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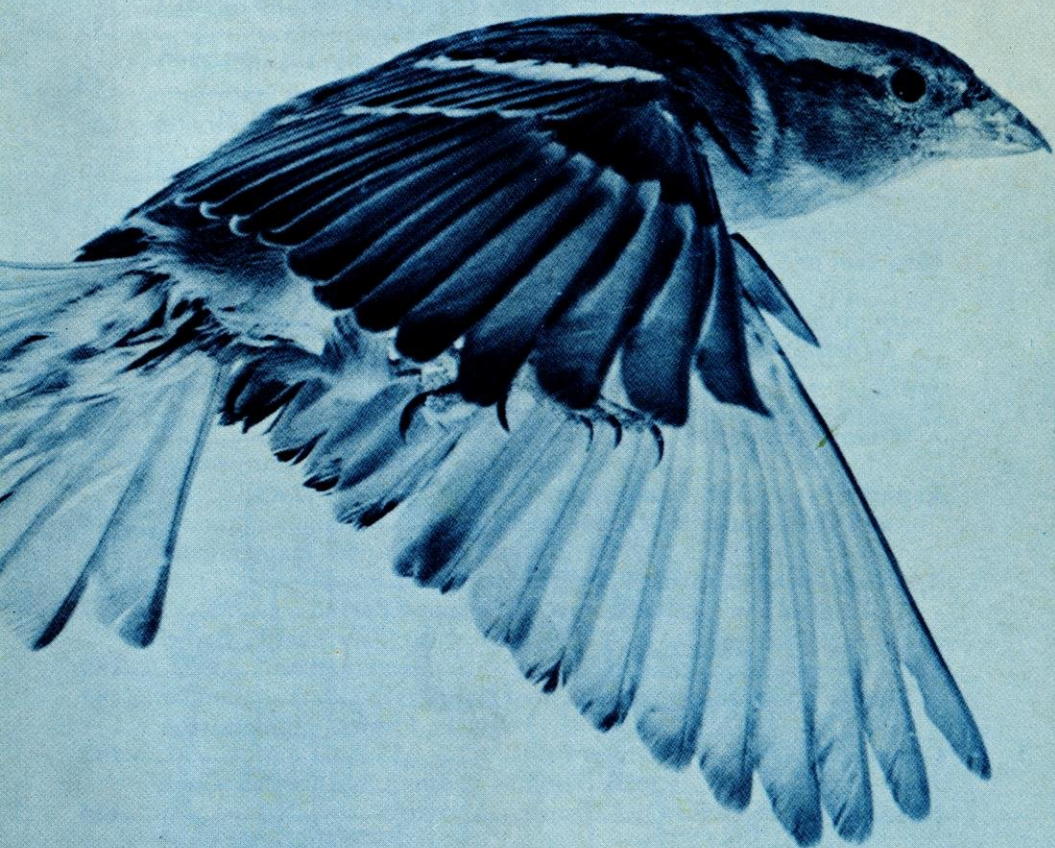
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Winter 1975

VOLUME 37, NO. 4



The
Passenger Pigeon

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NESTING GREAT EGRETS IN BURNETT COUNTY

by JAMES O. EVRARD

The Great Egret (*Casmerodius albus*) was a common bird of larger marshes and swamps bordering inland and rivers during the period of settlement in Wisconsin (1850-1875) according to Kumlien and Hollister (1903:35). They reported Great Egrets nesting with Great Blue Herons (*Ardea herodias*) west of Two Rivers in June, 1860; in a tamarack (*Larix laricina*) swamp near Jefferson in 1863; and near Waukesha in 1866.

The species then declined in numbers to a point of near extinction due to man's activities including plume hunting, indiscriminate shooting and habitat destruction. In 1900, the birds were finally given protection under the Federal Lacey Act.

During the period from 1960 to 1974, the only nesting of the Great Egret recorded in the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology files was from Buffalo and Trempealeau Counties. A search of the files of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) produced one additional nesting record on Fourmile Island in the Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area (Fig. 1).



FIGURE 1. Locations of Nesting Great Egrets in Wisconsin Since 1960.

The Great Egret has been seen regularly on the WDNR's Crex Meadows Wildlife Area in Burnett County since 1953 (Table 1). In 1974, the species was observed on the newly-flooded Grettum Flowage on the Fish Lake Wildlife Area about five miles southwest of Crex Meadows.

In 1975, the first nests of the Great Egret in Burnett County were seen in some water-killed jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*) in Grettum Flowage. There were three Great Egret nests in a rookery containing five Great Blue Heron nests and twelve Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) nests. Of the three Great Egret nests, at least one was successful. On June 25, I observed an adult Great Egret feeding two half-grown young in the nest.

The Grettum rookery will be observed closely to record any future nesting of the Great Egret. There are also plans of the WDNR to erect artificial nesting structures in the rookery when the water-killed trees begin falling down. The artificial nesting structures were used by Great Blue Herons in the Phantom Lake rookery on the Crex Meadows Wildlife Area in 1975.

TABLE I
Great Egret Observations in Burnett County, Wisconsin*

Year	No. of Observations	Maximum Number of Observed
1953	2	3
1954	1	1
1956	19	3
1957	2	4
1958	2	1
1959	1	2
1960	2	3
1963	5	2
1965	3	1
1967	4	2
1968	5	5
1969	1	2
1972	1	1
1974**	6	4
1975***	11	14

*1953-1972 observations recorded only on Crex Meadows Wildlife Area by N. R. Stone.

**4 observations with a maximum of 4 birds observed on Fish Lake Wildlife Area.

***8 observations with a maximum of 14 birds observed on Fish Lake Wildlife Area.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Dr. Ray Anderson, Dr. Ruth Hine and John Wetzel for providing Great Egret nesting records.

A CASE STUDY OF BARN OWLS IN WISCONSIN

by URSULA C. PETERSEN & LeROY R. PETERSEN

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Madison, Wisconsin 53711

"Get those owls out of my barn!" exclaimed the Jefferson County farmer. It was hard to believe that the 2 three-quarters grown barn owls (*Tyto alba*) could provoke such anger. The adult barn owls had chosen the hayloft of the barn as a nesting site for their fall brood. The access into the barn was directly above the attached uninsulated electrical lines, and sparks flew as the incoming adult's wingbeats caused the lines to touch. The farmer was fearful of a fire, and he was determined that the owls must go. The owlets stood about a foot high, both still covered with a great deal of down, but their incoming adult plumage was very visible. One of the owlets was noticeably larger than its sibling, as the female owl had begun incubation with the laying of the first egg.

The owlets were taken to the DNR Nevin Fish Hatchery, south of Madison. A food supply of wild-trapped rodents soon proved insufficient, so with help from the University of Wisconsin-Madison Zoology Department, new traplines, plus a great deal of scrounging, we were able to keep the owlets fed. It was already the second week in November 1973, and a release of these owlets at this late date posed a difficult problem.

Wisconsin is on the northern edge of the barn owl's range, and death from starvation during severe winters is not uncommon. Barn owls are unfortunately highly dependent on small rodents — the meadow vole (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*) in particular. It would seem so logical for the barn owls, in winters of prey scarcity, to turn towards house sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) and starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) commonly found in association with rural livestock operations. Schmidt (1972) in Hungary found the barn owl's diet consisted of 24 percent house sparrows, while Johnston (1974) reported 40 percent avian remains in his prey studies of barn owls in the West Indies. Yet, in the Great Lakes region, Wallace (1948) in Michigan observed less than 2 percent bird remains, and Ervington (1932) found less than 1 percent avian contents in Wisconsin.

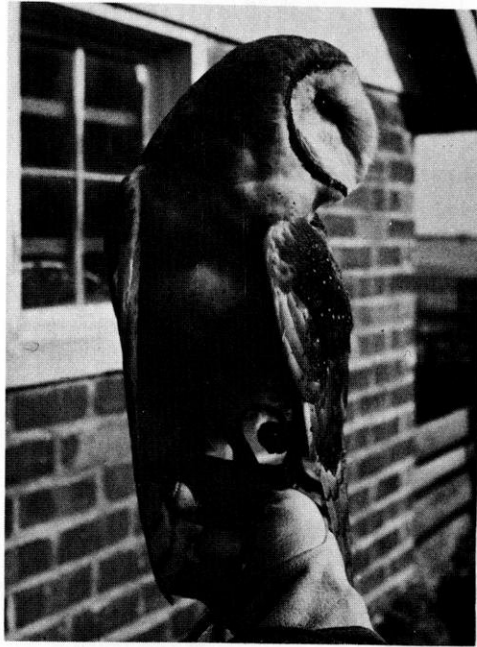


FIGURE 1. Barn owl in adult plumage near Monticello.



FIGURE 2. Nesting site in silage.



FIGURE 3. Young in nesting box attached to silo. Note owl pellets on top of box.



FIGURE 4. Near-fledged owlet at Dayton.

Because of the likelihood of winter starvation, the decision was made to hold the owlets overwinter, and release them in spring. Aylmeri anklets and jesses were placed on the owlets for ease in handling. The birds obtained their beautiful adult plumage by the first half of December (Fig. 1). In March the owls were placed in a shed near Monticello in Green County so they could develop their flying abilities. After a few weeks, the owls escaped, unbanded and with the leather anklets of Aylmeri jesses still attached. Mice were placed on the feeding board in the shed and the owls returned nightly for more than a week to feed. And then they returned no more.

It was in late August when Jim Rhyner, a farmer just east of Dayton in northern Green County, telephoned. Jim had purchased around half a silo of silage from his neighbor, Jack Heron. Jack had 3 silos built adjacent to one another, and the silage in the middle silo was being sold so the silo could be torn down, and moved to a new site. As Jim Rhyner began removing the dried top "couple of feet", so the quality silage could be reached, he observed a strange sight. There on a chute iron rung, perched a strange-looking owl. The farmer and the owl, both greatly surprised, stood staring at one another for a brief moment, then finally the owl flew out of the top of the silo, but not before Jim had observed small attached bands of leather around each leg of the owl — the leather anklets of Aylmeri jesses. The movement of the owl from the shed in Monticello to the silo in Dayton proved to be a straight line distance of 6.5 miles. At least one of the Jefferson County barn owls had survived in Green County. However, Jim Rhyner had still one additional surprise when the removal of some silage uncovered a nest of 2 small, homely owlets around 2 weeks old and one unhatched addled egg (Fig. 2). The bird not only survived, but had brought off a brood as well!

Our excitement was tempered by one sobering item — the silo was to be torn down in less than 2 weeks! Jim Rhyner was to remove the silage during those 2 weeks. The first thing to do was to find some other nesting site within the silo that would not be affected by the silage removal. The inside of a silo is rather devoid of perching sites, much less nesting sites. A rough wooden box was attached inside the silo. A small amount of straw for bedding, and presto, the latest in new homes for breeding barn owls! A check 5 days later indicated that the adults had completely accepted their new nesting box. Pellets were found within and on top of the box (Fig. 3). After a 10-day period, phase 2 of the operation barn owl called for the transferring of the nesting box to an adjacent silo, which proved to be successful also. The nesting box was transplanted once again to the inside of the barn so that the owlets would have an abundance of suitable perches once they fledged (Fig. 4), and again the adults accepted the change.

Pellets collected from the Dayton barn owls revealed 191 total prey items of which 170 (89 percent) were meadow voles, 17 (9 percent) were giant mole shrews (*Blarina brevicauda*), 2 (1 percent) were deer mice (*Peromyscus sp.*) and only 2 (1 percent) were house sparrows. Feeding results closely resemble Errington's (1932) finding near Madison.

In 1975, the adult barn owls did not return to the silo to nest. They may have nested in another place we never found, or the low small mammal numbers in 1975 may have affected their survival. Whatever the reason, we are keeping our fingers crossed in hoping at least for their survival.

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A GREAT HORNED OWL KILLED BY A RED FOX

Although Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) food habits are known, (Rusch, Meslow, Doerr, and Keith, J. Wildl. Mgmt., 36: 282-296, 1972) information concerning predation on owls is decidedly lacking.

