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BLUEBIRD

10th Anniversary THE PASSENGER PIGEON

VOLUME XI

JANUARY, 1949

NUMBER 1

NEWS . . .

The article on the American egret appearing in this issue is the result of the cooperation of many people. In addition to our efforts, the Conservation Department also contributed the results of their surveys. Thus, the article will appear also in the Conservation Bulletin.

Encouraged by the success of the egret article, we shall have as our 1949 project, the yellow-headed blackbird. Please be on the lookout for this species to see whether or not it is found in all counties and in what numbers. Approximate sizes of breeding colonies should be noted in every instance, and migration data will be useful. Questionnaires will be sent out later in the year to collect the material.

Mrs. R. P. Hussong has informed us that Earl Wright showed his new Alaskan movies at the annual banquet of the Green Bay Bird Club. Bernard Chartier played one of his original compositions; Mrs. Andrew Weber made individual favors in the form of birds; and many other members, known to our society took prominent parts. New club officers are: President, Myron Duquaine; Vice President, Edwin Cleary; and Secretary-Treasurer, Miss Erna Zapfe.

Occasionally we hear of bird catastrophes, especially when they are unusually serious. The Milwaukee Journal recently described the behavior of some waterfowl along a highway at night, as witnessed by Vic Perry, St. Lucas, Iowa, while travelling near Janesville, Wisconsin: "It was dark and raining hard . . . as I drove over a rise I saw something black coming at me and then hundreds of ducks—mallards and a few geese—flew into the lights of my car and covered the road and the ditches. There must have been four or five hundred of them. I think the lights of my car on the blacktop looked like water and they had to land. I waited, but they didn't get off the road, just kept landing. I opened my car door to yell to them and when the dome light went on, three or four ducks flew into the car. I finally just had to drive ahead, ducks or no ducks, and they piled up in front of my bumper like a snow plow. I could feel the wheels go over some of them."

If you have books on natural history subjects which you would like to sell or give away, your attention is directed again to page 162 of our last issue, where we explain our policy.

According to the compilers of our recent index, only three species of birds included in our official statewide check list were missing in our magazine for the years 1946-48. They were Pacific loon, Cuban snowy plover, and Say's phoebe.

Dr. A. W. Schorger, upon his return from a recent trip to northern Africa, lectured on his bird experiences at a recent meeting of the Kumlien Club of Madison. Specimens collected on this trip were donated to the University after the lecture.

Mrs. Howard Higgins informs us that a bird club was organized in the Kenosha area early in 1948.

Dates of our next annual convention are April 21-24. Since the Wilson Ornithological Club is to meet with us, the convention will last longer than usual, and the program will be exceptional. See detailed announcement elsewhere in this issue.

Gilbert H. Doane, chief librarian of the University, and librarian of our society, is assembling samples of bird bookplates to exhibit during the convention. If you can supply any, or know of sources, please write to Mr. Doane.

So much manuscript and so many photos were received for the tenth anniversary edition of *The Passenger Pigeon* that we shall have to commemorate our anniversary in this manner throughout the entire year of 1949. We shall have some historical notes of the society also during the course of the year.

Robert A. McCabe recently lectured on his study trip made last summer in northern Chihuahua. An overflow crowd attended this event—a part of the seminar program of the Department of Wildlife Management in the University.

Alfred S. Bradford, our attorney, and J. Harwood Evans, our endowment director, have prepared the following:
Dear Member:

Our Society has a special endowment fund the income from which is used for various worthwhile projects connected

(Concluded on page 33)

THE PASSENGER PIGEON, official publication of The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Inc., is published quarterly in Madison, Wisconsin. Classes of membership and annual dues: Active \$1.50 (Students under 18 years \$1.00). Sustaining \$5.00. Life \$50.00. Patron \$100.00 or more. At least \$1.25 of each annual membership is set aside to cover subscription to *The Passenger Pigeon*. Send membership dues to the treasurer, Harold C. Wilson, Ephraim, Wisconsin. Send manuscripts to the editor, N. R. Barger, 4333 Hillcrest Drive, Madison 5, Wisconsin.

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THE AMERICAN EGRET IN WISCONSIN

By FRANK H. KING

Introduction

The large numbers of "white herons" reported from Wisconsin this past summer have aroused considerable interest in the birds and questions as to their occurrence in the state. Even those who are not ordinarily "bird watchers" have had the American egret brought to their attention through the newspapers which still find this bird enough of a rarity to feature in an occasional summer article such as the one sent in from the **Baraboo News-Republic** July 29, 1948 where it was reported that, "It was a large bird, snowy white and . . . he could not get close to it but was certain it was a species that has become practically extinct." Although almost any bird student would likely be able to tell more about the bird than that, its sporadic appearance still brings up many questions unanswered by ornithologists. In order to gather information about the range of the egret in Wisconsin, nesting records, and population fluctuations from year to year, in 1948 a questionnaire was sent to state bird students who are members of "The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Inc." In addition, records were compiled from the society magazine, **The Passenger Pigeon**, for the ten years that it has been in existence. The Wisconsin Conservation Department has contributed many records, largely from the two statewide questionnaires sent to Department field personnel in 1938 and again in 1946.

Acknowledgement is due these organizations and the many contributors who sent in their personal records for this survey. Although "bird watching" is usually considered an individual undertaking, the ready exchange of information and collective studies greatly add to the value and enjoyment of such efforts.

Historical Information

Although the egret has been seen in the state in large numbers only in recent years, it seems from a review of the records of the earlier Wisconsin ornithologists that this bird was present, at least in some parts of Wisconsin, in sufficient numbers during its post-nuptial wanderings from southern rookeries to be considered a common bird here



APPROXIMATELY 125 AMERICAN EGRETS WERE FOUND IN THE VICINITY OF PORTAGE ON AUGUST 8, 1946. PHOTO BY ELMER HERMAN

about a hundred year ago. In the most important of the early references we find that, "Twenty-five to fifty years ago (1853-1878) the egret was a common bird on the larger marshes and swamps bordering the inland lakes and rivers."¹ This record probably covers mainly the southern and eastern parts of the state. It was considered as possible to be collected in Dane County in 1862² and said to be a "not uncommon summer resident" based on field work from 1873-1877 in Walworth, Jefferson, Green Lake, Waushara, Waupaca and Price counties.³ However, not all of these counties may have yielded records for the bird as no locations are mentioned. It is not likely that the egret was commonly found in all parts of the state in early days any more than it is today, and bird lists for Brown and Outagamie counties for 1881-1883⁴ ⁵ do not mention this bird, nor does the list for Oconto county published in 1902.⁶ The absence of the egret in these last mentioned lists may also be due to a decline in the numbers of birds by this time. The first few years after 1900 brought reports that this once common bird was now seldom seen⁷ and in 1903 was "of late years, thanks to the barbarous plume hunters, rare, so rare at the present time that three or four individuals only visit Lake Koshkonong each year where hundreds were found thirty years ago during August and September. A few single birds or small flocks rarely visit Delavan Lake during the early fall."¹¹

There seems to be no doubt but that the southern plume hunters as mentioned above were directly responsible for the reduction of the egret numbers. Many accounts tell of the cruel destruction of these birds in the Gulf State rookeries during the late 1800's when colonies of thousands were reduced to a few individuals in just a few years.⁸ Since the long, flowing plumes or "aigrettes," the only feathers of value to the millinery trade, are present only during the breeding season, destruction took place during the time when the young were left to starve in the nest. Four birds would furnish an ounce of plumes worth thirty-two dollars.⁹ And all this, as so quaintly expressed by one writer "to satisfy the barbaric demand for ornithological ornamentation of feminine headwear."¹⁰

The pleasing sight of these birds on our marshes today is largely due to the efforts of the National Audubon Society, stopping this stupid destruction of a species just in time through protection of colonies, agreements with the milliners, and working for legislation prohibiting possession and sale of such plumage. It could be said by 1905, "at the present time practically no native birds are killed in the United States for millinery purposes." From its lowest ebb in Florida in 1902, a colony having eighteen birds increased to 300 to 400 birds in 1908, giving a good example of the value of protection of breeding areas. The same authority says that in 1917 the egret was more numerous in Florida than for many years and was increasing in Texas in 1923.⁹

However, it evidently took many years for the egret to recover sufficiently in numbers to fill all its former range and to be seen commonly in post breeding movements to Wisconsin. Even though bird watchers were not so numerous in the state in the earlier 1900's as they have been the past ten years, a bird as large and conspicuous as the egret with its pure white plumage is almost certain to be noticed if present in any numbers. A review of the various bird lists published for many counties in the early 1900's shows no mention of these birds.

Areas and years covered during this period include: Waukesha 1913,¹² Madison 1915,¹³ Green Lake county 1915,¹⁴ Dane and Sauk counties 1917,¹⁵ North Western Wisconsin 1918-1922,¹⁶ Vilas county 1923,¹⁷ Bayfield county 1925,¹⁸ Door county 1927.¹⁹ In records for Dane county for fifteen years previous to 1929, Schorger lists the egret as a rare straggler in August or September. He mentions only one specific record, that of a single bird in Jefferson county May 1925,²⁰ the first reliable mention of the bird in recent years, although it must have occurred at least occasionally before this date.

In replying to the 1948 **Passenger Pigeon** questionnaire, J. H. Evans of Oshkosh sent in additional information on the history of the egret in



PHOTO BY GEORGE AND EDWARD PRINS
AMERICAN EGRET IN RACINE COUNTY

the state. "According to the late George Overton who lived on the same farm along the Northeast shore of Lake Butte des Morts, egrets used to be common in the late '80's and '90's and early 1900's. They disappeared for a long time and began showing up again in '40. He said that as a boy he used to see them regularly in the late summer and fall, but he had no definite records of dates or numbers."

After being reduced by the plume hunters, the breeding range of the egret in North America was found along the Gulf States to North Carolina and on the Pacific coast, north to Oregon, with small colonies in Arkansas and Tennessee.⁹

RECENT OCCURRENCE IN WISCONSIN

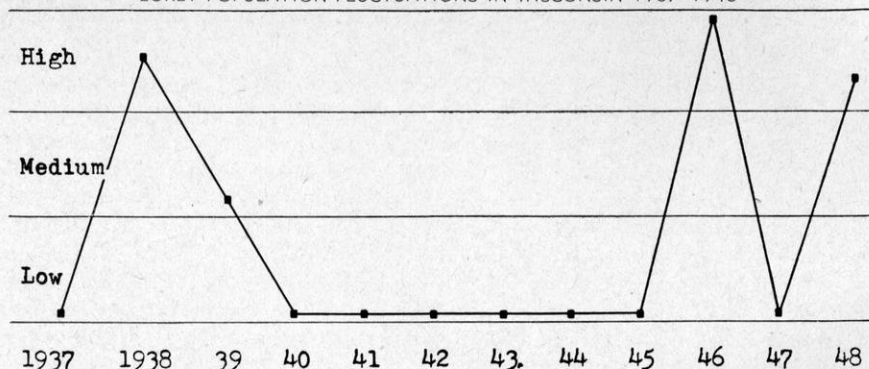
The great increase of the American egret in the state has, perhaps, been one of the outstanding events in recent years for students of Wisconsin bird life. Its occurrence during the late summer months is usually considered to be an example of that tendency found in most of the heron family to wander northward after the breeding season. This movement, sometimes called "vagrant migration" to distinguish it from true migration between nesting and wintering grounds, is usually thought to be confined chiefly to the young birds which may wander away from the breeding colonies and travel several hundred miles north of the region in which they were hatched.²¹ Since both adults and young of this species have pure white plumage, it is not easy to determine from observation alone just what portion of the fall influx is composed of adults and what part of young birds of the year. Possibly many of the early arrivals from April into June may be adult birds, some non-breeding. Bent²² gives March 29 to May 1 as the dates for the bulk of the egg records in Florida and April 14 to May 16 for Texas, although nests have been found in Florida as early as December. He also gives the incubation period as 23 or 24 days. Add to this the five or six weeks needed to reach flying stage, as found in recent Wisconsin nestings, and we see that the early arrivals in the state would have to be from very early hatchings to wander this far from the Southern colonies so early in the year. Certainly the presence of a few nesting birds in the state shows that part of the flight is made up of adults, and future banding studies may give more information on this point, as well as showing just where our birds come from and how far they travel.

The snowy egret and the little blue heron are other southern birds that are found in Wisconsin in summer but are much rarer than the larger American egret, with only a few recent records in the state for the snowy egret. With the white plumage being found on only the young of the year in the case of the little blue heron, it is easy to see that the northward flight is made up of the young birds in this species.

"Highs" and "Lows" in Population

Table I shows the recent egret records for the state up to 1938 when the first big influx was noted, and the first statewide survey was made

FIGURE 1
EGRET POPULATION FLUCTUATIONS IN WISCONSIN 1937-1948



to obtain information on the Wisconsin egret population. The next year, 1939, the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology was formed and was the beginning date of more extensive record collecting of Wisconsin bird life. Table II shows a summary of these records from 1938 through 1948, with fluctuations illustrated in Figure I.

At first glance it would seem that the high numbers of birds reported for the years 1938, 1946 and 1948 were the result of the increase in the number of observers for these years. Actually, they represent "highs" in the dispersal of egrets to Wisconsin. In the hope of obtaining more information on these great invasions, questionnaires were sent out in the three years mentioned. In 1938 and 1946, F. R. Zimmerman of the Game Division, Wisconsin Conservation Department sent out questionnaires to the Department field personnel, mainly the County Conservation Wardens. In 1948 the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology gathered records from a questionnaire sent to its members asking for 1948 and previous records. The "lows" in the table are based largely on records from the society and from field notes in its publication **The Passenger Pigeon**, Vols. 1 (1939) through 10 (1948).

Table I

RECENT AMERICAN EGRET RECORDS FOR WISCONSIN PRIOR TO 1938

Date	County	No.	Remarks and Source
1925, May 30	Jefferson	1	Schorger, 1929 "The Birds of Dane County, Wisconsin" ²⁰
1929, July	Oconto	1	Mounted by Schoenebeck; "Pass. Pigeon," Vol. 1, p. 88
1931, May 31	Pierce	2	Warden Hope, 1938 questionnaire
1933, Sept. 11	Rock	sev.	Mrs. L. Babcock, Milton, 1948 quest. "first seen in 1933, probably every fall since, in numbers of 1-12"
1933, Sept. 17	Outagamie	9	Mrs. W. Rogers, Appleton, 1948 quest.
Sept. 22	Outagamie	12	Mrs. W. Rogers, Appleton, 1948 quest.
1935, 36, 37	Racine	sev.	J. Martin, Racine, 1948 quest. "seen regularly at Eagle Lake, largest flock 9."
1935, 36, 37(?)	Grant	sev.	Warden Keeler, 1938 quest. "coming here for last 3 or 4 years but not so many as in 1938"
1936	Winnebago	1	H. Stroebe, 1948 quest.
1936 (?)	Jefferson	sev.	Warden Elliott, 1938 quest. "seen several years ago"
1936, May 20	Buffalo	2	Steele, "Pass. Pigeon," Vol. 1, p. 165 "first sight record in this locality"
1937	LaCrosse	2	Warden Lange, 1938 quest.
1937	Racine	15	C. Marck, Burlington, 1948 quest. "15 in one flock"
1937, Aug. 19	Grant	15	H. Bauers, Milwaukee, 1948 quest.

