



LIBRARIES

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

The passenger pigeon. Volume VI, Number 4 October 1944

Madison, Wis.: Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, October 1944

<https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/E7VMCRO5KPRJT9A>

<http://rightsstatements.org/vocab/InC/1.0/>

The libraries provide public access to a wide range of material, including online exhibits, digitized collections, archival finding aids, our catalog, online articles, and a growing range of materials in many media.

When possible, we provide rights information in catalog records, finding aids, and other metadata that accompanies collections or items. However, it is always the user's obligation to evaluate copyright and rights issues in light of their own use.

The PASSENGER PIGEON

VOLUME VI

October, 1944

NUMBER 4



SPOTTED SANDPIPER TURNING EGG

GORDON ORIAN

A MAGAZINE OF WISCONSIN BIRD STUDY

Published Quarterly By

THE WISCONSIN SOCIETY FOR ORNITHOLOGY, Inc.

NEWS . . .

The next annual convention of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology will be held in Madison, April 28-29, beginning on Saturday afternoon. Bert Harwell, of California, will be the chief speaker, presenting a program of bird song imitations and colored movies. This feature will combine the talents of a lecturer, photographer, musician, poet and naturalist into superb and vivid entertainment.

Dr. H. B. Wood, president pro tem of the Eastern Bird Banding Association, writes: "In 1921 in Ford County, Kansas, southwest of Dodge City, I am sure I saw a passenger pigeon. I have good reason to believe it was on December 15, 1921. While driving along an off road I saw a rather large bird ahead of me sitting on a wire fence. Slowing down I approached, keeping an eye constantly on the bird. Coming to a stop directly opposite, and about twenty feet away, I had an excellent view of that unmistakable copper-colored breast and a long tail. Instantly the bird took flight, turning quickly around and flying in a straight line at a gently rising elevation, and flying very fast northward. The bird was the correct size and did not behave or fly as any pigeon or any other kind of bird. I am certain it was a Passenger Pigeon."

The Christmas Bird Census should be sent for publication this year the same as usual.

A flock of banded wood ducks from Urbana, Illinois, was released in the University Arboretum, Madison, this season in order to study migratory and other habits of the species.

Prof. Aldo Leopold presented studies in the ecology of bird song to the Kumlén Club in Madison for its November meeting.

Official notice is being given all members in the report of the officers meeting, elsewhere in this issue, that a constitutional change has been recommended as follows: To raise the life membership fee in the society from \$25 to \$50, and the patron fee from \$50 to \$100.

The present officers of the Benjamin Goss Bird Club, Waukesha, are: President—Miss Eleanor Cuthbert, 742 W. College Ave.; Secretary—Albert Johnson, Route 2.

New members of the society will be interested in securing a copy of the Wisconsin Bird Check List before the supply is exhausted. In addition to listing all known birds of the state, with space for ten field

trip records, the booklet also gives the migratory dates, abundance and seasonal status of each species. Price 25c each. A discount of 20% is allowed members. Secure from E. L. Loyster, Middleton, Wis.

Three wild life programs presented at the Shorewood Auditorium, Milwaukee, remain: January 8, "A Naturalist Afield and Afloat," by Alexander Sprunt, Jr.; March 13, "A Naturalist's Diary," by Edna Maslowski; and April 14, "Bird Magic in Mexico," by O. S. Pettingill, Jr. All are lectures with colored movies.

The present officers of the City Club Bird Group, Milwaukee, are: President—Mrs. H. J. Nunnemacher, 2815 E. Newberry Blvd.; Secretary—Mrs. A. P. Balsom, 2209 E. Stratford Ct.

A winter home of the chimney swift has been discovered at last. The Migrant, official publication of the Tennessee Ornithological Society, has devoted its entire quarterly to this event and rightly so, for it was through the banding work of its members that the birds were found in northeastern Peru in winter.

The Flicker, official publication of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union, states that an avocet was seen feeding in the surf of Lake Superior, Minnesota Point, about four miles from the Duluth entrance canal. This is too close to Wisconsin for comfort!

Douglas E. Wade, formerly active in bird work in Wisconsin, especially in Walworth County and in Madison and vicinity where he attended the University, is now teaching in Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire.

George Becker, a member of our society, entered the armed forces and has visited Australia, New Guinea and the Philippines. An article in *Sports Afield* on a wallaby hunt in Australia was submitted by him recently.

Ludlow Griscom has a lengthy article in the Bulletin of the Massachusetts Audubon Society discussing sub-specific differences and problems with the gulls.

The following members now in the armed forces have been heard from: Wallace B. Grange, with the seabees now in the Pacific. W. E. Scott, now in Hawaii. E. T. Mitchell, now in France. J. R. Smith, now in France. F. W. Kozlik, probably in the Philippines. D. Q. Thompson, in the Navy, but appeared in Madison on short leave recently. F. R. Zimmerman, in the Navy, heard from while in Norfolk, Va., from which port he expected to go abroad. Howard Young, in the army, probably in Europe.

MEMBERSHIP FEE OF \$1 INCLUDES 75 CENTS FOR SUBSCRIPTION TO THE PASSENGER PIGEON, QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE WISCONSIN SOCIETY FOR ORNITHOLOGY, INC. SPECIAL MEMBERSHIPS: SUSTAINING \$5; LIFE \$25; PATRON \$50 OR MORE. SEND MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS AND DUES TO THE TREASURER, J. HARWOOD EVANS, 517 JACKSON DRIVE, OSHKOSH, WIS. SEND MANUSCRIPTS TO THE EDITOR, N. R. BARGER, 433 HILLCREST DRIVE, MADISON 5, WISCONSIN.

ENTERED AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER SEPT. 4, 1940, AT THE POST OFFICE OF MADISON, WISCONSIN, UNDER THE ACT OF MAR. 3, 1879.

NESTING STUDIES OF THE SPOTTED SANDPIPER

By RAY CIALDINI and GORDON ORIANs

Edited by H. L. Orians

Photographs by Gordon Orians

War-time restrictions on travel have made it impossible for the bird lover to travel far afield in the pursuit of his hobby. As a result, some have concluded that this sport must be largely discontinued for the duration, except for the seasons of migration in the spring and fall. Others, however, have decided that this is the best time to learn how many birds there are in one's own near neighborhood. This article is the result of such an investigation.

In the very heart of the city of Milwaukee, is a large tract of waste land which, with the coming of peace, will be transformed into park and boulevard. It is an area of one hundred and twenty-eight acres, stretching south for more than a mile along the shore of Lake Michigan from the Milwaukee harbor. This property was formerly the site of a large steel mill. The mill was closed down during the depression, and the property was finally acquired by the city of Milwaukee. All the buildings



REMOVING THE SHELL

have been removed and the area, well littered with such rubble as bricks, stones and cinders, with here and there a large slab of unbroken concrete, is now largely grown up in weeds. The northern end of the property contains two marshes where marsh wrens, red-wings, swamp sparrows, mallard ducks, and occasionally soras, raise their young. At the present time due to the nearness of installations vital to the war, the fifty-one acres at the north, containing the two marshes, have been fenced off and closed to the public, making a splendid bird sanctuary. The remaining seventy-seven acres are open to the public, and make an interesting place for the study of the bird life of that kind of habitat. We have made a rather intensive study this year, visiting the area nearly every day for a period of several weeks, and on many days spending several hours there.

Because the area is almost denuded of trees, only a few species of birds find it suitable for nesting. Prairie horned larks are found there throughout most of the year. One nest containing young several days old was found on the 19th of April.



FOUR EGGS USUALLY CONSTITUTE
THE CLUTCH

The nest itself is a slight hollow scooped out of the ground. This is lined with a thick mat of dried weed stems. It was interesting to notice that the first egg was laid before the nest building was completed. Many sticks were added during the period of egg laying. In the case of one nest the birds struck a stone when scooping out the earth for their nest, and then moved a few inches away and tried again, this time successfully. The birds were not seen in this area in any numbers until a few days before nidification began. Prior to that time they were found along the shores of the near-by ponds and the lake.

The area was remarkably free from predators. Of the twenty-one nests we found only two were unsuccessful. One of them was destroyed after the full clutch of eggs had been laid. We do not know what happened in this case, as the eggs just disappeared. The other nest was destroyed after the first egg was laid. The egg was broken by a stone which might have been thrown out by the tire of a passing car, or by some thoughtless boy. All of the other nineteen nests hatched successfully. All nests were observed either at the time of hatching, or a few hours later, when the young were still in or near the nest.

The first nest was located on Saturday, May 27. It had three eggs that day. The fourth was added the next day, and hatching occurred June 18th. The last nest to hatch was July 16th. It seems quite certain that the last two or three nests were tardy due to unsuccessful earlier attempts. There is no evidence to make one believe that a second brood is ever raised.

When the nests were first constructed, there was not much cover. But by hatching time they were well protected, usually by the white sweet clover which grows in abundance there.

Two of the nests were located before the first egg had been laid, the birds being flushed when in the act of scooping out the nest cavity. Six nests in all were found before the complete clutch had been laid. As a general rule an egg was laid every day, but there were two exceptions to that rule. In one case two days elapsed between the laying of the first and second eggs, and in another three days passed, again between the laying of the first two eggs. Incubation was not begun until the fourth egg was laid, but the birds, both male and female, stayed near the nest during the time when the eggs were being laid, which fact made it possible for us to find six nests before the clutch was completed. The almost infallible rule for shore birds is that four eggs constitute the clutch. In all the nests discovered last year and this year there was but one exception to that rule, a nest with five eggs.