I discovered the frozen carcass of a Great Horned Owl while tracking a red fox (*Vulpes fulva*) through a large marsh near Portland, Dodge County, Wisconsin at 10:30 on 7 February 1975. The temperature was -18°C and 76 cm of snow, 72 hours old, was on the ground. The tracks were made within the previous 12 hours and indicated that the fox was moving slowly north. The tracks led to a dead, adult-size Great Horned Owl, which was found lying on its back beneath a 10m willow (*Salix* sp). The owl's left wing was fully extended, while the right wing remained partially folded. A large number of fox tracks, intermixed with drag marks from the owl's wings, were trampled into an area approximately 8m² surrounding the owl carcass. The fox had apparently seized and dragged the owl around this disrupted area before releasing it. The owl appeared to be in good condition (no protruding keel was noted) but a small amount of blood was frozen next to the left eye. Frozen blood was found on the talons of both feet. A cone-shaped column of blood, located under the owl's head, was found frozen to the ground when the bird was picked up. A few breast feathers were found next to the carcass; no other parts of the owl were missing. After finishing with the owl, the fox again slowly headed north. At 16:40, I brought the owl to the Animal Health Laboratory of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture in Madison, Wisconsin for a post mortem examination by a veterinary diagnostician. Results indicated that trauma from a bitewound was the cause of death. Bitewounds punctured the left eye and skull behind the right ear opening. There was hemorrhaging into the ear cavity and the brain itself; apparently this injury caused death, and did not follow it. The owl's proventriculus was filled with a large mass of hair, feathers and bird feet.

It seems highly unlikely that an adult-sized owl, full of food and in apparently good health, would attack a full-grown red fox; however this possibility cannot be dismissed. The only evidence of a struggle was the blood found on the owl's talons, which may have been in response to the fox's attack on the grounded bird. However, when I continued to track the fox after its encounter with the owl, no bleeding was noted near any of the fox tracks. Although the post-mortem exam indicated that the Great Horned Owl was in good physical condition with the exception of the fox-inflicted wounds, I believe that the owl was on the ground for an unknown reason, when it was attacked and killed. This encounter demonstrates that a Great Horned Owl can be susceptible to predation by foxes, if the owl remains on the ground for any length of time. — Charles M. Pils, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, 3911 Fish Hatchery Road, Madison, Wisconsin 53711.



FIELD NOTES

by WILLIAM L. HILSENHOFF

The Winter Season

Dec. 1, 1974-March 31, 1975

The unusually mild weather that produced a record-breaking Christmas Count (Passenger Pigeon 37:3-19) continued until January 11, when an icy blast moved in from Canada on exceptionally high winds. But January and February were not unusually cold, and except for the March 15-17 period when Robins, blackbirds, Canada Geese, Killdeers, and Song Sparrows finally moved north, there were only occasional mild days and most migrants that normally arrive in late-March were delayed. Frozen lakes and ponds also delayed the duck migration.

The unusual winter resulted in numerous records and many other noteworthy observations. The Thayer's Gull in Douglas County was only the second observation of that species in Wisconsin. February records for the Pine Warbler, Chipping Sparrow, and Black Scoter were the first for the state. There were new spring arrival records for the Green Heron, Water Pipit, and Sora, and a new late departure record for the latter. Other highlights included a Gyrfalcon, a Peregrine Falcon, two January records for the Virginia Rail, a Northern Phalarope in early December, the Curve-billed Thrasher that wintered again in Buffalo County, a Ruby-crowned Kinglet in January, a wintering Yellow-headed Blackbird, a late-March Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and the fourth state record for the Black-headed Grosbeak. All of these observations were well-documented.

The Season Summary Follows. Not included are common permanent residents and observations made during the Christmas Count period that were reported earlier in the spring issue of the Passenger Pigeon.

The Season Summary

- Common Loon:** Only report Waukesha Co., Mar. 31 (Bielefeldt)
- Horned Grebe:** Arrived Racine Co. Mar. 20 (Erickson) and Winnebago Co. Mar. 22 (Schultz)
- Pied-billed Grebe:** Wintered Dane Co. (3 observers); seen Waukesha Co. Jan. 21 (Bielefeldt); arrived Milwaukee Co. Mar. 16 (Parfitt) and Brown Co. Mar. 18 (Trick)
- Great Blue Heron:** Arrived Kenosha Co. Mar. 12 (Hamers), Waukesha Co. Mar. 18 (Bielefeldt), and Pierce Co. Mar. 20 (Faanes)
- Green Heron:** New arrival record, Juneau Co. Mar. 31 (Necedah Refuge — Brad Ehlers)
- Black-crowned Night Heron:** Only report La Crosse Co. Mar. 24 (Leshner)
- American Bittern:** Remained Dane Co. Jan. 11 (Hilsenhoff)
- Whistling Swan:** Remained (2) Buffalo Co. Jan 9 (Faanes) and (2) Juneau Co. Feb. 2 (Follen, Tessen, Parfitt); arrived Waukesha Co. Mar. 20 (Bielefeldt) and Brown Co. Mar. 21 (Cleary and Columban)
- Canada Goose:** Wintered in southern Wisconsin; migrants Manitowoc Co. Mar. 16, Brown and Washburn Cos. Mar. 17
- White-fronted Goose:** Arrived (20) Kenosha Co. Mar. 22 (Hoffmann), Racine Co. Mar. 30 (Fiehweg)
- Snow Goose:** Wintered Racine Co. (Tessen); arrived Kenosha Co. Mar. 22 (Hoffmann)
- Mallard, Black Duck, and Common Goldeneye:** Wintered statewide where open water permitted
- Gadwall:** Wintered Dane Co; seen Ozaukee Co. Feb. 9 and Milwaukee Co. Feb. 11
- Pintail:** Wintered Winnebago Co. (Tessen); seen Milwaukee Co. Feb. 22 (Hanbury); arrived Waukesha Co. Mar. 17 (Bielefeldt), Brown Co. Mar. 25 (Cleary and Columban), and Pierce Co. Mar. 28 (Faanes)
- Green-winged Teal:** Seen Waukesha Co. Jan. 21 (Bielefeldt); arrived Milwaukee Co. Mar. 4 (Basten) and Waukesha Co. Mar. 22 (Bintz)
- Blue-winged Teal:** Arrived Milwaukee Co. Mar. 17 (Basten), Winnebago Co. Mar. 17 (Parfitt) and Brown Co. Mar. 19 (Trick)
- American Wigeon:** Wintered Milwaukee and Winnebago Cos. (Tessen); arrived Waukesha Co. Mar. 17 (Bielefeldt) and Juneau Co. Mar. 19 (Necedah Refuge)
- Shoveler:** Seen Dane Co. Jan. 19 (Erickson) and Milwaukee Co. Feb. 23 (Basten); arrived Winnebago Co. Mar. 18 (Parfitt)
- Wood Duck:** Wintered Dane Co. (Hilsenhoff), Winnebago Co. (Tessen), LaCrosse Co. (Leshner), and Oneida Co. (Vanderschaegen)
- Redhead:** Wintered Milwaukee and Winnebago Cos. (Tessen) and LaCrosse Co. (Leshner); arrived Brown Co. Mar. 22 (Trick)
- Ring-necked Duck:** Wintered Milwaukee Co. (several observers); arrived Waukesha Co. Mar. 21 (Bintz), Dane Co. Mar. 22 (Hilsenhoff), LaCrosse Co. Mar. 23 (Leshner), and Brown Co. Mar. 25 (Trick)
- Canvasback:** Wintered Milwaukee Co. (several observers) and Winnebago Co. (Schultz, Tessen); arrived Door Co. Mar. 19 (Lukes)
- Lesser Scaup Duck:** Wintered Brown Co. (Clary and Columban) and LaCrosse Co. (Leshner) and several counties farther south
- Bufflehead:** Wintered Milwaukee, Ozaukee, and Door Cos.
- Oldsquaw and Greater Scaup Duck:** Wintered on Lake Michigan
- White-winged Scoter:** Seen Kenosha Co. Feb. 1 - Mar. 28 (Hoffmann) and Ozaukee Co. Mar. 22 (Hanbury)
- Black Scoter:** Documented observation Kenosha Co. Feb. 4 (Erickson)
- Ruddy Duck:** Wintered Winnebago Co. (Schultz and Tessen); arrived Brown Co. Mar. 21 (Trick)

- Hooded Merganser:** Wintered Racine, Dane, and Winnebago Cos.; seen Buffalo Co. Jan. 9 (Faanes) and Brown Co. Mar. 7 (Cleary and Columban)
- Common Merganser:** Wintered Great Lakes and Pierce Co.; inland arrivals beginning Mar. 22
- Red-breasted Merganser:** Wintered Dane, Milwaukee, and Kenosha Cos.; arrived Pierce Co. Mar. 28 (Faanes)
- Turkey Vulture:** Remained Oneida Co. Dec. 30 (Vanderschaegen); arrived Kenosha Co. Mar. 22 (Erickson)
- Goshawk:** Reports from 15 counties statewide
- Sharp-shinned Hawk:** Wintered Manitowoc Co. (Woodcock), Langlade Co. (Pickering) and Pierce Co. (Faanes) and many counties farther south
- Cooper's Hawk:** Seen Jackson Co. Feb. 1 (Tessen, Donald, Erickson), Dane Co. Feb. 11 (Hilsenhoff), Mar. 22 (Tessen), and Pierce Co. Mar. 3 (Faanes)
- Red-shouldered Hawk:** Seen Wood Co. Jan. 19 (Follen) and Juneau Co. Feb. 1 (Tessen, Donald, Erickson); arrived Polk Co. Mar. 16 (Faanes, Robbins) and Manitowoc Co. Mar. 17 (Woodcock)
- Red-tailed Hawk:** Wintered Barron Co. and south; arrived Vilas Co. Mar. 27 (Vanderschaegen)
- Bald Eagle:** Wintered statewide in many areas where there was open water
- Golden Eagle:** Seen Buffalo Co. Jan. 15 (Faanes), Jackson Co. Jan. 25 (Follen), Burnett Co. Feb. 14-Mar. 17 (Evrard) and Juneau Co. Feb. 26 (Necedah Refuge) and Mar. 16 (Tessen)
- Rough-legged Hawk:** Wintered north to Door, Marinette, Price, and Barron Cos.
- Marsh Hawk:** Wintered north to Brown Co. (Trick)
- Gyr Falcon:** One report, Wood Co. Jan. 19 (Follen); see "By the Wayside"
- Peregrine Falcon:** One report, Brown Co. Mar. 22 (Faanes)
- Kestrel:** Wintered north to Barron Co. (Faanes, Goff) and Oconto Co. (Woodcock)
- Spruce Grouse:** Only report, Vilas Co. (Vanderschaegen)
- Sharp-tailed Grouse:** Reports from Burnett, Price, Vilas, and Juneau Cos.
- Gray Partridge:** Wintered north to Pierce Co. (Faanes), Shawano Co. (Carpenter) and Brown Co. (Cleary and Columban)
- Turkey:** Wintered (50) Juneau Co. (Necedah Refuge)
- Sandhill Crane:** Arrived Waukesha Co. Mar. 15 (Bintz) and Juneau Co. Mar. 22 (Necedah Refuge)
- Virginia Rail:** Remained Dane Co. Jan. 11 (Hilsenhoff) and Waukesha Co. Jan. 23 (Bielefeldt)
- Sora:** Seen Brown Co. Dec. 18-Feb. 2 (Cleary and Columban); arrived (3) Kenosha Co. Mar. 29 (Hoffman)
- American Coot:** Wintered Milwaukee, Dane, Waukesha, and Winnebago Cos.; seen Ashland Co. Feb. 15 (Faanes)
- Killdeer:** Remained Racine Co. Jan. 17 (Erickson); seen Rock Co. Feb. 16 (Beloit recount); arrived Rock Co. (Ellis) and Kenosha Co. (Hoffmann) Mar. 15, almost everywhere else Mar. 16 or 17, Burnett Co. Mar. 17 (Evrard)
- Woodcock:** Arrived Kenosha Co. Mar. 19 (Erickson), Waukesha Co. Mar. 20 (Bintz), LaCrosse Co. Mar. 21 (Leshner)
- Common Snipe:** After Feb. 24 Waukesha Co. (Bielefeldt)
- Greater Yellowlegs:** Present Kenosha Co. Mar. 28-29 (Hamers, Hoffmann)
- Northern Phalarope:** Remained Racine Co. Dec. 5-6 (Erickson)
- Glaucous Gull:** Reported Feb. 1-Mar. 15 Douglas Co. (Faanes *et al*) see "By the Wayside", Kenosha Co. Dec. 28-Mar. 15 (Hoffmann), Ozaukee Co. Feb. 5-Mar. 23 (Erickson), Milwaukee Co. Feb. 9-Mar. 2 (Erickson and others), and Brown Co. Mar. 31 (Trick)