7 years 10 Counties 100+

17 reports for 7 years

Table II

SUMMARY OF REPORTS ON THE RECENT OCCURRENCE OF THE AMERICAN EGRET IN WISCONSIN

Year	Abundance	Approx. No. Observers	Approx. No. Egrets	No. Counties	Nest Records	April Records	Per Cent Normal Rainfall (U. S. Weather Bureau)
1925 to 1937	Low	17	100+	10			1937 90% normal (Apr.-Sept. sub-normal)
1938	High	80	2500	42			Year 137% normal (Apr.-Sept. 144% normal)
1939	Med.	48	475	20	3 Tremp.	2	Year 88% normal (Apr.-Sept. 90% normal)
1940	Low	15	25+	11			Year 108% normal (Apr.-Sept. 110% normal)
1941	Low	20	125+	14	6 Tremp.	2	Year 112% normal (Apr.-Sept. 112% normal)
1942	Low	15	55	12	2 Tremp.	1	Year 116% normal (May & Sept. wettest)
1943	Low	2	25	2	2 Horicon	1	Year 96% normal (May, June & Aug. wettest)
1944	Low	4	25+	8	2 Horicon	1	Year 95% normal (June wettest)
1945	Low	10	325	13	1 Horicon		Year 115% normal (May, June & Aug. wettest)
1946	High	112	3500	48	1 Horicon	1	Year 97% normal (Apr. & May dry, June wet, July & Aug. very dry)
1947	Low	16	55	15	1 Horicon	4	Year 98% normal (Apr.-Sept. wetter than normal except July)
1948	High	85	1700	32	1 Horicon	2	Apr. 98% normal, May 58% summer dry
Totals		424	9000	58	19	14	

Locations where observation has been fairly constant over a period of years, such as the Federal Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge along the Mississippi River, and the state portion of the Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area in Dodge county, where observations have been constant since 1941 and frequent before that, give us a check on the validity of the "highs" and "lows."

The number of egrets reported for any year is only approximate and should not be taken to represent the actual number of birds in the state for that year, although it should give a good comparison for yearly fluctuations. Some of the "low" years, coinciding with the lack of observers during the war years, undoubtedly saw more birds in the state than are listed here, but any "high" in the yearly fluctuation would surely have been noted by many observers as well as by the controls mentioned previously.

The year 1938 gave many people their first opportunity to see an egret, with the late summer and early fall of that year bringing the first big influx of recent times. Many wardens reported these birds for the first time for their counties, such as Warden Schlumph of Fond du Lac county where birds were reported scattered over most of the county, "This is the first time that residents of this county can remember them as being around Wisconsin." And from Forester Prehn of Jackson County, "According to the older residents this is the first time that this species has been seen in this locality."

The year 1939 saw a sharp decline in egrets occurring in the state although they were evidently more common than in the following low years, and this is the only year where their abundance might be considered medium, rather than low.

The year 1940, though a "low" year, brought the first reports of egrets for Door county, as reported in the 1948 Passenger Pigeon questionnaire by George Wagner (Emeritus Professor of Zoology, University of Wisconsin) "In August 1940 and 1941, egrets appeared in considerable numbers in swamps adjoining Lake Michigan in Door county. I saw these swamps every year in a number of previous years, but no egrets before then."

The year 1945 showed a slight increase again, but this is mainly due to birds reported from the southwestern part of the state along the Mississippi river.

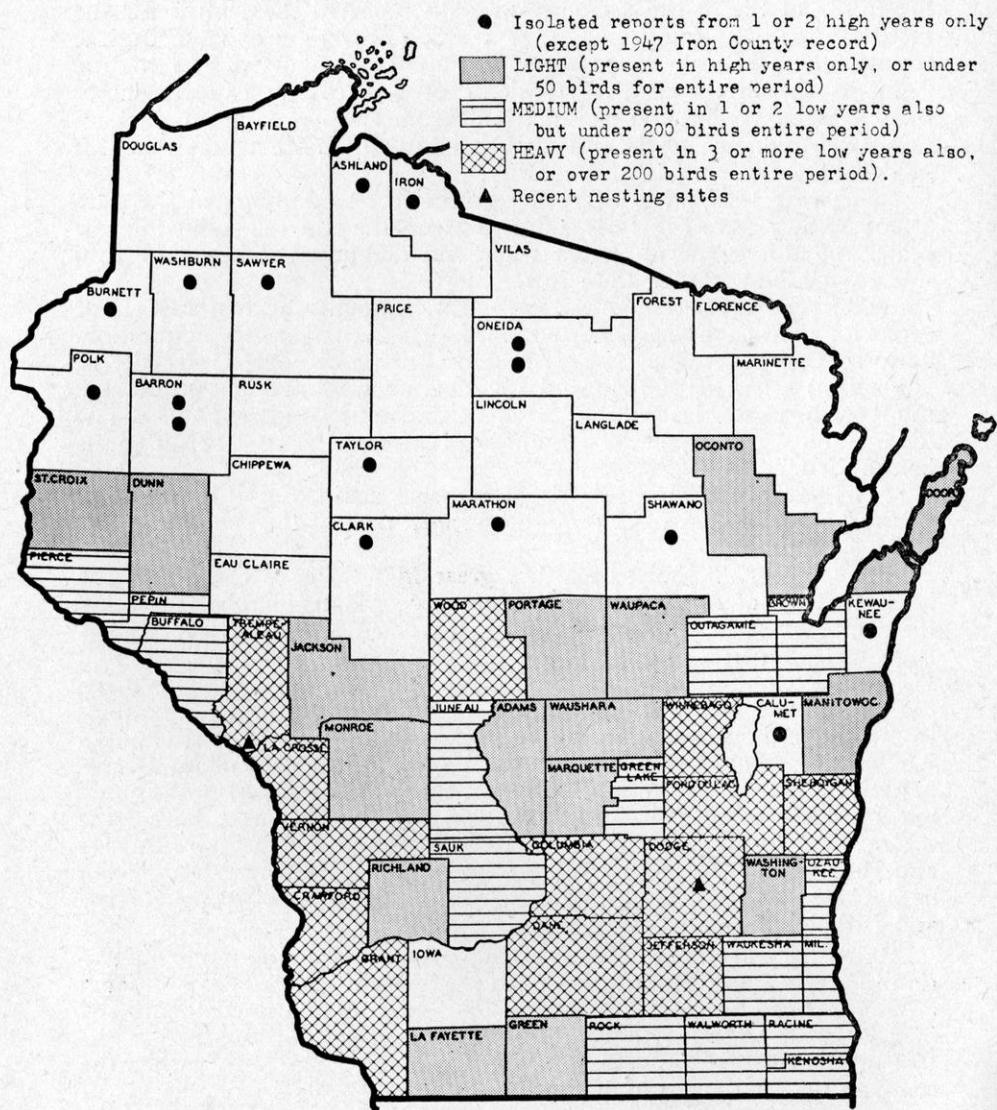
The year 1946 showed another great influx and is considered the heaviest flight of recent years when many people again reported seeing their first egrets, and several wardens reported "the most ever seen." Ray Steele, Superintendent of the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge, reported that "American egrets have been common during the middle and late summer throughout the Mississippi River bottoms from the southern boundary of Wisconsin to Prescott (Pierce county). The number would run into the thousands." And from John Greenbank, Biologist on the Mississippi river, who reports the bird as abundant from Grant to Pierce counties and says, "The egrets have been several times as numerous in this stretch of the river as they were in 1944 and 1945 when it was somewhat unusual to see even single birds north of LaCrosse, and not more than a few now and then between LaCrosse and Dubuque."

The sharp decline in 1947 is a good example of the extreme fluctuation in yearly abundance of the egret in Wisconsin and can be considered an accurate account of this phenomenon occurring at a time when many bird watchers were interested in the birds and coming just before the 1948 questionnaire was sent out, giving an opportunity to gather the comparative records for high and low years.

Range in State

Figure II shows the recent range of the egret in Wisconsin and its comparative abundance in various counties, based on the records summarized in Table II. Although an entire county is shaded in as being light, medium or heavy, this does not mean that the bird is equally distributed over the whole county. The counties bordering the Mississippi river, for example, have reports for few birds except actually along

FIGURE 2
RANGE AND ABUNDANCE OF THE AMERICAN EGRET IN WISCONSIN
(BASED ON REPORTS FROM 1938 TO 1948 INCLUSIVE)



the Mississippi river bottoms. Most of the records from Sheboygan county are from the vicinity of the Sheboygan Marsh only, and the Oconto county reports are from along the edge of Green Bay. Generally the egrets are found in parts of counties with extensive marshes, lakes and river areas, and the local water conditions are perhaps more important in determining distribution than any other factor of climate or geography. It is quite likely that several river systems form the main points of entry into the state, namely the Mississippi, Wisconsin, and Rock

rivers. The northern forested areas of the state have many apparently suitable water areas and yet are represented by only sporadic occurrences of the egret and then mainly in the high years. Although the numbers of bird observers in this part of the state are fewer than in the southern areas, the warden surveys of 1938 and 1946 would have brought records of any great numbers of these birds for that region. Possibly the more southern Wisconsin water areas may be more productive of desirable food or produce enough to maintain in those areas the number of birds normally reaching the state. It may be that since Wisconsin is evidently near the northern limit of the post-nuptial wandering of many of these birds, that this division in abundance between the northern and southern parts of the state is just the natural limit of the movement of the birds regardless of any reason that we may assign to it.

With the exception of one bird seen in Iron county in 1947, all the other northern records as shown on Figure II were obtained during the high years of 1938 and 1946. However, these are the only two years when a questionnaire was sent to Conservation Department field personnel and there may have been a few sporadic occurrences in these counties during other years also.

Arrivals and Departures

There are fourteen April records of the egret in Wisconsin, the earliest is that of Palas & Robinson, one bird in Waushara county April 12, 1947. As seen from Table II these early arrivals are not concentrated in the "high" years. With the exception of one April record of four birds, and two reports of two birds each, all other observations for this month are for single birds. Only four of these April records had follow-up records of nests found in the same vicinity the same year, not necessarily the same birds. The birds usually continue scarce through May, June and early July, becoming more abundant in late July and the first half of August. The largest numbers are found in the state during the last half of August and the first three weeks in September, with most of the birds leaving the last of September and the first week in October. There are quite a few records scattered through all of October, however, and during the "high" year of 1938, several hundred egrets were reported from the state during this month, evidently a later year than usual. Of the four November records, that of Miescke for Horicon, Dodge county, of one bird on November 13, 1948 is the latest.

Invasions not Explained

It has often been noticed in this and other states having the same type of seasonal influx that the "high" egret invasions have seemed to occur in the dry years. There has been much speculation as to why this should be so, if it really is so, such as the lack of food due to too little water in the breeding areas or more southern stopping places, the increased availability of food in the north due to the partially lowered water levels in ponds and marshes, or just a good survival in dry years making more birds available for the northward wanderings. Although we are not sure just where our birds do come from, it seems very unlikely that with the main breeding range in the deep south and reports of these "highs" coming from many parts of the Midwest as well as New

England, that weather conditions would be similar enough over such a wide area to be considered the main factor in this dispersal.

A brief look at the weather records from 1937 through 1948 as listed on Table II shows that the 1938 "high" occurred in a year that was one of the wettest in weather bureau history, with 1937 and 1939 both having sub-normal precipitation. Four of the "low" years were wet and three of them just below normal for the entire year, but with the wettest period in the spring and summer. The 1946 "high" occurred in a year that was just below normal for precipitation but a year of very dry spring and summer months with the exception of July. 1948 was dry.

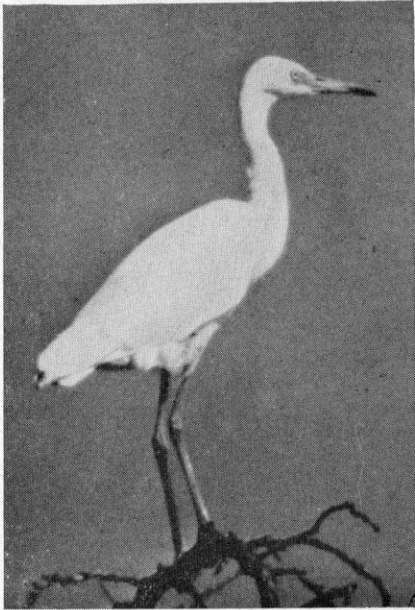
More complete knowledge of the weather conditions in the surrounding states, in the breeding colonies and along migration routes is needed to show the part weather conditions may have in the marked yearly fluctuation seen in Wisconsin.

It has been suggested that dry years concentrate the birds and so make them more conspicuous, leading to more reports, although in areas so well populated as southern Wisconsin, this could hardly account for the extreme variation between "highs" and "lows." Low water and drying ponds are attractive to wading birds, however, and may make more food available as the water recedes. Several reports have been received of egrets feeding about a pond until it dried completely, or being attracted to recently drained fish hatchery ponds.

Habits

The gregarious tendencies of these egrets seem to hold over even in their northward wanderings, and they are commonly seen in small flocks during their stay in the state. Only about five per cent of the flocks have been reported as consisting of over 50 birds, while two-thirds of the flocks are made up of from one to ten birds. Occasionally flocks up to several hundred birds are reported, largely from the Mississippi river area and from some of the more favored locations in Dodge, Dane and Columbia counties.

The habit of these birds to concentrate at night in definite "roosts" has also been observed at several places in the state. This usually takes place in trees, such as the roosting area on Four Mile Island in Horicon Marsh which Mathiak reported was being used by approximately 150 egrets on August 1, 1948. He also reported 150 birds roosting nightly in a slough on the same marsh during early September



FROM KODACHROME BY EDWARD PRINS
IMMATURE LITTLE BLUE HERON TAKEN IN
KENOSHA COUNTY DURING AUGUST, 1948

1946 and observed that they tumble much like geese to lose altitude. Smaller flocks have also been observed roosting nightly in a fixed location.

Although this northward movement of the egret is often called "wandering," it seems that once they reach a favorable location in the state, they may remain there for the rest of the summer. We do not know how far they travel to get here or how fast or slow that movement may be, but many observers have reported that the same flock of egrets could be found in the same area for weeks at a time and even for several months. The food supply is probably the main factor determining the length of stay in any one location.

The feeding habits of the egret apparently are very similar to those of the great blue heron, and the most unusual feeding habits report from Wisconsin is perhaps a note from Orians in 1946 stating, "The Federal Fish Hatchery at La Crosse had 400 egrets at one time and tried to chase them away with firecrackers." Several other Conservation Department men have noted egrets feeding along the edges of other hatchery ponds and claim that they are less wary than the great blue heron.

Wisconsin Nesting Records

In the only record of nesting egrets for Wisconsin in early days, it is stated that, "Fifty years ago (1853) specimens were occasionally taken on Koshkonong in June, but were never found nesting. Young, unable to fly, were taken from a colony in a tamarack swamp near Jefferson in July, 1863. It was found breeding with a large colony of great blue herons to the westward of Two Rivers in June, 1880. Also reported as nesting near Waukesha in 1866."¹

After these three early nesting reports, no mention of the bird as breeding in the state is found until the records of recent years summarized in Table III. The 1939 nesting in Trempeleau county is evi-



AMERICAN EGRET WITH SNOWY EGRET IN RACINE COUNTY
TAKEN DURING AUGUST, 1948

Table III
RECENT NESTINGS OF THE AMERICAN EGRET IN WISCONSIN

Year	Location and Observer	No. Nests	No. Young	Remarks	Early Arrivals In Vicinity
1939	Trempeleau County Migratory Waterfowl Refuge (Steele)	3	5* 4 4	June 8-3 nests in heron and cormorant rookery 35 feet above water in flooded birches June 30-young in nests, 5, 4, 4 plus 1 old egg July 17-photos taken, young well-grown July 31-young out of nests, feeding in marshes	2 (Apr. 26) 15 (May 10)
1941	Trempeleau (Steele)	6	19	8 pairs reported nesting for 1941 and 1942, and 19 young for 1941	
1942	Trempeleau (Steele)	2	8	2 nests and 8 young reported for 1942	1 (Apr. 29)
1943	Dodge County Horicon Marsh (Mitchell & Pelzer)	2	3 3	May 30-2 pairs nesting in heron rookery June 23-3 young in one nest, 3 eggs in other July 21-young well feathered	singles early and pairs late in May
1944	Horicon Marsh (Mathiak)	2	2 2	May 18-Adult standing on nest July 31-2 young, two-thirds grown, seen in nest Aug. 20-Second nest found with 2 nearly grown young (2 fledged young in nearby trees and 1 dead egret, age unknown, in first nest)	1 (May 5) 2 (May 11)
1945	Horicon Marsh (Mathiak)	1	2	July 22-1 nest, 2 young, about 3 weeks old Aug. 12-young nearly full grown	2 (May 4) 3 (May 13)
1946	Horicon Marsh (Mathiak)	1	3	July 11-1 nest, 2 young, half grown July 28-saw that nest had 3 young about full grown and ready to leave nest	1 (June 9)
1947	Horicon Marsh (Mathiak)	1	(?)	June 30-1 egret sitting on nest for 1 hour but no young actually seen this year	1 (Apr. 26) 1 (May 12)
1948	Horicon Marsh (Mathiak)	1	2	July 8-1 nest, 2 young about three-fourths grown. Nest in same small portion of heron rookery as were the previous egret nests	1 (Apr. 25)
9 years	2 counties	19	57		

Steele's records found The Pass. Pigeon, Vol. 1, p. 165; Wilson Bull., Dec., 1939; Audubon Mag. Field Notes, Sept.-Oct., 1946, p. 123; and letter from Geo. S. Bachay listing records from files of Upper Miss. Wild. & Fish Refuge.

