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The Passenger Pigeon

Monthly Bulletin of the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology

Vol. I.

August, 1939

No. 8

WISCONSIN BIRD BANDERS PLAY IMPORTANT ROLE

For many years ornithologists have banded birds in Wisconsin in cooperation with the U. S. Biological Survey and the Wisconsin Conservation Department. The results and value of this work in securing accurate records and migration data is well known. Special studies, such as those of Harold Wilson of Ephraim in banding thousands of Herring Gulls almost every year, are especially noteworthy.

Although there may have been more bird banders in Wisconsin in previous years, the present records show that there are still 83 individuals in the state doing this work. Of these, 38 have permission to trap and band any type of bird and 40 can trap and band only non-game species, while five specialize on game birds. This number trapping game birds often increases to over 30 during winter operations.

Because the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology desires to bring the bird banders of this state together for mutual benefit, the following list of cooperators is published. A list of scientific collectors under permit is also given below. THE PASSENGER PIGEON offers its facilities to these bird students in the hope that they will use this paper as a medium through which they can exchange notes and observations. This bulletin is being mailed also to those banders who have not yet subscribed so that all may have equal chance to publish records of state interest.

Permits for Both Game and Non-Game Birds

BROWN COUNTY--Mrs. E. P. Barnard, Green Bay

BURNETT COUNTY--Hollis Barrett, Grantsburg

DANE COUNTY--F. R. Zimmerman, Arthur Taylor and W. E. Scott,
all of Madison

DOOR COUNTY--Harold C. Wilson and Arthur J. Gorski, Ephraim

DOUGLAS COUNTY--T. J. McCarthy, Superior

GRANT COUNTY--Carmen Beining, Platteville

GREEN LAKE COUNTY--Mrs. Charles W. Hitchcock, Berlin

THE PASSENGER PIGEON

Monthly Bulletin of the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology.

Free to members. Membership dues per year \$1.00

Send membership applications and dues to the treasurer.

Manuscript and field notes should be sent to the editor.

Treasurer: Karl W. Kahmann, Hayward, Wisconsin

Editor: W. E. Scott, Wisconsin Conservation Dept.

Annex, 20 N. Carroll St., Madison, Wisconsin

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both of La Crosse

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WAUSHARA COUNTY--Mrs. Francis Hammerstrom, Plainfield

WINNEBAGO COUNTY--William F. Wydallis, Oshkosh

NON-RESIDENT--Dr. Frederick E. Ludwig, Port Huron, Mich-
igan, and Earl G. Wright, Chicago, Illinois

Permits for Non-Game Birds Only

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Wagner, Robert B. Halpin, Ralph C. Hopkins,
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Marx, Lawrence A. Hautz, Mrs. Lewis Rob-
erts Taylor, Wendell K. Beckwith, Walter

WISCONSIN BIRD BANDERS

C. Pelzer and Warren Dettman of Milwaukee; Paul W. Hoffman and Mr. and Mrs. N. L. Dittmer of Wauwatosa; Norbert A. Meyer, West Allis and Mrs. Fred L. Hook, South Milwaukee

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ROCK COUNTY--Joel Carl Welty, Beloit and Mrs. Melva T. Maxson, Milton

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VERNON COUNTY--Margarette E. Morse, Viroqua

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NON-RESIDENT--Robert P. Coffin, New Haven, Conn.

Permits for Game Birds Only

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TAYLOR COUNTY--George G. Ruesch, Medford

WAUSHARA COUNTY--F. N. Hammerstrom, Jr., Plainfield

NON-RESIDENT--Douglas E. Wade (recently moved from state)

Active Scientist Collector's Permits

The following individuals have federal and state scientific collector's permits at the present time for work in Wisconsin, but all do not specialize in ornithological studies:

DANE COUNTY--Sterling Brackett, Prof. Leon J. Cole, William H. Elder, John S. Main, Lewis A Posekany, Arlie W. Schorger and W. E. Scott at Madison

JUNEAU COUNTY--Louis A. Loboda, New Lisbon

KENOSHA COUNTY--William E. Dickinson, Kenosha

MILWAUKEE COUNTY--George Ammann, Warren Dettman, Owen J Gromme, Paul W. Hoffmann, Walter C. Pelzer and I. J. Perkins at Milwaukee

OCONTO COUNTY--Carl H. Richter, Oconto

ONEIDA COUNTY--Dean W. Mather, Rhineland

RACINE COUNTY--Clarence W. Hockings, Waterford

SAWYER COUNTY--Karl W. Kahmann, Hayward

NON-RESIDENT--Earl G. Wright, Chicago, Illinois

Recent reports of the work of collectors are available in the offices of the Wisconsin Conservation Department and some have been published in THE PASSENGER PIGEON. Early records may be secured from the Biological Survey.