- Iceland Gull:** Documented reports Kenosha Co. Dec. 28-Mar. 28 (Hoffmann), Milwaukee Co. Jan. 5 (Erickson), and Douglas Co. Feb. 1-Mar. 15 (Faanes *et al*) see "By the Wayside"
- Thayer's Gull:** Second state record, Douglas Co. Mar. 15 (Faanes, Tessen, Erickson) see "By the Wayside"
- Herring Gull:** Wintered north to Door and Marinette Cos. on Lake Michigan; inland movement in March
- Ring-billed Gull:** Wintered sparingly on Lake Michigan; moved inland to Winnebago Co. Mar. 19 and Juneau Co. Mar. 20.
- Franklin's Gull:** Early arrival, Milwaukee Co. Mar. 30 (Epstein), seen by many observers Mar. 31
- Bonapart's Gull:** Remained Milwaukee Co. Jan. 7 (Hanbury) and Kenosha Co. Jan. 7 (Hoffmann)
- Mourning Dove:** Wintered north to Chippewa Co. (Robbins) and Marinette Co. (Lindberg)
- Snowy Owl:** Reported from 12 northern and eastern counties, Kenosha to Burnett Cos.
- Saw-whet Owl:** Seen Price Co. Jan. 12 and Mar. 19 (Vincent) and Oneida Co. Mar. 13 (Vanderschaegen)
- Screech Owl:** Many reports north to Pierce and Brown Cos.
- Long-eared Owl:** Wintered Milwaukee Co. (many observers); seen Pierce Co. Feb. 26 (Faanes) and Burnett Co. Mar. 28 (Evrard)
- Short-eared Owl:** Wintered Waukesha Co. (Bintz); seen Burnett Co. Jan. 5 (Evrard) and Jan. 18 (Faanes), Kenosha Co. after Mar. 8 (Hoffmann), and Wood Co. Mar. 20 (Folen)
- Belted Kingfisher:** Wintered north to Barron Co. (Faanes) and Outagamie Co. (Tessen)
- Common Flicker:** Wintered Outagamie Co. (Tessen); seen Pierce Co. Feb. 16 (Faanes) and Brown Co. Mar. 17 (Wierzbicki)
- Red-bellied Woodpecker:** Wintered north to Marinette Co. (Lindberg) and Barron Co. (Goff, Faanes)
- Red-headed Woodpecker:** Wintered sparingly north to Barron Co. (Goff) and Outagamie Co. (Natzke, Tessen)
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** Arrived Kenosha Co. Mar. 28 (Hamers, Hoffmann)
- Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker:** One report, Bayfield Co. Dec. 1 (Roy)
- Northern Three-toed Woodpecker:** One photographed, Polk Co. Mar. 14 (Faanes)
- Eastern Phoebe:** Arrived Racine Co. Mar. 25 (Erickson), Waukesha Co. Mar. 28 (Bintz)
- Horned Lark:** Wintered north to Barron and Brown Cos.; northward movement in last half of February
- Tree Swallow:** Arrived Jefferson Co. Mar. 22 (Tessen), Racine Co. Mar. 24 (Erickson), Waukesha Co. Mar. 24 (Bielefeldt) and LaCrosse Co. Mar. 25 (Leshner)
- Gray Jay:** Reported from Oneida, Price, Douglas, and Sawyer Cos.
- Raven:** Reported from 15 counties south to Juneau
- Boreal Chickadee:** Only report from Price Co. (Vincent)
- Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Wintered statewide
- Tufted Titmouse:** Reported north to Chippewa, Pierce, and Brown Cos.
- Brown Creeper:** Wintered north to Marinette Co. (Lindberg), Oneida Co. (Thomas), Bayfield Co. (Roy) and Barron Co. (Faanes)
- Winter Wren:** Only report, Kenosha Co. Mar. 29 (Hoffmann)
- Carolina Wren:** Wintered Calumet Co. (Tessen) and Racine Co. (Garber); seen Dodge Co. after Feb. 7 (Neuenschwander)
- Mockingbird:** Wintered Calumet Co. at Maier residence (Tessen)
- Gray Catbird:** Remained Racine Co. until Jan. 1 (Erickson)

Brown Thrasher: Remained Pierce Co. until Jan. 11 (Faanes)

Curve-billed Thrasher: Wintered again Buffalo Co. (Maier)

Varied Thrush: Wintered Door Co. (Lukes), Jackson Co. (Seil's feeder); seen Milwaukee Co. Dec. 1 (Idzkowski, Hubert)

American Robin: Wintered north to Brown Co. (Cleary, Columban) and Langlade Co. (Pickering)

Hermit Thrush: Seen, Racine Co. Jan 25 (Erickson), Milwaukee Co. Feb. 11-12 (Basten); arrived Kenosha Co. Mar. 29 (Hoffmann)

Eastern Bluebird: Arrived Winnebago Co. Mar. 18 (Parfitt)

Golden-crowned Kinglet: Wintered Racine Co. (Erickson), Waukesha Co. (Bielefeldt), and Outagamie Co. (Tessen); remained Barron Co. until Feb. 18 (Faanes) and Oconto Co. until Feb. 15 (Woodcock)

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Remained Buffalo Co. until Jan. 3 (Maier) and Rock Co. until Jan. 17 (Ellis); arrived Winnebago Co. Mar. 29 (Schultz)

Water Pipit: New arrival record, Racine Co. Mar. 20 (Erickson)

Bohemian Waxwing: Remained Outagamie Co. through January (Tessen); seen Barron Co. Mar. 2 (Faanes)

Cedar Waxwing: Wintered north to Buffalo Co. (Maier), Brown Co. (Cleary, Columban); moved north to Price Co. Mar. 20 (Vincent)

Northern Shrike: Reported statewide throughout the period

Pine Warbler: First mid-winter record, Winnebago Co. Feb. 1 (Knuth) see "By the Wayside"

Meadowlark spp.: Large wintering populations in southern half of Wisconsin

Eastern Meadowlark: Wintered Brown Co. (Cleary, Columban); netted Polk Co. Jan. 16 (Faanes)

Western Meadowlark: Singing birds, Pierce Co. Feb. 3 (Faanes) and Rock Co. Feb. 27 (Ellis)

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Remained Brown Co. until Mar. 15 (Cleary, Columban)

Redwing Blackbird: Wintered north to Brown Co. (Cleary, Columban); seen Pierce Co. Feb. 3 (Faanes); migrants north to Price Co. Mar. 17 (Hardy)

Rusty Blackbird: Seen Feb. 16 Rock Co. (Ellis), Pierce Co. Feb. 26 (Faanes), Ozaukee Co. Mar. 20 (Erickson)

Brewer's Blackbird: Only report, Dane Co. Mar. 22 (Tessen)

Common Grackle: Wintered north to Brown Co. (Columban, Cleary), Price Co. (Vincent) and Pierce Co. (Faanes)

Brown-headed Cowbird: Wintered north to Brown Co. (Cleary, Columban)

Cardinal: Wintered north to Langlade Co. (Pickering) and Sawyer Co. (Faanes)

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Documented report of a female, Kenosha Co. Mar. 28 (Hamers, Hoffmann)

Black-headed Grosbeak: An adult male at the Charles Lloyd home in Iowa Co. after Mar. 3 (Robbins)

Evening Grosbeak: Wintered in good numbers south to Waukesha Co.

Purple Finch: Wintered statewide

Pine Grosbeak: Wintered Oneida Co. (Vanderschaegen); seen Price Co. Dec. 8-Mar 11 (Hardy), Douglas and Bayfield Cos. Feb. 15 (Faanes, Robbins), Sawyer Co. Feb. 15-Mar. 15 (Faanes), and Brown Co. Feb. 17-Mar. 9 (Cleary, Columban)

Common Redpoll: Reported from Langlade Co. Feb. 17-Mar. 3 (Pickering), Brown Co. Feb. 17-Mar. 9 (Clary, Columban), Marinette Co. after Feb. 5 (Lindberg), Pierce Co. Feb. 7-Mar. 4 (Faanes), Polk Co. Mar. 16 (Faanes, Robbins), and Dane Co. Feb. 25 (Hilsenhoff)

Pine Siskin: Wintered statewide

American Goldfinch: Wintered statewide

White-winged Crossbill: Only reports, Sawyer Co. Jan. 19-Feb. 15 (Faanes) and Price Co. Feb. 22-23 (Hardy)

Red Crossbill: Only reports, Bayfield Co. Feb. 15 (Faanes) and Price Co. Feb. 29 (Hardy)

Rufous-sided Towhee: Only report, a wintering bird in Price Co. (Hardy, Vincent)

Savannah Sparrow: Only report, Kenosha Co. Mar. 22 (Hamers)

Vesper Sparrow: A probable wintering bird Columbia Co. Mar. 1 (Tessen); probable migrant Pierce Co. Mar. 28 (Gaanes)

Dark-eyed Junco: Wintered north to Marinette Co. (Lindberg), Langlade Co. (Pickering), Sawyer Co. (Faanes), and Barron Co. (Goff); probable wintering birds Douglas, Bayfield, and Ashland Cos. Feb. 15 (Faanes)

Tree Sparrow: Wintered north to Door Co. (Lukes), Langlade Co. (Pickering), Price Co. (Hardy), Sawyer Co. (Faanes) and Barron Co. (Goff)

Chipping Sparrow: First February record at Pius' feeder Kenosha Co. Feb. 8 (Tessen)

Field Sparrow: Remained Waukesha Co. (4) until Jan. 17 (Bielefeldt); seen, Rock Co. Mar. 1 (Tessen)

White-crowned Sparrow: Six again wintered at Pius' feeder Kenosha Co.

White-throated Sparrow: Wintered Racine and Milwaukee Cos.; seen, Dane Co. Jan. 26 (Robbins), Rock Co. Feb. 16 (Beloit recount), and Shawano Co. Feb. 25 (Hafeman)

Fox Sparrow: Arrived Kenosha Co. Mar. 22 (Hamers), Racine Co. Mar. 23 (Erickson) and Waukesha Co. Mar. 28 (Bintz)

Swamp Sparrow: Only report, wintered Waukesha Co. (Bielefeldt)

Song Sparrow: Wintered north to Brown Co. (Cleary, Columban) and Pierce Co. (Faanes)

Lapland Longspur: Winter reports Columbia Co. Jan. 19 (Erickson), Oneida Co. (50) Feb. 8 (Thomas), Kenosha Co. Feb. 7 (Erickson), Barron Co. after Mar. 2 (Faanes); numerous reports after mid-March

Snow Bunting: Wintering flocks seen statewide

Contributors

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By the Wayside...

A Pine Warbler in mid-winter — A single bird was found in the vicinity of a bird feeder located in Riverside Cemetery in Oshkosh on February 1, 1975. Its olive back, yellow breast, prominent white wing bars and faint eye-stripe were seen well in bright sunlight as the bird perched on an outer branch of a pine. Attempts to locate it after that failed. Its thin, sharply pointed "warbler" bill was obvious, the bird being observed from a distance of ten feet with 7 X 35 binoculars. — Rockne Knuth, Oshkosh

Three species of Arctic gulls at Superior — On 1 February 1975, a trip was made to the city of Superior dump, directly adjacent to Lake Superior, in hopes of observing a visiting white winged gull. Upon arrival, we were greeted by nearly 200 Herring Gulls. Closer examination of the flock revealed 3 Glaucous Gulls, and 2 Iceland Gulls. Of the Glaucous Gulls observed, two were adults and one was in the second year plumage. The Icelands were one adult, and one in first year plumage.