Mitchell and Pelzer record from The Pass. Pigeon, Vol. 5, pp. 49 and 74.

Mathiak's nesting records found in The Pass. Pigeon, Vol. 6, pp. 65 and 81; and Vol. 7, p. 123, and in replies to the 1946 and 1948 questionnaires.

*(Bent^a gives the clutch size as 3 or 4 eggs only, not more; two of these 1939 nests seem to have had larger than normal clutches of 5 eggs each.)

dently the first recent nesting record in the entire Midwest area. These Wisconsin nesting records seem typical of the nesting habits of the species as reported for southern nesting colonies, except that our nestings occur in June rather than in April and May. The presence of these nests in colonies of coromorants, great blue herons, and black-crowned night herons is evidently typical, and a map of the known heron rookeries in the state would perhaps, be a guide in locating other egret nests.

Wisconsin has had no large nesting colonies such as the one found at Sabula, Iowa, just 40 miles south of the Wisconsin line along the Mississippi river, where a colony of ten nests in 1941 increased to 250 nests in 1943. It is claimed that great blue herons moved into this rookery in 1944, causing its abandonment by the egrets in 1945.²²

Since 1938 there have been at least seven other unauthenticated reports of possible egret nesting in six counties. Several of them mention nest and young birds, but all lack the necessary detail needed for them to be added to the list of known nests. Some were second hand reports and were unable to be followed up with more observations at the time. It is quite likely that the presence of egrets early in the year may lead to the belief that they are nesting in the vicinity; or the sight of the smaller little blue heron in the white juvenal plumage may cause reports of young egrets seen. However, it is very possible that there have been nests in the state other than those reported so far. One or two nests in a large isolated heron rookery would be hard to locate except by long and repeated observations. The "high" years have no priority on the nests found to date in the state.

The Egret in Neighboring States

Most of the neighboring states have experienced a decline and later increase in egrets similar to that observed in Wisconsin. Illinois and Indiana, at least, had enough birds to be considered common in the latter 1800's and also breeding birds, although Michigan and Minnesota have only scattered summer records during this period.^{7 23 24}

The first birds in recent years in Minnesota were seen in 1932,²⁴ with the first nest reported only this last summer, 1948.²⁵

Ohio had its first sizable invasion in 1930, with the first nest recorded May 18, 1940.²⁶ It first appeared in the breeding season along Lake Erie near Toledo in 1945, and the six nests found in a rookery there in 1946 had increased to thirty nests in 1948.²⁵

Just 80 miles south of the Wisconsin border at Depue, Bureau county, Illinois, about 25 nests were found in 1941. This same location had 20 nests in 1946 and showed an increase to over 50 nests in 1947.²⁸ At Chautauqua refuge, Illinois, approximately 160 miles south of the Wisconsin line, three egrets on May 8, 1944, had increased to 2,300 using the refuge on July 28, 1944.²⁹ Wisconsin has no records of concentrations such as this at any time. This same year, 1944, was a "low" year in this state.

The egret was abundant in Iowa in 1934,³⁰ and the large nestings at Sabula in 1943, just 40 miles south of Wisconsin on the Mississippi River have already been mentioned. In 1948, along the Mississippi River 60 to 100 miles south of Wisconsin, four new or greatly enlarged colonies were found in Iowa, the largest with 150 nests.²⁵

Summaries for the Mid-west as a whole show reports of egrets becoming common in this area in 1937,³¹ with the 1946 flight being greater than in any previous year.²² Summer records were scarce in the Mid-west region in 1947 although a good flight was reported farther south up to Missouri where they were said to be found in flocks of several thousand.³²

The Eastern states, too, have been having egret invasions in late years with great fluctuations also, and 1948 seems to have brought their biggest flight to date,²⁵ while in the Mid-west, although the 1948 flight was high, it was apparently surpassed by the influx of 1946.

Future Studies Needed

This outstanding and puzzling phenomenon of recent bird study, the increase and northward spread of the American egret, will continue to provide an interesting study subject for the student of Wisconsin bird life. We do not know where the birds come from when they arrive in the state in late summer, and banding will likely be needed to answer this, even though it would be difficult, and returns hard to get. Do they come mainly from the far southern colonies, or do the more northern colonies supply some of our birds? About the only banding record showing that some of the young egrets migrate very long distances, is that for the nestling egret banded in Mississippi on May 24, 1936 and recovered at Saskatchewan, Canada on August 7, 1937.²¹

We do not know the routes of this northward migration or the stopping points, or what part of the flight consists of young birds and what part of old birds.

One of the most interesting aspects is the reason for the great invasion of some years and the small flight of other years. Whether this is caused by conditions of the food supply, rainfall, successful nesting years, or some habit of the bird itself is still unanswered and it will probably take information gathered from all parts of the range to form an answer.

Since historical information is scanty, we may never know whether the number of birds now in this region is greater than that found in the days before plume-hunting or not. This increase of late years may be only a filling in of the original range, or it may represent an actual increase in the summering and breeding range of the bird. In either case, the increase can continue only until the carrying capacity of the available habitat has been reached, and accurate counts by interested bird observers will help determine just when this occurs.

Conclusion

This type of study illustrates the value of fitting together the small pieces of individual observation to make a general picture, and helps bring out many records not previously known. The increase of the egret shows that a species can sometimes be saved from the very edge of extinction, and the reappearance of these graceful white birds should be an especially gratifying sight to those who have worked long and hard for the protection of our native wild-life. If the extinct passenger pigeon is a symbol of the need for conservation, the living egret can be a symbol of the future hope for conservation.

Appleton, Wisconsin
January, 1949

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Sac Prairie Winter

By AUGUST DERLETH

22 December 1947: While walking through the Lower Meadow this sunny afternoon, I heard the drumming of a grouse in the southwest, rising out of the woods around Hiney's Slough, or from one of the wooded islands in the shallow east channel of the Wisconsin just nearby. I listened to it, standing there in the meadow, and heard it four times, after which no more. The sound was pleasant to hear in the winter afternoon, and it was carried clearly in the moist air, fragrant with the smell of thawing snow rising from all around. I did not hear it again in the course of the afternoon.

27 December 1947: I was conscious this afternoon while I sat reading in the thawing sunlight at the brook trestle of the incessant cawing of crows, distant in both north and south, a sound that never fails to give pleasure in this season. There is a freshness and vitality in the cawing of crows, a vitality which never flags; and even more, there is a kind of intimacy, however aloof the birds, about their voices, heard over the winter woods, as if these birds were the only other sentient life inhabiting this plot of earth. Their kind of wildness seems in this season to be the epitome of all wildness, something akin to man but just out of his reach.

10 January 1948: At the brook trestle this afternoon, I heard the unmistakable call of a flicker—the triumphant, free cry ringing through the woods quite as in summer; and in a few moments the bird itself came flying low among the trees, up over the embankment, and into the darker woods west of the railroad tracks, shouting his defiance of the cold. He veered a little to one side, seeing me, but veered back again and went on. I heard him twice more in the deep woods before he was either still or gone out of hearing. Subsequently, in the barber shop, a patron said he had heard and seen at least four flickers in the course of the winter thus far.

25 January 1948: Some young people, tending a fire in the fireplace in my livingroom this evening, were startled when a dead, partially burned flicker fell down the chimney into the fire and rolled out. I examined the bird with interest; it had clearly been dead for some time, since it was almost weightless and had a dryness even about the sound of it. Evidently it had sought refuge in the chimney and been unable to fly out again, yet I had heard no sound of its attempts to do so, as on one previous occasion I had heard a mourning dove fluttering there, and had released it through the draft.

4 February 1948: On the way past the Freie Gemeinde park at dusk tonight, with a faint smouldering of afterglow still pale in the west, I saw suddenly a dark form come flying in along the trees from the south, and then westward, followed by a second; they flew past quite close, but without sound of any kind—a pair of screech owls—and landed near to where I stood now watching, on a low limb of a pine tree there, quite clearly outlined against the fading daylight. There they sat, the two of them as close together as a pair of mourning doves; the one made a few muted bell-like notes, the other clacked quietly—scarcely more sound

than the wind's whispering, so that any casual passerby would never have noticed, or, noticing, would think a moment later that his imagination accounted for what he fancied he heard. The birds made no further sound, but neither did they move; there they stayed, fast to the limb of the pine, less than ten feet from the sidewalk, and quite as safe from sight of the average passerby as if they were leagues away.

7 February 1948: I startled a covey of ten quail, all fat birds, from the rushes along the railroad embankment along the Lower Meadow this afternoon. They flew up with a whirring of wings and some cheepings, crossed to the east and were lost among willows and osiers there. It was good to realize that, despite the bitterness of the winter, they had managed to find sustenance and survive. Their voices subsided on the instant of their descent among the growth to the east, and once more the usual sounds of blue jays, juncos, chickadees, and crows filled the afternoon, together with the voices of skiers half a mile away.

An immature bald eagle flew slowly down the Upper Meadow not far away. I watched him for a little while; he seemed not to need to use his wings much, taking advantage of the northwest wind which had begun to blow. Descending to the meadow, to observe him the closer, I came upon a song sparrow's nest in an alder bush; the nest was crowned and filled with snow, as light as down, and while I stood examining it, the eagle vanished.

16 February 1948: The day being warm, and the temperature circa 43°, with a south wind riding high among the trees, I went into the marshes to the brook and sat at the trestle to read. The afternoon was somnolent with the voices of birds. Across the meadows came the fluted phe-be-be of chickadees, together with the typical calls of goldfinches, the high rattling of flickers and red-bellied woodpeckers; the distant cawing of crows. Quite nearby, I heard suddenly a less familiar voice, and, looking, discovered a purple finch—the season's first. The bird swung on a maple limb not far away, but so placed that the sunlight made a sheen of his rose color. That there were others in the vicinity, their voices testified; but they were soon off to eastward, taking flight when the near bird did, crossing the meadow to the second brook, where they descended into the willows and osiers, and their muted songs were lost.

17 February 1948: In the moonlit marshes tonight there was no sound save the keening of a swamp owl, making its soft cooing hoot in the immediate vicinity of the Spring Slough trestle, to the north. But this was constant; I heard it intermittently approaching, and still when I had gone by, and left it receding behind me, and until I had walked out of its range, a small, pensive sound, like the spirit of the woods on the far edge of winter.

18 February 1948: A screech owl mourned about the house tonight. He was somewhere among the trees along the north edge of the garden, quite near to the north wing, and his sad little wailing song came clearly out of the moonlit night. A companionable sound, I thought, especially in the absence of other sound, for the night was still, save for the distant humming of traffic on the highway to the north. The owl sang for perhaps half an hour, and then no more. The hour was approximately midnight.

19 February 1948: Walking into the village this morning along the Lower Mill Road, I heard the reedy songs of horned larks rising out of

the fields, and, at Rajohn's house, a flock of twenty-four cedar waxwings flew struggling against the wind to an elm tree where they sat talking softly among themselves.

21 February 1948: Heard for the first time this year in late morning the **whatcheer song** of the cardinal, and later, at noon, heard it again—at first in the immediate vicinity of the house; subsequently behind the harness shop in Sac Prairie. It was good to hear, though fully three weeks later than its first occurrence last year.

26 February 1948: At 2:20 P. M. today, at the trestle over the brook, I heard the year's first bluebird song, and looked up past pussywillows and maples to find the bird flying over, quite low, and directly above the place where I sat, his chortling song bubbling down unmistakably. I watched him out of sight on his flight toward the low hills along the road past the Upper Meadow, his voice a joy to hear after the long, enclosing winter, his blue body bright in the still wintry landscape. From all around rose the **phe-be-be** of chickadees, the **whatcher** of cardinals, the cawing of crows, far and near. At 3:15 a dialogue of barred owls took place south of the Spring Slough; the nearer owl called several times, quite rapidly, but without the familiar ending **hoo-ah** notes; the more distant bird replied. After a minute's interval the dialogue was repeated, and that was all.

At 5:15 robin cries rose behind the house from the edge of the woodlot; a peremptory scolding, not yet the caroling of the birds, but this, combined with the bluebird of earlier afternoon, suggested that birds were beginning to move north in an extended area of warmth and clearing land reaching north from the Gulf.

8 March 1948: At the western edge of the Spring Slough trestle this afternoon I happened upon a snowy owl besieged by crows; it flew up and deeper into the woods at my approach, however, denying me further sight of the infrequent visitor.

12 March 1948: Out of the west window of the studio tonight saw twelve mallards flying north between Venus and the sickle new moon, bright and clear in the crisp western heaven.

14 March 1948: At 5:50 this evening, just after sundown, I walked up the railroad tracks from Hiney's Crossing. At 6:12, as I walked between the brook trestles, I heard from the valley behind Lenson's farm, the familiar nostalgic crying of a killdeer, the year's first, and stood taking pleasure in that welcome call, his voice rising in the dusk to mingle with the cooing hoot of a swamp owl, and the late singing of a cardinal, though muted plaints of cardinals rose from all sides, together with similar muted sounds from juncos. It was good to hear, and, standing there, I put down

First Killdeer—

Somewhere beyond the barn a killdeer cried—
new moon and evening star over on the other side—
and man between, hearing that first voice of spring,
telling again the joy of a familiar thing.

The killdeer cried and flew up high
to where day lingered palely in the evening sky,
up over hillslopes still patched with snow,
Crying down the brookside far below.

The bird had something to say and said it well,
and his crying cast an old, old spell—
enough to hold a man there where he stood,
unwilling to move even if he could.

For spring came in and winter went out
in the little space that bird flew about.

THE 1948 NESTING SEASON

By SAMUEL D. ROBBINS, JR.

Last summer saw the beginning of a monumental new project by the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology—the plotting on maps of nesting ranges and populations for all species of birds nesting in Wisconsin. This is not a project that can be accomplished over a set period of a few months or a year or two, nor one that involves only a few key individual persons; it will require years of observation, and it will give virtually everyone in the state who is interested in birds a chance to cooperate. The first results for 1948 are substantial; reports on over 1900 nests have been received, giving data on 129 species. The information that can be gleaned from these results is varied, and it is the purpose of this summary to show how some of the information gathered from the 1948 nesting season relates to different problems of range and population studies. In nearly every instance, the information gathered in 1948 is too fragmentary to lead us very far on the road to greater knowledge; rather it provides shafts of light that illumine many problems and areas of further investigation. As is so often true in any scientific research, the first bits of information raise more questions than they answer.

