52	38	34	47	
On Foot	56	1282	19	18	18	17	19	15	33	19	13	22	
By Car	34	627	15	19	17	34	24	22	19	19	21	25	
Party-miles, Total	301	7490	168	193	193	189	239	254	290	238	218	235	
On Foot	76	1615	31	21	22	19	27	23	48	33	31	31	
By Car	242	5875	137	172	170	212	231	242	205	187	204		
Time	6am-8 pm		7:30	7:15	7	7:30	6	6:30	6:45	6:45	6:45	6:40	
Temperature	-22 to 62		4:30	5	4	4	5	4:30	4:45	3:30	5:30	4:30	
Wind			32	12	15	20	-10	43	12	8	28	25	
Weather			40	41	28	34	16	48	27	25	34	35	
Species, Total		103	0-2	0-5	0-5	0-8	3-15	0-20	10-30	0-8	0-15	0-10	
Number of Individuals		171,472	W	S	W	SW/E	W/N	S/W	str.	N	W	W	
Added Species, Near Dates		5	v.od	p.cd	p.cd	p.cd	cl- v.cd	cl- v.cd	cl	cl- snow	p.cd	v.cd	
		5995	47	46	45	45	57	43	50	37	47	49	
		8469	5995	2771	4084	3307	4063	2923	3138	3757	8469	5560	
		9	3	1	6	5	5	9	8	2	4	2	

Species	Yrs.	Count	1 Yr.	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	None	Each
Horned Grebe	1	1	1												0
Pied-billed Grebe	1	1	1												0
Great Blue Heron	6	7	2												0
American Bittern	(f)														0
Canada Goose	1	12	12												0
Mallard	11	44	9												0
Black Duck	23	222	38												0
Wood Duck	1	1	1	1			1	7	3	8		1			0
Common Goldeneye	6	19	11	3								1			0
Bufflehead	1	1	1									1			0
Oldsquaw	2	2	1												0
Hooded Merganser	1	1	1												0
Common Merganser	24	323	66							30					00
Red-breasted Merganser	1	24	24												0
Goshawk	14	15	2					f					1		0
Sharp-shinned Hawk	6	7	2												0
Cooper's Hawk	13	18	2	1			2		2						0
Red-tailed Hawk	33	146	19	3	6	9	7	6	12	4	12	5	19		10
Red-shouldered Hawk	13	20	3	1	1										0
Rough-legged Hawk	21	69	17	1	9	17	f	f	6	5	3	f	1		0
Bald Eagle	3	3	1												0
Marsh Hawk	25	56	7	4	3	3	1					1	3		0
Peregrine Falcon	2	3	2												0
Pigeon Hawk	(f)														0
Sparrow Hawk	39	193	8	1	8	7	8	2	5	7	8	3	8		10
Ruffed Grouse	37	220	13	1	4	6	1	2	10	12	7	2	2		10
Bobwhite	4	20	10					10	1	1					0
Ring-necked Pheasant	40	721	190	19	9	14	8	10	22	17	11	1	7		10
Gray Partridge	1	7	7												0
Virginia Rail	1	1	1						1						00
American Coot	1	4	4												00
Killdeer	4	4	1												00
Common Snipe	5	7	2												0
Great Black-backed Gull (f)				1			1	1	2						0
Herring Gull	35	388	64	5	4	2				f		64	6		0
Ring-billed Gull	7	14	4							13		1			0
L.ourning Dove	27	1418	318	83	42	43	275	318	41	80	136	28	123		10

Species	Yrs.	Count	1 Yr.	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	None	Each
Soreech Owl	13	15	2	✓		1		1		✓					
Great Horned Owl	23	35	4	1		1		1	1	1		2			
Snowy Owl	3	4	2					1	✓	✓					
Barred Owl	10	13	2						✓	✓			1		
Long-eared Owl	1	6	6												⑩
Short-eared Owl	1	5	5		5		✓								
Belted Kingfisher	27	43	4			1		1	1		1	1	1		
Yellow-shafted Flicker	19	37	6		1	✓	3	2	1	3	2	1			
(Flicker -- hybrid)	1	1	1					1							
Pileated Woodpecker	21	43	5	✓	1	3	2	1	1	✓		2	2		
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2	4	1					1	✓	✓		✓			
Hairy Woodpecker	38	611	40	17	11	30	22	21	15	35	40	24	24		10
Downy Woodpecker	40	1394	65	43	38	56	47	34	22	49	32	34	52		10
Black-backed 3-toed Wood	2	2	1				1								
Eastern Phoebe	2	3	2				2								
Horned Lark	25	889	258	1	79	20	165	96	10	6	30	60	258		10
Blue Jay	40	3038	195	88	62	68	125	87	140	95	118	118	142		10
Common Crow	40	34828	4200	1577	333	480	457	393	589	408	437	657	534		10
Black-capped Chickadee	40	8342	443	195	128	244	152	209	188	185	185	122	190		10
Boreal Chickadee	3	5	3			3		1	✓						
Tufted Titmouse	11	112	22	4	✓	22	16	14	10	12	8	11	12		
White-breasted Nuthatch	40	1546	83	48	39	57	37	43	26	34	39	39	44		10
Red-breasted Nuthatch	24	131	68	4	1	1		4	4	1	3				
Brown Creeper	38	336	26	12	6	4	5	5	3	7	14	15	6		10
Winter Wren	15	29	6			✓	1					3	1		
Carolina Wren	3	11	8	8		✓	✓	✓	✓			1	5		
Mockingbird	5	10	5		1			✓		1	2	1			
Catbird	2	2	1						1						
Brown Thrasher	1	1	1												0
Robin	24	276	205		5	6	5	5	2	1	2	205	4		0
Hermit Thrush	4	6	2												
Eastern Bluebird	10	46	20					3							
Golden-crowned Kinglet	30	336	35	12	2	4	1	2		3		8	1		
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	6	8	2		1	2	✓	1			✓		6		
Schmian Waxwing	1	6	6												
Cedar Waxwing	19	651	205		12	12	2	12	6	2	118	205	8		
Northern Shrike	21	33	3	1	1	1	1			✓	2	1			