The period of incubation, as determined by the six nests in which the dates of egg laying were known, varies from nineteen to twenty-two days, with the usual time being twenty-one days. It is to be noted that this is not in harmony with the figures usually given. One nest hatched in nineteen days, another in twenty, four in twenty-one, and a seventh nest found on June 8th, with four eggs, hatched on the 30th, or in twenty-two days.

The eggs were pipped two days before hatching took place, so it was easy to predict the time of hatching, and to be there to observe and record it. In every case

Several male Savannah sparrows were heard singing in their nesting areas. Three nests of the meadowlark and five of the killdeer were found.

Our particular interest, and the chief reason for writing this report, was the spotted sandpiper, one of the commonest and most widely distributed of our shore birds. A year ago we discovered that large numbers of them were using this area for nesting; in fact, fourteen nests were located in 1943. This year we made a more systematic search, and as a result we were able to locate twenty-one nests. It is not likely that many nests escaped our notice. We set down here our observations of these nests.

The nests were located anywhere from 50 to 1000 feet from the shore of the lake. In fact, only one nest was found within two hundred feet of the water. Two of the nests were about one hundred feet apart, and all of the rest were separated by distances usually greater than 200 feet.



EGGS WERE PIPPED TWO DAYS BEFORE HATCHING

the hatching occurred during the day, usually the afternoon. All four of the eggs were hatched within the period of a few hours. The young left the nest the same day.

We were unable to tell whether or not both parents assisted in the task of incubation. Both birds were seldom found near the nest at the same time, except, as already indicated, during the time of nest building and egg laying.

Like other shore birds the spotted sandpipers attempt to lure one away from the nest by feigning injury. However, very few of them did so at any other time than the day when the eggs were hatching, at which time they put on a splendid demonstration. The tail feathers were spread, the wings drooped, and a rapid series of piteous cries were emitted, as the bird ran rapidly about in the neighborhood of the nest.

Eleven of the nests hatched between June 21st and June 30th, indicating the peak of the season.

American Egrets Nest on Horicon Marsh

By HAROLD A. MATHIAK, Horicon

Two egret nests were found in 1944 in the large great blue and black-crowned night heron rookery on Four Mile Island in Horicon Marsh. The first nest when found on July 31 had two young egrets about two-thirds grown. On August 20 a second egret nest with two nearly full grown young was located. In addition, two fledged young were in nearby trees. These young may have come from the nest found on July 31 which now contained a dead egret. The age of the dead bird could not be determined from the ground.

The egrets apparently left the marsh soon after leaving the heron rookery in contrast to their actions of the previous year when a dozen or more were commonly seen feeding near the marsh headquarters. I saw only one egret on the marsh after August 20. There were no egrets at the rookery on Labor Day. The nest trees have been blazed to determine whether or not the same trees are used by the egrets each year.

Benjamin Franklin Goss

By A. W. SCHORGER

Nearly every state has produced an ornithologist of some renown, few an oologist of outstanding reputation. Wisconsin has the honor of having been the home of Capt. Benjamin Franklin Goss who, in his day, was second only to Capt. C. E. Bendire as an oologist. Frank M. Chapman once wrote: "Studied from a local standpoint, I confess I can see only two points of interest in a bird's egg—one is what the egg is in, the other is what is in the egg." Both of the above oologists collected widely and at a time when authentic information on nests and eggs was by no means voluminous; accordingly, their contributions were of great importance.

The ancestors of B. F. Goss¹ emigrated from Wales and received from the Crown a grant of land in eastern Massachusetts. The original plat of the first survey was in the possession of Goss at the time of his death. He was born in Lancaster, New Hampshire, April 24, 1823, the son of Nathaniel and Permelia Goss. They had four children, two sons and two daughters. His education was obtained in an academy in Lancaster, at which place he also learned the printers' trade. In 1841, at the age of eighteen, he came to Milwaukee where he followed his vocation for a year; hence he arrived in Wisconsin two years earlier than Thure Kumlien and five years ahead of Dr. P. R. Hoy.

In the spring of 1842, he took up 160 acres of land in the town of Pewaukee, a mile west of the village of the same name. Here he farmed until 1855. He married Miss Abby Bradley, January 21, 1851, by whom he had two sons and one daughter. Only the daughter reached maturity and she did not survive her father. He served in the Wisconsin Assembly in 1855 and then spent a year with his brother, N. S. Goss, in the grocery trade at Freeport, Illinois. Following this venture he went to Waverly, Iowa, and engaged in the real estate business for approximately two years. In about 1859 he joined his brother, who was living at Neosho Falls, Woodson County, Kansas, a town that N. S. Goss assisted in founding in 1857.* The locality at this time was a wilderness.

Goss was active in politics when the Civil War broke out, he became a Captain in the Home Guards. On January 21, 1862, he enlisted in the U. S. Army and served the full term of three years as Captain, Company F, Ninth Kansas Cavalry. He had many narrow escapes during the savage battles and skirmishes of the guerilla warfare in Kansas. He returned to Pewaukee in 1866.

Mr. Henry L. Culver informs me that he came to Pewaukee in 1869. He began to work for Goss in 1876, the year when he became very active in collecting, and this association was not terminated until the death of Goss. The latter had a general store and was postmaster for a long period. Though in politics a democrat, such was his popularity that he retained this office, in spite of changes in administration, until he chose to resign. Goss was absent for many years during the nesting season and left Culver in charge of the store. As an illustration, the Pewaukee *Standard*, June 26, 1879, states: "Mr. B. F. Goss returned home last Wednesday from his extended tour through the states of Kansas, Nebraska, and Colorado . . ." He usually took one or more boys with him to climb the trees and lower the eggs. A few years before his death, while attempting to remove a nest from a tree near his store, he fell from a step-ladder and broke his arm. He wore a cape in place of an overcoat the remainder of his life.

In the course of years he made for his daughter a large collection of butterflies and other insects.** This diversion was continued after her death to fill in the time between the nesting seasons. One of his other activities was the operation of a fruit farm at the edge of town where he developed the Pewaukee apple. He possessed considerable business acumen and could have left more than a modest estate had he not found the collection of eggs a more absorbing interest.

There is an old Norse proverb, "Bare is back without a brother behind." Goss was fortunate in having a younger brother, Nathaniel Stickney, who was as ardent

*It has not been possible to follow accurately the movements of B. F. Goss from 1856 to 1860. No agreement is to be found in the various brief biographies. He definitely was not one of the founders of the town. D. W. Wilder, *Annals of Kansas, Topeka*, (1886), states that Neosho Falls was settled by N. S. Goss and Isaac Dow, April 6, 1857. The first definite mention of B. F. Goss in Kansas is in the census of 1860.

**Mrs. Goss, in 1895, gave 2388 butterflies and beetles collected in the U. S. to the Milwaukee Public Museum.



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN GOSS

a student of birds as he was of their eggs. It was not until the close of the Civil War that the brothers determined to concentrate on collections in their respective fields. N. S. Goss remained in Kansas and as land agent for the Santa Fe Railway had abundant opportunity for studying and collecting birds. These he mounted with his own hands. His life work culminated in the well-known book, *History of the Birds of Kansas*,* that came from the press shortly before his death.² The dedication reads: "To my brother, Capt B. F. Goss, **Oologist**, with whom I have spent so many, many, pleasant hours in the field, this work is affectionately inscribed." B. F. Goss after returning to Pewaukee devoted all the leisure of his remaining days to the collection of nests and eggs.

*The writer has in his library the presentation copy from Goss to C. Hart Merriam.

The youthful brothers were noted at Pewaukee for their ardent interest in natural history. That it had long been a serious study is shown by the fact that in May, 1863, B. F. Goss made the discovery that Audubon was incorrect in his account of the nesting habits of the prothonotary warbler. Brewster³ wrote: "Mr. B. F. Goss of Neosho Falls, Kansas, first brought to light the fact that in that locality the bird invariably nested in holes of trees or buildings."*

The Goss brothers were known to Mary E. Stewart⁴ since her childhood. In 1890 she said: "... once upon a time there lived in Pewaukee two very young men. They were not remarkable for their personal beauty, though the clear eyes and frank open countenances they had were better than beauty. Nor were they at that time, noticeable for unusual intellect, but certain traits of character showed a difference between them and many of the rustic youths in that neighborhood . . ." It would seem that this devastating introduction would prohibit favorable comment but the undaunted lady proceeds to make amends. If the reputed shortcomings existed, the brothers overcame them nobly in later life.

There was remarkable devotion between the brothers and most of their extensive field trips were made together. They are stated to have travelled "nearly all over North America, including Mexico and parts of Cuba." A joint expedition to the Gulf of Mexico was unusually successful. The following incident is related: "There was a question as to whether a certain water fowl bred in that region [Texas] or not, Mr. [B. F.] Goss maintaining that it did, while others asserted that it did not. In a small canoe and with one attendant, Mr. Goss had been searching for weeks for a nest but without success. One night they went late into camp on the shore of a small island, not far from the coast. In the morning he was awakened early by the cry of a bird, and rushing from the tent without waiting to dress he beheld large flocks of the birds he had been so long seeking. He hastened back to the tent and awakened his man; they quickly dressed and went out, when he found in close proximity to his tent, just acres of nests built on the ground and so close together one could with difficulty walk between. . . . Then began the work of securing specimens of the eggs. . . . As the perforation must be as small as possible, the process of blowing the egg is often a tedious one. The attendant turned sick and gave out. Mr. Goss worked till the cords and muscles of his neck and face were badly swollen and painful. . . . By night Mr. Goss had secured some twenty specimens, and was able to fully satisfy those interested concerning the breeding of those birds in that locality." We are left in the dark as to the species involved.