In order to make the data received as useful as possible, the essential information was copied into the permanent filing system of the Society. In addition, the nesting sites were plotted on maps of the state (one map for each species), with the essential information about each nest carried on an accompanying sheet. These maps can be used for a number of years, and as additional information is received, an increasingly accurate picture of the nesting range of each species can be seen at a glance. Some of these maps will be on display at the annual convention of the Society this spring.

The Rarer Nesting Records

Perhaps the most spectacular of the data received from the 1948 nesting season relates to species that rarely nest in Wisconsin. The American egret again nested at Horicon, where two young birds (three-fourths grown) were observed on July 8 (Mathiak). Other breeding records at Horicon in the last few years, plus 1948 breeding records in Minnesota and Iowa indicate a trend that ornithologists will watch with interest.

A nesting record of the piping plover is indicated by the observation of adult and small young birds in Door County, Aug. 15 (Zimmerman). This species is rarely reported in the state; but the fact that Zimmerman found a nest in Door County in 1942, and the fact that the species nests

regularly near Duluth, Minnesota, suggest the possibility that the piping plover may be a regular breeder in certain parts of Wisconsin.

Another rarity in the state at any time is the barn owl. Three nests of this species were reported in 1948. A nest with six young was observed near Madison during June and early July (many observers); another with six young was seen in a barn in Johnson Creek, Jefferson County, on Aug. 16 (Marilyn Haas); young were also raised successfully in the third nest, in Evansville (O. Ringhand). Does this indicate that the barn owl is becoming more common in Wisconsin? Time, and good observers, will tell.

Nests of the orchard oriole have been reported occasionally in recent years, but infrequently enough to make any record interesting. Especially noteworthy, because it comes from an area where the species has not been reported in recent years, is the record of a nest containing young birds in Eau Claire, June 23 (Miss Almon et al).

The nesting of the pine siskin is a noteworthy event. Suspicions of birds nesting in Mercer were aroused in 1947, when a bird was seen carrying nesting material, and seen off and on later in the summer. This year Mrs. Sell observed the nestlings on June 21. There have been enough other reports in June of recent years to make one wonder if this species nests more frequently in selected areas in the northern part of the state than present knowledge would indicate.

Data on Breeding Ranges

There are numerous species that breed in Wisconsin regularly, but not commonly enough and over a sufficiently large portion of the state to give a clear picture of their breeding range. Some of the data from the 1948 season will help increase our knowledge of the following species:

Gadwall: A brood of five young was seen in Jackson County, July 4 (Roberts); another of seven young in Peninsula Park, Door County (Cors).

Pintail: Five young observed in Burnett County, Aug. 1 (Stone).

Green-winged Teal: Two broods, containing six and 22 young, noted in Burnett County, July 27 (Stone).

Redhead: Five young in Horicon, June 22 (King); pair with several young in Door County, Aug. 3 (Cors).

Ring-necked Duck: A nest with two eggs was found in Beaver Dam Marsh, Waukesha County, in mid-June (Gordon Orians); a group of 10 young was seen in Burnett County, June 8 (Stone).

Ruddy Duck: Nest with eight eggs, Beaver Dam Marsh, in mid-June (Gordon Orians).

Hooded Merganser: Young birds of the year, usually with their parents, were seen in Ozaukee County, July 8 and 14 (Mrs. Larkin-Gordon Orians); in Sheboygan County, June 11 (Gordon Orians); in Vernon County, July 17 (Miss Morse); in Outagamie County, July 26 (King); in Marinette County, June 6 (King); and in Forest County, May 21 (Bradle) and July 4 (Carl Richter).

American Merganser: Two young seen in Door County, June 25 (King).

Red-breasted Merganser: Five broods with a total of 44 young were seen near Wausau during June (W. L. Rothmann).

Red-shouldered Hawk: Besides nesting in the southern portion of the state, this species was found nesting in Black River Falls, Apr, 14 (Roberts), and in St. Croix County, May 18 (Rosenwinkel).

King Rail: Four young seen in Ozaukee County in late July (Mrs. Larkin-Gordon Orians).

Common Tern: Besides nesting on Lake Michigan near Oconto (Carl Richter), a colony of this species was studied on the west shore of Lake Winnebago, in northern Fond du Lac County by Kaspar. Weekly trips during July and early August disclosed more than 60 nests. Late in the season a predator inflicted heavy damage on this colony.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Nests were seen in Price, Iron, Forest, Oconto and Buffalo Counties.

Raven: We do not know how frequently this bird remains to breed in Wisconsin, but birds are known to have bred near Mercer in 1948 (Mrs. Sell).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: Five young, recently out of the nest, were coming to a feeding station in Mercer by July 15 (Mrs. Sell).

Brown Creeper: Two nests of this species were found in Oconto County on May 13 and May 29 (Carl Richter).

Winter Wren: Three nests found in Oconto County in late May (Carl Richter).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: A nest containing young birds was located near Neillsville, July 13 (Robbins).

Grinnell's Water-thrush: Three nests containing a total of 12 eggs seen in Oconto County, May 29-31 (Carl Richter).

Mourning Warbler: Besides five nests found in Oconto County during June (Carl Richter), young birds just out of the nest were observed in Cedar Grove, Sheboygan

NESTING SITE OF WINTER WREN (NEST UNDER HORN-LIKE ROOT IN CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPH). TAKEN IN OCONTO COUNTY BY C. H. RICHTER.

BELOW: YOUNG MARSH HAWKS IN NEST. PHOTOGRAPHED JULY 16, 1948 BY MYRON REICHWALDT.



County, July 14 (Mrs. Larkin-Gordon Orians).

Canada Warbler: A nest containing four eggs was located in Oconto County on June 15, and two young from another nest were seen on the wing on June 26 (Carl Richter).

White-throated Sparrow: Nest with two young in Oconto County, June 10, and a nest with four eggs in Forest County, July 4 (Carl Richter).

Changes in Breeding Range

There are a few species whose range in Wisconsin seems to be changing at the present time. Nesting data is very helpful in following these changes, and from the records for 1948 we have the following data:

A strong come-back of the wood duck in Wisconsin is indicated by breeding records from widely separated localities in the state. Nine young were observed in Vernon County, July 17 (Miss Morse); eight young were found in Jackson County, July 4 (Roberts); young were noted in Outagamie County, July 26 (King); a nest with 11 eggs was seen in Oconto County, May 5 (Carl Richter); five young were watched in Forest County, July 4 (Carl Richter); and a brood of nine young was located in Burnett County, June 9 (Stone).

Various observers have noted a decline in the number of migrant shrikes, and few nesting records have been received in recent years. One such report was received in 1948, of a nest in Outagamie County that was first discovered on Apr. 29. By May 30 there were four young, two of which were still in the nest (Mrs. Rogers).

Another bird that is extending its range in Wisconsin at the present time is the Brewer's blackbird. Definite nesting reports come from Oconto County, where several nests were being constructed by May 13 (Carl Richter), and from Oneida County, where four young were observed



PHOTO BY JAMES NEIS

MEMBERS OF THE MADISON BIRD CLUB EXAMINE THE NEST OF THE SHORT-BILLED MARSH WREN. IT WAS CONSTRUCTED BETWEEN JUNE 13 AND 20 AND LATER CONTAINED SIX EGGS. TWO UNOCCUPIED NESTS WERE WITHIN SIX FEET.

on June 26 (Miss Almon). Doubtless this species has extended its breeding range over a greater portion of the state than these records indicate.

Nests Not Often Seen

Some of the nesting data received for the 1948 season pertained to birds that are fairly common in parts—if not most—of the state, whose breeding range is fairly well known, but whose nests are not often observed. Consequently this data has some definite value, that will increase as more observation is made. Some of the more interesting reports include:

Least Bittern: Four nests observed in Oconto County during June (Carl Richter); two nests with a total of nine eggs noted in Waukesha County in mid-June (Gordon Orians).

Chimney Swift: A nest with one egg was found in Loganville, June 11 (Kruse).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Nest construction was observed in Eau Claire, July 9 (Miss Almon); in St. Croix Falls two young were found and raised by hand during July (Mrs. Morrow).

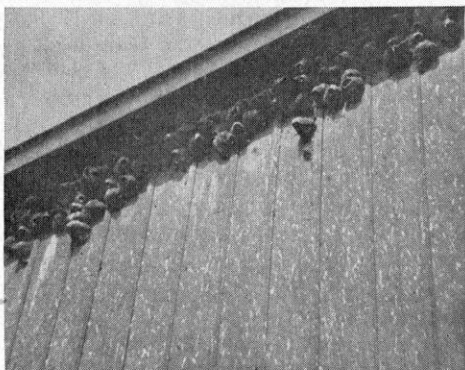
Pileated Woodpecker: Nest with four eggs, Oconto County, May 4 (Carl Richter); constructing nest in Spring Green, May 16 (Kruse); young birds in a nest in Eau Claire, May 18 (Miss Almon).

Red-bellied Woodpecker: Nest located in Loganville, May 9 (Kruse).

Alder Flycatcher: During June and early July four nests containing a total of 14 eggs were found in Oconto County, (Carl Rich-

NESTING TREE OF WOOD DUCK (UPPER CAVITY) AND PILEATED WOODPECKER (LOWER CAVITY). OCONTO COUNTY. ON MAY 8, WOOD DUCK NEST HELD ELEVEN EGGS, AND WOODPECKER NEST FOUR. PHOTO BY C. H. RICHTER.

CLIFF SWALLOW COLONY
PHOTO BY GEORGE HALL



ter); and several nests were seen in Sheboygan County (Gordon Orians).

Short-billed Marsh Wren: Two nests in Oconto County, May 27 (Carl Richter).

Wood Thrush: A nest located in Milton on May 31 later produced four young (Mrs. Maxson); a nest with two eggs was seen in Oconto County, June 10 (Carl Richter).

Golden-winged Warbler: Nests were found in Oconto County on June 7 and 10, both containing five eggs (Carl Richter).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: Nest located in Mercer, June 11 (Mrs. Sell).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Nested in Waukesha, Dodge, Oconto and Winnebago Counties.

Dickcissel: This species was known to have nested in Green Lake, but the nest was not located until after the young had left (Cors).

Grasshopper Sparrow: Parents feeding young just out of the nests were seen in Milwaukee, July 14 (Mrs. Larkin-Gordon Orians).

Clay-colored Sparrow: Four nests with a total of 16 eggs found in Oconto County in early June (Carl Richter).

Nesting Dates

How early do the different species begin nesting operations in Wisconsin? How late in the fall does it continue? The 1948 reports indicate that quite a bit of nesting activity is in progress by the end of April. The earliest account of nesting was furnished by the observation of red-tailed hawks constructing a nest in Loganville on Feb. 29 (Kruse). It is interesting to note that these must have been winter residents, beginning to make their nest even before the spring arrivals had come. Known also as early nesters are the great horned and barred owls. A great horned owl nest with two young was observed in Dane County, Apr. 25 (Kay-Buss). A barred owl nest located in Oconto County on Apr. 4 contained one egg, with two more added by Apr. 9 (Carl Richter). Another early nesting is indicated by the observation of four young prairie horned larks in Milwaukee, Apr. 24 (Bill Jackson).

Mourning doves were building a nest in Oconto, Apr. 16 (Carl Richter), while a nest of this species with two eggs was found in Eau Claire, Apr. 21 (Miss Almon). Kingfishers had begun to nest in Waupaca by Apr. 11 (Mrs. Peterson), and in Madison by Apr. 17 (Emlen). A phoebe nest with eggs was noted in the shot tower of Tower Hill State Park, Iowa County, Apr. 29 (Kay-Buss). A crow nest with three eggs was sighted in Loganville, Apr. 17 (Kruse); on Apr. 22 a nest was found in Rock County (King), and another the same day, containing five eggs, in Oconto County (Carl Richter). A white-breasted nuthatch was nesting in Waupaca by Apr. 5 (Mrs. Peterson). A nest of the bluebird was started by Apr. 9 in Black River Falls (Roberts), and by Apr. 12 in Waupaca (Mrs. Peterson). A cardinal's nest with three eggs was discovered in Stoughton, April 29 (Mrs. Thomas). A nest of the vesper sparrow in Loganville was nearly complete on Apr. 30 (Kruse). Chipping sparrows were building in Iowa County, Apr. 29 (Kay-Buss).

By mid-May many more nests were under way, but we mention particularly a nest of the cedar waxwing in process of construction in Rhineland on May 15 (Miss Almon), because this species is ordinarily one of the latest nesters.

1948 furnished two bits of evidence of nesting carrying into September. In Milton, juvenile young yellow-billed cuckoos were banded on Sept. 3 and 8 (Mrs. Maxson). In Madison a cardinal nest still contained young birds on Sept. 8 (Mrs. Stephenson).

Nesting Density and Success

Another fruitful field for inquiry deals with problems of density and success of bird nesting. How close together do birds nest? How many nests of a given species are in use at a given time in a given locality? How close together do birds nest? How many nests of a given species are in use at a given time in a given locality? How does this vary in different types of habitat? How many nests of a given species can be located during an entire nesting season? How many of these nests lead to successful fledging? What happens to those that fail? The answers to these and other similar questions will not be forthcoming in a year's time, but each year will add some information that will eventually lead to many of the answers. On May 31 Kaspar located 16 red-wing nests near Oshkosh, containing 19 eggs and 40 young. A study of robin nests by the Kumlien Club in Madison, consisting largely of observations by Howard Young and Leon Edmunds in two areas of the city, indicated a total of 93 nests found, from which a total of 176 young fledged. Observations on a smaller scale in Onalaska revealed that of nine robin nests discovered, three were unsuccessful (Alvin Peterson). Two colonies of cliff swallows were reported: One estimated at 1000 pairs in Dane County, July 11 (Hall), the other of about 100 pairs in Calumet County, May 30 (Mrs. Rogers). In addition, four nests with young were observed in Oconto County, July 3-16 (Hans Zell). Interesting information about mallard nesting in Burnett County is furnished by a report of six broods of young observed between May 20 and June 12. A previous nest with 11 eggs had been destroyed.

Interesting Tidbits

There are still other aspects of the nesting season which deserve some mention. It is interesting to note which species were parasitized by the nesting activities of the cowbird. In Loganville on Apr. 30 Kruse found a nest of the prairie horned lark containing two eggs of the lark, and four of the cowbird. Other cowbird eggs were found in the nests of the alder flycatcher, yellow warbler, mourning warbler, scarlet tanager, chipping sparrow, field sparrow, and white-throated sparrow. Young cowbirds were seen being fed by adult wood thrushes, golden-winged warblers, pine warblers, and song sparrows.

In Onalaska there was an instance of a catbird building a nest in early June, only to abandon it later, and have it taken over by a brown thrasher. (Peterson).

Several instances of large broods were reported. A case in point is the brood of 22 young green-winged teal in Burnett County, July 27 (Stone). A brood of 15 young ruffed grouse was watched near Three Lakes, Oneida County, July 16 (Wicks). An unusual observation was that of three eggs in the nest of a mourning dove in Madison in May; one egg was decidedly older than the other two, however. (Emlen).

Conclusion

These are the "first fruits" of the new effort by the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology to gather and assimilate data about the breeding birds of Wisconsin. The project is off to an encouraging start. It is hoped that observations in future years will be even more numerous and more complete. Active bird students who are looking for some worthwhile ornithological problems to investigate will find an abundance of opportunities connected with this breeding survey. Other bird lovers who cannot go to such lengths of study can still watch the nests they see in their own yards, and know they are contributing to an important study. We look forward to greater progress in 1949!

The Student's Page

By MRS. N. R. BARGER

With spring not far away, we again look forward to the season of migration with enthusiasm. Old acquaintances will be revived and new ones added to our lists daily. Among those will be a few which we cannot recognize. I well remember such an instance in my experience.