Species	Yrs.	Count	1 Yr.	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	None	Each
Starling	40	68152	4842	1980	993	1549	693	412	737	436	1159	4449	1813		10
Myrtle Warbler	1	1	1											①	
Yellowthroat	1	2	2												
House Sparrow	40	17120	1400	350	449	359	597	528	357	529	559	544	625		10
Eastern Meadowlark	14	119	31	1	31	10	5	7	22	3	11	7	20		
Red-winged Blackbird	23	261	163	6	2	3	3	163	13	2	13	4	14		10
Baltimore Oriole	2	2	1	1	1	7		1							
Rusty Blackbird	6	13	5	5				2	1			2	2		
Common Grackle	10	16	3	2		1	1	2		1		1	2		
Brown-headed Cowbird	15	1270	869	3	43	22	8	107	1	4	7	869	6		10
Cardinal	15	319	76	10	4	32	22	29	29	33	36	36	76		10
Dickcissel	1	1	1							1					
Evening Grosbeak	14	649	179	100		86	7	57	7	43		7	22		
Purple Finch	19	226	71	55	3	11	22	4		1	1		7		
House Finch															
Pine Grosbeak	13	208	132			71		5		42		2	132		
Common Redpoll	19	2822	586	586	4			13		386			53		
Pine Siskin	16	611	246	10	37			86		38			10		
American Goldfinch	40	3254	374	57	73	37	166	154	83	147	46	254	98		10
Red Crossbill	2	17	14					3							
White-winged Crossbill	3	23	20							1		2			
Rufous-sided Towhee	2	3	2												
Vesper Sparrow	3	4	2			7		7		108	34	72	81		10
Slate-colored Junco	39	2542	243	49	63	164	46	268	68						
Oregon Junco	1	1	1	632	184	328	303	880	417	304	649	489	886		10
Tree Sparrow	40	14969	886			7	1	1							
Chipping Sparrow	2	2	1												
Field Sparrow	1	1	1										1		
White-crowned Sparrow (f)															
White-throated Sparrow	12	87	59	1		5	5	6	7	2	2	59	11		
Fox Sparrow	2	6	3	7				3							
Swamp Sparrow	11	25	5	2	2	1	1		4	5		1			
Song Sparrow	39	747	58	9	6	17	20	49	35	23	26	34	54		10
Lapland Longspur	7	31	20		1	1	2	2	7						
Snow Bunting	17	889	271	2	20	271	63	9	2	5	7	11	153		

TABLE III -- RELATIVE ABUNDANCE, 100 or more in 40-year total

Starling	68,152	Hairy Woodpecker	611
Crow	34,828	Pine Siskin	611
House Sparrow	17,120	Herring Gull	388
Tree Sparrow	14,969	Brown Creeper	336
Black-capped Chickadee	8,342	Golden-crowned Kinglet	336
American Goldfinch	3,254	Common Merganser	323
Blue Jay	3,038	Cardinal	319
Common Redpoll	2,822	Pine Grosbeak	308
Slate-colored Junco	2,542	Robin	276
White-breasted Nuthatch	1,546	Red-winged Blackbird	261
Mourning Dove	1,418	Purple Finch	226
Downy Woodpecker	1,418	Black Duck	222
Brown-headed Cowbird	1,270	Ruffed Grouse	220
Horned Lark	889	Sparrow Hawk	193
Snow Bunting	889	Red-tailed Hawk	147
Song Sparrow	747	Red-breasted Nuthatch	131
Ring-necked Pheasant	721	Meadowlark	119
Cedar Waxwing	651	Tufted Titmouse	112
Evening Grosbeak	649	(37 Species)	

In the above table it is interesting to note that two species, cardinal and tufted titmouse, were practically unlisted until 15 years ago.

TABLE IV -- MAXIMUM ONE-YEAR COUNTS, 100 OR MORE

Starling	4842	Mourning Dove	318	Robin	205
Crow	4200	Snow Bunting	271	Blue Jay	195
House Sparrow	1400	Horned Lark	258	Ring-n. Pheasant	190
Tree Sparrow	886	Pine Siskin	246	Evening Grosbeak	179
Common Redpoll	586	Slate-c. Junco	243	Red-w. Blackbird	163
Blk-c. Chickadee	443	Cedar Waxwing	205	Pine Grosbeak	132
Amer. Goldfinch	374			(19 Species)	

TABLE V -- NUMBER OF YEARS RECORDED

40 years (10)	Ring-necked Pheasant, Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Common Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Starling, House Sparrow, American Goldfinch, Tree Sparrow.
39 years (3)	Sparrow Hawk, Slate-colored Junco, Song Sparrow.
38 years (2)	Hairy Woodpecker, Brown Creeper.
37 years (1)	Ruffed Grouse.
35 years (1)	Herring Gull.
33 years (1)	Red-tailed Hawk.
30 years (1)	Golden-crowned Kinglet.
27 years (2)	Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher.
25 years (2)	Marsh Hawk, Horned Lark.
24 years (3)	Common Merganser, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Robin.
23 years (3)	Black Duck, Great Horned Owl, Red-winged Blackbird.
21 years (3)	Rough-legged Hawk, Pileated Woodpecker, N. Shrike.
19 years (4)	Yellow-shafted Flicker, Cedar Waxwing, Purple Finch, Common Redpoll.
17 years (1)	Snow Bunting.
16 years (1)	Pine Siskin.
15 years (3)	Winter Wren, Brown-headed Cowbird, Cardinal.

14 years	(3)	Goshawk, Eastern Meadowlark, Evening Grosbeak.
13 years	(4)	Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Screech Owl, Pine Grosbeak.
12 years	(1)	White-throated Sparrow.
11 years	(3)	Mallard, Tufted Titmouse, Swamp Sparrow.
10 years	(3)	Barred Owl, Eastern Bluebird, Common Grackle.
7 years	(2)	Ring-billed Gull, Lapland Longspur.
6 years	(5)	Great Blue Heron, Common Goldeneye, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Rusty Blackbird.
5 years	(2)	Common Snipe, Mockingbird.
4 years	(3)	Bobwhite, Killdeer, Hermit Thrush.
3 years	(6)	Bald Eagle, Snowy Owl, Boreal Chickadee, Carolina Wren, White-winged Crossbill, Vesper Sparrow.
2 years	(11)	Oldsquaw, Peregrine Falcon, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, Catbird, Baltimore Oriole, Red Crossbill, Rufous-sided Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Fox Sparrow.
1 year	(19)	Horned Grebe, Pied-billed Grebe, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Gray Partridge, Virginia Rail, Common Coot, Long-eared Owl, Short-eared Owl, (Hybrid Flicker), Brown Thrasher, Bohemian Waxwing, Myrtle Warbler, Yellowthroat, Dickcissel, Oregon Junco, Field Sparrow.