Goss, after much patient search in the coniferous forests of Newfoundland, found the golden-crowned kinglet nesting. Only two or three nests with eggs had been discovered previously. A nest with the eggs was given to the Smithsonian Institution. On October 30, 1882, he wrote Baird: "Yours rec'd. It turns out as I expected, a misunderstanding. Those eggs were collected in Texas. I went to South West Texas in Feb., returned the last of May, made headquarters at Corpus Christi; among other things I took several sets of the eggs in question, No. 441, White-tailed Hawk, *Buteo albicaudatus*. This Hawk has but lately been added to our fauna, and I suppose the eggs are rare."

He had an aviary in which he kept wild birds. It appears that he had considerable success in getting them to nest and raise young. Mrs. Stewart wrote: "I can remember well the delight I felt when a child on being shown a low chamber above the store, fitted up with branches of trees and sanded floor, and numbers of birds flying freely about and singing, or sitting on their nests which they had built where they pleased."

It is remarkable that Goss published so little. I have been unable to find more than two papers bearing his signature.^{5 6} When asked three years before his death why he did not publish a book with the voluminous information that he had acquired, he replied that "at his age he did not wish to undertake so arduous a work, but would leave his notes for some younger man who may take sufficient interest to make use of them."

The information that has come down to us has resulted largely from the writings of men with whom Goss corresponded. It has been stated that when not more than eighteen years of age he began a correspondence with the Smithsonian Institution, Agassiz, and other scientists. This cannot be true regarding the Smithsonian Institu-

*Goss does not appear to have published this information independently. The earliest mention of the breeding of this warbler in Kansas that I have found is by F. H. Snow (Catalogue of the birds of Kansas, *Trans. Kansas Acad. Sci.*, April, 1872, p. 23) who wrote: "Found breeding at Neosho Falls." He credits this statement to T. M. Brewer who in turn obtained it from Goss. Brewer gives a somewhat fuller account in *North American Birds*, (1875).

tion since this organization did not begin functioning until 1846; however, he corresponded extensively with T. M. Brewer⁷, C. E. Bendire⁸, and N. S. Goss² who quote him freely.

Most of the collecting by Goss in Wisconsin was done at Pewaukee and Horicon. Some of the nesting records are of special interest today. Practically the same data are given by Brewer and Col. Goss. Though there are minor discrepancies in dates, I have followed Brewer since his information is somewhat fuller.

Species	Locality and Date
Common tern.....	Pewaukee—May 27, 1881
Gadwall	Horicon—May 27, 1868
Shoveller	Horicon—May 27, 1868
Redhead	Horicon—May 24, 1868
Ring-necked duck.....	Pewaukee—May 24, 1867
Buffle-head	Pewaukee—
Ruddy duck	Pewaukee—
Wilson's phalarope.....	Pewaukee—June 1, 1883
Yellow-bellied sapsucker.....	Pewaukee—
Chestnut-sided warbler.....	Pewaukee—June 15, 1879

The breeding record for the buffle-head is based on the capture of young birds. The chestnut-sided warbler was formerly a common breeder.

The Goss collection of eggs is now in the Public Museum of Milwaukee. The first presentation was made by him in 1884 or 1885 and installed at his expense.* It was probably given in 1885 as this is the year the collection is mentioned by Sherin.⁹ He states that it comprised sets representing 471 species. Nearly ten years of time and an outlay of over \$9,000 were required to make it. The Museum report for 1885 mentions the receipt by gift of 2305 eggs representing 471 species. Subsequent acquisitions raised these figures to 3328 eggs representing 795 sets and 720 species.¹⁰ It appears from the reports that the additions were made by Goss through purchase and not through personal collecting. In 1900 sets of eggs of the red crossbill and white-winged crossbill, collected by A. J. Schoenebeck at Fox River, Michigan, and donated to the Museum, were placed in the Goss collection. Intrusions of this nature were exceptional. In this year the inventory of birds' eggs and nests of the original Goss collection was given as 3024.

Some detailed information on the collection has been kindly furnished by Owen J. Gromme, who states that some of the sets were obtained in exchange with other collectors. In this way he secured a set of the Manx shearwater, taken June 10, 1844, and one of the San Lucas thrasher, dated August 18, 1860. His personal collecting fell largely in the period 1875 to 1890. All the eggs are genuine with the exception of an imitation one of the extinct great auk. In 1937 the entire collection was washed with soap and water by Marvin Adams without the loss of a single egg.¹¹ Only 159 sets in the entire collection were taken in Wisconsin, and of this number about 95 per cent came from Pewaukee and vicinity. The only rare egg, valued at about \$100 in 1922, is that of the passenger pigeon. It was taken by Goss from a nest at Pewaukee on June 3, 1873.

A paper on the Goss collection was read by Marvin Adams before the Milwaukee Bird Club on September 13, 1938. At the time that the collection was acquired by the Museum it was valued at \$10,000. The present value is conjectural but would certainly exceed greatly the original figure. The nominal values existing in 1922 for single eggs of various species in the collection were:

Black-bellied plover	\$16.50	Yellow rail	17.50
Whooping crane	45.00	White-tailed kite	25.00
Hudsonian curlew	15.00	Pectoral sandpiper	15.00
Marbled godwit	15.00	Aleutian tern	15.00
Canadian pine grosbeak.....	15.00	Black turnstone	15.00
Richardson's owl	15.00	Swallow-tailed kite	35.00
Baird's sandpiper	15.00	Trumpeter swan	50.00
Little brown crane	20.00	Wilson's petrel	25.00
Golden eagle	20.00	Bohemian waxwing	25.00
White gyrfalcon	20.00	Townsend's warbler	27.50
Canada jay	20.00	Ivory-billed woodpecker	100.00
Grace's warbler	20.00		

*At this time the collection was considered one of the finest in private hands. When Major Bendire became Honorary Curator of the Department of Oology, U. S. National Museum, in 1884, he had a personal collection of 8,000 specimens. This was given to the National Museum. Goss may have been motivated by Bendire's action.

The collection contains the eggs of three species, Lucifer hummingbird, Xanthus hummingbird, and Mexican chickadee, so rare that no prices were ventured.

Goss was a collector to the end. He made a special trip to Florida in the "winter of 1891" in search of the still undiscovered eggs of the Carolina parakeet.¹ This once abundant species was then to be found only in the extensive cypress swamps and he predicted that it would soon become extinct. The trip was fruitless with respect to obtaining reliable information on breeding habits. His last collecting trip was in Oconto County in 1892 and lasted from June 7 to 13. In company of A. J. Schoenebeck he explored the woods and swamps, and succeeded in finding the nests of a large number of birds including those of the Arctic three-toed woodpecker, red crossbill, white-throated sparrow, blue-headed vireo, magnolia warbler, and winter wren.

There are numerous testaments of his fine personality. Nehrling said of him: "It was always a very pleasant time when the late Mr. Benjamin F. Goss, Honorary Curator of Oology and Ornithology of the Public Museum of Milwaukee, visited the institution. His kindness to all the employees, his congeniality, his good humor, his interesting conversation made him a delightful and always welcome visitor. I have spent many happy hours with him in the Museum, and I must say that I rarely have met a man who was so upright, so true and kind and friendly as Mr. Goss. Like all those who really know anything he was very modest. A boundless love for nature and her beauties and a never-ceasing enthusiasm for the birds of our country and their nesting habits characterized him." Bendire² paid him the following professional tribute: "Like his younger brother Col. N. S. Goss . . . he was an equally ardent student of nature . . . contributing much new and valuable information to both our ornithological and oological knowledge, and also many rare specimens to the Smithsonian Institution. Nearly all his leisure hours, especially in later years, were devoted to the study of the nesting habits of our North American birds, and his name will always be a familiar and prominent one in any standard work on this subject. Few naturalists since the days of Audubon, Wilson and Nuttall, have done more active and accurate field work than Capt. B. F. Goss. . . ."

He became an Associate Member of the American Ornithologists' Union in 1883 and remained in this class until his death. His reluctance to use the pen for publication is the only reason that can be advanced for his failure to receive a higher honor. He has received local recognition of the most satisfying kind. In 1939 the bird club founded in Waukesha in 1928 was renamed The Benjamin F. Goss Bird Club of Waukesha.¹²

Goss was again elected to the Wisconsin Assembly in the fall of 1892 and though in poor health he served in the early months of 1893. He died of heart disease at Pewaukee on July 6, 1893. Neither he nor his brother left descendants to continue the name. His adopted daughter, Pearl Goss Jones, is living in Pewaukee at the present time. The nests and eggs of our native birds are now so well known that oology draws but few recruits. It is therefore improbable that Wisconsin will produce soon another oologist of the professional standing of Benjamin Franklin Goss.