It was about the size of a bluebird. It seemed to be the shape of a blackbird, though smaller. I tried to note everything about it that would be important in deciding what bird it was; it was brownish, varied with streaks and edgings, while the underparts were broadly streaked with dark brown. Also, there was a broad light stripe above the eye. My impression was that it must be a sparrow of some sort.

DARYL TESSEN WITH A CHICKADEE FEEDING FROM HIS HAND. THE BIRD CAME TO THE TRAY TO TAKE PEANUTS WHILE THE TRAY WAS BEING INSTALLED, AND FED FROM THE HANDS OF NINE PERSONS THE FIRST DAY.



BELOW: CHICKADEE PHOTOGRAPHED BY NINE-YEAR-OLD DARYL WITH A "TOY" CAMERA. NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY IS AN ABSORBING HOBBY FOR YOUNGSTERS.



Upon looking through Peterson's "Field Guide to the Birds" I could not find a single sparrow that answered the description exactly. The sparrows' bills were all short and conical, while this bird had a sharp pointed bill.

Secretly I was hoping that I was really looking at something good, something unusual. I wanted to find an interesting bird, like my husband who was always finding interesting ones and showing them to me. I soon learned, however, that to be sure of something unusual or rare, one must be thoroughly familiar with all the common birds or they will be sure to lead you astray.

So I proceeded to ask myself further questions. Did it have a characteristic flight? What was its behavior? Did it sing or call? In what kind of habitat was it found?

The first three questions didn't really have definite or deciding answers for this particular bird, but the habitat was certainly indisputable. Why didn't I think of the habitat before? This was a marsh! What birds do we usually find in marshes? Bitterns, ducks, rails, blackbirds, marsh wrens, sparrows, but this was not a sparrow!

Suddenly it occurred to me that not all birds we study need to be males and I was overlooking the possibility of a female entirely. How stupid! Of course, it was a female red-winged blackbird. I was making hard work out of a simple thing like that!

With a few years of study a bird student takes all of these considerations for granted, almost subconsciously; but for those of us who are just beginning, a definite ritual well may be followed—what is the bird's size, shape, color, mode of flight, behavior, call notes, habitat, et cetera? Any, or all of these points may be needed to positively identify a species.

BIRD NOTES FROM CLEARWATER LAKE, WISCONSIN

By MRS. E. J. ABRAHAMSON

Our bird feeding station gave us a great amount of satisfaction and amusement during the winter of 1948, our first in the north woods. We spread the feast on a shelf three or four feet from the living room window, so had a very close view of the diners.

The most amusing were the chickadees who were the champion acrobats, going to no end of effort to get the peanuts suspended to strings and fastened to a tiny trapeze. They were not daunted even by a whirling stick with a nut on each end which gave them a ride with every peck. There seemed to be no way to outwit the little rascals.

Close seconds were the white-breasted nuthatches. They, of course, being so adept at swallowing while upside down, never missed a bite. These dapper little dandies are more scrappy than any of the other patrons. No other bird, not even of its own species, could eat at the same time. Their more shy cousin, the red-breasted nuthatch, visited our tray a number of times. Blue jays, supposedly so ornery, were very decent about waiting for other birds to get their meal; or, more likely,

were later risers; but when their own turn came they made the food disappear in a hurry and in great quantities. They took a back seat for the Canada jays who frequently sailed in to carry away a whole pancake to a tree for total consumption. These visited us in the fall and pecked all of the old hornet nests to pieces to get the larvae remaining there. In December they left us, but returned on February 2, so we had pancakes again for their benefit.

The lonely, 'near-sighted' brown creeper was with us all winter. He was the most awkward one on the shelf, but was driven to eat there once in a while. A shelf is not his natural dining spot, for he has a source of food on the trunks of trees, which he covers thoroughly.

Flocks of pine siskins, goldfinches, and redpolls were about in the yard, but it was a rare event when they ate from the shelf. The goldfinches sang all winter. It was a treat to stand out in the winter sunshine and hear them trilling away, up in the tall trees.

Another beautiful winter singer is the purple finch which we saw at intervals all season. His long warbling song gives you a real thrill on a zero morning. Our most interesting sight of this fellow was later in the spring when we witnessed his mating dance. He spread his wings, plumped out his feathers, danced about on the ground with a stick in his mouth as a hint to his brown mate to get busy and build a nest. She, in a businesslike fashion, was hustling about cramming her bill with soft dog hair, not too much impressed with the performance of her spouse. Later, he dropped the stick and danced around her, singing his entire song.

On January 31, a male crossbill visited the tray, awkwardly manipulated a morsel of food, and flew to a nearby tree where his mate sat hopefully awaiting a lunch. He fed her solicitously and then regurgitated some more choice bits which he had previously consumed at the tray. It was a feat of skill for them to pass food from one to the other with their funny crossed bills. There was a big crop of white pine cones, their favorite food, so many of them stayed with us throughout the cold season.

Steady customers were the woodpeckers, hairy and downy. They ate pounds of suet and were fond of cornmeal cakes made from waste fat and the meal. All birds like this cake. Although the pileated woodpecker dwells within sight of our house, it never deigns to eat from the suet box.

This winter, on November 22, a fox sparrow came and remained for a week. Then snow covered his scratch feed. We did not hear him sing.

All these species of birds and not one starling or English sparrow to aggravate us!

This year, we have two ground shelters made of balsom boughs, and two trays, so we can see birds from any window. Canada jays have been here and gone again; and I hear by way of the grapevine that the crossbills are back.

THANKSGIVING MORNING IN CALIFORNIA

By MRS. ARTHUR KOEHLER

We spent the night before Thanksgiving camping in a eucalyptus grove on the ocean, ten miles below Santa Barbara. Upon our arrival we found about 70 Farallon cormorants roosting in the trees above our trailer. Also, in these eucalyptus trees, 65 feet in height, were about 20 snowy egrets. It was the first time I had ever seen egrets roosting so high.

Next morning, to work up an appetite, I walked about a mile down the beach to a salt marsh and back along a road in order to study both water and land birds.

The shore birds were not as numerous as they were a month ago, but there are several species that stay on this beach all winter. The most numerous were the sanderling. It is interesting to watch them follow each retreating wave, then turn and hurry back just in time to escape the next. There are many willets and godwits. The former are so drab while at rest, but when they fly a beautiful wing pattern shows. Only one Hudsonian curlew showed up, although they had been there by the hundreds during August and September. Several killdeer were on the beach and in the marsh. Brown pelicans and gulls were constantly flying up and down the shore; of the latter, ringbilled, western, and Heerman's were noticed.

The surf scoters are interesting ducks. They seem to enjoy riding the big waves near shore. Up and up they go until the wave breaks over them, causing them to disappear for a moment. Red-breasted mergansers and a hundred western grebes were feeding a little farther out.

When I reached the marsh, I was surprised to see a lone white pelican. It looked like a big sail boat beside the dozens of pintails, shovelers, baldpates and coots. I flushed a couple of Anthony's green herons and a sora rail. A marsh hawk flew low over the marsh and a sparrow hawk was sitting on a wire. Two ravens sailed over.

Coming back on dry land, I was interested in some new (to me) land birds. It was my first chance to see golden-crowned sparrows as they fed with large flocks of Gambel's sparrows. Mockingbirds are everywhere out here, as are Anna's hummingbirds and linnets. These three are our most common back yard birds.

A California woodpecker was in the live oaks, and a black phoebe on a wire. The latter look somewhat like our juncos, only darker; but they wag their tails just like the eastern phoebe. One hermit thrush was feeding under some cedars.

I saw only three species of warblers. The Audubon is abundant now, just as the myrtle is in Wisconsin during migration. These two species are much alike except the Audubon has a yellow throat. The dusky warbler (much like the orange-crown in appearance) and the yellow-throat were feeding in the weeds. A western meadowlark reminded me of home. California purple finches had come down from higher altitude for the winter and were feeding with their cousins the linnets. The California towhee is inconspicuous and easily missed, but his call note

is much like that of the red-eyed, and by this I found him. Out here the experts call the goldfinch the willow goldfinch, but I can see no difference between it and the common goldfinch. Flocks of these and Oregon juncos were feeding in the weeds.

While enroute home, I stopped to admire a beautiful flower garden, whereupon the lady who lived there came out with scissors and told me to help myself to anything. So I went home with my hands filled with sweetpeas, carnations, scabiosas, and a dozen more.

And so, two hours were spent meeting old friends and making new ones, thus bringing my current list of California birds to 109.

2308 Eleventh Avenue
Los Angeles 16, California

BOOK REVIEWS

DAYS WITHOUT TIME. By Edwin Way Teale. New York, 1948. 6¾x10 in., 283 pp. 144 photos, \$6.00.

Without doubt Mr. Teale is one of our most versatile naturemen. Almost every living thing, small or large, seems to attract his attention and sooner or later they all turn up under the inquisitive gaze of his versatile camera. In this, his latest book, Mr. Teale has let his gifted pen run rampant through the animal kingdom from the parasites of parasites to squirrels and wolves. In keeping with his major interests however about one half of the book is devoted to insects. In these sections we learn about the complex diversity of insect eggs, the ingenious device used by the milkweed to insure cross pollinization, as well as countless other facts about the most abundant animals. Bird life ranks as the second largest portion in the book and the reader is taken on several excursions in search of interesting birds, both common and rare. There are interesting chapters on the habits of crows, starlings and robins as well as one on a captive merganser. Mammals, reptiles, and plants are not slighted.

The reader of this book can look forward to many fascinating hours, and countless vicarious thrills in accompanying the author through the pages of the book. The information is interesting and Mr. Teale tells it in a readable and enjoyable fashion.

All of Mr. Teale's books have been well illustrated and this one is no exception. The remarkable collection of photographs is indeed one of the strongest points in recommending the book.—George A. Hall

AMERICAN BIRDS IN COLOR. LAND BIRDS. By Hal H. Harrison. New York, 1948. 6⅝x9¾ in., xxiv+486 pp. 387 photos (192 in color). 5.00.

As far as I know this is the first book to attempt the job of reproducing colored photographs of birds in mass quantities. The results however are disappointing to a certain extent. It seems obvious that in a book of reasonable price one cannot as yet expect high fidelity color reproduction. Some of the colored photographs in the book are excellent,

as for example, the bluebird, the hooded warbler, the junco and others. However the reader will be shocked at some of the poorer reproductions such as a sky-blue black-throated blue warbler, a yellow-breasted chat with a blue back and a pink brown thrasher. This reviewer spent some time in the field with Mr. Harrison this past summer and I can vouch for the care and thoroughness of his photographic technique. I feel that the faults lie mainly in present day color reproduction techniques. Most of the black and white pictures are good but many are obviously of mounted museum specimens.

The text of the book offers little that is new to the well read ornithologist, particularly in connection with western birds. This results in a decided unevenness, for when Mr. Harrison writes about the eastern birds which he knows, and particularly when he includes personal experience the text is good, but for those unfamiliar to him the text becomes little better than a rehash of other books.

In general the book is quite good however, but principally serves to make one long hopefully for the necessary advances in color printing so that a truly adequate book can be prepared using colored photographs.—George A. Hall.

NEWS . . .

(Continued from page 2)

with Wisconsin Ornithology. A number of our members have asked how a gift should be left to our Society in a will and the following form is suggested:

"I give to the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology the sum of blank dollars to be used by the Society for the following purposes ——" and then specify the purpose or say you give it to the general endowment fund.

Needless to say we also welcome gifts from our members during their lifetimes.

OUR NEXT CONVENTION

The 1949 annual meeting of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology will be held at the Wisconsin Memorial Union on the University of Wisconsin campus April 21 to 24. The Society will meet jointly with the Wilson Ornithological Club. The Kumlien Club and the University of Wisconsin will act as hosts for the occasion.

Sessions on Thursday morning and afternoon will be devoted to papers of general ornithological interest. A special symposium will be held on Friday afternoon. Papers on Wisconsin ornithology will feature the program on Saturday morning.

There are many notable aspects of this meeting that you will not want to miss: the reception by the Kumlien Club on Thursday evening, the fine moving picture programs Friday night and Saturday afternoon, the big banquet in the Great Hall of the Union on Saturday, and a wide choice of field trips on Sunday led by crack ornithologists from the Wisconsin Conservation Department and the University. This will also be your chance to meet famous authors, bird photographers, and wildlife lecturers from many parts of the country . . . and to talk and think about birds for four solid days if you want to.

It won't be expensive either! The University is turning over dormitory space to us for out-of-town visitors. You can stay there, for two and a half dollars per person per night. The Union will sell you a special block of meal tickets to simplify your eating problems and permit you to get five afternoon and evening meals there for six dollars. As a special feature this year, no registration fee will be charged. Banquet tickets will be two-fifty.

The officers of the Wisconsin Society hope that you can attend all four days of this, our finest annual meeting. If you cannot make it for all four days, make it for three or two, or one. We know you'll enjoy it tremendously.—The Committee.

Aldo Leopold

By IRVEN O. BUSS

Chief of Wildlife Research, Wisconsin Conservation Department*

The announcement of Aldo Leopold's death came suddenly. So suddenly in fact that even now many of us here in the halls of the conservation department and on the campus of the university have not yet attuned our hearts and minds to the new world in which he left us.

We appreciated him, but many of us did not realize the importance of his influence in our lives until we lost him. Since youngsters we have liked the clearness of a bobwhite's call, the smell of maple leaves drifted against a partridge log, and the scolding stones of the Flambeau, but their real value was never realized until our city work with its greasy smoke and concrete walks took us from them. Likewise, as we now look into an empty chair, a vast emptiness is born in our hearts—one who gave us these values of life has been taken from us.

Those who have followed the life and philosophies of Aldo Leopold by his pen will remember him as the father of wildlife management. From his early boyhood days spent prowling atop a bluff of the Mississippi to his final hours studying the sand-loving plants that thrive near his summer home on the Wisconsin river, wildlife grew up within him.

His writings not only are graced with eloquence, they are backed with scientific accuracy tuned to problems of the day. Since 1916 over 300 publications flowed from his ever-active pen. His pioneer text, "Game Management," lives on as the standard reference for wildlifers throughout the land. It is indeed regrettable that God called a recess before his more modern "Wildlife Ecology" was whipped into print.

To members of the Wisconsin Conservation department he will long be remembered as a friend in need, one who stood ever by his convictions, a man unmoved by the whims of emotion. For political motives he cared nothing, and his primary concern as a commissioner was ever directed at the wise utilization of our natural resources. The standards of conservation were and long will be measured by his yardstick, and his management precepts were based on factual information—bias and passion were never a part of his life. To the very end Aldo Leopold was a power and an advocate of conservation based on what is ethically and esthetically right as well as what is economically expedient. "A thing is right only when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the community, and the community includes the soil, waters, fauna, and flora, as well as people."

The several hundred students who have taken his courses will remember him as more than a professor. He was a competent commentator—a man who was able to teach from his own research, one who recognized and sifted out the important findings of other researchers, and an ecologist who pieced together the ABC's of scientific studies to spell the meanings of wildlife problems afield. They liked him because he could talk the language they understood and still retain the scientific soundness on

*Now professor of wildlife management, State College of Washington, Pullman, Washington.

which all his teachings were based. They respected him because his word was gospel, his lectures were linked to the land, and whether they be farmers, foresters or fishermen the ecological lessons of his classes became a part of their lives. The painstaking diligence of his lesson planning and the hours of precious time devoted to daily outlines were not in vain, for the seeds he has sown are already well rooted. They will mature and grow other progeny to foster his way of life.

Many of us will remember him as a man! Someone we were proud to call our friend, for in all his greatness he remained ever modest, kind, polite and tolerant. His manliness was reflected in his own conservation ethics as well as ethics applied to local and national wildlife problems. He shared his equity in the ringneck with our raptors, his deer with the cougar and wolf, and he would trade an extra rabbit to include the hoot of an owl in his interminable variety of wild animals. Hunter that he was, no species was "sold short" in order that he could enjoy better shooting. On his own land Aldo Leopold practiced what his ecological conscience dictated. His tactics did not seek to achieve one kind of conservation by destroying another, and his community included the soil, waters, animals, and plants with his own membership giving equal respect to each.