TABLE VI -- SCHENECTADY COUNT PARTICIPANTS, 1959 AND SINCE

10 years:	Guy Bartlett 40, Esly Hallenbeck 29, Mr. and Mrs. Byron T. Hipple, Jr. 15, Stephanie Podrazik 25.
9 years:	Betty Hicks.
8 years:	Mary Linch 11, Dr. and Mrs Robert P. Yunick 16.
7 years:	John M. Fuller, Irene S. Podrazik, Mrs. Richard A. Waite.
6 years:	Mrs. Gilbert Eddy 10, Alice Holmes 30, Mary Johnston 9, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Malone 11, Walton B. Sabin 7, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Shedd, Rudolph H. Stone (Holyoke, Mass.) 16.
5 years:	David P. Ellers, Benton R. Seguin 17.
4 years:	Mr. and Mrs. B.D. Bedford, Mr. and Mrs. W.T. Cook.
3 years:	Mr. and Mrs Ainslee Allen, Brother E. Austin 7, Dr. and Mrs. Francis Bundy, Stephen Fuller, Mr. and Mrs Justus E. Glick, Dr. Walter Kaskan 6, Samuel R. Madison 11, Mrs. Thomas McGuirk, Harvey Spivak, Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Wernick.
2 years:	Mrs. Elizabeth Ellis, Eleanor Byrne, Mrs. Roy O. Dunham, Mrs. C.G. Grace 12, Barrington S. Havens 13, Mr. and Mrs. J. Milton Lang, Mrs. William H. Norris, Mr. and Mrs. Louis C. Novak 3, Barbara M. Podrazik, David Rothaupt, Mrs. Vincent J. Schaefer, Dr. Minnie B. Scotland 15, Aaron Spivak, David Stoner, Dr. Clifford Tepper, Carroll F. Terwilliger, Dr. Donald J. Tucker 9.

1 year: Alice Abel 7, Gustave Angst 3, Pauline Baker 10, James Boyd, Frances Brewster (Bloomfield, N.J.), Laura Brown, Mrs. W.J. Champeau, Philip H. Clark, Mrs. O.B. Conoway, Mrs. A.G. Darling, Leo Frees, Joe Hart, Mr. and Mrs. Orin S. Haskell, Mrs. R.J. Heinemann 5, Mary Kerley, Hazel Kinzly, E.F. and Mark Koch, Dr. Robert F. Kornis, Robert Laudenslager (Allentown, Pa.), Robert McCullough, Gloria Meader 7, Mrs. E.H. Meilinger, Dr. Will D. Merritt, Jr., Mrs. Ralph Ostrander, Regena Podrazik, Joseph Pollak, A.E. Powers, Doris Remis, W. Schipper, Nancy and Stuart Tepper, E. Lee Thomas 2, Nelle G. Van Vorst 21, Dr. Peter P. Wickham, Ethel Young.

* * * * *

AFTER 20 TROY CHRISTMAS COUNTS

Harvey Spivak

It was twenty years ago, December 31, 1949, that G.M. Andrews and one companion took to the field to participate in the first Troy Christmas Count. They had an interesting time during their trip along the Hudson River, finding 23 species, including four pintails and an old squaw.

Two decades later, we have a composite list of 98 species and 84,615 individuals compiled by the 92 enthusiastic bird watchers who have contributed fruitful efforts through the years.

A stranger to this area could use our Christmas Count lists to get an idea of what he could find on a winter day in the Troy area. It would mean no effort at all to find some species. More than one-half of all the individuals on all twenty lists were either black ducks (22 percent), starlings (17 percent), or house sparrows (15 percent). There is indication that black ducks will not remain at the top of the list for many more years. Starlings are rising fast, with counts in recent years totaling hundreds, or even thousands, more than black ducks.

Of course there are other species with which the bird watcher new to our area would quickly become familiar. Fourteen species have 20-year totals of more than 1000:

Black Duck	18,701	Herring Gull	2,680
Starling	14,248	Blue Jay	2,285
House Sparrow	13,054	Evening Grosbeak	1,690
Tree Sparrow	7,095	Common Merganser	1,356
Black-capped Chickadee	4,374	Mourning Dove	1,347
Common Crow	4,044	Slate-colored Junco	1,284
Mallard	2,847	American Goldfinch	1,013

It is also interesting to note which species have not been missed in all the counts since 1949. They are:

Mallard	Hairy Woodpecker	Starling
Black Duck	Downy Woodpecker	House Sparrow
Ring-necked Pheasant	Blue Jay	Tree Sparrow
Common Crow	Black-capped Chickadee	

Sparrow hawk has been missed once, and that was on a cold and windy day in 1956.

There have been some rare and unusual species seen in recent years. The 1965 count, which resulted in an all-time high species total of 57, produced glaucous gull, two barred owls, a myrtle warbler and seven white-winged crossbills. Other odd species seen recently were short-eared owl and killdeer in 1966 and a scaup in 1968. The myrtle warbler, short-eared owl and killdeer were new to Troy's list.

Looking at the results of Christmas Counts over a period of years, one can sometimes recognize significant changes in the abundance of certain species. The one species which shows a marked downward trend is the common merganser. While 395 common mergansers were counted back in 1949, not a quarter of that number has been seen in all the counts of the last 10 years combined. The Hudson River, where the mergansers flock at that time of year, has always been covered well, so there is no question that the figures are fairly accurate. Heightened pollution of the water is suggested as a cause of the decline, but that may not be the only answer.

Because the past decade has seen a great increase in the amount of thorough coverage the Troy circle has received, it is a problem trying to discern a genuine upward trend of small land birds. The Hudson River has always been investigated closely, but only since the mid-1950's have other parts of the territory been as carefully scrutinized as the river. Additionally, reports of people with productive feeders have only recently been incorporated into the count totals on a large scale. This is another factor which has swelled the total numbers on land birds.

Even with these thoughts in mind, it is safe to point out certain species which have shown remarkable increases over the past several years. Winter populations of some half-hardy species, such as mourning dove, robin and white-throated sparrow, have grown over the past several years. Many bird watchers active during the winter months will agree that red-winged blackbird and brown-headed cowbird may also be included in that category. The spread of the cardinal and evening grosbeak has been well substantiated by many studies in the Northeast. The figures from the Troy Christmas Counts only serve to support what is now common knowledge among bird watchers. Of course, starlings have long been expanding past the point of annoyance. The original 1949 count of 45 shot up to 643 in 1960 and reached a peak of 4084 in 1967. Only extraordinarily poor weather in 1968 kept this species from breaking 1000 for the fourth year in a row.

After consideration of the results of the past years, an impression is received that perhaps the Troy area has the greatest potential of any of the three local Christmas Count circles. The 57 species seen in 1965 now stands as Troy's record high, but if ever we should have a December during which Tomhamock Reservoir and other water bodies remain open, a total count of 60+ species would not be surprising.

I am hoping that many of our energetic club members will join us this year, and that people lucky enough to have well-frequent-ed feeders will add their bit to the total. After all, last year's only field sparrow and chipping sparrow were reported from feeders. I am already looking forward to December 27!

SOME EVENINGS WITH PHOENICEUS

Harvey Spivak

Sunday, August 10, 1969 was the afternoon I decided to finally look for the secret spot where the red-winged blackbirds went each night. Every late afternoon in the hot months, they flew over my home in an elongated mass to a roost near the Mohawk River. This I knew, but my casual searches had never disclosed the exact location of their nightly resting place. Driving down to River Road, I noticed the line of birds veered south as it reached the river, after having approached it from the east. By following the line of blackbirds, it took just a few stops along the river to discover where these birds spent each night - a small, marshy island on the Mohawk River, only about 2000 feet from the WTRY radio towers on River Road.