References

1. N. Nehrling. In memoriam of Capt. B. F. Goss. Eleventh Ann. Report Public Museum of Milwaukee, Oct. 1, 1893. Additional biographical material will be found in: *Auk* 10 (1893) 385; C. E. Bendire, The Late Capt. B. F. Goss, *Nidologist* 1 (Jan., 1894) 65-6; Portrait and Biographical Record of Waukesha County, Wisconsin. Excelsior Publishing Co., Chicago (1894) p. 607; Waukesha *Democrat* July 15, 1893; Waukesha *Freeman* July 13, 1893, and reprinted in *Oologist* 10 Oct., 1893) 281-2.
2. N. S. Goss. History of the Birds of Kansas, Topeka (1891).
3. William Brewster. The Prothonotary Warbler. *Nuttall Bull.* 3 (1878) 158.
4. Mary E. Stewart. A Village Scientist. *Yenowines News* (Milwaukee) Jan. 26, 1890, p. 5.
5. B. F. Goss. Notes on the Breeding Habits of Maximilian's Jay (*Gymnocitta cyanocephala*) and Clarke's Crow (*Picicorvus columbianus*). *Nuttall Bull.* 8 (1883) 43-5.
6. B. F. Goss. Breeding Habits of the Carolina and American Eared Grebes. *Ornith. and Ool.* 8 (1883) 1-2.
7. S. F. Baird, T. M. Brewer, and R. Ridgway. North American Birds. 5 Vols., Boston (1875 and 1884).
8. C. E. Bendire. Life Histories of North American Birds. Part I, Washington (1892).
9. [F. M. Sherin]. The Goss Collection of Birds' Eggs. *Western Oologist* (Milwaukee) 1, No. 2 (June, 1885) 3.
10. Third Annual Report Public Mus. of Milwaukee, Oct. 1, 1885 (1885) p. 14; Fourth Report, Oct. 1, 1886 (1886) p. 8; Fifth Report, Oct. 1, 1891 (1891) p. 13; Eighteenth Report, Oct. 1, 1900 (1900) p. 9.
11. Milwaukee *Journal* May 1, 1937, p. 7.
12. Goss Honored by Bird Club. Waukesha *Freeman* Feb. 25, 1939.

BIRD WATCHING IN NEW CALEDONIA

By WALTER E. SCOTT, U. S. Army
Madison, Wisconsin

So this was the home of the Kagu, described by Dr. Ernest Mayr* of the American Museum of Natural History as the "only representative of a special suborder, perhaps the most peculiar bird of the South West Pacific." As any bird student at sea for the first time, I had carefully noted the birds seen on our journey—there was never a day without some sort of sea bird nearby, although we had seen land only once. Now I stood at the ship's rail, our secret destination before me. It was April 15, 1944, Noumea harbor, and two Silver Gulls (I first called them "Little Gulls") were there to greet me. About five months later, when I left New Caledonia on September 22, I was to see these birds again. I had already heard of the Kagu while aboard ship, but how many other strange and interesting birds were waiting to be studied on the high rocky land before me, I did not know.

I had left my binoculars at home. Because of my unknown destination I had no reference material. My knowledge of the birds of this distant land was very meager. So I decided on my only course of action—I would take detailed notes of what I saw, especially as to bird descriptions and characteristics; I would give them a "temporary" name until I could check my records with published data later. This was my salvation, for most of my early records were detailed enough so that the birds could be identified definitely when I knew them better.

While debarking and traveling to our camp in the gray dawn, I saw groups of blackish birds which looked and acted like starlings, but when they flew, there were large white patches in their wings. I called them "Maynas," and later found they were the Indian Mynah, an introduced species, and one of the island's most common birds. That same morning I saw what I called an "Azure Kingfisher," sitting on a perch over a river pool. Its small body, blue-green back and wings, and large bill were distinctive. This bird, really the Sacred Kingfisher, proved to be a very common resident also.

Then it happened. Fortunately or unfortunately, I broke my left wrist the next day—badly enough to stop my bird watching for ten days and restrict me largely to hospital areas for about four months. But it did allow me to write home for data on New Caledonia birds, gave me free time to walk the fields and hills to look for them, and also an opportunity to learn more about my "hunting grounds." I found that New Caledonia had been sighted by Captain Cook in 1774 and taken under French jurisdiction in 1853. The island is 250 miles long, 30 miles wide, and has a total of 8,000 square miles. It is about 750 miles to Australia and 900 miles to New Zealand. Its highest point, Mt. Humbolt, is 5,361 feet, and most of the island is hilly to mountainous away from the river valleys and coastal outwash plains. Summer is in January and February, with an average mean temperature at Naumea of 86 degrees; winter is in July and August with an average temperature of 75 degrees. Most of the rain was supposed to fall from February to April, but although Noumea's average rainfall was only 43 inches, 131 of the days of the year were supposed to be rainy or partly so. I found it rained even more in the hill regions.

Kagu Becoming Extinct

I also learned that the Kagu was the national bird of New Caledonia and that it was becoming extinct. And why not—for the bird couldn't fly, laid its single egg on the ground, and had a habit of running only a short distance when frightened before it sat still with its head tucked under its wing. Although the island had no land snakes to devour the eggs, introduced mammals such as rats, wild house cats, dogs, wild boar, and grazing animals such as deer, horses, cows and sheep, which run wild almost everywhere, were of no help to this bird. Originally the only mammals on the island were bats such as the "flying fox," but yes, among the introduced mammals was man. The story is that one of these "men," a Japanese, ran a trap line of leg-hold traps to catch the Kagu for exportation—but oftentimes he forgot to check his trap line completely, leaving feathers and bones in the unattended traps. Now this bird is protected from killing and exportation as well as from Japanese trappers. This is the

*Dr. Ernst Mayr, author of the new book, "Birds of the Southwest Pacific," has kindly reviewed this article particularly with reference to the names of the birds.

land of the Niaouli tree, the Captain Cook pine (originally found only here), the wild pigeons of unusually large size and of deer so common there is no closed season and they can be hunted with dogs! I was anxious to get out to see the birds.

The hills above my hospital area were ideal for bird watching, for birds seemed to congregate in the trees and shrubs which crowded the precipitous stream valleys. Here was shelter from winds and rains, here was food in the form of insects, flowers, fruits, seeds and nuts. Of interest are the names I gave these strange birds as I discovered them, for I usually tried to name them in accordance with birds I knew at home, and if that was impossible, I made up my own name "just for fun," as if I'd been the first to see them. What I first called a "Scarlet Finch" (I didn't see the curved bill) turned out later to be the Scarlet Honey-eater; my Red-breasted Bunting" was really the Rufous-bellied Whistler; the "White-monocled Kinglet" was the Green-backed White-eye; my "Olive-backed Flower Drinker" was the Silver-eared Honeyeater and what I called the "Sunburnt Parrot" was none other than the Coconut Lory.

Reference Sources Important

But then came a pleasant surprise. Through the courtesy of the American Museum of Natural History and assistance of the University of Wisconsin, my wife was able to secure a chapter of Dr. Ernst Mayr's unpublished book (to be published January 16, 1945) on "The Birds of the South West Pacific." Now I finally had the latest authentic list of the birds of New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands! Now I knew what to search for, which birds were rare and which were common and how much was still unknown about them. I learned that there were about 68 species of native land and freshwater birds here, of which 18 species are not found outside of New Caledonia and the nearby Loyalty Islands. The two previous reports on these birds, by E. L. and E. L. C. Laylard in 1882 and by F. Sarasin in 1913 were used as reference in Dr. Mayr's paper, plus the many collections of the American Museum and other sources. Here was a challenge, for some of these birds had not been seen for the past fifty years, and others were known only from a single specimen. But of course, my time and facilities were limited.

But my most interesting and valuable source of information was the knowledge and bird collection of Dwayne W. Warner, U. S. Army, a Cornell University student of ornithology and protege of Dr. Olin S. Pettingill and Dr. George W. Sutton. Warner was luckily connected with Malaria and Rodent Control work, which allowed him to go into the field often, and he made good use of his opportunity and ability. My discussions with him and a trip into the hills one afternoon, cleared up most every doubtful bird record on my lists. Here again I was very much aware of not only the value of good source material, but of discussions and trips afield with local authorities. Any attempt to study birds entirely "on your own" in strange territory is, at least for the amateur, a much slower and less accurate process. This was especially so in my case, as my bird watching had not only been restricted to the lowlands and foothills, but to the southern tip of the island within twenty-five miles of Noumea. As this paper is more of a discussion of observations rather than a scientific report, I cite here only the more interesting records and reactions.