ADDITIONS TO A. J. SCHOENEBECK'S
BIRDS OF OCONTO COUNTY
By Carl H. Richter, Oconto, Wisconsin

(Editor's Note: A. J. Schoenebeck's "Birds of Oconto County" was originally published privately in a limited number of copies (51 pages) on Oct. 27, 1902. The article was again republished in the Oconto County Reporter for January, February and March of 1903. In order to bring these records to the attention of present-day bird students, this material was carried in the June and July, 1939 issues of THE PASSENGER PIGEON. The following article was prepared by Richter to bring the records of his county up to date.)

LESSER LOON--Of seven birds brought to me by a fisherman, three showed an appreciable difference in size, being smaller; otherwise marked the same. All were taken from gill nets (same day) set out some distance from shore, in Green Bay, May, 1935. (Does not appear on A. J. Schoenebeck's list)

HOLBOELL'S GREBE--Two male birds seen on Oconto river three miles west of the city of Oconto, May, 1924, were of this species. (Not on A. J. S. list)

WESTERN GREBE--Four taken at "Flander's Rush-bed", north shore, north of mouth of Oconto river when they swam into the decoys in September, 1924. (Not on A. J. S. list)

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT--Fairly common in migration, especially in the spring. Have never found it nesting, although I have seen individuals in June. (Not on A. J. S. list)

EASTERN GREEN HERON--Fairly common in suitable places in the county now. I found three nests with eggs one day and was not searching for them. I also found other nests in woods along Green Bay shore, along course of Oconto river, and Pensaukee river.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON--Now fairly common in suitable localities. During June and July I saw a dozen or more daily in a marsh south of Oconto river along Green Bay. Numbers will be found in the marsh to the north and south of the mouth of the Pensaukee river.

WHISTLING SWAN--Now common in migration both in fall and spring. I have noted several hundred at one time feeding

OCONTO COUNTY BIRD NOTES

and resting just "off shore" on Green Bay. Occasionally a few non-breeding birds remain here all summer.

TRUMPETER SWAN--Four birds observed at Pecor's Point, four miles south of city of Oconto on Green Bay. When first heard the four were just north of the Pensaukee river, swimming to near the Point. They then took wing and joined a large flock of Whistling Swan. (Note: Became familiar with the call of this species when in Yellowstone Park. The call is altogether different from that of the Whistling.) These birds seen in October, 1937. (Exact dates sent to Biological Survey)

HUTCHINS GOOSE--At times fairly common in migration. Few are shot by duck hunters. Have taken them personally. Date of collecting: skin in collection dated Oct. 31, 1934. (Does not appear on A. J. S. list)

AMERICAN BRANT--Migratory; spring and fall. A pair remained here for about three weeks in 1933 from latter part of April into May. They fed on grass in meadow back of marsh along Green Bay within the limits of the city of Oconto. (Does not appear on A. J. S. list). There are no records for this bird in Minnesota and but one for Michigan.

BLUE GOOSE & LESSER SNOW GOOSE--Often observed in large flocks during migration especially in the fall. The two species travel together. Skins in collection taken Oct. 17, 1932. Both species from same flock.

RED-LEGGED BLACK DUCK--Quite common in migration. This hardy, more northern variety remains until the "freeze-up" of the Bay and rivers in late fall and arrives early in spring. Skins collected in October and November. (Not on A. J. S. list)

COMMON BLACK DUCK--Common now. This more eastern species has been gradually moving westward and is now common in Wisconsin. A fairly common nester in Oconto county along Green Bay marshes, inland marshes and even along streams back in woods (trout streams). Have found nests and seen many broods of young.

GADWALL--Not so common in migration any longer and not seen here during breeding season any more. I have no summer records.

THE PASSENGER PIGEON

BALDPATE--Fairly common in migration especially in the fall. A few remain to nest in the marsh along Green Bay.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL--Our most common nester of the ducks, along the Green Bay marshes.