The narrow island which provided the red-wings' nightly shelter is about one-half marsh and one-half land with wet-soil trees such as willows. The entire island is about 190 X 880 feet and the marsh which provided the roost site is about 160 X 380 feet.

There were five major flight lines leading to the roost, one of which gave me the clue to its whereabouts. The west Saratoga County flight line (designated as "A" on the map) was by far the largest contributor of blackbirds to the roost. Although I did not have the time to make actual count of the number of birds in each flight line, I believe it is safe to guess that close to one-half of the total number of red-wings that arrived daily used that route. The volume of birds from line "C" was probably the second highest and the others were more or less equal.

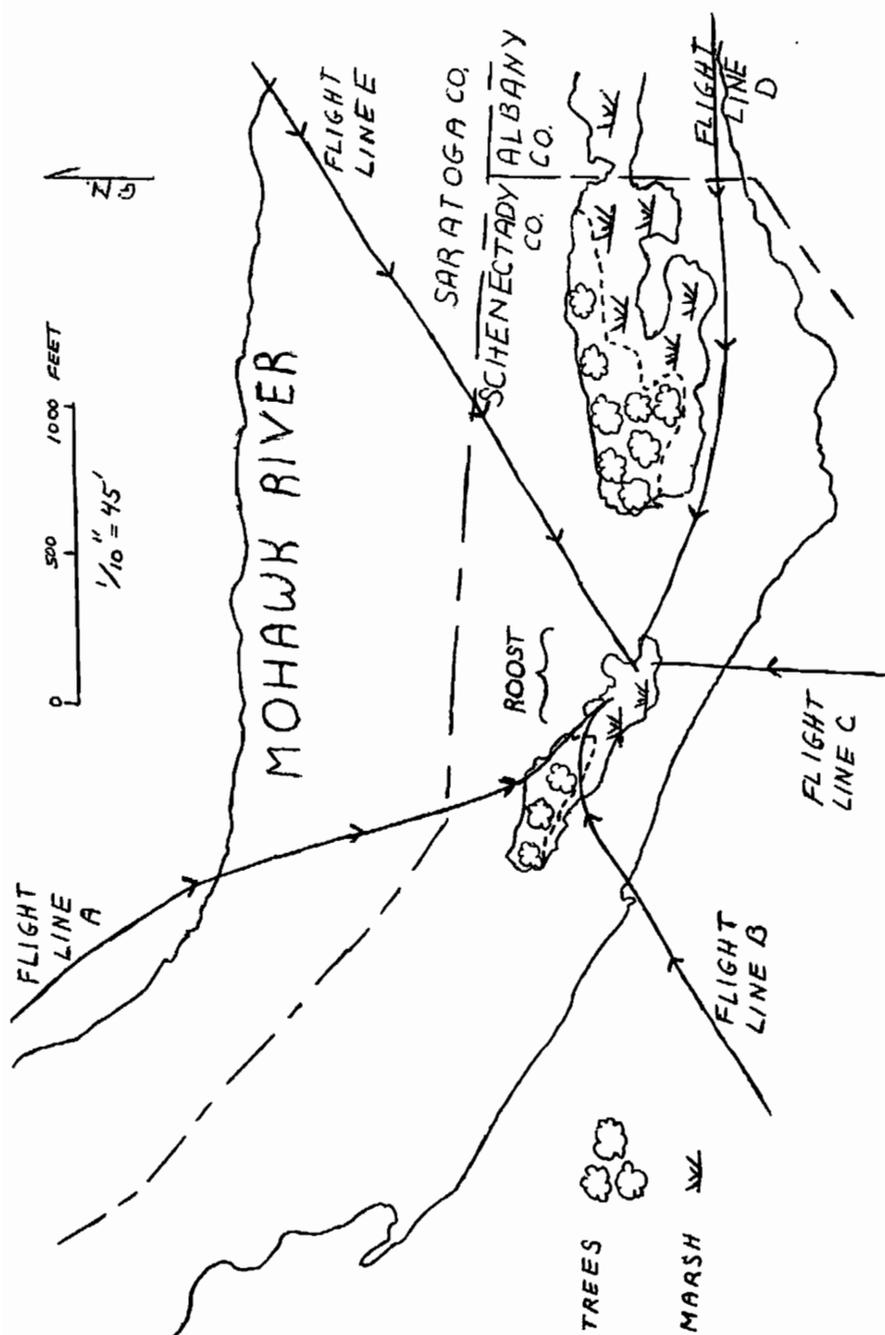
While the red-wings entered the roost area, birds of other species passed overhead on their way to other sites. Starlings, common grackles and chimney swifts followed flight lines that passed directly over the center of the red-wing roost and continued southwest, paralleling flight line "B" for a distance.

Quite regularly large numbers of starlings and small numbers of grackles temporarily entered the roost, only to fly off along their regular path later. Sometimes a flock of thousands of starlings would descend upon the reeds in a mass. These flocks can be genuinely frightening to one who has taken the responsibility of counting the birds. I soon learned that (fortunately) the starlings would invariably move on to their own roost and relieve some of the worry about inaccurate counting.

Interestingly enough, the island seemed to mark the spot of a confluence of flight lines to various species. The starlings habitually used lines "C" and "D", and the grackles lines "A", "C" and "D". They would follow the red-wings as far as the island and then either abruptly change directions to follow their southwest route or rest in the marsh with the red-wings for a time, to continue to their own roost later.

Barn swallows roosted at or near the red-wings' roosting site. They also appeared by the thousands each dusk during August.

I had been observing the roost for three weeks, when very suddenly brown-headed cowbirds began to appear. I had never no-



ticed them earlier, but on September 4, 2200 cowbirds shared the roost with the red-wings and on September 6, 2000 cowbirds turned up to spend the night. The cowbirds arrived only along flight line "B". I was forced to terminate my study after September 6, so I cannot be sure if they returned over a long period.

I decided my objective for returning to the roost night after night would be to try to answer three questions:

- A. How many red-wings utilized the roost site?
- B. What time did the birds arrive at the roost?
- C. What influence did variable environmental factors have upon the time of arrival?

As for question "C", I decided to investigate the possible affects of four factors: time of sunset, air pressure, temperature and cloud cover.

I arrived at the site no later than 4:45 pm. (Standard Time) each afternoon. The point of observation was the only unobstructed view from the south bank, a tiny peninsula just below flight line "B" (behind the Miskayuna Coal and Oil Company on River Road). I noted the numbers of arrivals for every five-minute period during the flight. By later comparing the number of red-wings arriving during successive five-minute periods I could accurately picture the crescendos and decrescendos of the flight. I also made as many notes as I could about certain other events, such as the gathering of red-wings before entering the roost and the arrival of other species.