On 15 March, another trip was made to Superior in search of gulls, this time in the company of Mary Donald, Louise Erickson, and Daryl Tessen. Upon arriving at the dump, we were dismayed to find that all of the garbage was covered over, and there were no gulls to be seen. The group travelled out onto a pressure ridge along the lakeshore, and found a small flock of about 60 gulls resting on the ice and swimming in the water. We began to scan the gulls, using binoculars and 3 different spotting scopes. Within this flock 4, possibly 5 Iceland Gulls, 3 Glaucous Gulls, and 1 Thayer's Gull were observed. Using two 30X spotting scopes, and one 50X spotting scope, the following characteristics of the Thayer's Gull were observed: size of a Herring Gull; grey wing tips, rather than black; head more rounded than a Herring Gull's; bill slightly smaller than a Herring Gull's. When first observed the Thayer's Gull was resting on the ice. It soon took flight and gave us a good chance to observe the wing tips more thoroughly. Godfrey's *The Birds of Canada* was consulted for comparison with the Herring Gull. The bird was observed from 250-300 yards. The sky was clear and there was very little wind.

Janet Green of Duluth has reported the Thayer's Gull for the last two or three years in the Duluth area. As far as I know, this is the first sight record of a Thayer's Gull from the Lake Superior area of Wisconsin. — Craig Faanes, River Falls, Wisconsin

A Gyrfalcon in Wood County — On January 19, 1975 at approximately 1000 hours, after being unsuccessful on a Snow Owl search and successful on a Red-shouldered Hawk hunt, my oldest son Bud and I were on the way home. We decided to look for Rough-legs around the Prairie Chicken area to the East of Arpin. We were traveling west on County Trunk C near the town of Sigel when we both saw immediately to the front of us a long winged, light colored hawk. The bird was moving to the north and we to the west at approximately fifty miles an hour. From nearly directly below the bird we could see the mottled color on the underparts, the long pointed falcon wings, and long pointed tail. As we hit the brakes and looked at each other, I said "Gyrfalcon". Since I had the scope ready I studied the bird carefully and recorded it as a gray phase although it was light for the gray and dark for the white phase. The bird flew out over a cut over cornfield and for approximately ¼ mile was just above the ground. The rowing slow wingbeat of this bird to me was one of the final reasons that I ascertained that this bird was a Gyrfalcon. — Don Follen, Arpin

HOW NOT TO CATCH BIRDS WHEN TRAPPING FOR MICE

by FRANCES HAMERSTROM

The Hamerstoms have run small mammal trap lines for museums, and to determine range and densities of various mammals, for over 40 years. Now, more than ever before, we recognize the need to find out *where* the rare mammals are — how else can we save their range from being plowed, flooded or sub-divided? We have found snap traps far more effective than live traps.

Trappers of small mammals — mice and shrews — do not like to catch birds by mistake. Ordinarily the problem is not serious.

Roger L. Boyer (Unintentional bird mortality caused by mammal trapping. 1975. Passenger Pigeon 37:87-89) suggested that “. . . snap trapping methods should not be used during high periods of passerine migration.”

Permit me to suggest another solution: the mice one wants to catch operate primarily at night; the birds one does *not* want to catch feed during the day. The solution is somewhat painful. It is — when worried about bird mortality — *to get up early in the morning and unset all snap traps.*

Mammalogists call each night that a trap is set a “trap night”. (If 100 traps are set in one night the catch is based on 100 trap nights). I have tabulated the inadvertent bird kills while small mammal trapping on the Buena Vista Marsh in Portage County, Wisconsin for the last 5 years to compare our mortality with Boyer’s.

Comparison of Boyer and Hamerstrom Snap Trap Bird Kills

	Trap nights	Birds caught	Trap nights per bird
Boyer	180	11	16.37
Hamerstrom	5,849	4*	1462.25

*3 Savannah Sparrows, *Passerculus sandwichensis*, and 1 Grasshopper Sparrow, *Ammodramus savannarum*.

No wonder Boyer was perturbed. Every time he set 16 mouse traps he could expect to catch a bird. By comparison, it averaged 1,462 trap nights to catch a bird on my project.

The comparison is not entirely valid as we were trapping in summer and in open country, but the principle of leaving traps unset when many birds are active is the same.

I would like to thank those who did most of the trapping: Alan Beske, Keith and Jan Bilstein, Deann De La Ronde, Curt Griffin, Keith Janick, Daniel Thompson, and Josef and Sheila Schmutz.

NOTES ON A CHRISTMAS COUNT

GREEN TURTLE CAY, ABACO, BAHAMAS

by G. W. FOSTER, JR.

This is a report on 51 species observed December 28, 1974, during a Christmas Bird Count taken on — and in the vicinity of — Green Turtle Cay, Abaco, Bahamas. Twelve additional species seen in the Count area within three days of the Count are also reported.

Green Turtle Cay, Abaco, Bahamas. 26° 44' N 77° 22' W, center Customs Bldg., Treasure Cay Airstrip, Abaco; mangrove thickets and casuarinas 60%, ocean, bays and tidal marshes 15%, pine barrens 10%, other barren areas 10% and residential areas 5%.—Dec. 28; 6:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Fair with brief afternoon overcast; 73° to 78°; winds ESE, 5-10 m.p.h. Two observers in one party. Total party hours 10¾ (9¾ on foot, 1 by boat); total party miles (13 on foot, 6 by boat).

Green Heron, 1; Turkey Vulture, 2; Pigeon Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Clapper Rail, 1; Sora, 1; Killdeer, 2; Black-bellied Plover, 2; Common Snipe, 1; Spotted Sandpiper, 1; Sanderling, 5; Herring Gull, 11; Ring-billed Gull, 8; Laughing Gull, 4; Common Ground Dove, 14; Smooth-billed Ani, 5; Cuban Emerald, 7; Bahama Woodstar, 4; Belted Kingfisher, 1; West Indian Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 2; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Loggerhead Kingbird, 2; Stolid Flycatcher, 5; Greater Antillean Pewee, 3; Bahama Swallow, 3; Northern Mockingbird, Catbird, 35; American Robin, 1; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 10; Thick-billed Vireo, 45; Black-and-white Warbler, 7; Parula Warbler, 8; Cape May Warbler, 1; Myrtle Warbler, 12; Yellow-throated Warbler, 4; Olive-capped Warbler, 2; Pine Warbler, 2; Prairie Warbler, 60; Palm Warbler, 140; Ovenbird, 2; Northern Waterthrush, 15; Common Yellowthroat, 1; Bahama Yellowthroat, 18; *Wilson's Warbler*, 1) American Redstart, 4; Bananaquit, 85; Stripe-headed Tanager, 7; Redwinged Blackbird, 2; Black-faced Grassquit, 70; *Clay-colored Sparrow*, 1.

Total, 51 species; about 629 indiv. (Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Great Blue Heron, Snowy Egret, Piping Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Royal Tern, White-crowned Pigeon, *Solitary Vireo*, Worm-eating Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Greater Antillean Bullfinch, Painted Bunting.) G. W. Foster, Jr. (compiler, 5616 Lake Mendota Dr., Madison WI 53705), Jimmie Foster.

About the Count Generally

My family and I spent a week, from December 24, 1974, to January 1, 1975, in the northeastern Bahamas on Green Turtle Cay off the Atlantic coast of Great Abaco.

The area was new to me although I had done some birding at Bimini in the Bahamas two years earlier and five years earlier had made a two-day circle around Puerto Rico. Thirteen of the 63 species observed during our stay on Green Turtle Cay were new to me and among the 13, only the White-crowned Pigeon occurs in any numbers in the A.O.U. area.

I centered the 15-mile diameter Count area on the Customs Building at the Treasure Cay Airstrip on Great Abaco Island and land accounted for substantially less than half the area of the resulting circle. While a boat was at my disposal, it was soon apparent that seabirds were largely absent at this season and that coverage on foot was obviously more productive.

From the air the Atlantic side of Great Abaco (and the adjoining cays) in the Count area appears considerably more verdant than the side of Abaco that faces toward Florida. Within the circle the land areas are generally low-lying although a few gentle slopes swell to heights that approach or slightly exceed 80 feet. Superficially at least habitat situations seemed to me limited in kinds and extensive areas seemed largely homogeneous. But that judgement is grounded on a skimpy knowledge of the local vegetation and surely the habitats within the area are more numerous and various than the following broad outline suggests:

- Mangroves and other non-coniferous trees and shrubs account for the bulk of the vegetation cover on Green Turtle Cay. A similar association seems largely to rim the Atlantic edge of the Count area on Great Abaco, with some of the trees that stand well removed from the water's edge rising to heights of 25 feet or more and having boles a foot or more in diameter. Casuarinas (the non-indigenous Australian "pine") were present in sporadic clusters.
- Some of the higher ground on Great Abaco within the Count area was covered by a pine-palmetto barrens and from the air it was evident that some of the area west of the center of the Count circle had been cleared of the pine-palmetto coverage and was being used for current crops (someone suggested cucumbers).
- Around the few places within the Count area where concentrations of people are to be found (the village of New Plymouth and several resorts on Green Turtle Cay, plus a resort area at Treasure Cay on Great Abaco) there has been a good bit of non-indigenous planting: a variety of citrus trees and, more generally, palms and other trees pretty clearly selected for ornamental purposes.
- Finally, from the air it appeared that on the westerly side of Great Abaco there were substantial areas without significant vegetation cover or that had vegetation associated with the rise and fall of the tide. Perhaps some of the ponds visible from the air in this area involved fresh instead of salt or brackish water but I got to none of these.

The bulk of my birding was done in areas dominated by mangroves or other nonconiferous vegetation. The pine-palmetto barrens were next and were interesting for such species as the Loggerhead Kingbird, Bahama Swallow, Yellow-throated, Olivecapped and Pine Warblers — and the lone West Indian Red-bellied Woodpecker I saw. The exotic ornamental plantings around the small residential area at New Plymouth were sufficiently extensive and concentrated that they attracted species that I saw less frequently or not at all in other areas: 16 of

the 18 species of warblers observed during my stay showed up around New Plymouth (the Olive-capped and Pine Warblers showed up only in the pine-palmetto barrens on Great Abaco) — and the Clay-colored Sparrow was at New Plymouth, too. Finally, I managed on two occasions to visit extensive flats exposed at low tide but found the yields generally disappointing: a few Great Blue Herons and Snowy Egrets, small numbers of the usually expected shorebirds and a scattering of Herring, Ring-billed and Laughing Gulls that waited around to pounce on the garbage and trash when emptied from New Plymouth's trash barge a mile off the cay.

In the sections that follow I will comment on the birds I saw and on those I had hoped to see but failed to find.

Unusual Observations

The 1961 edition of Bond's *Birds of the West Indies* was my *vade mecum* (but I was glad I had copies of Peterson and Robbins, too, for checking out some of the winter warbler plumages).

The general character of the geographic and seasonal distribution in Bond makes it difficult to assess the comparative "unusualness" of some species at particular places and times. Below I have grouped species in three senses of "unusualness":

- (1) Birds treated by Bond as unusual in the Bahamas at this season;
- (2) Birds likely to be new or unusual for U.S. birders; and
- (3) A.O.U. areas species that I observed only once during my stay.

(1) *Birds treated by Bond as unusual in the Bahamas at this season*

Solitary Vireo. Bond writes "A rare winter resident in Cuba and Jamaica and apparently transient in Bahamas (e.g., Eleuthera) (Nov. 29-April 19)." I had a good and leisurely look at a bird apparently of the eastern race (blue head, spectacles, olive sides, white throat and wing-bars) while it fed in an ornamental tree adjoining a private home near the Green Turtle Cay Club on December 25, 1974.