Comparison With Birds at Home

One of my first experiences was the awareness of a lack of different species of birds. On a single trip for several hours I might see only fifteen or twenty different kinds, although the numbers of individuals of certain ones might be fairly large. For instance, on Memorial Day, May 30, I made a census of a small area in the foothills and saw only 38 birds of 14 species, including the Whistling Eagle-Kite, White-throated Pigeon, Sacred Kingfisher, Fantail Warbler, Spotted Fantail, New Caledonian Whistler, Rufous-bellied Whistler, White-breasted Wood Swallow, Glossy Starling, New Caledonian Crow, Scarlet Honey-eater, Silver-eared Honey-eater, Barred Honey-eater and the Green-backed White-eye. This may be contrasted with what was one of my "best days" when Warner and I spent the afternoon in the field. Counting birds observed in town as well as in the lowlands and foothills, we saw (well enough to identify) less than 100 birds of twenty species. All of the birds listed above were seen or heard except the White-breasted Wood Swallow, New Caledonian Crow and Barred Honey-eater. In addition, we saw the Australian Goshawk, White-rumped Swiftlet, Mountain Graybird (Cuckoo-shrike), Collared Fantail, Broad-billed Flycatcher, Indian Mynah, Red-throated Parrot Finch, Red-browed Waxbill (introduced species) and English Sparrow (found largely in Noumea and immediate vicinity). Still, in proportion to the birds present at home, with over 300 species recorded in Wisconsin, we were getting a fair bird list with a little less than one-third of the possible number seen on a single trip. A word about introduced species. The Indian Mynah was supposedly imported



to combat the grasshoppers and the English Sparrow may have been brought in for the same reason. Both have been present for over fifty years. The Red-browed Waxbill probably is an escaped cage bird but is present in large numbers in certain localities.

As with our birds at home, there are field problems here too. The white-eyes are common birds everywhere, moving in groups from tree to tree, but there are two kinds—the Green-backed and the Gray-backed, and you must get a good look to be sure that it is a gray back, even as you must be careful to be sure a Bank Swallow isn't a Rough-winged Swallow at home. Also, especially on dark days, it's practically impossible to tell a White-rumped Swiftlet from a Glossy Swiftlet. The Fantail Flycatchers, Spotted and Collared, are confusing in the field, although the latter prefers high trees as compared to the other's habit of frequenting brush areas. That brings up another distinction in bird watching in New Caledonia. Birds seen near places of habitation, which is usually along river valleys and coastal plains, are often as different from those in the hills and mountains as the birds in southern Wisconsin are from those in the northern part. In the lowlands, the Indian Mynah, Sacred Kingfisher, Rufous-bellied Whistler, Spotted Fantail, Silver-eared Honey-eater and various types of White-eyes and finches are most common. But a mile away in thick hill forest you will find the New Caledonian Whistler, Collared Fantail, Yellow-bellied Robin and the Cuckoo-shrikes and pigeons.

Possibly the one thing I missed most were the Wisconsin lakes with their usual complement of blackbirds, shorebirds and waterfowl. There are few lakes here, and I saw none of them. There are no blackbirds at all, and no native shorebirds such as our snipe except for those that visit the sea coasts. Of four kinds of herons that visit the coast and river flats, I saw only the common Reef Heron. Of four species of ducks, using the coast, rivers and fresh water ponds, I saw only the Australian Gray Duck. There are also no woodpeckers, and surprisingly few dead trees with fewer natural cavities in them. Probably the only hole nesting species are the starlings (including the introduced Mynah), the English Sparrow and the Barn Owl. Hawks, however, are seen frequently, but not in large numbers. Besides those previously mentioned, I saw the beautiful little White-bellied Hawk, the Swamp Harrier (not unlike our Marsh Hawk) and the Osprey. The Peregrine Falcon nests here, but I did not see it.

By way of further comparison with conditions at home, the difficulty of finding old bird's nests, as well as active ones, should be mentioned. Here the grass and herbage is very tall, the vines and shrubs dense, and the trees heavy with foliage, usually dropping their leaves progressively. On only one tree that had dropped its leaves did I find two old nests. It seems to be much easier to find the nests of hawks or herons than those of song birds, although this may have been different had I stayed there longer into the nesting season. Also, I can remember seeing only three kinds of birds sitting on wires, although there was plenty of opportunity. These were the Sacred Kingfisher, White-breasted Wood Swallow and a single Gray-backed White-eye. Few song birds are seen on the ground except for flocks of Red-browed Waxbills and Indian Mynahs, and an occasional Whistler, Fantail or Red-throated Parrot Finch. Other birds such as the crow undoubtedly use the ground for feeding, but I saw only small numbers of them (although they are supposedly common) and I never saw one on the ground.

Experiences of Special Interest

Now for some of my most interesting experiences with the birds. On April 30 I found a tree in the hills which had a crown entirely covered with small golden-yellow flowers. The tree top was alive with Scarlet Honey-eaters including both sexes and possibly juvenile birds. My first impression of the male bird was that it was of the same colors as a Red-headed Woodpecker—only it was as small as a Goldfinch. Imagine this little fellow with scarlet red on his head, middle of back, rump, throat and breast, with contrasting black wings and tail and a white belly! Then there was the Broad-billed Flycatcher that fooled me completely. I actually thought the male and female were different species! My list had no description of this bird, so it was not until I saw Warner's skin collection that I knew the truth—the male has an iridescent blue-black head, throat and upper breast, while the female substitutes a rufous color on the throat and upper breast. Added to that, the fact that I never saw them together until September 13 (after the nesting season had begun) makes my mistake explicable.

I had an unusual experience with my first Red-throated Parrot Finch. Generally, the bird is all "parrot green" except for a bright crimson head and throat and a scarlet rump and tail. As I saw the bird I exclaimed to myself, "Parrot Finch!"—but then the bird disappeared. Finally I found it again sitting in a bush, but all I could see was its red head and throat looking very much like a flower, its green body perfectly blending with the foliage. Later I saw many of these beautiful finches, and once a group of twenty moving together, feeding among the Guava shrubs.

Possibly my most exciting incident was the first time I encountered the White-throated Pigeon. I had no lists to follow then, and didn't have the least idea that this place had such large pigeons. Here's a copy of my notes: "April 30: Well, I don't know what they call it. The size of a crow and same color in iridescent black, with wings as large as a crow's and tail maybe even longer, this bird differed from a crow in that its body was full and round as a quail or partridge and it had a white patch on throat and upper breast for a little ways. Was very wary—watching me from a distance behind tree trunks and flying as I moved the least. . . . On May 25 saw three of these birds, two on a dead tree, and silhouetted against the sky they looked and acted not unlike grouse with a fairly long neck! Couldn't get color then, but when they flew, I saw only black—even on tail. . . . May 30: Saw one quite close and well. Grayish all over rather than too black—but most distinctive was white throat patch." But no wonder these birds were so wary! Warner later told me he bought them in the Noumea market for over a dollar apiece during open season when their sale is permitted. They are a famous island delicacy and only slightly smaller than the Giant Pigeon which is 20 inches long. But of the five other species of pigeons on the island, I had only one fleeting glimpse of a flock of six Green-winged Ground Pigeons on May 17.

My first encounter with the Cocoanut Lory will speak for itself, if it will be remembered I'd never before seen them: "Can't rightly name anything so exotic to me—and also seen so fast. Anyhow, on May 24, a flock of six or eight of these birds size of Mourning Doves, flew by me twice in a solid and close flock, turning together. On one turn I saw a flash of parrot-green backs, and, it seemed, wings also. And when they turned again I saw a flash of orange-red breasts and bellies. Every time they turned it seemed they gave out sharp piercing cries. This was in morning as storm clouds came over the hill and sun was not out. What were they?" On July 9 I saw another flock of eight of these birds, but now at my new base where I am camped among cocoanut trees, this Lory frequently flies over the tree tops, screeching at the top of its voice—and with the mating season on, usually one chasing the other.

Then there was the day I found the tracks of a rail in the mud beside a stream. I decided to build a funnel trap to catch the bird if possible. Later, the bird's tracks went into the trap—and out again—and only once did it venture close to my "contraption" again. This bird I later saw and found it to be the common Banded Rail. I also tried to catch finches in a "government sparrow trap" but found there was so much food outside the trap that I was wasting my time. But I really gave up the trapping idea when one of my drop-door traps caught an inquisitive Major one day. It was lucky for me I had set the trap at the request of the Chaplain who wanted to find out "what bird was that" behind his tent.

Flocks and Groups of Birds

The largest flocks of birds I saw were (as is often the case) of the introduced species. On July 21 I saw a flock of 60 Indian Mynahs at dusk, and on August 5 I watched at least 75 of them roost in low trees at twilight after the usual period of noise. It was common to see groups of ten to twenty feeding in pastures and also on the backs of cattle. The Red-browed Waxbill also was found in large flocks feeding on the ground. On July 18 I counted about 50 in a small space, and when I flushed them they chirped not unlike English Sparrows. But they are much prettier with their red bill and red "eyebrow." Several times, with the help of my buddies, I tried to catch Mynahs in these roosting trees at night with the use of Harold Jung's net-type trap. We wanted one of these "starlings" for a cage bird, and came so close to catching them it wasn't any joke. Once some birds flew into our net—and out again—before we could close it. But we did learn more about this good trapping method, which should easily be successful with proper poles and net. Flocks of as many as 40 Swiftlets also were seen feeding over a pasture at a single time.

Here is a common experience while out birding in New Caledonia: "July 22: While I was standing at the base of a Niaouli tree, a group of Green-backed White-eyes came into it searching the bark so diligently that they moved down the trunk to within three feet of my head. Also about me at the same time were two Spotted Fantails, two Fantail Warblers (the smallest bird I saw here), two Long-tailed Trillers, two Rufous-bellied Whistlers, a flock of about 20 Red-browed Waxbills and six or more Red-throated Parrot Finches." But possibly the most memorable experience with New Caledonia birds is their sounds. Especially lovely are the loud and clear calls of the Whistlers and the throaty flute-like notes of the Silver-eared Honeyeater. The White-eyes often set the woods vibrating with an oft-repeated chant that is weird in its continual repetition. The low distant booming of the White-throated Pigeon and the high piercing call of the Mountain Graybird are not easily forgotten.