The number of red-wings using the roost fluctuated widely from night to night - from 14,400 to 49,000. Although the idea comes to mind that the roost count might be used as an index of migration and while it is obvious from looking at the figures (Table I) that the trend was toward an higher number of birds as time went on, it is impossible for me to say anything concrete when judging simply from the tally of figures (except that there were many birds at that marsh!).

In order to study and describe a flight, it was necessary to draw up two definitions: (1) The beginning of the flight, and (2) The peak of the flight. The very first arrival each afternoon could not constitute the beginning of the flight because often one or two individuals would arrive so far ahead of the mass as to make their arrival time unrealistic as far as the beginning of the main flight was concerned. One afternoon, two individuals entered the marsh 25 minutes before any others. I decided that the arrival of the 50th red-wing would signal the beginning of the flight. By that time, the birds were beginning to come at a steady pace, and after all, 50 is not nearly a substantial portion of 49,000. The peak, or climax, of the flight was defined as the shortest time interval in which 50 percent of the total number of red-wings arrived. For instance, on August 25, 50 percent of the red-wings to arrive that evening came within a five-minute interval. The other 50 percent came within a period of 70 minutes. That five-minute period was clearly the climax of the flight.

I attempted to make some statistical measures of the data. The coefficient of correlation was used to prove mathematically wheth-

Table I

ARRIVAL OF REDWINGS AT ROOST

p.m. EST	AUG 12	AUG 14	AUG 16	AUG 23	AUG 24	AUG 25	AUG 27	AUG 28	AUG 31	SEP 1	SEP 2	SEP 3	SEP 4	SEP 6
4:55														
5:00			T									T		
05												T		T
10			T								T	T	T	
15		T	T								T	+T	T	T
20		T	T			T	T	T	T	T	+T	T	T	T
25			+T				T	T	T	+T	T	2	T	+T
30			T		T		T	T	T	T	T	9	+T	T
35	T	T	T		+T		T	+T	+T	T	T	4	T	1
40	T	T	T		T		T	T	T	T	2	18	1	1
45	T	T	T	T	T	+T	+T	T	2	1	2	18	2	2
50	T	T	1	T	T	T	T	T	2	1	2	13	8	3
55	T	T	1	T	T	1	T	1	4	4	8	9	10	3
6:00	T	1	5	+1	2	2	1	3	4	7	8	4	14	10
05	2	2	10	1	2	2	1	2	8	15	8	5	15	8
10	3	3	11	3	3	4	2	3	8	11	10	3	11	13
15	2	7	9	3	4	6	6	6	14	14	21	7	7	27
20	5	2	10	5	4	5	6	9	15	13	25	7	19	*11
25	3	10	8	5	12	7	5	17	13	7	*2	*1	*12	4
30	6	6	5	6	13	6	12	7	*22	*22		T	4	17
35	6	8	10	11	10	9	*15	*8	8	6				T
40	6	10	14	*10	*14	*50	27	14	1					
45	7	7	10	20	10	7	10	20						
50	11	16	3	33	21	1		9						
55	15	*10	*T	1	3									
7:00	*6	16		T	1									
05	10	1												
10	18	T												
15	T													
totals	4,400	20,600	22,300	22,400	20,600	31,300	27,000	31,700	49,000	40,000	30,800	32,900	48,300	37,600

+ -50 redwings in roost (no such data taken for 8/12 & 8/14)
 * -sunset (EST)

T - less than one-half of one per cent

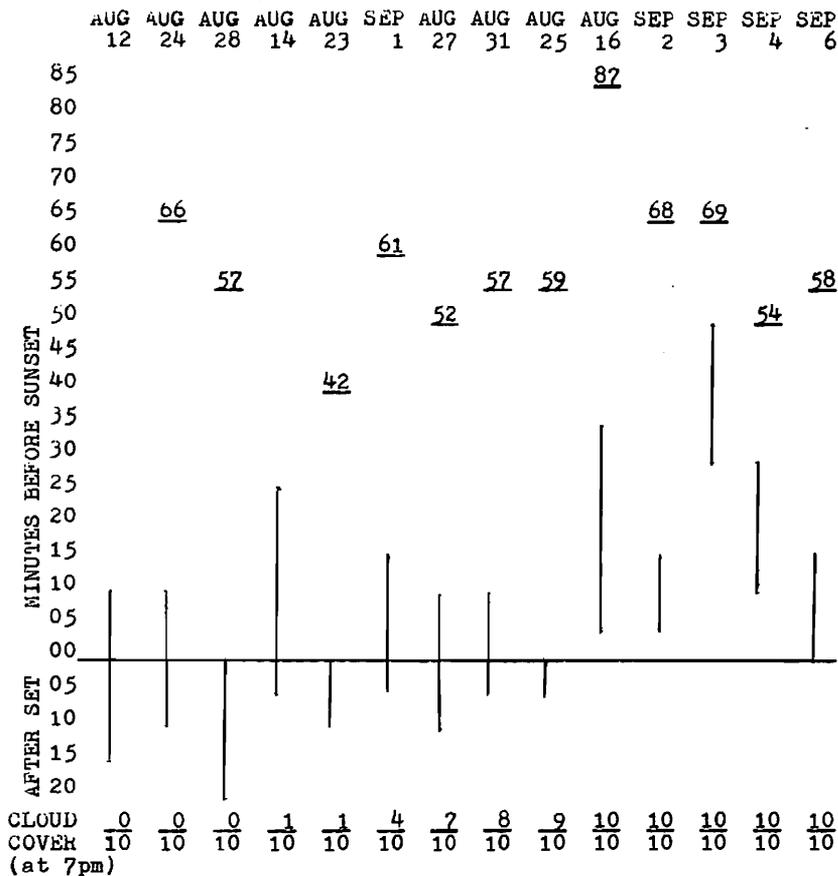
The numbers in the columns indicate the percentage of the total number of birds counted.

er or not there was a relation between the temperature, etc. and the time of arrival of the red-wings at the roost.

The data in Table I indicate that the time of arrival is definitely related to the time of sunset. In this case, the coefficient of correlation is +0.70, indicating just what is made obvious by a glance at the chart: as the sun sets earlier in the evening, the red-wings arrived at the roost earlier.