Wilson's Warbler. Bond treats this as a vagrant in the West Indies: "Western Cuba (Sept. 24 and Nov. 12)." I had a good look at a cleanly marked male bird — black cap, yellow forehead and clear cheeks, no wing-bars — feeding with Parulas, a Yellow-throated Warbler and Redstarts in ornamental shrubbery and trees at New Plymouth, Green Turtle Cay, on the Count Day, December 28, 1974.

Clay-colored Sparrow. Bond lists as a vagrant in the West Indies: "Recorded from Cuba (Nov. 7, 1959) and New Providence (Dec. 11, 1959)." (New Providence, also in the Bahamas, is perhaps a hundred miles south and slightly west of Green Turtle Cay.) My Clay-colored flew into a nearby tree while I still had the Wilson's Warbler in view at New Plymouth. The tree bordered an extensive Bermuda grass lawn and the bird sat in open view possibly 35 feet away. The Clay-colored is a familiar

bird to anyone who has birded in central and northern Wisconsin and this was a neatly marked adult: face patch, moustache mark, clear median stripe and when it flushed as I walked around behind it, a rump which was the same brownish buff as the base color of the striped back (i.e., rump not gray). The place was New Plymouth, Green Turtle Cay, on December 28, 1974.

(2) *Birds likely to be new or unusual for U.S. birders*

Cuban Emerald. Three to 10 or more seen daily. Seems to prefer more open, brushy areas than does the Bahama Woodstar. Both the Emerald and the Woodstar responded to my squeaking and often came in promptly to perch nearby.

Bahama Woodstar. See daily but usually in lesser numbers and associated with shady areas of larger and more mature stands of vegetation. The contrasting white breast and buff belly are readily seen and easily separate this smaller hummer from the Emerald.

West Indian Red-bellied Woodpecker. A single, silent male was seen hammering indolently at a tall pine in the pine-palmetto barrens a quarter of a mile south of the SE corner of the Treasure Cay Airstrip on Great Abaco, December 28, 1974. Yellow-throated, Olive-capped and Pine Warblers were nearby in the pines and Ovenbirds were in the brushy understory of the same area.

Loggerhead Kingbird. Usually heard before seen (though I don't agree with Bond that its harsher calls suggest the Eastern Kingbird). Seen in the Count area only on Great Abaco south of the Treasure Cay Airstrip. Most were in or near the pine barrens but a few scattered individuals were near the edges of stands of larger, nonconiferous trees. The big head and stout bill stand out at a distance and the dark cap contrasts sharply with the white face and throat and the brownish back. The white terminal band on the tail was not easy to see but on some individuals we picked it up either with a 30x Balscope or, once, with binoculars. At a distance the birds looked dark on the back, white underneath (but we saw not well one large-headed kingbird of dubious identity which had a pale yellowish wash below the white chin and throat).

Stolid Flycatcher. A smaller Crested Flycatcher, much subdued in color and voice compared with its strident U.S. cousin (and much less wary of humans than the crested). Its rising Whoo-eee' note was frequently heard from the tangled mangrove and other nonconiferous stands. Also in ornamental trees around residential areas.

Greater Antillean Pewee. Seen daily and had a variety of notes that more often sounded like some of the Empidonax flycatchers of the Western U.S. than anything heard from an Eastern Wood Pewee. Too, it is a warmer-colored bird than the U.S. Wood Pewees — olive brown

rather than gray-backed and in some individuals the underparts had a marked yellowish wash. Seen in about the same kinds of habitats as the Stolid Flycatcher. Incidentally, these three flycatchers sort out easily by size: The Loggerhead is a good bit bulkier than the Eastern Kingbird; the Stolid Flycatcher is smaller and more slender than the Crested; and the Pewee is an olive to yellowish (not gray) Wood Pewee. The Pewee's tail does quiver as Bond notes but you have to look sharply to see this since it occurs only momentarily after landing or when the bird shifts position on a perch (don't expect a good, solid Phoebe kind of tail jerk).

Bahama Swallow. Seen only over pine-palmetto barrens on Great Abaco. Keep an eye on the sky in that terrain for this dark above, white below swallow with its fine and usually conspicuous deeply notched tail.

Thick-billed Vireo. Conspicuous, numerous and widespread, with a variety of call notes and some songs that sound an awful lot like the White-eyed Vireo. But this fellow had big dark eyes, yellow (not white) chin and throat and a noticeably more stout bill. Otherwise it shares with the White-eyed a set of spectacles and conspicuous wing-bars. Responded readily to my squeaking and came fearlessly within a yard or two to look me over.

Olive-capped Warbler. Pine barrens bird. The cap looked more like that of a male Chestnut-sided than olive-green as Bond described it. Otherwise a bright yellow throat and chest, clear gray back and white wing-bars — altogether brighter and more handsome than the dingy pen and ink drawing in Bond suggests. Each time I saw the Olive-capped there were Yellow-throated Warblers nearby and if your bird in the pine with a yellow throat has white on the sides of the head and neck, it is a Yellow-throated Warbler. When the white isn't there, mind the Pine Warbler before you call it an Olive-capped.

Bahama Yellowthroat. The frequently heard alarm or call notes resemble those of the Common Yellowthroat but are lower and less harsh. Both the male and female of this Bahamian bird are more intensely colored and darker than the Yellowthroats of the eastern U.S.; indeed some of the female (or young) Bahamian birds have quite dark, olive-colored flanks that differ markedly from the generally whitish bellies and light-colored flanks of the U.S. species. The larger size (and larger bill) of the Bahamian bird were helpful corroborating points, as were voice differences. In male birds, the mask is separated from the olive-brownish cap by white in the U.S. Yellowthroat and by yellow in the local bird — but I found the point a bit tricky. In short, the darker color, larger size and less harsh voice were more helpful in identifying the considerably more common Bahamian bird. (But Common Yellowthroats were seen and heard daily.)

Bananaquit. Conspicuous and just about everywhere. The bird on Abaco, though, has a white throat and chest, not gray, as shown for the Jamaica race in the Eckelberry color plate in the 1961 edition of Bond. Bananaquits usually responded to my squeaking and their agitation over my presence often attracted other species that came up to see what the commotion was all about. An appealing and helpful little bird.

Stripe-headed Tanager. Widespread and at this season somewhat gregarious, at least when attracted by berries or some other favored food. Often responded to my squeaking and were not wary. The first female (or young) bird I saw gave me a bad time. It was a dull, uniform greenish gray with a grayish white wing-patch similar to that of the Black-throated Blue Warbler; a pale stripe over the eye and a somewhat more pronounced gray malar stripe were the only other obvious marks. The female of the Jamaica race shown in the Eckelberry plate is no help with the Abaco birds because the plate depicts a bird that is a warm yellow below a gray chin and throat, shows no wing-patch and does show light feather edgings that were not conspicuously present on the Abaco birds at this season. To sum up, the Abaco females were uniformly greenish gray, with a noticeable wing-patch and somewhat less conspicuous gray malar and superciliary stripes — and in shape resembled a slimmer Summer Tanager (though a bit smaller).

Greater Antillean Bullfinch. Seen only once, a male bird which emerged at the edge of a ten-foot high thicket that had both palmettoes and non-coniferous trees and shrubs. The area was damp and I heard a Sora in the same general place. A dark bird, with conspicuous warm red-brown eye-stripe and chin and a more subdued repetition of the red-brown on the under tail coverts. Shaped rather like a Red Crossbill and about the size of an Eastern Bluebird. The place was Great Abaco along the road to Treasure Cay about two and a half miles south of the airstrip and on December 26, 1974.

Black-faced Grassquit. Conspicuous and widespread. A diminutive, stubby and nearly tailless greenish-gray bird, with a slight eye-ring and looking immaculate is likely a female or young of this species if nearby is a male that has a black or blackish hood and bib which extend to the middle of the belly. Responds to my squeaking and is tame. A trim and appealing little bird.

(3) *A.O.U. area species observed only once during my stay*

Pigeon Hawk. Adult bird, just south of the Treasure Cay Airstrip on Great Abaco, December 28. Best look I have had at a Pigeon Hawk in more than forty years of birding: wound up a spectacular flight by perching in a good light a hundred yards off where we watched it for some time with a 30x scope.

Clapper Rail. One came out to the edge of what I had assumed was a freshwater hole on higher ground but close by a brackish marsh. December 28, 1974.

White-Crowned Pigeon. A single bird emerged noisily from a mangrove tangle and sped away along the woodland edge below tree-top level. Great Abaco, a mile and a half south of the Treasure Cay Airstrip on Dec. 26, 1974.

What I Did Not See

Long ago I learned that one enters new birding territory with hopes set higher than expectations.

The virtual absence in the Count area at this season of seabirds in particular and of waterbirds in general was something of a surprise and certainly a disappointment. While there I spent enough time on the water to be reasonably confident that seabirds and waterbirds were hard to come by in the region adjoining the Atlantic side of Abaco between Green Turtle Cay and the Hoptown-Marsh Harbor area some twenty-odd miles to the southeast. From the air as we flew between Treasure Cay Airstrip and Marsh Harbor a number of ponds and lagoons were visible on Great Abaco and perhaps had I visited these I could have made a better showing among herons, ducks, coots and rails. Some of these wet areas were connected by wheel tracks to the road that connected the Treasure Cay Airstrip and Marsh Harbor and thus appeared comparatively accessible.

Help Save

HABITAT FOR WILDLIFE

Mary and Charlie Nelson

Both the Mourning and Zenaida Doves were missed. So was the Mangrove Cuckoo (though I am half certain I glimpsed one on Green Turtle Cay the morning of our departure). Other disappointments included the Red-legged Thrush (twice I may have seen it: once near the Green Turtle Cay Club and again on Man of War Cay) and the Black-cowled Oriole (never once suspected its presence). Thoughts of the Kirtland's Warbler crossed my mind in the pine barrens, recalling the general statement that it winters "in the Bahamas." Whether that description includes Abaco I do not know. Certainly the jack pine country of Oscoda County, Michigan, is not a spitting image of the pine-palmetto barrens on Great Abaco and though I listened and looked while there I never thought I had a Kirtland's.

Summing Up

To a considerable extent, the numbers — and to a lesser extent, the kinds — of land bird species reported here result from the fact that these birds were attracted into my vision in response to squeaking. The list thus importantly reflects that bias, specially since I never fully mastered all the chips and muted notes that I heard. The Thick-billed Vireo and the Yellow-throated Warbler uttered the only songs I heard during my stay and I'd like to re-visit the area when more birds were in song.

My chief tactical regret is that I made no effort to rent a car for a day or so on Abaco and would have preferred a Jeep or Land Rover. No one we asked knew how this could have been accomplished (though there were taxis at both the Treasure Cay and Marsh Harbor Airstrips). If, when we flew in (rather than when we flew out), I had noticed the wheel tracks that connected some of the lagoons and ponds with the main road up and down Abaco, I might have made a real effort to get a car after first padding on foot for a day or so to become familiar with the more obvious species.

All told, I had a first-rate time and saw some first-rate birds.

NEW RELEASE

WSO meets for its Annual Convention at Carroll College in Waukesha, WI. May 21, 22, and 23 1976. Varied program of field trips, workshops, illustrated talks and lectures. Banquet speaker will be Robert Nero of Canada speaking on The Great Gray Owl.

A WINTER WREN STORY

by DR. MARGERY C. CARLSON & KATE STALEY

When we arrived at our summer cottage near Sayner, Wisconsin, on July 15, we noticed a Winter Wren flying under and out from under the house. I thought the bird must be getting insects, since the house is open underneath on all sides but one. The closed end is a partial basement which opens to the outside by a door and has four high windows. Of course, it had been closed for the winter.

As we passed a window, we saw young birds flying in it, trying to get out. As I went in the door, a parent bird flew past my head and out. Six young ones were flying about. They were well feathered, but had very short tails and still had the baby beaks. We do not know how long they had been out of the nest, but the parent was still feeding them.