To those who knew him best Aldo Leopold will be remembered as a steadfast and untiring searcher for what was right. Behind his wind-worn years was hidden a determination for truth, and there was beauty ever about him and in his work which shall live forever. With notebook and field glasses he took to the fields recording horizontal transects through the sciences of botany, forestry, ornithology, mammalogy and soils.

Each winter he looked forward to the first event that marked the beginning of spring. For as he watched he knew that "after the midwinter blizzards, there comes a thawing night when the tinkle of dripping water is heard in the land. It brings strange stirrings, not only to creatures abed for the night, but to some who have been asleep for the winter. The hibernating skunk, curled up in his deep den, uncurls himself and ventures forth to prowls the wet world for breakfast, dragging his belly in the melting snow. His track marks one of the earliest dateable events in that cycle of beginnings and ceasings which we call a year."

Thus did he record the happenings in nature, and so was his life dedicated as a phenology in wildlife history. He is gone, but his work lives on:

For, lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of singing of birds is come
And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.

(Song of Solomon 2, 11-12)

THE BIRDS OF WISCONSIN

By L. KUMLIEN and N. HOLLISTER

With Revisions by A. W. Schorger

(Continued from last issue)

***Tringa alpina pacifica* (Coues). Red-backed Sandpiper.**

Very abundant migrant in May along the Rock River Valley, remaining some time in favorable localities. So plentiful are the red-backs at times that we saw, in May, 1899, fifty-three individuals killed by the discharge of a double-barreled shot gun, and the entire flock of several hundred birds immediately alighted among their slaughtered companions, so that the same performance could have been repeated. In the spring all are in full breeding plumage, but show an immense variation in the amount of black on the under parts. On its return in September and October it is much less common, except along Lake Michigan, and is then always in winter plumage. Such specimens as have been found in summer have always proved to be wounded birds.

***Ereunetes pusillus* (Linn.). Semipalmated Sandpiper.**

This little sandpiper is quite abundant in southern Wisconsin during May and the first half of June, and so many are summer residents that one easily gets the impression that it nests. Evidence of breeding is, however, entirely lacking, although specimens shot on Lake Koshkonong June 16, 1897, contained ova the size of medium hazel nuts and were in full breeding plumage. The majority of the birds which remain all summer do not assume this dress, however. They begin to gather in considerable flocks, associated more or less with other species, by the middle of August, and remain until there has been a severe freeze. On Lake Michigan this species remains much later than in the interior. Mr. Clark finds it most abundant in Dunn County in August.

***Ereunetes occidentalis* (Lawr.). Western Sandpiper.**

Migrant. Not nearly as common as the preceding, yet of regular occurrence in May and often up to the middle of June. We have no state records for the fall, and have never personally taken it anywhere except on Lake Koshkonong, but it doubtless occurs in all suitable localities, a few individuals with the large flights of *pusillus*. Much more readily distinguished from the semipalmated when both are in breeding plumage. The somewhat larger bill and the extended reddish-brown patch at the back of the head are distinguishing characters.

[There are two females in the Milwaukee Public Museum taken at Lake Koshkonong by Ludvig Kumlien, May 29, 1896.]

***Calidris arenaria* (Linn.). Sanderling.**

Common migrant along the shore of Lake Michigan in May, August, September and October. Less common in the interior, especially of late years. Formerly quite common about Lake Koshkonong, and, as with many of the waders, a few non-breeding birds remained all summer. Frequents the sandy shores exclusively, and not the mud flats like most of the shore birds. The winter plumaged adults and young are readily

detected among the large flights of smaller sandpipers by their lighter colored feathering.

***Limosa fedoa* (Linn.). Marbled Godwit.**

Formerly not very rare during migrations, but of late years, except along the Mississippi and in the northwestern part of the state, has almost entirely disappeared. Was not considered uncommon by Dr. Hoy in 1852, and a pair seen June 15, 1848, on the Wisconsin River, were supposed to be nesting. Thure Kumlien took his first pair at Lake Koshkonong, May 25, 1855. We have seen the bird in Green Bay and on Lake Winnebago, but our acquaintance with it in Wisconsin is principally from Lake Koshkonong, where it was not rare from 1870 to 1876, and in 1857-59 it was known to nest in two instances, once near Stoughton and once at the lake. There is, in the Kumlien collection a perfect egg taken from the oviduct of a female shot May 28, 1878, in the eastern part of Dane County. Mr. H. Nehrling gives it as breeding in the northern peninsula of Michigan, and it used to nest in Iron County, Wisconsin, and almost certainly along Green Bay. At the present time one of the rarest of the waders in Wisconsin.

[No specimen has been taken in recent years. W. Taylor (*Auk* 40,1923:339) saw one in Dane County, May 18, 1922; and H. L. Orians (*Pass. Pigeon* 6, no. 4, Oct., 1944:97 and back cover) another at Milwaukee, Sept. 8, 1944.]

***Limosa haemastica* (Linn.). Hudsonian Godwit.**

Migrant only. We have never known this godwit to occur anywhere within the state in any numbers, and of late years it must be considered very rare. Dr. Hoy procured a single specimen at Racine, November 1, 1850. At Lake Koshkonong it was taken regularly in small numbers up to about 1885; since then very rarely. Appears to have been more common along the Mississippi River than elsewhere in the state. Three specimens were taken near Albion, June 3, 1870, which is the latest record for spring that we have. These birds were doubtless just about to leave for more northern breeding grounds.

[The Hudsonian Godwit has declined in number so greatly within recent years that there is doubt if it will avoid extinction. A female was taken at Madison by A. W. Schorger (*Auk* 51,1934:533), May 13, 1934. The following specimens are recorded by O. J. Gromme (*Ibid.* 52,1935:81 and 102): two at Bear Bluff Marshes, Jackson County, May 21, 1931; one taken by C. S. Jung in Ozaukee County, May 13, 1933; and one at Lake Winnebago, June 12, 1934.]

***Totanus melanoleucus* (Gmel.). Greater Yellow-Legs.**

Common migrant, spring and fall, and also a summer resident in the less thickly settled portions of the state. Arrives from April 10 to April 28, and in autumn often remains until it freezes up. Dr. Hoy, in 1852, says of this species: "Abundant and nests in all large marshes." Mr. Nelson found it breeding in Northeastern Illinois in 1875, and Barry speaks of its nesting commonly in Wisconsin in 1854. Downy young were procured by L. Kumlien near Minnesota Junction in 1882. Noted only as a spring and fall migrant in Dunn County by Mr. J. N. Clark. The greater yellow-shanks is not as abundant as the next, yet occurs in

considerable numbers in fall, and being readily called by imitating the note many are shot by gunners. It is in full breeding plumage by May 1 and nests in much the same situations as the next. At Lake Koshkonong it bred at considerable distances from the lake, far out in the miry marshes and did not often visit the lake shore until the young were nearly full grown.

Totanus flavipes (Gmel.). Yellow-Legs.

Formerly an exceedingly abundant migrant, and to a considerable extent a summer resident. Arrives in Wisconsin about the first of May, and rarely remains later than October. Formerly bred at Lake Koshkonong, Horicon Lake, about Lake Pacana, and presumably in other localities. Is shot in large numbers by the gunners at the present time, and is decreasing very fast in numbers. Young, still unable to fly, are yet obtainable about Lake Koshkonong in July, but of late years not commonly. Prefers to nest some distance from the lake shore in the large marshes. So closely does it keep in the marshes during the nesting season that a person might visit the lake shore daily and not see a specimen until the young are almost able to fly.

Helodromas solitarius (Wils.). Solitary Sandpiper.

A fairly common summer resident in suitable localities, breeding from the southern counties northward to Lake Superior and beyond. Arrives in southern Wisconsin about May 1, the larger number at once passing on. Returning, the northern birds, together with those which remained to breed, leave early for the south, few being seen after September 15. Not at all a "shore bird," its haunts are almost strictly along wooded streams and about closely timbered ponds. There is no Wisconsin bird of which we have so diligently and systematically sought the eggs, and without success, as this sandpiper. Numbers of times we have found the young just hatched, and judging from the actions of the parents have often been near the eggs.

[Tringa solitaria cinnamomea (Brewster). Western Solitary Sandpiper.

B. Conover (*Auk* 61,1944:542) lists a specimen from Meridean, Clark County.]

Symphemia semipalmata (Gmel.). Willet.

None of the older Wisconsin ornithologists found the willet in any numbers. Dr. Hoy and Thure Kumlien spoke of it as a rare summer resident. The specimens secured during the past thirty years were usually taken in May and September, and although there are some records for June, we never found any evidence of nesting. Some numbers pass up the Mississippi and remain, or at least did, during June, in the marshy tracts in the western part of the state, possibly a few nesting. At the present time, however, it must be classed as a rare wader in Wisconsin. A good series taken at different seasons would doubtless prove the occurrence of the western form, *S. s. inornata* Brewst. within our borders at some time, if only as a straggler during migrations.

[The Western Willet (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus inornatus*) is the form occurring in Wisconsin. Uncommon migrant. One was taken in Sheboygan County by C. S. Jung (*Auk* 49,1932:468), April 30, 1932.]

Bartramia longicauda (Bechst.). Bartramian Sandpiper.

This once abundant species is disappearing at such a rate that if the decrease in the next twenty years is as great as it has been since 1870 the bird will become extinct. Formerly every meadow, border of marsh, or grassy lake shore contained great numbers of this bird. Of late it is found in limited numbers only, but is a regular breeder, even in the southern counties, about prairie pastures and grain fields. Arrives about the first of April and but few remain after the first hard frost in September. The "prairie pigeon" was but little molested until it became generally known that it was one of our best table birds, and consequently brought a good price in the city markets. From that time on it has been slaughtered both spring and fall in great numbers, and this is still carried on wherever the birds exist in any numbers, and especially during the southern migrations. The abominable practice of hunting with dogs for market during the breeding season no longer pays in Wisconsin, and, thanks to our spring shooting laws, has been to a great extent stopped, but entirely too late to save more than a remnant of the flocks of "upland plover" which once nested within our borders.

Tryngites subruficollis (Vieill.). Buff-breasted Sandpiper.

Rare migrant. During a residence of fifty years in southern Wisconsin Thure Kumlien procured but a single specimen, killed on a prairie in Dane County late in September, 1845. On September 10, 1892, a single young male was killed by L. Kumlien on Rock Prairie, Rock County. Another young male was shot by Mr. Henry Skavlem at Lake Koshkonong, and is now preserved in the collection of the club house on the "Carcajou Farms" at that place. Dr. Hoy (1852) gives the species as "quite common from September 15 to October 10. Never met in spring." Willard (1) gives it as a regular migrant in Brown County. It is unfortunate that these writers have left only the bare statements as above. This species "should" pass through the prairie regions of Wisconsin during spring and fall migrations, but it certainly does **not**, except very rarely, in the central parts of the state. Possibly more frequent in the western counties. We consider it one of our rarest "shore birds." To be looked for in prairie regions only, in such localities as are frequented by the Bartramian sandpiper.

[This species remains one of the rarest of the shore birds. I am unaware of its occurrence during the last fifty years.]

Actitis macularia (Linn.). Spotted Sandpiper.

A very common summer resident, arriving late in April of an average year, and remaining until quite late in autumn. Nests from the southern part of the state to Lake Superior in all suitable localities, and almost any situation will suit if near water. Its nests are the most easily found of any of the waders, in fact it seems to display very little ingenuity in concealing the eggs. Does not appear to have diminished in numbers to any great extent during the past thirty years.

Numenius longirostris (Wils.). Long-billed Curlew.

This is one of the species of birds that have been almost entirely driven out of Wisconsin. Formerly not only common, but abundant, it is now so rare as to merit a special notice when found. During the forties,

fifties and sixties it bred in suitable localities in different parts of the state. The last exact date of which we have any record for eggs is May, 1859, although it undoubtedly bred at a much later date in less thickly settled parts. From 1860 to 1890 it decreased rapidly, and when found at all it was as a migrant only. During the past ten years we have seen but two or three flocks on the prairie, in spring. As an illustration of the former numbers of the curlew Mr. Skavlem tells of his boyhood experiences, in the early fifties, when he was set to following the plows when breaking up the virgin prairie sod, and gathering up the eggs for the house. The curlew will not stay long on cultivated ground, but leaves with the disappearance of the original prairie sod.

Numenius hudsonicus (Lath.). Hudsonian Curlew.

From 1845 to about 1865 this species was fairly common during migrations in the prairie regions. Dr. Hoy writes of finding a few nesting at Fox Lake, June 15, 1848, and Thure Kumlien found the birds in summer in Dane County, and from their actions supposed them to be nesting. We have no **positive** evidence, however, that the species ever bred in the state. It has certainly been decidedly rare during the past thirty years even in migrations, and we have not seen a single specimen for twelve years. "Curlews" are still reported from sections in the north-western part of the state, but whether of this species or the foregoing is an unsettled question.

[Rare migrant. There are the following recent records: one taken in Sheboygan County by H. L. Stoddard (**Auk** 40,1923:321), September 23, 1922; one taken in Ozaukee County by O. J. Gromme, September 8, 1923 (H. L. Stoddard, Yearbook Mil. Pub. Mus., 1925:125-6; two in Ozaukee County by O. J. Gromme (Records Wis. Cons. Dept.) in September, 1930; one at Cedar Grove, Sheboygan County, by Earl Loyster and W. J. Mueller (**Pass. Pigeon** 1,1939:144), September 11, 1939.]

Numenius borealis (Forst.). Eskimo Curlew.

Exceedingly rare migrant. Thure Kumlien procured but two specimens during fifty years collecting in the State. Dr. Hoy took several in an early day, but considered them rare. A specimen, which we saw, was also shot in Green Bay in the fall of 1879.

[The Eskimo Curlew is thought to be extinct. The last reported capture was in Argentina, January 11, 1925. O. P. Allert (**Auk** 45,1928:95) has a specimen taken by Delos Hatch on the Horicon Marsh, spring of 1903. It was inspected by Dr. H. C. Oberholser.]

(Continued in next issue)

The 1948 Christmas Bird Count

Eighty-two species were found in 13 Christmas bird counts between December 19, 1948, and January 2, 1949. Participants in the counts numbered 56, and they covered eight areas in southern Wisconsin and four in the east central part of the state.

One notable feature of the counts is the large number of water birds in the Milwaukee area. A comparison of the 1947 and 1948 counts, covering approximately the same area, shows 6590 herring gulls in 1948 where there were 405 in 1947, and 1500 golden-eyes compared with 270 in 1947. American mergansers, on the other hand, dropped from 3760

in 1947 to 2210 in 1948. Other significant changes in bird populations, taken from comparisons of similar counts in 1947 and 1948, show a surprising increase in blue jays in Green Bay, and a decrease elsewhere; a sharp increase in red-headed woodpeckers in Loganville; good numbers of marsh and rough-legged hawks in Waukesha; an increase in short-eared owls at Horicon; and surprising drops in brown creepers and golden-crowned kinglets.

The knot in Milwaukee is a spectacular record; it had been seen frequently earlier in December, and was seen by all observers on the day of the count. Less astonishing, but still very unusual, are the following: pied-billed grebe, black-crowned night heron, green-winged teal, and hooded merganser in Green Bay; white-winged scoter at Cedar Grove; snow and blue geese, ruffed grouse, long-eared owl, red-breasted nuthatch, hermit thrush, cowbird, and white-crowned, fox and swamp sparrows in Milwaukee; Brewer's blackbird in Waukesha; and canvas-back in Appleton.