Although such figures tend to be artificial, we can say that a "typical" flight began roughly 62 minutes before sunset, with a peak lasting from about 16 minutes before until about three minutes after sunset. The end of the peak of the flight almost always nearly coincided with the end of the entire flight for the evening. The surge of arrivals that constituted the climax was fol-

Table II
ARRIVAL OF REDWINGS AT ROOST
AS INFLUENCED BY CLOUD COVER



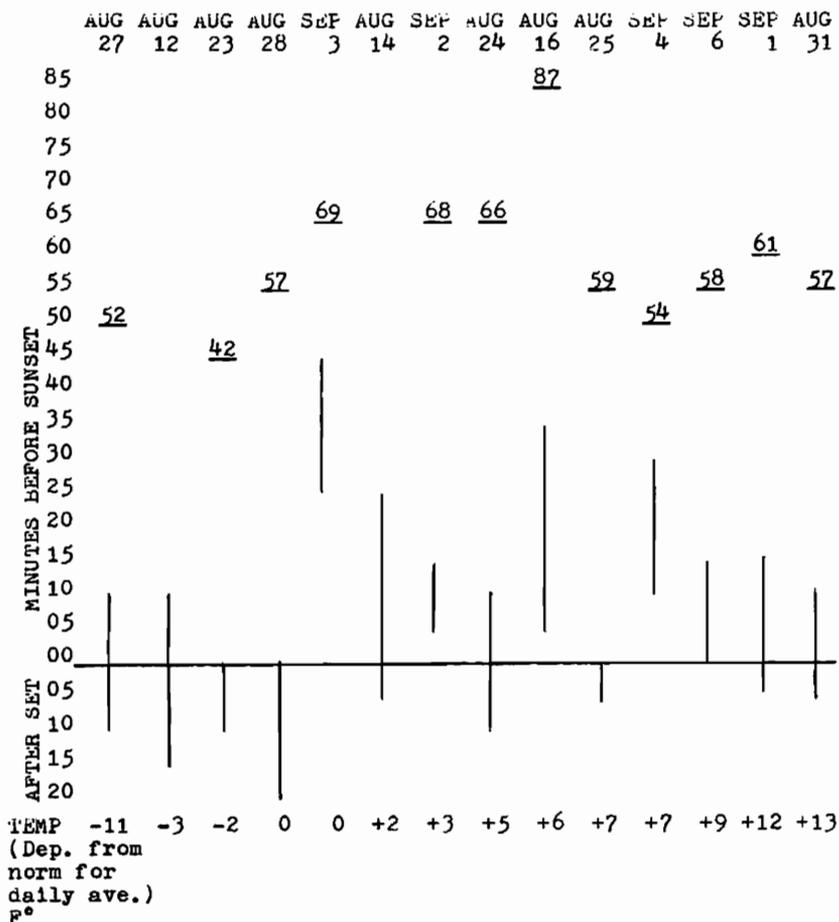
xx-exact time of beginning of flight: 50th redwing has arrived at roost (no such data taken for 8/12 & 8/14)

| climax of flight: shortest period of time in which 50% or more of the flight arrived

lowed by a very quick denouement, and then silence and motionlessness.

According to Table II, there is an apparent relationship between the degree of cloudiness and the earliness of arrival at the roost. The coefficient of correlation associating cloud cover and the beginning of the peak of the flight is +0.48, a significant indication that on a cloudy day the red-wings tended to flock to the roost earlier than on a bright day.

Table III
ARRIVAL OF REDWINGS AT ROOST
AS INFLUENCED BY TEMPERATURE



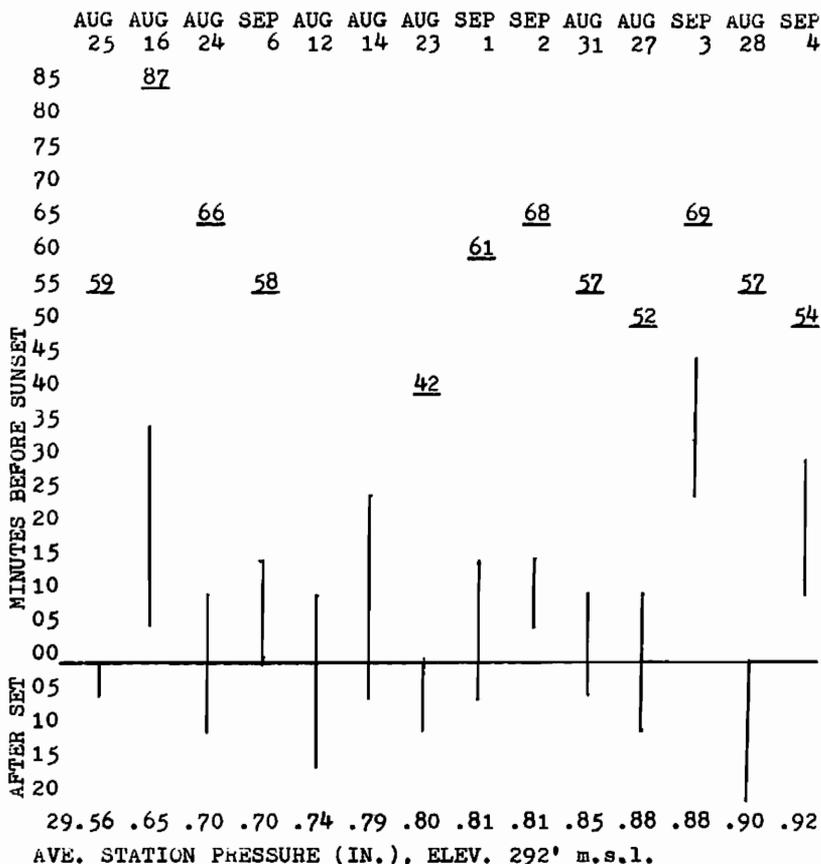
xx-exact time of beginning of flight: 50th redwing has arrived at roost (no such data taken for 8/12 & 8/14)

| climax of flight: shortest period of time in which 50% or more of the flight arrived

Investigation of the affect of temperature and air pressure on the birds proved only one thing - they have no appreciable affect at all. The coefficient of correlation between temperature and the beginning of the peak is +0.10, and the correlation of air pressure to the beginning of the peak is -0.19. Both figures suggest that neither temperature nor air pressure affect the birds' behavior.

Even impending rain did not control the behavior of the birds. On August 25, thunderheads were gathering in the distance in an

Table IV
ARRIVAL OF REDWINGS AT ROOST
AS INFLUENCED BY AIR PRESSURE



xx-exact time of beginning of flight: 50th redwing has arrived at roost (no such data taken for 8/12 & 8/14)

| climax of flight: shortest period of time in which 50% or more of the flight arrived

apparent prelude to a summer evening thunderstorm. Most of the sky was still light, however, and the blackbirds arrived at a leisurely pace - slower than usual, in fact.

At about 6:30 the sky darkened very suddenly and between 6:40 and 6:45 15,700 red-wings, 50 percent of the total for the evening, converged on the marsh. Just after the last bird disappeared into the grasses, the thunderstorm reached us.

I can conclude that the greatest influence on the red-wings' arrival at their roost is the amount of light present each even-

ing, the birds arriving earlier with decreasing light. They are unresponsive to variations in temperature and air pressure or to approaching rain.