I find I have already listed all 36 kinds of birds I recorded except the New Caledonia Grass Warbler which is of somewhat "doubtful" status on my list (there always



THE KAGU MAY BE SEEN ON THE GROUND. IN THE TREE ARE TWO FRUIT PIGEONS AND A CROW. (FROM THE NEW CALEDONIA GROUP, WHITNEY BIRD HALL.)
 PHOTO, COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY.

must be at least one you don't want to discard because it's too good to throw away!) Here are my notes from August 21 and 22: "Saw a very little bird looked like a Yellow-throated Warbler as it threw back its head and lowered its tail, singing a short loud warble. Throat seemed to stand out pale yellow or buff—back and all of rest brown. . . . In afternoon heard this little bird sing again, a light warble, then two clear flute-like notes, then a lighter warble like a wren. . . . Got a much better look at the yellow or buff-throated bird today. The rest of its undersides was gray or at least light, its top was dark gray and brown, with most brownish to olivaceous on tail and upper tail coverts. Seemed as if it had dark marks on the side of its head at lores and back. It acts as if it were a worm hunter among leaves of trees, but throat always stood out—literally—and color evident." I don't know why I'm doubtful, as this checks pretty well with a specimen Warner has, but he never heard one sing, and I'd never seen it before. Anyhow, this is the type of bird that brightens up a dull day and which you want to meet again!

I feel the most beautiful bird I saw was the New Caledonia Whistler with its white throat, orange-yellow breast and belly and black breast band. The most startling bird was the White-bellied Hawk with its white underparts distinctly set off against a black throat and completely black upper parts. The Red-throated Parrot Finch was probably the most exotic of them all—a bird you wouldn't believe existed until you saw it. But the Glossy Starlings with their short tails were so much like our Cowbirds

I was most reminded of home by them. The female is a chocolate brown color while the male is iridescent black. They were almost always seen several together sitting on dead tree limbs, and they strut and give out squeaking calls and whistles not unlike a cross between our Starlings and our Cowbird. The most graceful bird I remember was the White-breasted Wood Swallow. Once they hovered six feet above me on the side of a cliff and practically stood still in the air, looking me over with their beady dark eyes.

Conservation a Problem

This article would not be complete without a note on the conservation problems regarding New Caledonia birds. Besides the law preventing the killing and exportation of the Kagu, the only other protective law I learned about was that preventing the selling of the various pigeons or the "flying fox" bat in the market from August 1 to January 30, which is their breeding season. Waterfowl are not protected whatsoever, and I definitely learned that they are "jack-lighted" at night on some of the fresh water sloughs. By this method localized species of ducks could eventually be exterminated, as could the Giant and White-throated Pigeons if market hunting is continued. Enforcement of restrictive laws among the natives would be practically impossible, for these birds are an important source of food for them, but it is to be hoped that the French administrators of this island will protect their waterfowl from wholesale slaughter by a few persons and their pigeons from "market hunting" before it is too late. The conditions reminded me of the last years of the large flocks of Passenger Pigeons—especially in regard to the Giant Pigeon which is found only on New Caledonia and on an ever-decreasing range.

It was almost the last day of my bird watching on this island when Warner introduced me personally to the Kagu. But unfortunately they were birds in cages owned by French people in Noumea. This one family had three of them, of which two were supposedly young. The old bird had lived, they said, for over fifteen years in captivity. It was a beautiful proud bird and showed more fight than fear, for to come near the cage was to have a sharp orange-red bill come through the wire at you. Generally, the Kagu is throughout an ashy or pearl gray in color. It stands about two feet high. Besides its bill, its feet are also orange-red and its iris is a brilliant scarlet that seems to pierce straight through you. When the bird is excited, it extends its wings showing black, white and chestnut bars, and raises its large crest of plume-like gray feathers high over and around the sides of its head so as to form a sort of halo or monk's-hood that is beautiful to see. It would truly be a loss if this bird became extinct. Surely wild dogs and cats in this bird's restricted range in southern New Caledonia should be controlled as much as possible.

Bird students reading this article are urged to remember that the records cover only a small portion of this island, are largely from lowland and foothill areas, and are incomplete even to some very common species not observed in the short time I was there. A good example of this is the Barn Owl which is evidently very common, but which I never saw. Likewise, the New Caledonia Crow is supposed to be common, but for some reason I recorded only seven birds on five different occasions. Surely with binoculars and a chance to travel on my own schedule, I would have seen many more birds in numbers and kinds, but this article will show what can be done anytime in this universal hobby under most any circumstances. In a recent letter Frederick C. Lincoln assured me my army life would be far happier because of my interest in birds, and even indicated that some people might envy me the opportunity to travel and study so many different kinds. I feel this is essentially true for all bird students in the armed forces throughout the world, and there is no doubt that many young men are finding an interest in birds that they never before possessed.

The following list of scientific names of the New Caledonia species here mentioned is attached for reference purposes for those interested. An asterisk marks those not observed by me in the wild.

- Reef Heron (*Demigretta sacra albolineata*)
- Australian Gray Duck (*Anas superciliosa pelewensis*)
- Whistling Eagle-Kite (*Haliastur spheurnus*)
- White-bellied Hawk (*Accipiter haplochrous*)
- Australian Goshawk (*Accipiter fasciatus vigilax*)
- Swamp Harrier (*Circus approximans approximans*)
- Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)
- Peregrine Falcon* (*Falco peregrinus nesiotes*)
- Banded Rail (*Rallus philippensis swindellsii*)
- Kagu* (*Rhynchotus jubatus*)
- Giant Pigeon* (*Ducula goliath*)
- White-throated Pigeon (*Columba vitiensis hypoenochroa*)
- Green-winged Ground Pigeon (*Chalcophaps indica chrysoclora*)

Coconut Lory (*Trichoglossus haematodus deplanchei*)
 Barn Owl* (*Tyto alba lifeuensis*)
 White-rumped Swiftlet (*Collocalia spodiopygia leucopygia*)
 Glossy Swiftlet (*Collocalia esculenta uropygialis*)
 Sacred Kingfisher (*Halcyon sancta canacorum*)
 Long-tailed Triller (*Lalage leucopygia montrosieri*)
 Mountain Graybird (*Coracina analis*)
 New Caledonian Grass Warbler (*Megalurulus mariei*)
 Fantail Warbler (*Gerygone flavolateralis flavolateralis*)
 Spotted Fantail (*Rhipidura spilodera verreauxi*)
 Collared Fantail (*Rhipidura fuliginosa bulgeri*)
 Broad-billed Flycatcher (*Myiagra caledonica caledonica*)
 Yellow-bellied Robin (*Eopsaltria flaviventris*)
 New Caledonian Whistler (*Pachycephala caledonica*)
 Rufous-bellied Whistler (*Pachycephala rufiventris xanthetraea*)
 White-breasted Wood Swallow (*Aratmus leucorhynchus melaleucus*)
 Glossy Starling (*Aplonis striatus striatus*)
 Indian Mynah (*Acridotheres tristis*)
 New Caledonian Crow (*Corvus moneduloides*)
 Scarlet Honey-eater (*Meliphaga dibapha caledonica*)
 Silver-eared Honey-eater (*Lichmera incana incana*)
 Barred Honey-eater (*Guadalcanaria undulata*)
 Green-backed White-eye (*Zosterops xanthochroa*)
 Gray-backed White-eye (*Zosterops lateralis griseonota*)
 Red-throated Parrot Finch (*Erythrura psittacea*)
 Red-browed Waxbill (*Estrilda temporalis*)
 English Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)

—Southwest Pacific, Oct. 11, 1944

Book News and Reviews . . .

The Prairie Chicken in Missouri. By Charles W. Schwartz. Conservation Commission of the State of Missouri. \$5. Because of its unsettled future and because of its interesting habits, the prairie chicken has been the object of extensive study. "To stimulate interest and action toward the further restoration of this magnificent bird" Charles Schwartz has combined the knowledge gained from a three year study of the bird with his talents as an artist and photographer in producing **The Prairie Chicken in Missouri**. In a series of unusually fine photographs Mr. Schwartz takes the prairie chicken through the calendar year. Each photograph is full page and depicts some phase of the life history or ecology of the prairie chicken or pinnated grouse. Each picture is accompanied by several paragraphs of description which, at the same time, culminates the results of the study made of this bird in Missouri. The frontispiece is a full page kodachrome and the book also contains several of the author's sketches, the small number of which is the only fault this reviewer finds with the book. Incidentally, the printing is done on paper of the finest quality based on pre-war standards. —Arnold S. Jackson, Jr.

Canadian Birds. By L. L. Snyder. Canadian Nature Magazine, 177 Jarvis St., Toronto, Ontario. Price 35c. A booklet on a new plan. Seventy-five birds have been chosen, each illustrated as well as described, and divided according to habitat. Fifteen such groups have been included of which the following is an example: Group 3. Above Timber-line: Golden Eagle, White-tailed Ptarmigan, Pallid Horned Lark, American Pipit and Common Rosy Finch. The pen and ink drawings are by T. M. Shortt.