REDHEAD--Not observed during the breeding season any more, but still seen during migration, some years in fair numbers.

RING-NECKED DUCKS--On several occasions have seen hens with brood in summer along the Green Bay shore.

AMERICAN SCOTER--Migratory. A few are taken by duck hunters along Green Bay. I saw a specimen taken at Pecor's Point in October, 1937. (Does not appear on A. J. S. list)

RUDDY DUCK--No longer common in migration and I have never seen it during the breeding season.

HOODED MERGANSER--Rare nester. A nest was found in the Peshtigo marsh country in the hollow of a tree. A female with a brood of 7 downy young observed in June, 1932 on McCaslin brook, town of Riverview.

TURKEY VULTURE--First recorded personally in Sept. 1926, when a single bird was seen on the Green Bay shore about one mile north of the mouth of the Oconto river. An adult male was brought to me by Wm. DePouw in May, 1933; taken just west of city limits of Oconto. My last record is of two birds, perhaps a pair, in July and August, 1937, southwest of Stiles. These birds were seen on a number of occasions for several weeks.

EASTERN GOSHAWK--My last breeding record was of a nest found near the east edge of the Peshtigo marsh area in 1934. Two young were recorded.

EASTERN RED-TAILED HAWK--This bird can no longer be considered a common resident. A number of pairs do nest in scattered locations about the county, returning to the same nesting sites from year to year unless disturbed too much.

BALD EAGLE--Uncommon, even in migration. Very few pairs remain to nest. My last nesting record (set of 2 eggs taken) was April 8, 1928 in woods bordering Green Bay north of Oconto.

OCONTO COUNTY BIRD NOTES

DUCK HAWK--The last individual bird seen was at Pecor's Point, south of Oconto, along the Green Bay shore in October, 1934.

EASTERN SPARROW HAWK--This bird can no longer be considered abundant, especially in the nesting season. A decrease is noticeable in breeding pairs compared with 10 to 15 years ago.

RUFFED GROUSE & GREATER PRAIRIE CHICKEN--These birds have their cycles. Both species are again on the increase. Large flocks of 305 were observed during past winter, 1939.

PRAIRIE SHARP-TAILED GROUSE--This bird is still to be found in numbers toward the northern half of the county. A brood was seen in 1938 north of Mountain (only recently hatched). One specimen, a male, was taken by a hunter three miles west of the city of Oconto in 1934.

EASTERN BOBWHITE--The first birds observed in this county by me in 1932 at Mosling. Several pairs appeared a few years later near Oconto. In 1934 several broods were seen. The following extremely cold winter tended to drive the birds away or they were frozen. None were heard or seen in the past two years near Oconto.

VALLEY QUAIL--Accidental. Two birds were taken by Wm. DePouw just west of the city limits of Oconto in July, 1933, for identification, out of a flock of about a dozen on the DePouw farm. They were thought to have been reared near there in a wild state. Perhaps this was an escaped pair as I could locate no one who had released these birds. (Not on A. J. S. list)

CHUKAR PARTRIDGE--Introduced in 1939. Several individuals have been seen or captured, since release. (Not on A. J. S.)

RING-NECKED PHEASANT--Introduced; resident. Fairly well scattered throughout the county except in extreme northern part; is becoming more common. (Not on A. J. S. list)

SANDHILL CRANE--A pair or two still return and nest in the county. They were reported in the summers of 1938 and 1939.

THE PASSENGER PIGEON

KING RAIL--Summer resident, but not common any longer. No birds found during "low water level period" of Green Bay of several years ago. A few pairs are now returning to nest in marshes.

YELLOW RAIL--Occasional summer resident in marshes of Green Bay. They did not nest here during period from 1930 to 1937 which was the low water level period. I have found both the nests and young.

(Note: I have never heard or seen the Black Rail in this county, although I have searched marshes carefully.)

FLORIDA GALLINULE--This species is not at all as common as in Schoenebeck's time. I have never found more than two nests in one day, and this in covering large tracts of marsh. It is seldom taken by hunters in the fall, while the American Coot is holding its own much better. Even this species is less common now.

RUDDY TURNSTONE--Migratory; rare. Two male birds were seen at the mouth of the Oconto river on a sandbar, in company with Red-backed Sandpipers on May 24, 1936.