* * *

A TERN TO THE SOUTH

Robert F. Yunick

Banding the nomadic wanderers of the world's oceans always holds an element of surprise, for one never knows where a band placed on a tern will be recovered. The manner of recovery sometimes offers a bit of intrigue. So it was with my first recovered common tern.

The bird, an incubating adult, was trapped for banding on its nest on July 14, 1965, on a sandy strip of land adjacent the State Beach between Oak Bluffs and Edgartown, Martha's Vineyard. The manner of capture was described several issues ago in my article on gull banding. This bird was the third of five banded that day.

It was not until May 31, 1969 that I received notice of the recovery, which had taken place in October, 1968. The recovery card indicated that the bird had been caught in a trap or snare by a Mr. Balram Pertak of Berbice, Guyana. One of the fringe benefits of banding is that one has the opportunity to learn some geography. A dash to the globe showed that the recovery was near New Amsterdam on the northern coast of South America about 2400 direct air-miles south and east of the Vineyard, or about 350 miles from the equator.

On June 1 I wrote to Mr. Pertak asking how he trapped the bird. His reply of June 12, which follows, confirmed my suspicion about the epicurean fate of the bird, however, left me still guessing about the manner of capture. The letter, however, lived up to the reputation of some previous letters to band recoverers - namely, it was most interesting.

"Dear Sir,

"I received your letter, and as you say that you want to know how I caught that bird with the ring on his feet and why I caught that bird.

"Well sir that bird have bin caught by us with a secret away and if I told you, you would not under stand unless I was there to show you.

"As you said that why I caught that bird for. Well sir that bird was really caught for our food and also for us to sell.

"The ring which I have from that bird I have it very safte and if you want I to send the ring or you want I to put it on an other bird feet plice make me to know and I would do it for you.

"Well sir what I would like to hair from you if you would help me with a job or if you would help me with some

other way.

"Yours Respectfully,

Balram Pertak (signed)

"N.B. I hope I would receive an other letter from you when you receive this from me."

I answered Mr. Pertak's letter by thanking him for reporting the band recovery and for taking the time and trouble to answer my letter. I explained that banding was a sparetime pursuit for which I did not get payed, and that unfortunately I had no job to offer him. I did send him some stamps which I thought he would find interesting or would be able to trade for something more to his liking.

One particular comment of Mr. Pertak's caught my attention. I thought it odd that he offered to replace the band on the tarsus of another bird. Perhaps it struck me as odd because as a bander I am instructed to never reuse a band because of the confusion such an act could introduce into the Fish and Wildlife Service's record system. To an unsuspecting non-bander, out of reach of governmental admonishment, replacing a band might make some sense. Such a case recently came to light, much to the chagrin of the F & W S's computers, as noted in INLAND BIRD BANDING NEWS.

The case in point began with the banding of a snow goose on July 19, 1960 by a Canadian biologist near the mouth of the McConnel River in the Keewatin District of the Northwest Territory of Canada. The goose was reported shot at Lake Preston, S.D. in November, 1967. The hunter subsequently crippled another snow goose, nursed it back to health and released it with the already reported band on its tarsus! When this second goose was shot for the second time on January 6, 1968 near Riviera, Texas, the unsuspecting hunter reported the second-hand band and the computer balked. Man came to the rescue of the machine and straightened out the mess.

In a letter of explanation to the Texas hunter, the chief of the Bird Banding Laboratory instructed, "If you still have it, I would appreciate it very much if you would bury the band."

* * * * *



KARNER PINE BARRENS

SEPTEMBER 6

At eight o'clock on the muggy, murky morning of September 6, nine members of our Club, including one who is also a member of the Greene County Bird Club, gathered at the junction of Rt. 155

and the Washington Avenue extension. We lost no time in entering the pine barrens, with high hopes of finding a good variety of migrating fall warblers.

As we made our way along a path, there was little activity for half an hour. Then suddenly, just ahead of us, we saw small birds flitting back and forth. We advanced cautiously, and for an hour and a half worked slowly through a small area, striving mightily to identify "those confusing fall warblers." There were constant exclamations of delight, surprise and bafflement as the birds quickly appeared, disappeared and then reappeared amid the foliage. It was difficult to concentrate on one bird at a time, for there were so many warblers flying from one perch to another, and chasing each other swiftly through the air. Our check-list indicates that we eventually identified 69 of these tiny birds, but certainly no one would claim this count to be exact. We listed 13 different species of warblers.

It is interesting to note that on the field trip of September 7, 1968 in the same location, the same number of warbler species was identified - however only eight of them common to both lists.

We tabulated a total of 32 species for the three-hour trip, all the while feeling very fortunate and happy to have encountered so lovely a wave of warblers.
--Hazel Bundy

GALWAY LAKE

NOVEMBER 1

Eighteen people attended the trip to Galway Lake to tally 38 species on a windy, overcast November 1st. Three species of grebes and 12 species of waterfowl, including white-winged scoter, were seen. The shore birding was equally interesting with five species and a count of 30 dunlin.

Among the land birds were a northern shrike and some snow buntings.
--Mildred D. Crary



ARE THERE TWO? - PART II

In reply to Beezer Seguin's recent note in FEATHERS, "Are There Two?", I should like to offer the following:

- 1) I kept close watch on a Traill's flycatcher nest in Hackensack, N.J. during an entire nesting season and heard only "wee-bee-o" calls. Less than ten miles away in Caldwell, N.J. "fitz-bews" were frequently heard.
- 2) For the last three years I have heard "fitz-bews" in North Easton, N.Y. in the same general area during the June breeding bird survey.

- 3) This year during the same breeding bird survey, I also heard a "wee-bee-o" in the area between Schuylerville and Saratoga.
- 4) I also recall hearing "fitzbevs" in Meadowdale and Vosburgh.
--William Gorman

TALK TO THE ANIMALS

Come with me to the land of books, where the nature lover is unaware of any "generation gap." Even the most devoted, the most dedicated amateur ornithologist can suddenly see through someone else's eyes what he has missed.

Most of us are aware that the language between birds is simple; a reaction to instinct. The main secret of understanding the language of birds is to feel enough kinship with them to catch their feelings and emotions. When you hear a gull scream, try looking at things through a gull's eyes, eyes backed by a brain capable of emotion, swift reaction to things around it, but with little reasoning power, foresight or capacity for ideals. This is what pits man against man, creates conformists and idealists. The gull screams because it is hungry, or frightened, or frustrated, or perhaps has seen something curious and wants to draw the attention of other gulls to the curious object. We have our gossips, too. At the Federation of NYS Bird Clubs' meeting, someone remarked, "The more I see of people, the more I like animals." That didn't get into the report in FEATHERS. But, back to the curious object. You look where the gull is looking. Try to see what it sees if you can.