Birds of the Southwest Pacific. By Dr. Ernst Mayr. The MacMillan Co., New York. \$3.50. An excellent book for those in the armed forces. A new book bringing the nomenclature of the birds up to date and presenting much valuable information.

A Distribution of the Birds of California. By Joseph Grinnell and Alden H. Miller. Cooper Ornithological Club, W. Lee Chambers, Robinson Road, Topanga, Cal. \$6 unbound; \$7 bound. An up-to-date account of the distribution, seasonal occurrence and habitat of the birds of California with guide to the most significant writings concerning each species. Contains over fifty maps of distribution and a colored frontispiece by Allan Brooks.

The Illustrated Encyclopedia of American Birds. By L. A. Hausman, Ph. D. Illustrated by J. B. Abbott. Garden City Pbl. Co., New York. \$2. 540 pages. 1,422 birds of 75 families are described and illustrated. Family characteristics, plumage, size, distribution, general remarks and in some cases food habits are included. At the end is a class list by structure.

Trial By Fire

By ELIZABETH A. OEHLenschlaeger*

On April 1 the Charles Boesels in Shorewood lit their gratefire for the obvious reason that it was a cold, damp day. The senior Boesels left the room immediately after a good blaze had started. Suddenly the children gave a startled cry and the oldest daughter called, "Oh Daddy, a little owl fell into the fire and all her feathers were burning when she flew under the sofa!" Said Father Boesel, "All right, I'll bite, even if it is the first of April!"

To his utter consternation and dismay, he found a nearly unrecognizable and still smoldering bit of singed, evil-smelling feathers just where the children said it was. Mr. Boesel is a bird lover as well as photographer, so his first impulse was to make the bird as comfortable as possible, and his second, to photograph it. Late that evening I received a telephone call from him asking me to take care of the bird, even though he felt it had only a very slim chance to survive. And that is how on April second I came into possession of *Otus asio asio* (screech owl) gray phase.



THE BIRD'S CONDITION PRESENTED A DISTINCT PROBLEM

Many types of bird injury have come under my care—and a goodly number of these have proved fatal. But I had never seen one that had gone through the fire before. There is always a challenge in the unusual. The bird was covered with ashes and scorched feathers. One side of the upper mandible as well as the curved end were scorched and had begun to fray. All talons were curved **upward** in varying degrees, and had begun to take on a gray color which could be easily diagnosed as burned. The eyelids were bare, but the ear tufts had escaped injury, as also, fortunately, the eyes themselves. Excepting only the quills, the tail was nonexistent, the same was true of the primaries. The bird's condition presented a distinct problem, to solve it was a mental exercise!

First of all she was placed in a washbowl of warm water with a generous amount of saturated boric solution in order to remove the ashes and burnt feathers. After

*Miss Oehlenschlaeger has a permit to possess wild birds.

being dried, all the burnt flesh spots were touched up with plain vaseline. The feeding had to be forced very carefully, in small pieces, into the uninjured side of the mandibles. In order to build up the general system of the little raptor, she was fed only squab! This was the order of procedure every day for three weeks. At the end of the third week, a dish with finely cut meat was placed on the floor of the bathtub (she shares my bathtub!) and the little owl ate voluntarily. This has become an established habit with her since that time.

On July 4th, a live mouse was placed in the bathtub, just to try out the hunting disposition of little *Asio*. She dashed at the little rodent with all the savage fury of her tribe, and killed it in short order. For 24 hours she held the dead mouse in her talons without making any effort, as far as I could observe, to dispose of it. Apparently her mandibles were too dulled to make the tearing apart of the mouse possible.

On July 9th the right hand talon and one fore fell off, and on the 10th one of the left fore talons dropped off. At this writing, October 25th, there is no sign of any of these being replaced, but the toes have healed into blunt stubs, completely covered with their fine feathers native to the tribe.

How changed can the natural disposition of a flesh-eater become? A very recent observation may serve for at least this one individual owl. On the 19th, another live mouse was released in the bathtub and *Asio* gave it one look without being at all interested. For two days mouse and owl lived in perfect harmony together, the mouse seeking and finding sanctuary under the owl's tail when the bird was on the floor of the tub. On the third day there was a dead mouse, but it showed no signs of owl violence!

Asio is moulting now, and has a perfect new tail, eyelid feathers, and a nearly perfect replacement of the primaries on her right wing. The left wing is badly crippled, and the primaries grow out on an angle which seriously interferes with the bird's sitting on her perch. They have to be clipped before they have completely emerged from their sheaths. Head and breast, as well as the back, are developing normally, a beautiful gray and white stripe.

Asio is quite a clown. She still feels impelled to fight with her feet when I want to pick her up from the floor, but when I place my fingers on her little crippled feet, she steps up like a well-trained falcon. She goes into ecstasy when stroked and scratched on her head. She bathes vigorously in a dish of water placed conveniently for her use. In a very general way, she has accepted me as inevitable.

Crippled as she is, *Asio* does her bit for conservation. The procession of children as well as adults who go through the hospital doors of the "Hummocks" always leave it with the feeling that, after all, owls are not such dreadfully evil birds as they had been taught to believe. In this way the little owl fulfills a mission which she could not have accomplished in her native habitat and an uninjured condition.

WISCONSIN GIRLS IN BIRD STUDY

By MRS. W. E. ROGERS, Appleton

Much is being done today by means of organized activities and study for boys and girls in the field of Nature through the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Junior Audubon Clubs, Public Schools, Museum lectures, Recreational programs and the Home. From these sources many young people become aware of and develop a keen interest in birds, which opens a new world to an investigating mind.

Boy Scout programs are extensive and allow a much more advanced work in bird study than do the Girl Scout programs. However, not all of the boys go as far as the Eagle and few beyond the Tenderfoot rank.

There are also many boys and girls in the state who are not privileged to participate in any of these worthwhile activities and especially is this true in the smaller communities of the state where facilities for study are not accessible.

The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology has very close to five hundred members, the greater number being adults, of which some are specialized in the field of ornithology while others are students. Many of these men and women are making a fine contribution to the training of our young people, but not all of the capable members of the society are at work. There is much for every member to do if the future of the Society is to be assured.

A member recently called attention to the local portion of this membership list which comprises chiefly older men and women. This is due partly to the loss of the boys in service which of course will have to be replaced by the younger boys and girls.

With this need in mind the Appleton Junior Audubon Club was organized on June 6, 1942 with an enrollment of fifty-six girls and seven adult sponsors. The pur-

pose of the club is to promote study, protection and conservation of bird life. Each Girl Scout will earn the Bird Study Merit Badge.

At the end of the first year some of the girls did not renew their memberships, the Scout Bird Badge having been earned and other interests developed, however, at the end of the second year forty members retained membership. The third year has just begun and with a new recreational program recently established, a better year looms ahead for the girls. A club house in the best park, which includes also the river bank, will afford an excellent place for laboratory and field study.

In addition to the ten requirements for Scout badges, the girls keep field notes and make a bird note book, some of which are illustrated with music, art and poetry. The Audubon study leaflets, six each year, are used and included in the notebooks. A trip to the Green Bay Neville Public Museum; a public lecture titled "The History of Bird-banding" with colored movies by Earl G. Wright, with visits to a station where traps, records, returns, and bands were explained and exhibited; are a few of the activities which were included in the program of last year.

Plans are now being made for a public lecture and colored movies late in the winter. The President of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Mr. H. L. Orians, has agreed to visit Appleton with his splendid pictures and lecture.

The field is a large one and the need urgent; much has been done for the boys and girls of the state, more must be done. America is our heritage.

THE SUMMER SEASON . . .

(Field notes should be sent to the editor at the end of each of the four seasons. They should be turned in promptly and the A. O. U. order may be followed. All members are invited to participate.)

The following is an annotated list of the more unusual observations of the season:

American egret: Second nest, Horicon Marsh, Aug. 20 (Mathiak). See article elsewhere in this issue.

One egret of this species was observed near Waterloo, Sept. 20 by Loyster.

Snowy egret: One, Milwaukee, Nov. 3 (Dick Bub). A species of casual occurrence in Wisconsin. See note elsewhere in this issue.

Canada goose: Flock flying southward over Madison, Sept. 20 (Loyster).

Black duck: Ten nearly grown, Vilas County, Aug. 3 (Schmidt).

Hooded merganser: Female and two young, Vilas County, Aug. 8 (Schmidt).

Duck hawk: Madison, Sept. 1 (Mrs. Koehler).

Ruffed grouse: Feeding on clover in the road, September (Poe).

Chukar partridge: Pair in Columbia County, Aug. 2 (Kennedy).

Piping plover: Milwaukee, Aug. 18 (Orians). Also one of Lake Michigan by Hans Zell.

Black-bellied plover: Milwaukee, Aug. 18 (Orians).

Ruddy turnstone: Milwaukee, Aug. 18 (Orians); Sept. 7 (Bierman).

Knot: Milwaukee, Sept. 4 (Bierman).

Baird's sandpiper: Milwaukee, Aug. 18 (Orians); Sept. 18 (Bierman).

Marbled godwit: Milwaukee, Sept. 8 (Orians). A species of casual occurrence in Wisconsin. See note elsewhere in this issue.

Northern phalarope: Pair, Madison, Sept. 3 (Mrs. Koehler). Rarely observed in Wisconsin. See note elsewhere in this issue.

Glaucous gull: Green Bay, Aug. 18 (Wright). Seldom seen in Wisconsin especially during summer. See article elsewhere in this issue.