(Note: I have observed the Piping Plover, but kept no record.)

LESSER YELLOWLEGS--In June, 1936, I saw a female with three young. This was about a half mile south of the mouth of the Oconto river. This brings this latest nesting record near the vicinity where Schoenebeck found a nest in 1896. (Ed. note: There are no correct Minnesota or Michigan breeding records)

(Note: There is no doubt that nearly all of the Plovers and Sandpipers were more common at the time of Schoenebeck. However, protection seems to be bringing some of them back again.)

GLAUCOUS GULL--Two individuals were observed at the mouth of the Oconto river and on the Green Bay "ice field" in the winter of 1939.

HERRING GULL--Permanent resident; abundant and especially

OCONTO COUNTY BIRD NOTES

along Green Bay and at the mouth of the Oconto river. A nest was found on rocks of the Lighthouse pier at the mouth of the Oconto river. (Not on A. J. S. list)

BONAPARTE'S GULL--Common; spring and fall. Often numbers return to the vicinity of the river mouth (Oconto) by mid-July, remaining until well into the fall. A nest containing three heavily incubated eggs was found in the hollowed top of a pile in piling of a pier at the mouth of the Oconto river on July 7, 1933.

COMMON TERN--Listed as being uncommon; is now more frequently seen.

CASPIAN TERN--Now fairly common along Green Bay and seen throughout the summer months, but no nests have been found in the county as yet.

PASSENGER PIGEON--This species now considered extinct.

EASTERN SCREECH OWL--No longer a very common species.

GREAT HORNED OWL--Much less common than formerly.

SNOWY OWL--Winter visitant. I would not consider this species as common. Some winters it is rare, if seen at all. Occasionally a few birds move south from northern Canada, perhaps because of the lack of their natural food in the north.

Northern BARRED OWL--Permanent resident; much less common than formerly.

SHORT-EARED OWL--Migratory. This bird is more frequently seen in the fall and some years it is quite common. I have found this species in the Green Bay marshes in midsummer but no nest has been found.

AMERICAN EGRET--A group of 13 birds of this species remained here for several weeks in August and September, 1938, moving about, some along shore of Green Bay, although most frequently seen at Pecor's Point south of Oconto. Three were observed on October 1, date of the opening of the duck season. They were not seen again thereafter (1938).

(To be concluded soon)

JULY FIELD NOTES

Notes for this department are to be sent to the Editor at the end of each month. Accurate information regarding dates and observers' names should be given.

ADAMS COUNTY--On July 16, Scott observed an Upland Plover with three young near Big Flats.

BROWN COUNTY--Hunters and bird students report more water birds on Green Bay this year than usual. The number of July birds present was 99 species, including the Evening Grosbeak (Kendall) at Oconto, July 14. Kendall observed a young Bluebird of a 1939 brood carrying food to his younger brother, and took pictures of it for evidence. (This is rarely heard of among Bluebirds, Ed.) Observing Western Meadowlarks over a series of counties (Door, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Brown, Oconto, Marinette and Shawano of Wisconsin and Menominee county of Michigan) Kendall never found them within city limits as the Eastern Meadowlark is found.--E. W. Strehlow, reporter.

DANE COUNTY--The Wilson Phalarope nesting in Dane county as mentioned in last issue was studied in July by Main and Feeney, with two nearly fledged young observed on July 5. A "broody" male was the clue which Mr. Main saw July 4. Green Heron were out of the nest by July 2, and Coot by the 19th. Several nests of the Alder Flycatcher came to our attention, one with three eggs July 2. One nest contained also an egg of the Cowbird (Mitchell). Shorebirds were in evidence on their return flight as was to be expected, July 23. Pectoral, Least and Solitary Sandpipers were on the flats. Only a few Egrets (American) were reported for the county in July.--N. R. Barger, reporter.

Zimmerman reported seeing an Upland Plover near DeForest on July 11; Arthur Oehmke found a dead Common Tern at the Madison fish hatchery on July 29; and on July 31, John Spaeni reported that a flock of Prairie Chicken (about 25) were to be found in a marsh on the Deerum Road. The most interesting record for Dane county, as well as for the state this month, was an Alberta Dowitcher collected by John Main, July 16, in Dane County. This bird was identified as such by H. C. Oberholzer and adds a new bird to the state list. This bird was first described by Rowan in 1932.