With all species, when the mother bird arrives at the nest, the young mouths fly open. Soon they learn to give the hunger cry, usually shrill. Gradually they learn to give the cry only when they see the parent approaching. When they are old enough to fly, sometimes they have to be pushed, it's an emotional time, and if they're "conformists" and afraid, there's liable to be a lot of shrill cries. Once they are airborne, there's usually an enemy around. They don't realize they are lucky to have made it this far! Comes the chase and, as in the western movies, more noise. As the bird flees it gives the fear or alarm cry, alerting all nearby. The hunting language depends on whether the hunter hunts alone or in flocks. Carnivorous birds usually hunt alone, and give a hunting cry to claim a certain territory. Some more social birds call other birds of the flock to eat with them.

In the breeding season there are other calls, but I will not go into that. What I have given here is an invitation to open HOW TO UNDERSTAND ANIMAL TALK by Vinson Brown. There are two or three excellent chapters on birds. You too can be a Dr. Doo-little.
--Ginny Sabin

WILDLIFE PORTRAIT SERIES

The superintendent of documents has announced the availability of the first in a series of wildlife portraits. "Printed in beautiful natural color, this set of 10 wildlife pictures, reproduced from original color transparencies, will appeal not only to conservationists, teachers and nature lovers but to home decorators and gift buyers. The first prints to be issued by the Bur-

eau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife depict such birds as the avocet with upturned bill; white ibis of the southern lowlands; trumpeter swan, largest of the waterfowl; the interesting secretive chachalaca; sandhill cranes, desert bighorn, pintail drake plus such interesting creatures as the black-footed ferret, rarest mammal in North America; the pronghorn antelope, speedster of the purple sage; and a massive bison.

"Concise descriptions of each picture accompany the set, with every photograph picked for framing, 17" x 14"."

These sets may be ordered at \$2 per set by requesting Catalog No. I 49.71:1 from Government Printing Office, Wash. D.C. 20402.

PEREGRINE FALCON POPULATIONS

The University of Wisconsin Press has just offered a 618-page volume, edited by Joseph J. Hickey, for \$10 entitled, PEREGRINE FALCON POPULATIONS - Their Biology and Decline.

"This book describes a contemporary ecological disaster and the search to explain it. Its extensive analysis offers, on the other hand, an unusual landmark in population biology and, on the other, perhaps the requiem of a species. Once the prized favorite of medieval falconers, the cosmopolitan peregrine falcon was, until quite recently, a remarkably successful example of avian evolution. By the early 1960's, however, the peregrine populations were catastrophically declining on two continents. Other raptors were mysteriously and rapidly decreasing too. In an effort to establish the cause or causes of these unprecedented events, an international conference of scientists, naturalists and conservationists was convened at the University of Wisconsin in 1965. PEREGRINE FALCON POPULATIONS, edited by Joseph J. Hickey, summarizes the proceedings of this conference and the enormous pool of unpublished population data that these investigators brought together.

"The peregrine falcon population crash was no isolated occurrence. It was paralleled by regional declines of bald eagles, ospreys, Cooper's and sharp-shinned hawks in the United States and by golden eagle, sparrow hawk and kestrel declines in the United Kingdom. But the peregrine was much the best-studied, and in its fate lay the clues to a new and major change in our environment that may in time take on world-wide aspects.

"Much of this volume describes the recent population behavior of the peregrine, the long-term trends that affected it in some regions, the adverse factors that varied locally, and the distinctive reproductive failure that overtook so many of its populations in both Europe and North America. The key fact emerging was the extraordinary tendency of the adult birds to break and eat their own eggs.

PEREGRINE FALCON POPULATIONS examines a wide variety of adverse factors - diseases, parasites and human harassment - and reaches the conclusion that the concentration of chlorinated hydrocarbons by bird- and fish-eating raptors is the only hypothesis that can adequately explain the simultaneous population failures of so many species on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. A concluding chapter in the book briefly describes the research gaps that ecologists promptly closed after conclusion of this

conference: insecticides were found in high levels in surviving peregrines in Alaska and the Canadian Arctic. A dramatic change in eggshell thickness was found to have overtaken various species of raptors in Britain, California and Massachusetts in 1947. And chlorinated hydrocarbon residue levels in eggs were shown to be inversely correlated with eggshell thickness.

"The increasing production of persistent insecticides now appears to be a threat to the world's biota on a much wider scale than the one described in this book. The arguments and the data here presented will be of great interest to scientists, conservationists, naturalists and laymen concerned with the pollution of our environment and with the subtle delayed effects that modern chemicals have on our wildlife resources.

"Sixty photographs illustrate the peregrine falcon, its nesting sites and habitat on four continents, and represent one of the most unusual collections of wildlife photographs ever assembled."

BIRDS OF THE SOVIET UNION, VOL. II AND III AVAILABLE

Volumes II and III of G.P. Dement'ev et al.'s BIRDS OF THE SOVIET UNION are now available for \$3 per volume from the Clearinghouse, Springfield, Va. 22151. These volumes are English translations from the Russian done in Israel under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution and National Science Foundation.

Volume II consists of 553 pages and covers doves, grouse, cranes, auks, loons, grebes, sea birds, and marsh birds. The text centers mostly on ecology and distribution, including information on range, migration, biotope, numerical status, breeding, molt, diet. In addition there is space devoted to description and field marks.

Volume III is 756 pages. It includes shore birds, gulls, terns and rails. Volume II may be ordered under number TT 65 50021, and Volume III as TT 64 11107.

BROWN-CAP INVASION UNDERWAY

Word from New England indicates that a significant invasion of brown-capped chickadees is underway this fall. One has already appeared in our area at the feeder of Joe Pollak on Rosendale Road in Niskayuna. It would behoove birders and feeder watchers to closely examine flocks of the wee forest folk in search of this rare northern visitor. He travels frequently with his black-capped brethren.

TELL IT TO SEARS

One cannot help but be concerned about the threat that commercial exploitation poses to rare or endangered species of wildlife. The plight of the alligator in the southern swamps is a case familiar to almost all conservationists.

The commercialization of leopard appears to have escalated to new heights with the mailing of this year's Sears-Roebuck Christmas catalog. Page 265 features the sale of leopard skins for purposes of home decoration.

Perhaps the president of Sears-Roebuck at 925 S. Homan Avenue, Chicago, Ill. 60607 is unaware of the endangered status of these magnificent, inspiring carnivores, and that he as chief corporate officer of one of the world's largest retail businesses is consenting to and promoting the potential extermination of these cats. Why not remind him that a simple signing of his name to a corporate directive could help to keep the cats in Africa. It's worth six cents just for the sport of it.

DUES REMINDER

That pink sheet included in the last issue of FEATHERS was intended to get your attention and remind you that your dues were due. If it didn't sufficiently arouse your attention to prompt you to pay your dues immediately, we earnestly hope that the bright pink color will aid your efforts in locating the notice amid your pile of unattended mail.

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