In addition there are scattered reports of some of the semi-hardy species: red-shouldered hawk in three places, marsh hawk in three, coot in two, mourning dove at five localities, kingfisher at Milwaukee, flicker at Milwaukee and Oshkosh, meadowlark at Appleton, robin in three places, redwings in two, and song sparrows in four.

Reports of the northern visitants are few, but outstanding among them are the pine and evening grosbeaks in Carrollville. Other northern visitants include an evening grosbeak at Appleton and Cedar Grove, and redpolls and a northern shrike at Green Bay.

	Appleton	Appleton	Carrollville	Cedar Grove	Green Bay	Horicon	Loganville	Mazomanie	Milwaukee	Oshkosh	Ripon	Viroqua	Waukesha
NUMBER OF OBSERVERS	3	3	4	2	12	1	1	2	18	2	1	1	11
NUMBER OF SPECIES	20	13	20	30	29	17	19	28	59	15	11	16	21
Pied-billed Grebe					1								
Black-crowned Night Heron					1								
Snow Goose									1				
Blue Goose									2				
Mallard	1			1					325				50
Black Duck	79			2	50				148				
Baldpate									1				
Pintail									4				
Green-winged Teal					7								
Shoveller									35				
Redhead									3				
Canvas-back	2			8					62				
Greater Scaup Duck				3					30				
Lesser Scaup Duck				70	5				278				
American Golden-eye	265	61	150	160	18			7	1500				
Bufflehead									305				
Oldsquaw				225					166				
White-winged Scoter				1									
Ruddy Duck				1					2				
Hooded Merganser					1				3				
American Merganser	17		45	23	57			20	2210				
Red-breasted Merganser				6					325				
Red-tailed Hawk			1				2		9				1
Red-shouldered Hawk			1						1		1		

	Appleton	Appleton	Carrollville	Green Bay	Cedar Grove	Horicon	Loganville	Mazomanie	Milwaukee	Oshkosh	Ripon	Viroqua	Waukesha
Rough-legged Hawk						2			4	2			9
Bald Eagle								3					
Marsh Hawk						2		1					5
Sparrow Hawk			1	1					2				2
Ruffed Grouse							7		1				
Hungarian Partridge				28					10				32
Bob-white							17						
Pheasant			6	2	5	28		1	68	15	1		
Coot				1					1				
Knot									1				
Herring Gull	1		600	328	307			1	6590				1
Ring-billed Gull			75	35					655				
Bonaparte's Gull									353				
Rock Dove			2	8	57		26	16	51	3			
Mourning Dove		2			1			2	3	3			
Screech Owl									1				
Great Horned Owl						1		3					1
Barred Owl							1	1					
Long-eared Owl									4				
Short-eared Owl						6			1				
Belted Kingfisher									3				
Flicker									1	1			
Pileated Woodpecker					1		2	2					
Red-bellied Woodpecker							1	10				4	
Red-headed Woodpecker					1		24	8				3	
Hairy Woodpecker	1		1		3			3	7			1	2
Downy Woodpecker	3	2	1	2	8	5	5	5	26	2	3	5	5
Blue Jay	6	4			117	1	6	25	44	3	5	12	5
Crow	3	1	5	28	59	4	12	3	195	54	1	6	650
Chickadee	4	5	6	8	69	6	16	20	119	36	8	10	11
Tufted Titmouse								2				2	
White-breasted Nuthatch	6				8	2	9	10	11	1	6	6	1
Red-breasted Nuthatch									1				
Brown Creeper	1							4		1			
Robin		1		1					1				
Hermit Thrush									1				
Golden-crowned Kinglet										2			
Northern Shrike					1								
Starling	23	24	30	50	232	2	1	2	353	18	40	50	38
English Sparrow	50	330	28	230	1350	45	70	50	412	105	200	30	268
Eastern Meadowlark	2												
Redwing						4		1					
Brewer's Blackbird													1
Cowbird									1				
Cardinal	4	1	1		10	1	18	4	34			15	4
Evening Grosbeak	7		115	1									
Purple Finch									1				
Pine Grosbeak			3										
Redpoll					75								
Pine Siskin				1					14				
Goldfinch					1	1	18	6	78			20	9
Junco	6	2	15	18	40	8	21	40	146		25	15	66
Tree Sparrow	10	4	35	35	75	25	4	160	238	25	4	8	163
White-crowned Sparrow									3				
Fox Sparrow									1				
Swamp Sparrow									3				
Song Sparrow		1							6			1	
Snow Bunting				3	51	166							

Appleton. (City, along river to Kaukauna, south to High Cliff; along lake shore to Menasha and Neenah, north through Riverside cemetery to Center Swamp and return; river banks 20%, lake front 15%, hardwoods 12%, open fields 25%, city streets 12%, cemetery 8%, swamp border 8%). Jan. 2; daylight to dusk. Partly cloudy; temp. 14° to 32°; wind slight; 1½ inch hoarfrost on vegetation in morning; 8 inches snow; river mostly frozen; lake frozen. Three observers together. Total hours 9 (5 afoot, 4 by car); total miles 82 (5 afoot, 77 by car). Total, 20 species, 491 individuals.—Mr. & Mrs. W. E. Rogers, Dexter Wolfe.

Appleton. (City parks, ravines, cemeteries and streets 20%, high woodland 20%, swamp woodland 10%, fields 20%, riverbanks 30%). Dec. 27; 9 a. m. to 1 p. m., and 2 p. m. to 4:30 p. m. Cloudy; temp. 14° to 20°; wind south, 10 m.p.h.; 1½ inches snow. Three observers together. Total hours 6½ (5 afoot, 1½ by car); total miles 35 (5 afoot, 30 by car). Total, 13 species, 438 individuals.—Mrs. Frank Blick, Mrs. Fred Guenther, Mrs. Fred Tessen.

Carrollville. (From village south along Lake Michigan to within seven miles of Racine; fields 50%, woods 25%, lake shore 25%). Dec. 30; 1 p. m. to 5 p. m. Mostly fair; temp. 23° to 28°; wind NE, 10-15 m.p.h.; ground mostly bare; Lake Michigan open. Four observers together. Total hours, 4 afoot; total miles, 7 afoot. Total, 20 species; 1122 individuals.—Helmuth Mueller, Gordon Orians, Thomas Sharp, George Treichel.

Cedar Grove. (Fields west of town, woods along Lake Michigan and Bahr Creek east of town, Port Washington harbor; fields 40%, woods 35%, lake shore 25%). Jan. 1; 9:30 a. m. to 4:45 p. m. Cloudy; temp. 18° to 30°; wind NW, 8-12 m.p.h.; 3-4 inches snow; Bahr Creek frozen; Lake Michigan mostly open. Two observers together. Total hours, 7¼ (6½ afoot, ¾ by car); total miles, 37 (12 afoot, 25 by car). Total, 30 species, 1333 individuals.—Gordon Orians, George Treichel.

Green Bay. (City parks, streets and cemeteries; bay shore and river; marsh, woods and fields in surrounding area.) Dec. 19; 8 a. m. to 4 p. m. Overcast, with intermittent snow; temp. 23° to 29°; wind light; 1 inch snow; some open spots in bay and river. Twelve observers in four parties. Total miles 93 (16 afoot, 77 by car). Total, 29 species, 2726 individuals.—Joe Bader, Bernard Chartier, Edwin Cleary, Clara and Ray Hussong, Chester Krawczyk, LeRoy and Don Lintereur, Ed Paulson, Eric Richter, Dr. E. S. Schmidt, Alice Weber.

Horicon. (Horicon to Mieske farm to Four Mile Island and back to Horicon). Dec. 30; 6:45 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. Clear; temp. 8° to 22°; light NW wind. One observer. Total hours 9¾; total miles afoot 11. Total, 17 species, 143 individuals.—Harold A. Mathiak.

Loganville. (Area one square mile; deciduous woodland 40%, open fields and farmyards 60%). Jan. 2; 1:20 p. m. to 4:45 p. m. Clear; temp. 27° to 23°; moderate NE wind; 6 inches snow; creeks frozen. One observer. Hours afield 3½. Total, 19 species, 260 individuals.—Harold Kruse.

Mazomanie. (Selected areas along both sides of the Wisconsin River between Mazomanie and Prairie du Sac; deciduous woodland 40%, river 25%, marsh 20%, open fields 10%, residential 5%). Jan. 1; 6:45

a. m. to 4:30 p. m. Overcast; temp. 1° to 20°; wind slight; 2 inches snow; few open spots in river. Two observers together. Total hours 9¾ (8 afoot, 1¾ by car); total miles 48 (8 afoot, 40 by car). Total, 28 species, 410 individuals.—N. R. Barger, Sam Robbins.

Milwaukee. (City parks and parkways, Bender dump, Wind Lake, Cedarburg swamp, Upper River Road, sections of Lake Michigan front, fields and woods on the west, northwest and southwest sides of city; river bottoms 22%, lake front 20%, woods 20%, fields 15%, tamarack swamp 15%, coniferous plantings 5%, feeding stations 3%). Dec. 26; dawn to dusk. Fair; temp. 9° to 21°; wind SW, 20-25 m.p.h.; trace of snow on ground; Lake Michigan mostly open. 18 observers in 6 parties and at 4 feeding stations. Total hours 44 (34 afoot, 10 by car); total miles 285 (52 afoot, 233 by car). Total, 59 species, 14,588 individuals.—Audrey Andrews, Mrs. A. P. Balsom, Marie Daetz, Mrs. C. Decker, Mary Donald, Mr. & Mrs. C. P. Frister, Daniel Frister, Dr. A. Hehn, Bernard Kaiman, Mrs. F. L. Larkin, Lauren Meyers, Helmuth Mueller, Gordon Orians, H. L. Orians, Frank Schaeffer, John Schaeffer, George Treichel.

Oshkosh. (Sections near Black Wolf Point and other areas south of the city; deciduous woodland 75%, farm roads and adjoining fields 20%, coniferous grove 5%). Dec. 26; 7:45 a. m. to 12:15 p. m., and 2 p. m. to 4:30 p. m. Partly cloudy; temp. 5° to 11°; 2 inches snow. Two observers together. Total hours 7; total miles 80 (5 afoot, 75 in car). Total, 15 species, 271 individuals.—Jack and Kurt Kaspar.

Ripon. (Fields and woods in and near city). Dec. 29. One observer. Total hours, 3. Total, 11 species, 294 individuals.—Paul Cors.

Viroqua. (Country roads, fields and woods). Dec. 25; 10 a. m. to 1 p. m. Clear; temp. 6° to 15°; 3-4 inches snow. Total hours 3; total miles afoot 6. Total, 16 species, 188 individuals.—Margarette E. Morse.

Waukesha. (City; Mukwanago Marsh, along Fox River, woods, marsh and farmlands). Dec. 26; 7 a. m. to 4 p. m. Partly clear; temp. 10° to 21°; wind 5-20 m.p.h. Eleven observers in two parties. Total hours 9 (5½ afoot, 3½ by car); total miles 90 (9 afoot, 81 by car). Total, 21 species, 1324 individuals.—Clarence Anthes, Vince Batha, Harlow Bielefeld, Les Compton, Olive Compton, Al Johnson, S. Paul Jones, Charles Nelson, James Selle, Roy Wakeman, T. G. Wilder.

THE SUMMER SEASON . . .

IMPORTANT CHANGE IN THE FIELD NOTE DEPARTMENT

Please note the following changes in the seasons for reporting field notes, and the dates for forwarding notes to the field note editor, effective immediately.

Season:	Inclusive Dates:	Reports Due:
Winter	November 1—January 31	February 10
Spring	February 1—April 30	May 10
Summer	May 1—July 31	August 10
Autumn	August 1—October 31	November 10

This change involves a partial break-up of the natural ornithological seasons, particularly in spring; but this loss is more than offset by the following advantages:

(1) We shall soon be able to publish "The Passenger Pigeon" on schedule, including a field note summary that is much fresher than those we have had in recent years.

(Please send field notes to Rev. Samuel D. Robbins, Mazomanie, Wisconsin)

(2) We shall be able to cooperate more fully with "Audubon Field Notes," giving them the seasonal picture of Wisconsin bird life they desire, and giving our observations nation-wide prominence.

(3) We shall be able to cooperate more fully with the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service program, outlined in the last issue of "The Passenger Pigeon."

Therefore we ask our observers to do the following things:

(1) Send all notes for the period September-January to the field note editor immediately.

(2) Send lists of birds observed in Wisconsin in 1948 to the field note editor immediately for use in the annual summary. The new pocket check-lists will be handy for this.

(3) If you wish to become a regular contributor for the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service, write to the field note editor for a supply of the proper forms.

The success of this new revised program will depend on promptness in sending in reports. It is hoped that individuals and bird clubs will use every means at their disposal to cooperate.—S. D. R.

By the first of June the spring migration was virtually completed, and nesting was well under way. In contrast with 1947, when the general arrival of some migrants did not take place until early June, and when a number of migrants remained until the middle of the month, there were only a handful of reports of individual stragglers during the first week of June, 1948.

Comments on the nesting season will be found elsewhere in this issue.

The fall migration began normally with the appearance of a few shorebirds in mid-July. As a whole, however, the shorebird migration during July and August was disappointing—quantity especially, and with the exception of the willet, western and buff-breasted sandpipers in Milwaukee, in quality also. July and August also saw a very good flight of "white herons." As reports for the special nesting survey have come in, it has become increasingly clear that the American egret flight of 1948 compares favorably with any flight in recent history with the possible exception of 1946. Along with the American egrets were a surprising number of smaller "white herons." In addition to the specific records of the snowy egret and little blue heron listed below, small white herons were observed in Milton and Horicon, but positive identification was not made in these instances.

Lack of observers in the northern part of the state, and the presence of such a varied breeding population in that area, makes it difficult to determine the first evidence of small land bird migration. Apparently birds were returning to Land O'Lakes in Vilas County by August 4, when Mrs. Miles noted unusually large groups of warblers, including a bay-breasted warbler. Two days later a few migrants had appeared in Neillsville. In southern Wisconsin, in spite of the warmest weather of the summer, migration was in evidence by August 20. With the end of the warm spell on August 28, small land birds came through in a rush. King noted many small migrants going over Appleton on the night of August 29. During the last three days of August, Scott and Robbins found the migration to be in full swing—in mid-September form—in Dane County, counting seven species of flycatchers, six thrushes, four vireos and 21 warblers during that time.

Here are the season's highlights.

Double-crested Cormorant: One still in Milwaukee, June 2 (Mrs. Larkin). Two were noted in Jackson County on July 4, apparently in good health (Roberts).

American Egret: A surprising number of early summer records. Besides the nesting birds at Horicon, flock of 20 was seen at Lake Wisconsin, Columbia County, from June 10 on, and there is a strong possibility that some of these nested (J. T. Walker). Two were present in Racine throughout June and early July (Prins). One was observed in Merrick State Park, Buffalo County, June 5 (Robbins), and an individual—perhaps the same as the one reported in the spring—was seen off and on during the early summer in Burnett County (fide Stone). More and more birds came into the state during the latter part of July and all of August, some individuals getting as far north as Green Bay, Oconto, and Outagamie, Waupaca and Dunn Counties.

Snowy Egret: Two were seen in Kenosha County, where a bird of this species was collected in 1947, on Aug. 14 (Prins), and one was still there Aug. 29 (Higgins et al). Another individual was carefully observed at Lynxville, Crawford County, on Aug. 11 (Albert Johnson).

Little Blue Heron: The snowy egrets in Kenosha County were accompanied by three birds of this species on Aug. 14 (Prins) and Aug. 29 (Higgins et al). In Jefferson County six were seen at Ixonia, Aug. 15 (Mrs. Paulsen), and two were found near Fort Atkinson, Aug. 28 (Robbins).

Canada Goose: Straggler still in Douglas County, June 3 (Stone-Hartmeister). Bred in Wood County (Searles).