Barn owl: Horicon Marsh, Aug. 16 (Mathiak).

Pileated woodpecker: Infrequently seen in the eastern part of the state was observed in Outagamie, Waupaca and Winnebago Counties by Bradford this year.

Olive-sided flycatcher: Milwaukee, Sept. 12 (Bierman).

Tufted titmouse: Racine, July 8 (von Jarchow).

Winter wren: Trapped and banded, Sept. 20 by Herman Schaars.

Carolina wren: Racine, July 20 (von Jarchow).

Cedar waxwing: Constructing nest from July 15 to 18, Waupaca (Mrs. Peterson).

Magnolia warbler: Immature, struck a window and was killed, Appleton, Sept. 5 (Mrs. Rogers).

Chestnut-sided warbler: Nest with young, Forest County, July 3 (Bierman).

Bay-breasted warbler: Immature, struck a window and was killed, Appleton, Sept. 5 (Mrs. Rogers).

Bronzed grackle: Thousands feeding on beech mast in yard (Jung).

Scarlet tanager: Observed feeding on mountain ash berries until Sept. 24, Wau-paca (Mrs. Peterson).

Cardinal: Three young in pin-feather stage, Waupaca, Sept. 26 (Mrs. Peterson).

Vesper sparrow: Nest in grass under sweet fern bush, containing four young, beginning to feather out but eyes not yet open. Vilas County, July 15 (Schmidt).

Lark sparrow: Milwaukee, July 1 (Orians). Not as abundant here as in the western portion of Wisconsin.

Lapland longspur: Oneida County, Sept. 16 (Schmidt). Early date.

BY THE WAYSIDE . . .

Snowy Egret in Milwaukee. While birding at Estabrook Park on Friday, November 3, I saw a snowy egret on the river shore. The river is quite narrow at that spot and I was able to come directly opposite the bird. It was feeding in the shallow water shuffling up food with its feet when I first saw it, but later it walked up on shore, where I was able to observe its strikingly yellow feet in contrast to the black legs.—Dick Bub, Milwaukee.

Northern Phalarope in Madison. On September 3 we rode across Lake Mendota in our motor-boat. About one mile out from Maple Bluff we came near a pair of phalarope. The birds were not much concerned by the boat and we circled around them closely for views with the binoculars. They were gray with snowy white breasts, but their continuous nodding and spinning around assured us that they were phalarope. When they flew the conspicuous white wing stripe showed they were the northern variety. A fish jumped with a big splash not two feet away at which they took off toward the west in a hurry.—Mrs. Arthur Koehler, Madison.

Loon Calling in Flight. On the evening of October 25 I heard the call of a loon faintly in the distance. The calls were repeated at about ten second intervals, growing louder as the bird passed overhead.—Don Bierman, Milwaukee.

A Glaucous Gull in Summer. On August 18 I visited one of the small islands two miles out from the harbor entrance to Green Bay. On a sand spit which runs out to the southwest from this island I noted a flock of herring gulls (*Larus argentatus*) numbering about 75 individuals. Through my 10 power glasses I picked up a bird which by comparison was much larger and whiter than the herring gulls around it. Upon making a closer approach the herring gulls took to the air leaving the gull in question behind. I studied it for some time at various ranges up to 50 feet; then forced it to fly for further identifications of wing pattern. There being no dark markings on the primaries, I believe it to be a full adult glaucous gull (*Larus hyperboreus*) which apparently is the first summer record for this species; but not unusual when one considers the wandering habits of the gull tribe.—Earl G. Wright.

Some Records of Northern Wisconsin. A Hudsonian chickadee was seen in Vilas County, Jan. 29, 1944 in company with other chickadees. About a month later another was seen in a spruce swamp. In Oneida County, Mar. 14, three sharp-tailed grouse were found bedded under the snow. An Arctic three-toed woodpecker in a cedar swamp of Vilas County was noted Mar. 15, and another two days later in another part of the county. On April 7 a goshawk, perched on a hard maple snag, allowed me to approach in plain sight until I was directly under the tree itself. On April 18, the sapsucker, myrtle warbler, hermit thrush and woodcock were in northern Vilas County. A song sparrow's nest contained 5 eggs, May 27 in Oneida County. Two days later two eggs of the cowbird had been added, but I removed these and one young sparrow hatched June 1. On the Elk River in Price County, May 22, I photographed a nest of four eggs of the hermit thrush.

In 1943 a pair of red-headed woodpeckers nested in Oneida County. A flock of twelve golden plover remained two days in the vicinity of Woodruff, Sept. 29, feeding in a pasture. When alarmed they quickly gathered in close formation, flying swiftly and wheeling close to the ground, until ready to alight. Then they stood like small statues for a moment before again spreading widely over the pasture. An immature Harris's sparrow was found in Oneida County, Oct. 2, feeding on some corn spilled on the ground. Later it was seen feeding with a flock of juncos on the lawn. Two turkey-vultures visited Oneida County and were observed, Oct. 7. Two more were seen near Washburn, Oct. 19. A single spruce grouse flew across the road northeast of Spooner. Upon stopping my car, I flushed it twice, each time observing it through the binoculars. A white-throated sparrow lingered about the barn until Nov. 15 at Woodruff. Finally a flock of pine grosbeaks appeared in Oneida County, Nov. 25.—Ralph A. Schmidt, Minocqua.

THE OFFICERS' MEETING OF NOVEMBER

On November 18 the officers of the society met in Milwaukee with seven in attendance. The dates April 28-29 for next year's convention in Madison was approved. Mr. Bert Harwell of California will present a program in which bird song imitations and music will be the feature attraction.

A list of the bird clubs of the various cities in Wisconsin together with place and time of meeting will appear in an early issue of THE PASSENGER PIGEON. Although the society is financially in position to improve its official publication, to secure suitable material from within the borders of our state according to schedule presents a problem. Thus an editorial committee of three will be appointed by the president to assist in ferretting out undiscovered talent.

It was recommended that the proper routine be followed to increase the life membership fee from \$25 to \$50, and the patron membership fee from \$50 to \$100. This will require a change in the constitution and corporation papers.

As an aid to membership growth it was decided to have printed a small supply of extra copies of THE PASSENGER PIGEON for distribution at cost. In addition a double postal card will be mailed to all members on which sufficient space for several new names will be provided.

—Mrs. A. P. Balsom, Secretary.

CURRENT EXCHANGES . . .

The following exchanges have been added since our last issue:

The Chat. Dr. Archie D. Shaftesbury, Woman's College of University of North Carolina, Greensboro, N. C. Issued five times a year. North Carolina Bird Club.

Canadian Nature. A. R. Whittemore, 177 Jarvis St., Toronto, Ont. Issued five times a year. Conducted as a non-commercial public service.

The Florida Naturalist. R. J. Longstreet, Daytona Beach, Fla. Quarterly. Florida Audubon Society.

The Chicago Naturalist. The Chicago Academy of Sciences, Lincoln Park, Clark Street and Ogden Ave., Chicago. Quarterly.

The Gull. Miss Clelia A. Paroni, 575 Vincente Ave., Berkeley 6, Cal. Monthly. Audubon Association of the Pacific.

Feathers. Guy Bartlett, 1053 Parkwood Blvd., Schenectady, N. Y. Monthly. Schenectady Bird Club.

The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Inc.

Organized 1939

Incorporated 1942

President.....H. L. Orians, 2401 South Williams Street, Milwaukee 7

Vice-president.....Earl L. Loyster, Route 1, Middleton

Secretary.....Mrs. A. P. Balsom, 2209 East Stratford Court, Milwaukee 11

Treasurer.....J. Harwood Evans, 517 Jackson Drive, Oshkosh

Directors at Large:

Dr. B. L. von Jarchow, 1601 Washington Street, Racine

Mrs. R. P. Hussong, 332 E. Beaupre, Route 3, Green Bay

Legal Counsel.....Alfred S. Bradford, 312 West Prospect Avenue, Appleton

Librarian.....Gilbert H. Doane, University of Wisconsin Library, Madison 6

Assistant Librarian.....Ellen A. Hoffman, 1319 West Dayton Street, Madison 5

Sanctuaries.....Mrs. W. E. Rogers, Box 135, Appleton

Membership.....Mrs. Andrew Weber, 1243 South Jackson Street, Green Bay

Publicity.....Earl L. Loyster, Route 1, Middleton

Editor.....N. R. Barger, 4333 Hillcrest Drive, Madison 5

Assistant Editor.....Mrs. N. R. Barger, 4333 Hillcrest Drive, Madison 5

Bird-banding Editor.....Harold C. Wilson, Ephraim

A Marbled Godwit In Milwaukee

On the beach of Lake Michigan at South Shore Park a bird circled around calling, and flew directly past us three times at a distance no greater than 150 feet. We could see that the bill was not turned down as that of the curlew. A rich warm buffy brown color, together with its size (crow) and two-noted call convinced us of its identity. Ray Cialdini and Gordon Orians were with me.

Kumlien and Hollister of course report it as not rare in their day, but in recent years a set of eggs of this species was taken in Oconto County May 10, 1911. Taylor saw the bird May 18, 1922 in Madison and Raasch noted one near Oregon (Dane County) May 12, 1935. Very few other records of recent date exist and apparently no specimens have been taken since early days.

—H. L. Orians