The nest? Where was it? I noticed, hanging from a nail in a rafter, an old birch-bark nesting-box, which I had placed there some time ago. Some small branches were sticking out of the opening. I felt the soft lining of the nest inside the opening.

How had the bird gotten into the basement? I looked around and found a small hole in an upper corner, through which electric wires passed. There was just room enough for the bird to enter and leave the basement to the open part under the house. Apparently, the young ones had not been able to find the hole.

We decided to catch one baby and take it outside to see if it could fly into a tree. It did. So we let them all out into the woods surrounding the cottage. We tried to follow them but that was impossible because the woods is so dense. We hoped the parent or parents would care for them and that they would survive.

About two weeks later, I decided to clean out the nesting-box, leave it in the same place, to see if the birds would return the next year. As I took it down from the nail, a bird flew out the opening, past my face, and out the open door. I put the birdhouse back and felt inside. There were eggs. I tried to count them and think there were four or five. The bird returned to the nest, entering through the same hole which she had been using. From then on, I watched her, always standing perfectly still. The eggs were fertile and hatched. The feeding went on. Even though I left the door open, the bird continued to use the hole.

One young bird seemed stronger than the others and eventually sat in the opening with two-thirds of its body out. The parent couldn't, or wouldn't, get past it, to feed the others. So I took it out, put it in a cage, and fed it for a while, so that the others wouldn't starve. I put the greedy one back in a few days, but by then it had to take its chances with the others. As it happened, one bird did die in the nest.

The birds were not out of the nest when we had to leave for home, so I left the basement door open, with instructions for a friend to watch, report when they had left the nest, and then lock the door.

We wonder if there will be a sequel to the story next summer.

2308 Hartzell St.
Evanston, ILL 60201



REPORT OF RESEARCH COMMITTEE AT 1975 ANNUAL WSO MEETING

Two of the Research Committee projects were published in the *Passenger Pigeon* during the past year, vol. 36 no. 2, 1974: "Two breeding bird censuses on the Quarry Scientific Area, Wisconsin" by Charles Munn (pp. 62-68) and "A comparison of two breeding bird censuses on the Prairie Chicken Preserve Scientific Area" by Williams McKee (pp. 69-73).

The Upland Sandpiper survey and the Heron-Egret survey have both been given considerable input by field men of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Data are now being brought together on maps, and both surveys may well be completed this year.

The major undertaking has been the program of computerizing WSO field records. Under the direction of Ruth Hine and R.K. Anderson (the new File Keeper), Mark Davis has programmed, punched, and printed out the records for the four seasons of the year 1971 as a trial run. Along with this, a new reporting form has been developed and is now in use, so that future records can be punched directly. We plan next to concentrate on summer records, as the best index to breeding populations, and will carry the summer records back as far as present funds permit — probably through 1972, 1973 and 1974. We hope that it will be possible to continue the program, both into past records and into the future as new records come in.

In this connection, the student group of which Mark Davis is a member has been awarded a grant from the National Science Foundation to search out information on those species in Wisconsin whose status is at present unknown. As part of that study, they will computerize WSO summer records of the past for an estimated 10 years.

Frederick and Frances Hamerstrom
Chmn. Research Committee

Amazing Number of Bird Species Recorded in 24 Years During Christmas Bird Count Period

by KARL E. BARTEL

Since the winter of 1952 I have been recording all the different species of birds seen during Christmas Bird Count Period. Also birds were counted within the period but not on any count day. From the winter of 1952 through the winter of 1975 the total of species and sub-species seen was amazingly high. One hundred and eight-five.

These reports were taken from census that were covered throughout the Chicago area. This count also included two out-of-state reports. The northwest corner of Indiana and one count at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.

I have found that many new species are reported each year. This could be due to better coverage by more participants engaging in the sport of taking part in Christmas census.

Some birds that have been seen only once in 24 years in the table 1, are marked by 1 asterisk (*), those seen twice by (**), and those seen only three times by three (***).

Since my tabulation had been done BEFORE AOU changed the names of some of the birds, also changed some of the birds to races, or sub-species — I will take the liberty to use the old system.

Table 2 lists the total species observed for each census period. Space would not permit the listing of all the species and years under one chart.

TABLE I

TOTAL YEARS SPECIES OB- SERVED	TOTAL YEARS SPECIES OB- SERVED	BIRD	TOTAL YEARS SPECIES OB- SERVED	TOTAL YEARS SPECIES OB- SERVED	BIRD
1952 to 1963	1964 to 1975		1952 to 1963	1964 to 1975	
5	3	Common Loon	3	2	Mute Swan
1	0	Red-throated Loon*	2	5	Whistling Swan
1	0	Red-necked Grebe*	11	12	Canada Goose
10	7	Horned Grebe	3	12	Snow Goose
3	0	Eared Grebe***	6	7	Blue Goose
2	0	Western Grebe**	12	12	Common Mallard
10	11	Pied-billed Grebe	0	2	Mallard X
3	2	Double-crested Cormorant			Black Duck Hybrid**
8	6	Great Blue Heron	12	12	Common Black Duck
0	1	Green Heron*	4	12	Gadwall
3	6	Black-crowned Night Heron	1	0	European Widgeon*
0	2	Am. Bittern**	8	12	American Widgeon

TABLE I (Cont.)

TOTAL YEARS SPECIES OB- SERVED	TOTAL YEARS SPECIES OB- SERVED	BIRD	TOTAL YEARS SPECIES OB- SERVED	TOTAL YEARS SPECIES OB- SERVED	BIRD
1952 to 1963	1964 to 1975		1952 to 1963	1964 to 1975	
8	12	Pintail	0	1	Black-bellied Plover*
5	11	Green-wing Teal	0	2	Woodcock**
1	3	Blue-wing Teal	8	11	Wilson Snipe
0	1	Cinnamon Teal*	1	0	Purple Sandpiper*
0	7	Shoveler	1	0	Pectoral Sandpiper*
4	11	Wood Duck	1	0	Sanderling*
11	7	Redhead	1	0	Red Phalarope*
9	12	Ring-necked Duck	6	7	Glaucous Gull
12	12	Canvas-back	5	0	Iceland Gull
11	12	Greater Scaup	3	2	Great Black-backed Gull
12	12	Lesser Scaup	12	12	Herring Gull
0	1	Tufted Duck*	12	12	Ring-billed Gull
12	12	Am. Golden-eye	7	8	Bonaparte's Gull
1	1	Barrow's Golden-eye**	5	3	Little Gull
11	12	Bufflehead	2	2	Black-legged Kittiwake
12	12	Old-squaw	12	12	Rock Dove
1	5	E. Harlequin Duck	12	12	Mourning Dove
1	0	King Eider*	0	2	Monk Parakeet**
9	10	White-winged Scoter	8	4	Barn Owl
6	1	Surf Scoter	12	12	Screech Owl
1	2	Am. Scoter***	12	12	Great Horned Owl
10	12	Ruddy Duck	6	7	Snowy Owl
10	11	Hooded Merganser	5	8	Barred Owl
12	12	Am. Merganser	12	12	Long-eared Owl
12	12	Red-breasted Merganser	8	11	Short-eared Owl
3	8	Eastern Goshawk	11	7	Saw-whet Owl
9	10	Sharp-shinned Hawk	12	12	Belted Kingfisher
11	12	Cooper's Hawk	12	12	Yellow-shafted Flicker
12	12	Red-tailed Hawk	12	12	Red-bellied Woodpecker
0	4	Krider's Hawk	12	12	Red-headed Woodpecker
1	0	Harlan's Hawk	8	10	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
12	12	Red-shouldered Hawk	12	12	Hairy Woodpecker
0	3	Broad-winged Hawk***	12	12	Downy Woodpecker
12	12	Am. Rough-legged Hawk	0	1	Bl.-backed
2	0	Golden Eagle**			Three-toed Woodpecker*
9	3	Bald Eagle	1	1	Eastern Phoebe**
12	12	Marsh Hawk	8	0	Northern Horned Lark
1	1	Peregrine Falcon**	11	12	Prairie Horned Lark
2	1	Merlin***	12	12	Blue Jay
12	12	Kestrel	1	1	Am. Magpie**
7	0	Prairie Chicken	12	12	Crow
1	8	European Partridge	12	12	Black-capped Chickadee
10	11	Bob-white	1	1	Brown-capped Chickadee**
12	12	Ring-necked Pheasant	12	12	Tufted Titmouse
0	3	Virginia Rail***	12	12	White-breasted Nuthatch
1	0	Sora Rail*	12	12	Red-breasted Nuthatch
0	1	Common Gallinule*	12	12	Brown Creeper
12	12	Am. Coot	0	1	House Wren*
10	12	Killdeer	10	12	Winter Wren

TOTAL YEARS SPECIES OB- SERVED	TOTAL YEARS SPECIES OB- SERVED	BIRD	TOTAL YEARS SPECIES OB- SERVED	TOTAL YEARS SPECIES OB- SERVED	BIRD
1952 to 1963	1964 to 1975		1952 to 1963	1964 to 1975	
12	12	Carolina Wren	12	12	Cardinal
1	1	Long-billed Marsh Wren**	0	2	Rose-breasted Grosbeak**
6	6	Mockingbird	0	1	Lazuli Bunting*
2	6	Catbird	10	11	Evening Grosbeak
10	12	Brown Thrasher	12	12	E. Purple Finch
0	1	Sage Thrasher*	0	2	House Finch**
12	12	Robin	3	4	Pine Grosbeak
1	2	Varied Thrush***	10	11	Common Redpoll
7	10	Hermit Thrush	12	11	N. Pine Siskin
0	1	Gray-cheeked Thrush*	12	12	E. Goldfinch
5	3	Bluebird	9	8	Red Crossbill
3	3	Townsend's Solitaire	5	7	White-winged Crossbill
12	12	Golden-crowned Kinglet	11	11	Rufus-sided Towhee
2	10	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	0	2	Arctic Towhee**
3	3	Bohemian Waxwing	0	4	Savannah Sparrow
12	12	Cedar Waxwing	1	6	Vesper Sparrow
12	12	Northern Shrike	12	12	Slate-colored Junco
4	4	Loggerhead Shrike	11	11	Oregon Junco
12	12	Starling	1	0	Pink-sided Junco*
0	1	Orange-crowned Warbler*	12	12	Tree Sparrow
5	9	Myrtle Warbler	1	6	Chipping Sparrow
1	1	Pine Warbler**	10	12	Field Sparrow
1	1	Palm Warbler**	2	2	Harris's Sparrow
0	1	Common Yellow-throat*	9	12	White-crowned Sparrow
12	12	House Sparrow	12	12	White-throated Sparrow
12	12	E. Meadowlark	7	12	E. Fox Sparrow
0	2	Yellowheaded Blackbird**	0	4	Lincoln's Sparrow
12	12	Red-wing Blackbird	11	12	Swamp Sparrow
0	3	Baltimore Oriole***	12	12	Song Sparrow
11	11	Rusty Blackbird	1	0	McCown's Longspur*
5	7	Brewer's Blackbird	10	10	Lapland Longspur
11	12	Common Grackle	12	12	Snow Bunting
11	12	Brown-headed Cowbird			

**TABLE 2
TOTAL SPECIES FOR THE 24 YEARS**

YEAR	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963
TOTAL	85	120	106	102	111	106	95	96	101	89	87	105
YEAR	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975
TOTAL	99	111	109	104	104	121	112	118	103	121	118	121

2528 W. Collins St.
Blue Island, Ill. 60406

BOOK REVIEWS

The Life of Birds by Joel Carl Welty; W. B. Saunders Co., Philadelphia, Pa. \$18.50.

This is the second edition of an already excellent textbook by Dr. Welty. I recall having the pleasure of attending an Inland Bird Banding Association banquet in Beloit one year when Dr. Welty delivered a talk on *The Geography of Birds*. It was unusual in that there were no slides, no movies, just a straightforward lecture. Without any audio visual accessories this lecture held an over-fed post banquet audience in complete concentration and rapt attention for at least an hour. This lecture was based on chapter 20 of this book.