DODGE COUNTY--Bussewitz reports that the Wilson Phalarope was again nesting on Mud lake, west of Watertown, July 14. They have been there since 1934. The Dickcissel was there this year after an absence of five years.

JUNE FIELD NOTES

JUNEAU COUNTY--Wm. Schunke reports that the Green-winged Teal has been found nesting on Soil Conservation Service flowages in this county this past summer.

MARINETTE COUNTY--On July 17, near Athelstane, Scott observed the Black-throated Green Warbler, Scarlet Tanager and Indigo Bunting, and near Crivitz a flock of crows numbering about 50.

MONROE COUNTY--Wm. Schunke reports three Sandhill Cranes having been seen all summer near flowage number 4 in the northeast part of the county. Scott recorded Lark Sparrows and a Grasshopper Sparrow near Camp McCoy.

OCONTO COUNTY--Carl Richter reports a fair crop of young ducklings in the Green Bay marshes.

OZAUKEE COUNTY--Arthur Koop of Frederic reports two American Egrets in the Milwaukee river near Saukville since June.

RACINE COUNTY--On July 16, young Kingbirds were first seen to be in full plumage, by Edward Prins, while on the 31, Geo. Prins saw a young Spotted Sandpiper not quite able to fly feeding with the parent, which still had its spots. On July 14, George and Edward Prins saw their first fall migrant, a Solitary Sandpiper. On July 21, the Root river above the Horlick's dam had dwindled, leaving large mud flats. Here Least Sandpipers, two Lesser Yellowlegs and one of the rare Stilt Sandpipers was seen by Edward Prins. The long dull yellow legs with the unmistakable crosswise markings on the bottom combined with the long bill, light line over the eye, and white upper tail coverts made identification certain. The record of a Pectoral Sandpiper, July 21, was questioned, but by the 24th it was substantiated when seven were seen. This is the first record since the same conditions existed on the river, during 1934. Included in the flock was also a Semi-palmated Plover, Semi-palmated Sandpiper, and a few Killdeer. The Solitary was the most abundant, then the Lesser Yellowlegs, and Spotted Sandpiper. Along the river on July 31, Geo. Prins saw the Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, the Pectoral Sandpiper and another Stilt Sandpiper.--Edward Prins, reporter.

Fred C. Hewitt, Supt. of the Burlington Fish Hatchery, reports that 8 American Egrets were to be found on the ponds most of the summer.

THE PASSENGER PIGEON

SAUK COUNTY--Prof. Aldo Leopold records seeing the Prothonotary Warbler in the Town of Fairfield every month this summer and states that he is quite sure it is breeding. He also reports two broods of Wood Duck along the river at this town.

SAWYER COUNTY--Scott reports some observations near Loretta as follows: July 16, Blackburnian and Chestnut-sided Warblers; July 18, Parula, Black-throated Green and Northern Yellow-throat Warblers, Oven-bird, Wood Thrush, Barred Owl, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Slate-colored Junco, Least Flycatcher and Cedar Waxwings.

SHEBOYGAN COUNTY--Edward Prins reports that on July 4 a hail storm near Plymouth dropped many stones as large or larger than a Robin's egg. They caused much damage, even to birds. A Goldfinch had a broken wing and died three days later, although it fed well. A Flicker which was struck on the back also died. In the Sheboygan Marsh, which was well up, the ducks, herons, terns and swallows were quite abundant on July 6. Three American Egrets were seen and also White-throated Sparrows. Either the Olive-backed or Gray-cheeked Thrushes were singing in one section.

VILAS COUNTY--Scott reports the Willow Thrush near Allequash lake and the Red-tailed Hawk near Jute lake, July 27.

BACK NUMBERS OF THE PASSENGER PIGEON

will be furnished at the close of the year, when a new supply will have to be printed of certain numbers. Our treasurer reports a number of inquiries. Let it be understood however, that unless complete volumes are desired, subscriptions and membership may begin at any time with the assurance that one year (twelve copies) of the bulletin will be guaranteed. By this we mean bird-banders can begin subscription now to obtain the September issue which will have a department devoted to bird-banding in the state. The editor has available all banding records since the beginning in the state, and hopes to get them into shape for use.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

N. R. Barger, president of the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology, has recently moved to Apt. J, 450 No. Few St., Madison.