Gadwall: Bred in Door and Jackson Counties.

Baldpate: Two Rivers, June 20 (Mrs. Smith).

Pintail: Bred in Burnett County; two in Sheboygan County, June 11 (Gordon Orians). Migrants returned by Aug. 31 in Milwaukee (Gordon Orians-Mrs. Larkin) and in Madison (Robbins).

Green-winged Teal: Breeding birds in Burnett County. Migrants in Kenosha County, Aug. 14 (Prins).

Shoveller: Two Rivers, June 12. (Mrs. Smith).

Redhead: Bred in Dodge and Door Counties.

Ring-necked Duck: Bred in Waukesha and Burnett Counties.

American Golden-eye: Lingered in Milwaukee until June 9 (Mrs. Balsom-Mrs. Thompson). One in eclipse plumage near Oshkosh, July 11 (Kaspar).

Ruddy Duck: Bred in Waukesha County; Horicon, June 20 (King); one in Oshkosh, Aug. 7 (Kaspar); six in Dane County, Aug. 19 (Robbins).

Hooded Merganser: Females with young of the year seen in Vernon, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Outagamie, Forest and Marinette Counties. One female noted in Two Rivers, June 20-21 (Mrs. Smith).

American Merganser: 100 seen in Door County, June 26 (King).

Red-breasted Merganser: 3 young birds seen in Racine during the summer (Prins); nested near Wausau.

Turkey Vulture: Again numerous reports. 34 were counted in Crawford County, Aug. 20 (Apel); five noted in Oconto County, June 13 (Carl Richter). Single individuals noted as follows: Milwaukee, July 14 (Gordon Orians-Mrs. Larkin); Waukesha County, June 29 (Mrs. Balsom); Loganville, June 30 (Kruse); Vernon County, July 29 (Scotts);

Buffalo County, June 5 (Robbins); Brown County, Aug. 23 (King); and Oconto County, June 11 (Becker).

Sharp-shinned Hawk: One in Neillsville, Aug. 6 (Robbins).

Bald Eagle: Summering birds reported in Polk, Brown, Door, Iron and Vilas Counties.

Osprey: One in Brown County, July 13 (Paulsen). Migrants appeared in Oshkosh, Aug. 28 (Kaspar), and in Milwaukee, Aug. 29 (Mrs. Larkin).

Duck Hawk: Peninsula State Park, Door County, Aug. 2 (Cors).

Pigeon Hawk: An unusual summer record: One was seen on both the Wisconsin (Forest County) and Michigan sides of the Brule River, July 3 (Carl Richter).

Prairie Chicken: Three in Deerfield, Dane County, Aug. 21 (Aberg).

Bob-white: One seen and heard in Cable, Bayfield County, June 10 (Heinsohn); noted in Marathon County, July 3 (Robbins).

King Rail: Nested in Ozaukee County. Noted in Waukesha County Aug. 3 (Mrs. Balsom).

Piping Plover: Nested in Door County, (Zimmerman).

Killdeer: Reached a peak in Oshkosh on Aug. 25 when 245 were counted (Kaspar).

Black-bellied Plover: Noted in Oshkosh on Aug. 14 (Mrs. Fisher) and Aug. 31 (Kaspar). Single individuals seen in Vernon County, Aug. 31 (Miss Morse); Dodge County, Aug. 18 (Mallow); and Kenosha County, Aug. 29 (Higgins et al).

Ruddy Turnstone: Lingered in Winnebago County until June 5 (Mrs. Rogers). Arrived in Racine County, July 24 (Prins), and in Milwaukee, Aug. 7 (Gordon Orians).

Wilson's Snipe: 24 counted in Outagamie County, July 26 (King).

Solitary Sandpiper: Arrived in Milwaukee, July 12 (Gordon Orians-Mrs. Larkin), and in Vernon County, July 17 (Miss Morse).

Willet: One seen in Milwaukee, Aug. 10 (Howard and Gordon Orians).

White-rumped Sandpiper: One in Milwaukee, July 25 (Mrs. Larkin); one at Lake Koshkonong, Aug. 28 (Robbins).

Baird's Sandpiper: Present in Milwaukee, July 21-Aug. 29 (Mrs. Larkin), and in Oshkosh, Aug. 12-25 (Kaspar).

Red-backed Sandpiper: Racine County, Aug. 22 (Prins); Milwaukee, Aug. 29 (Mrs. Balsom).

Dowitcher: Kenosha County, Aug. 14 (Prins); Dodge County, Aug. 18 (Mallow); Oshkosh, Aug. 18-25 (Kaspar).

Western Sandpiper: One carefully observed under favorable conditions in Milwaukee, July 28 (Mrs. Larkin-Gordon Orians).

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: Milwaukee, July 31 (Orians). See October issue (back page).

Sanderling: Present in Milwaukee from July 21 on (Mrs. Larkin). Noted also at Lake Koshkonong, Aug. 28 (Robbins), and in Kenosha County, Aug. 29 (Higgins et al).

Wilson's Phalarope: Eight counted in Dodge County, Aug. 18 (Mallow).

Bonaparte's Gull: A few seen in Milwaukee throughout the summer (several observers). Returned to Oshkosh, July 29 (Kaspar).

Forster's Tern: Milwaukee, Aug. 5 (Gordon Orians).

Barn Owl: Nested in Dane, Jefferson and Rock Counties.

Long-eared Owl: Peninsula Park, Door County, early August (Cors).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: An individual was seen near Milton from June 4 to 25, and again on Aug. 31 (Mrs. Maxson). In Vernon County Park, an adult was seen on June 27, and an immature on July 11 and 18 (Miss Morse). Unusual so far south.

Arctic Three-toed Woodpecker: Seen in Land O' Lakes, Vilas County, in mid-July and on Aug. 9 (Mrs. Miles).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Milwaukee, Aug. 16 (Mrs. Larkin); Racine, Aug. 29 (Prins); Dane County, Aug. 29 (Scotts-Robbins).

Acadian Flycatcher: One in Jefferson County, Aug. 23, and one in Dane County, Aug. 31; both heard making their distinctive call note (Robbins).

Alder Flycatcher: Present at Peninsula Park in Door County in early August (Cors).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Late migrants were seen in Neillsville, June 1 (Robbins), and in Rhinelander, June 2 (Miss Almon). One in Dane County, Aug. 29 (Scotts-Robbins).

Canada Jay: Present in Vilas County during July and August (Mrs. Miles).

Raven: Nested in Iron County. Seen also in Taylor County, June 29 (Robbins), and in Vilas County through July and August (Mrs. Miles).

Hudsonian Chickadee: A flock was noted in Land O' Lakes on Aug. 10 (Mrs. Miles).



PHOTO BY C. H. RICHTER
SHOWING TRIANGULAR ENTRANCE OF
AN ACTIVE NEST OF THE PILEATED
WOODPECKER. NEST WAS UNDER CON-
STRUCTION WHEN PHOTOGRAPHED ON
APRIL 24.

Tufted Titmouse: Seen near Milton, June 3-8 (Mrs. Maxson).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: Seen during the summer months at Mercer (Mrs. Sell) and Land O' Lakes (Mrs. Miles). One was seen near Rhinelander, Aug. 9 (Mrs. Larkin), and one in Neillsville, Aug. 13 (Robbins).

Brown Creeper: In addition to summering birds in Vilas and Oconto Counties, one was seen in Fond du Lac County, July 18 (Mallow), and one in Waupaca County, Aug. 21 (Kaspar).

Winter Wren: Nested in Oconto County. Seen also during July and August in Vilas County (Miles); two noted in Forest County, July 3 (Richter); seen in Door County in early August (Cors).

Carolina Wren: One in Nashotah, Waukesha County, Aug. 15 (Miss Buckeridge).

Wood Thrush: Becoming more plentiful in northeastern Wisconsin (Richter).

Hermit Thrush: Present in summer near Rhinelander (Miss Almon); one heard singing in Chequamegon National Forest, Taylor County, June 29 (Robbins).

Olive-backed Thrush: A late migrant remained in Milwaukee through June 6 (Mrs. Balsom). Fall arrivals were noted on Aug. 22 in Madison (Hall) and Milwaukee (Mrs. Balsom-Mrs. Larkin).

Gray-checked Thrush: Remained in Green Bay until June 9 (Miss Church). Arrived in Madison, Aug. 31 (Robbins). A most unusual summer record is the bird seen in Mercer, July 28 (Mrs. Sell).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: The nesting birds in Neillsville were still present on Aug. 13 (Robbins). One was present in Waupaca, being seen daily from Aug. 6 into September (Mrs. Peterson).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: A few were seen in Forest and Florence Counties, July 3 (Richter).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Rhinelander, Aug. 9 (Mrs. Larkin).

American Pipit: A very unusual record is furnished by five birds carefully observed in Oconto County on Aug. 4 (Mrs. Balsom).

Migrant Shrike: Nested in Outagamie County; two seen in Vernon County, June 27 (Miss Morse); one in Kenosha County, July 18 (Higgins); one in Columbia County, Aug. 19 (Robbins).

Bell's Vireo: Two were seen and heard near Pine Bluff, Dane County, July 4 and 5 (Scotts); one seen and heard at the same place, Aug. 31 (Robbins).

Blue-headed Vireo: One in Jackson County, July 4 (Roberts); seen in Vilas County, Aug. 7-11 (Mrs. Miles); migrant noted in Milwaukee, Aug. 18 (Mrs. Larkin). These records substantiate the possibility that this species may be a regular breeder in certain areas of the state.

Black and White Warbler: Reports in late June, July and early August, indicating probable summer residents, come from Fond du Lac, Jefferson, Lincoln, Oneida, Taylor and Vilas Counties. Early fall migrants arrived in Milwaukee by Aug. 17 (Mrs. Larkin), and a few days later in Dane, Dodge, Racine and Rock Counties.

Prothonotary Warbler: On June 5 birds were heard at numerous suitable spots along the Mississippi River bottom lands in Grant, La Crosse, Trempealeau and Buffalo Counties (Robbins). One was seen in Black River Falls, July 7-11 (Mrs. Putnam-Mrs. Roberts).

Blue-winged Warbler: Vernon County, June 27 and July 4 (Miss Morse).

Tennessee Warbler: One remained in Appleton until June 2 (Mrs. Rogers). Arrived in Jefferson County on Aug. 23 (Robbins), and in Milton the same day (Mrs. Maxson).

Nashville Warbler: Remained in Appleton until June 2 (Mrs. Rogers). Arrived in Dodge County, Aug. 23 (Robbins), and in Milton, Aug. 25 (Mrs. Maxson).

Parula Warbler: One in Milwaukee, June 6 (Mrs. Balsom); Land O' Lakes, Aug. 22-23 (Mrs. Miles); Madison, Aug. 30 (Robbins).

Magnolia Warbler: Present at Land O' Lakes through July and most of August; arrived in Milton, Aug. 22 (Mrs. Maxson).



PHOTO BY HANS ZELL
NEST OF THE RED-EYED VIREO

Cape May Warbler: One in Milwaukee, Aug. 30 (Mrs. Larkin).

Black-throated Blue Warbler: Madison, Aug. 30 (Robbins); Milwaukee, Aug. 31 (Mrs. Larkin).

Black-throated Green Warbler: Summer residents reported from Door, Forest, Oneida, Taylor, and Vilas Counties.

Cerulean Warbler: Wyalusing Park, Grant County, June 5 (Robbins); July 11 (Miss Morse);

bins); Vernon County, June 5 (Robbins) and Fond du Lac County, July 18 (Mallow).

Blackburnian Warbler: Summer residents noted in Door, Iron, Lincoln, Taylor and Vilas Counties. Fall migrants arrived in Milton by Aug. 23 (Mrs. Maxson) and in Kenosha by Aug. 24 (Mrs. Higgins).

Bay-breasted Warbler: Late spring migrant seen in Milwaukee, June 6 (Mrs. Balsom); fall migrants noted in Land O' Lakes, Aug. 4 (Mrs. Miles, and in Dodge and Jefferson Counties, Aug. 23 (Robbins).

Black-poll Warbler: On Aug. 29 fall migrants were noted in Milwaukee (Mrs. Larkin), Racine (Prins), and Dane County (Scotts-Robbins).

Pine Warbler: Migrants noted in Milwaukee, Aug. 20 (Mrs. Larkin), and in Milton, Aug. 25 and 31 (Mrs. Maxson).

Palm Warbler: An early arrival in Milwaukee, Aug. 31 (Mrs. Larkin-Gordon Orians).

Grinnell's Water-thrush: Summer residents in Oconto and Vilas Counties. Early migrants in Neillsville, Aug. 6 (Robbins); Milwaukee, Aug. 13 (Mrs. Larkin-Gordon Orians); Racine, Aug. 15 (Prins).

Connecticut Warbler: Neillsville, June 1 (Robbins); Oshkosh, June 2 (Kaspar). Fall migrants in Viroqua, Aug. 26 (Miss Morse); in Madison, Aug. 29-30 (Robbins); one banded in Milton, Aug. 30 (Mrs. Maxson); and one in Milwaukee, Aug. 31 (Mrs. Larkin-Gordon Orians). A surprising number of fall reports.

Mourning Warbler: Still present in Green Bay in early June (fide Mrs. Hussong), and in Milwaukee, June 6 (Mrs. Balsom). Summer residents were found in Clark, Door, Forest, Oconto, Price, Sheboygan, Taylor and Vilas Counties. Fall migrants seen near Neillsville, Aug. 7, in Rock County, Aug. 28, and in Madison, Aug. 30 (all by Robbins).

Hooded Warbler: In Milwaukee, one was taken in a banding trap on June 7 by Clarence Jung.

Wilson's Warbler: Last seen in Winnebago County, June 5 (Mrs. Rogers). Fall migrants found in Dane County on Aug. 22 (Hall) and Aug. 31 (Robbins), and in Milwaukee, Aug. 31 (Mrs. Larkin-Gordon Orians).

Canada Warbler: Late migrant in Milwaukee, June 7 (Mrs. Larkin). Eight were banded in Milton, Aug. 20-31 (Mrs. Maxson).

Redstart: Reported at various places in southern Wisconsin between Aug. 20 and 23, and regularly thereafter.

Orchard Oriole: Nested in Eau Claire (Miss Almon et al).

Brewer's Blackbird: The extent to which this species is coming into Wisconsin is indicated in part by summer records noted in Ozaukee, Jackson, Clark, Marathon, Rusk, Taylor, Price, Oneida and Oconto Counties.

Dickcissel: Reports from neighboring states have not indicated that this was a particularly good year for dickcissels, but reports from Wisconsin have come from a surprisingly wide-spread area: from Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties in the southeast, through Marquette, Green Lake, Jackson, Clark, and even as far north as northern Taylor County in the central part, and in most southern and western counties as far north as Buffalo County in the west.

Pine Siskin: Nested near Mercer (Mrs. Sell).

LeConte's Sparrow: Milwaukee, Aug. 22 (Mrs. Balsom).

Lark Sparrow: At least six were present in Jackson County throughout the summer (Roberts); also noted in Trempealeau County, June 5 (Robbins), and in Richland County, June 15 (Miss Morse).

Junco: Summer residents in Iron and Vilas Counties.

White-throated Sparrow: Noted in summer throughout most of northeastern Wisconsin: in Oconto, Forest, Oneida, Iron and Vilas Counties.

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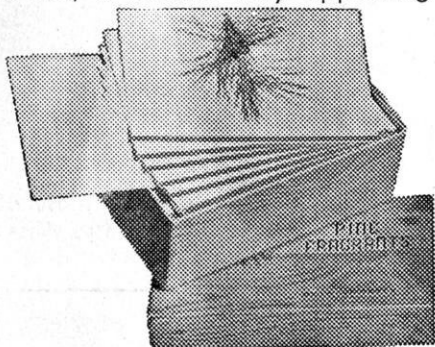
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