The other 23 chapters are equally interesting. In fact I know off hand of no other text in any field that is so readable, or palatable.

Technical terms have been kept to a minimum. The author has avoided ecstatic hyperbole as well as tedious pedantry and stuffy treatise. Yet he does not sacrifice authority. It is a splendid book and I recommend it as well worth the money to put it in your library. Below follows a more comprehensive review by Ruth Hine.

It is difficult to become lost in the world of birds indoors on a dark winter day . . . but one way to quickly become engrossed is by dipping into Dr. Welty's book that focuses on Aristophanes' question: "What sort of life is it among the birds?"

Dr. Welty's answer is a fascinating mix of the scientific and popular, resulting in 623 pages of factual information presented in a lively literary style — "In no other vertebrates do the fires of metabolism burn more furiously than in a tiny hummingbird." And a style that includes frequent references to ancient literature: "Pliny says that the Greek poet Aeschylus met his death because an eagle, carrying a tortoise, mistook his bald head for a smooth rock."

The book has been called by one professional ornithologist "the best and broadest coverage of bird biology". This second edition updates the already acclaimed first edition. After a short but thorough resume of the bird families of the world, Dr. Welty deals with various aspects of biology, habits, ecology, geography, evolution and relationships with man in a series of definitive chapters. He shows a monumental grasp of his subject as he expertly weaves into his own background of knowledge concepts and examples from around the world, gleaned from study of 14,000 literature references.

"The Life of Birds" is directed toward the general student of birds, not necessarily the specialist. To this end, the photographs and excellent sketches and easily comprehensible tables and figures are particularly appropriate. One can gain quite an education just browsing through the

illustrations and explanatory captions. Suggested readings at the end of each chapter, as well as the extensive bibliography, add to its usefulness.

It is a delightful book to read and a valuable reference source. Anyone interested in birds will be stimulated by it. — Ruth L. Hine (Reprinted from Wisconsin Academy Review, Winter 1976)

A Tip For Nest Observers and Bird Banders

by **DR. FRANCES HAMERSTROM**

“Nests in Trees”

Start up the tree with a ladder (it leaves no scent up the trunk), or throw a rope over a branch and climb the rope, keeping clear of the trunk.

Another solution is to place naphthalene crystals (“moth balls”) at the base of the tree. An animal inhaling a nose-full of the fumes usually retreats to re-evaluate the consequences of raiding a nest protected by such noxious odors. The idea of using the crystals is especially ingenious as naphthalene fumes are heavy and several handfulls of crystals, spread about the base of the tree, will settle in the ground cover and stay there for a long time — certainly until the human scent has disappeared. Scattering crystals on the ground comprises the first barrier. A second barrier, for example a burlap collar containing naphthalene crystals, should be installed about six or seven feet below the nest.

(Reprinted from Cornell Laboratory
of Ornithology)

Newsletter, No. 16. Fall 1974

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GROOVE-BILLED ANI AT GREEN BAY

THOMAS ERDMAN and ROBERT S. COOK, UWGB
Green Bay, Wisconsin

Wisconsin has recorded another visit of the Groove-billed Ani, (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*). On October 8, 1975 Ms. Amy Kienitz, a UW-Green Bay student found a freshly killed Ani on East Shore Drive near the university. The identification was confirmed by Dr. Robt. Cook and the specimen was added to the Richter Ornithological Collection at UWGB. The bird, an adult female was in good condition when found, however, fat deposits were very small. Three grams of partially digested grasshoppers, (*Orthoptera*) were present in the stomach. The Ani was apparently a car kill, judging from the subcutaneous bruises found on the left anterior part of the body and head.

This is the first record for Brown County and the fifth state record. Interestingly, all of the state records have occurred in the fall, usually October.

Oct. 12, 1913	Pierce County	W. Gantenbein ¹
Oct. 27, 1949	Dane County	E. Reindahl (Sight record) ¹
Fall, 1968	Milwaukee County	Milwaukee Public Museum ²
Oct. 31, 1969	Columbia County	J. Slepicka ³
Oct. 8, 1975	Brown County	A. Kienitz

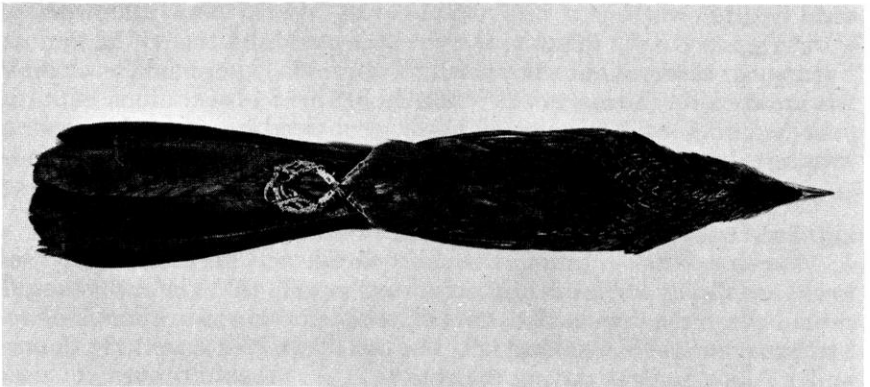
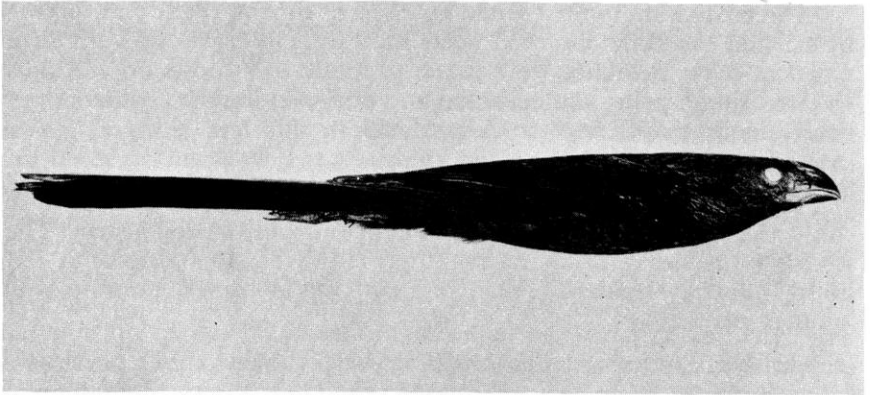
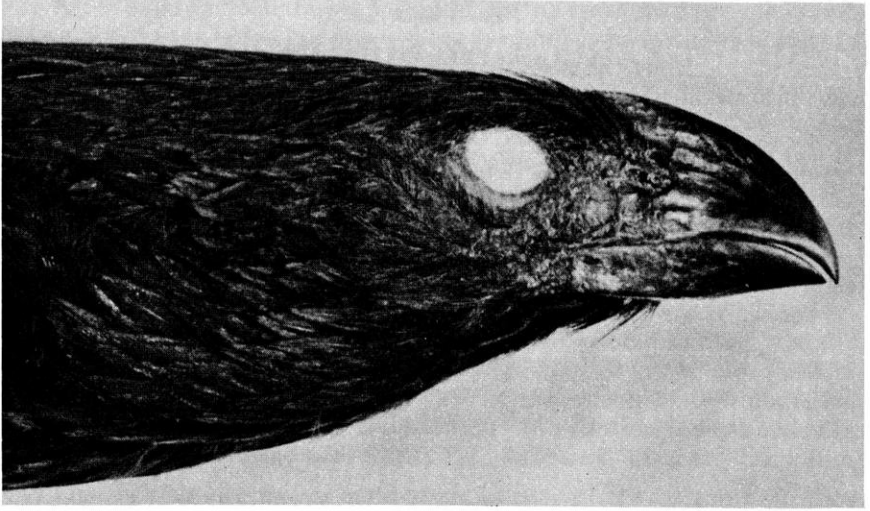
The Ani reported by Mrs. Slepicka in 1969 had also been observed to be feeding on grasshoppers.

The breeding range of the Groove-billed Ani extends from Central America to Texas. Recent reports indicate some northward breeding range extensions and excellent reproduction. Northward movements after the breeding season have produced records in Ohio, Michigan, and Minnesota since 1965^{4 5 6}. If the trend continues Wisconsin should expect more records of this straggler from the South.

The editors wish to give special thanks to Sam Robbins for making available past state records.

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NOTES ON SHORT-EARED OWL HUNTING ACTIVITIES

by RICHARD P. THIEL

Two hunting short-eared owls (*Asio flammeus*) were observed at the Ottawa Lake State Recreation Area, Kettle Moraine State Forest — South Unit located in southwestern Waukesha County, Wisconsin, T6N; R17E; Section 34, between 30 July, 1973 and 15 August, 1973. Day roosts of at least one short-eared owl were located on the west side of Ottawa Lake in a shrub-carr community (Curtis, 1959). The dominant plants were joe pyeweed (*Eupatorium sp.*); fringed gentian (*Gentiana crinita*); grass of parnassus (*Parnassia glauca*); aspen (*Populus tremuloides*); willow (*Salix spp.*); and shrubby cinquefoil (*Potentilla fruticosa*). A 17.8 acre fallow field hunted intensively by these owls contained common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*); golden rod (*Solidago nemoralis*); whorled milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*); timothy grass (*Phleum sp.*) and foxtail (*Setaria sp.*).

METHODS

The birds were located while perched or during flight and followed by car and carefully observed while hunting. Observations were terminated at dark. Searches were made to locate day roosts on 7 August, 1973. A single pellet was collected and analyzed and the contents were determined by skull and hair identification.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A pair of short-eared owls was known to have been present in the study area during the study period and presumably nested nearby. They were never observed hunting together. However, on 4 August at 1945 hours Central Standard Time, one owl was observed hunting while another perched.

At the onset of activity (initial activity), the owl either perched or began hunting. An owl was observed to perch after coming off the roost on eight evenings between 1830 and 1945 hours. Two perch trees were used by the owls; one a cherry (*Prunus sp.*) (perch No. 1), and one an aspen (perch No. 2). Perch No. 1 was occupied for a total of 52 minutes during two observations when the bird was initially perched. Perch No. 2 was utilized for a total of 29 minutes in three observations of initial activity, and for 21 minutes of subsequent perching after the onset of hunting. An owl was observed at perch No. 2 at dark on four occasions.

After several short flights about the roost area the owl began hunting. In a total of twelve observations, hunting began at the earliest at 1850 hours. When hunting, the short-eared owl characteristically flew low, periodically hovered, and occasionally pounced. The owl generally remained on the ground less than 15 seconds if it was unsuccessful and up to one minute if it made a kill. The owl made 13.5 hovers, 3 pounces, and 1.7 kills per day during the study.

After making a kill the owl returned to the roost with the catch in its talons. On twelve occasions the owl made several short flights about the roost, disappeared briefly in the dense vegetation where its catch was probably transferred to concealed, begging young or its mate, and then perched. This behavior is typical of short-eared owls feeding young (Clark, 1975), and led us to suspect the pair was feeding fledglings. In two instances after a successful hunt, the owl flew to perch No. 2 in the roost and ate its catch.

FOOD

The owls successfully killed 14 voles (*Microtus spp.*) during the study. A single pellet contained the remains of two meadow voles (*M. pennsylvanicus*) and the remains of three meadow voles were found at a day roost site. The unidentified humerus of a bird, 8 cm in length, was also found among some short-eared owl feathers at the roost site.

The owls used a fallow field approximately 70% of the time they were observed hunting. All of the observations of successful hunting were made in this field. A population of 1188 voles was estimated from a two day snap-trapping census (DuLurey Method) on the 17.8 acre site. This is roughly a density of 66 voles per acre.

On six evenings between 3 August and 14 August the number of hovers, pounces, and kills were recorded. Table 1 shows these results. Our observations show that a hunting owl hovered when potential prey had been located or noticed. If prey remained vulnerable the owl pounced. The outcome of pounces could be discerned since the owl returned directly to the roost upon successfully killing a vole. The ratio, hovers/kill (H/K), records the predator exertion upon the prey. Vulnerability of the prey, as defined by Craighead and Craighead (1969), is that portion of the population above the 'threshold of security'. (see Errington, 1963). At the beginning of the study period the vole population was undoubtedly vulnerable. On 3 August, two voles were caught from a nine meter² area in two pounces. However, on 14 August, 19 pounces were noted before the owl captured a vole. Thus the H/K ratio also serves as an indicator of prey vulnerability for short-eared owl predation. When vulnerability is high considerably less effort is needed in hunting them. But as the owls remove the voles, vulnerability decreases, effectively increasing predator exertion (Table 1). Thus there tends to be an inverse relationship between prey vulnerability and predator exertion.

After 14 August, the short-eared owls were not observed hunting the fields near Ottawa Lake despite attempts to watch them until 20 August. By August 15, short-eared owl owlets should be capable of being entirely independent (Bent, 1961), but the owls' disappearance from this area also indicates that the vulnerable excess of the vole population had probably been removed.

DATE	HOVERS	POUNCES	KILLS	HOVERS/KILL	POUNCES/KILL
(August)					
03	6	3	3	2	1
06	10	5	2	5	2.5
07	-	-	2	-	-
09	13	2	2	6.5	1
10	25	6	0	-	-
11	8	2	1	8	2
14	19	2	1	19	2
TOTAL	81	18	11	-	-
MEAN (X)	13.5	3	1.8	8.1	1.7

TABLE 1. Observations of Hovers, Pounces, and Kills made by Short-eared Owls between 3 August and 14 August, 1973.

January 22, 1976

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to Jean Thomas and Robert Welch for their suggestions and criticisms. J. Thiel, D. Bronk, R. Van Osch assisted in observations and R. Kurowski provided data on the vegetation surrounding the roost area.

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Letters to the Editor

Dr. Kemper,

Just had to let you know that Monday my wife and I had the fortunate luck to see a Louisiana Heron in northern Wisconsin. We were spending the day at my parent's cabin on Siskurt Lake near Cornucopia, Wis. It was about 1:30 in the afternoon when we drove into a public access boat landing on the Bark River Slough and stopped the car. Almost immediately a heron landed about 40 feet from the car on the edge of the marsh. Before it hit the ground I had already assumed it was a Little Blue as I was reaching for the binoculars. The first thing I saw was a beautiful white plume very prominent on the bird's head, although neither Robbins field guide nor Peterson's mention this plume as being a diagnostic mark, the illustrations in both books show it clearly. As the heron moved about it was easy to see it had white underparts and a buffier feathering down the back. When my wife started reading the description of the Little Blue aloud out of Robbin's guide I glanced over and saw the picture of the Louisiana Heron standing next to the Little Blue and literally ripped the book out of her hands in my excitement. This heron matched exactly the illustration and description given in Robbin's of the Louisiana Heron. The bird let us observe it a good 5 or 6 minutes and then flew to the far north end of the slough.

Bark River Slough is located about 2 or 3 miles west of Cornucopia, Wis. just off highway 13 where it is formed just before it empties into Lake Superior.

We're hoping the fishing proves good enough so that the little heron will stay thru the summer. We spend a lot of time in the area and will try to get pictures if we can spot it again.

Sincerely,
Rob & Leigh Ann Pristash



Dear Dr. Kemper,

I became interested in studying wildlife 57 years ago when I was a student at the Manitowoc Normal School.

Have been feeding birds in the De Pere area for the past 30 years. I used to feed at 10 different places but the past five years I have cut down to five stations.

My No. 3 station is one of my favorites on account of the large number of pheasants in the area though the past few years they are getting fewer and fewer in numbers. Three years ago I had 50 pheasants in this area now it is down to less than 20.

I have the pheasants trained to come to a certain call when I put out feed and it is quite a sight to see them come on the run when they hear this sound or call. Of course everything else comes too, including House Sparrows, Mourning Doves, Brown Thrashers, Juncos, Song Sparrows, Red-wing Blackbirds, Grackles, Starlings, and even gophers and rabbits!

I feed the year around and the Summer time is especially very interesting as many species will bring their young to be fed.

I use this same call when I go to the Abbey Pond Wildlife area near De Pere and you should see the ducks and coots rush in to be fed!

De Pere, Wisconsin 54115

October 24, 1975
Arpin, Wis. 54410

Dear Dr. Kemper,

I am enclosing a Marshfield New Herald picture and a little note that you may want to put in the field notes of the *Pigeon*.

WHITE PELICANS STOP AT ARPIN

On October 20 my cohort Jim Scheunemann stopped me on the road and asked me if I wanted to see some Pelicans. I said yes and he instructed me that they were at the "Bud Albrecht" pond in Arpin. The pond belongs to Jacob Elmer of that town.

When I drove into the yard it was already very dark. Mrs. Albrecht was very suprised when I asked her if she had seen the Pelicans. Some time ago two white Muscovy ducks flew into the pond and they are still residents there. We took a large flashlight and walked toward the pond and instantly we recognized the birds as White Pelicans.

The birds stayed in the pond until 10:00 A.M. the next day and abruptly left.

This is only the third time I have seen White Pelicans in the area in about twenty five years.

Don Follens



Dear WSO Member,

More than fifty years ago *Inland Bird Banding Association* was organized, and in that same year began publishing the scientific findings of bird banders. The association has continued to grow, and now has a larger membership than any other similar association in America. With this in mind, I urge you to join *Inland Bird Banding Association*.

The bimonthly publication, INLAND BIRD BANDING NEWS, is sent to all members and subscribers. It has suggestions for banding techniques and articles telling of the results of banding projects. Numerous articles deal with observations of birds and their behavior. All are written in lay language.

As a special service to members and subscribers, numerous reprints and brochures are available. These deal with identification, age and sex determination of birds, attracting and feeding birds, and other subjects of interest to the naturalist. A two-day annual meeting consists of papers sessions and workshops, as well as social events.

I, personally, am confident that you will find membership in *Inland Bird Banding Association* worth your time and annual fee.

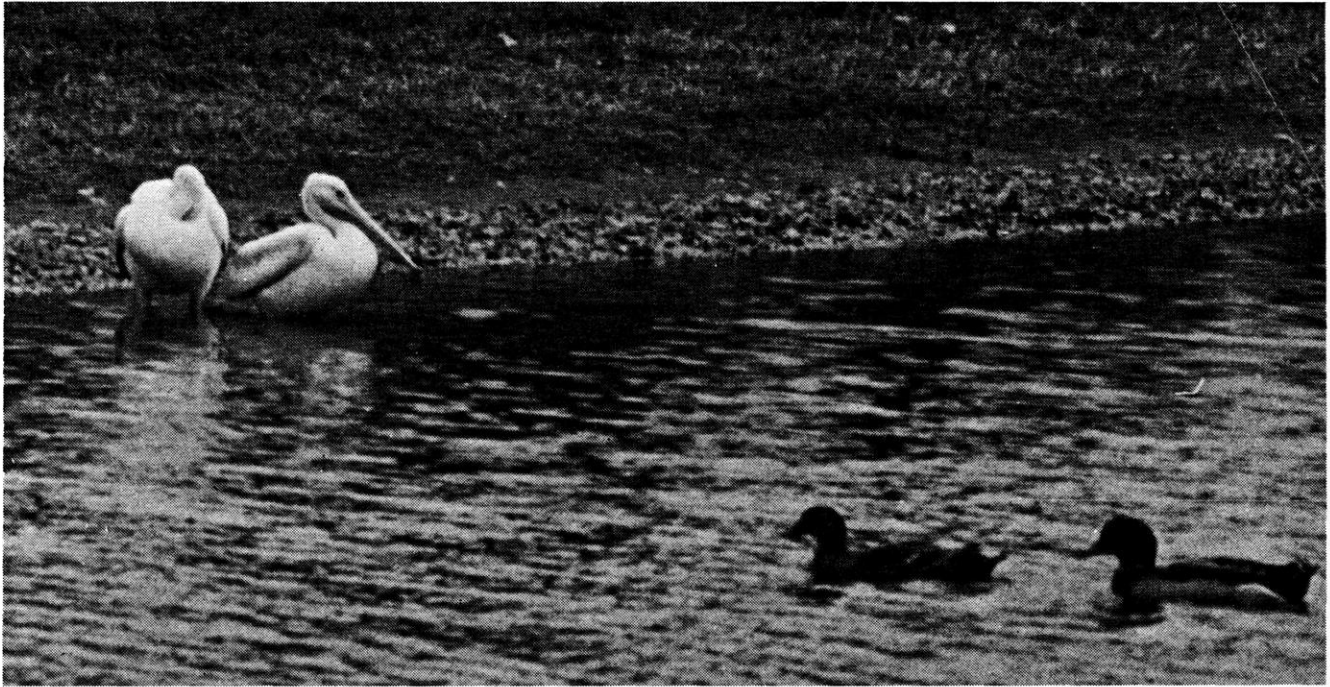
We will be pleased to hear about your bird studies and observations; and will be happy to assist you when possible.

Sincerely,
Mrs. John Lueshen
Membership Secretary
Inland Bird Banding Assoc.

REVISIONS TO EXCEPTIONAL ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE DATES

VOL. 32, NO. 3

1. **Pine Warbler**, page 127, under Winter Status change 1 record to 3 records. Under Winter Status column and under Exceptional Dates column insert Dec. 19, 1974, Sam Robbins, Feb. 1, 1975, Rockne Knuth.
2. **Chipping Sparrow**, page 135, under Exceptional Dates delete the line 1/2/6/00 (Von Burgh), insert Feb. 8, 1975 (D. Tessen)
3. **Black Scoter**, page 95, under Exceptional Dates insert Feb. 4, 1975, L. Erickson.
4. **Thayer's Gull**, page 107, below Exceptional Dates insert 2 hypothetical records, March 14, 1974 (Donald, Erickson) and March 15, 1975 (Faanes, Tessen, Donald, Erickson)
5. **Green Heron**, page 86, under Spring Arrival Column delete April 6, 1964, Robert Fiehweg, and insert March 31, 1975, Brad Ehlers.
6. **Water Pipit**, page 120, delete under Spring Arrival column, March 25, 1972, Ron Hoffman and insert March 20, 1975, L. Erickson.
7. **Sora**, page 98, under Spring Arrival column delete March 30, 1911 and insert March 29, 1975 (Ronald Hoffman). Under Exceptional Dates, page 99, insert December 18, 1974 to February 2, 1975, Cleary and Columban.



Pelicans in Arpin

Two white pelicans, in their flight southward, decided to take a stopover at the Herman Albrecht pond, Arpin, and visited with a group of Mallard ducks there. It is somewhat unusual to see these birds in this area, as they

nest in the Chase Lake region of North Dakota and Manitoba, Canada, and fly south along the Mississippi River. These pelicans have a wing span of approximately nine feet. (News-Herald Photo)

OBITUARY



ALFRED O. HOLZ

Alfred O. Holz, 66, 125 Kolb St., died Thursday afternoon in a local hospital. He was born June 25, 1909 in Seymour to the late Dr. Alfred and Minnie Holz and married the former Phyllis Widsteen, July 15, 1940 in Seymour.

Mr. Holz, a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, Madison, was director of Graphic Arts at Green Bay Packaging until his retirement last year. He was also known for his work in photography and as a naturalist. Mr. Holz was presently teaching at the UWGB.

He was on the board of directors of the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology, and was a member of the UWGB Visiting Committee and Founders Assn. Mr. Holz was also a member of the Advisory Board of the Green Bay Symphony, Theodore Roosevelt Lodge No. 322, F. & A.M., and the Union Congregational Church.

Survivors include his wife; one sister, Miss Dorothea Holz, Green Bay.

Friends may call at Lyndahl Funeral Home after 2 p.m. Sunday. Funeral 1:30 p.m. Monday at the funeral home with Dr. Charles Bagby officiating. Burial in Woodlawn Cemetery. A memorial fund has been established for the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology.

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