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## The passenger pigeon. Vol. II, No. 5 May 1940

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# *The Passenger Pigeon*

Monthly Bulletin of the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology

Vol. II

May, 1940

No. 5

## HOW MY BIRD RECORDS GREW

By Elmer Strehlow  
Green Bay, Wis.

In 1936 when I joined the Green Bay Bird Club my system of keeping bird records was very simple. I used a notebook in which I listed the species and the dates on which I first observed them. A sample of form No. 1 is shown as follows:

### Chart No. 1

1	English Sparrow	1-1-37
2	Blue jay	
3	Chickadee	
4	Pheasant	
5	Tree Sparrow	1-4-37
6	Junco	
7	Ruffed grouse	
8	Red-headed woodpecker	

This system is all right for beginners but as your interest and knowledge grows you will want a more complete record.

No complete, up-to-date list of Wisconsin birds being available, I drew up my own list in 1938 and arranged the species in the latest A.O.U. order. My next bird record, form No. 2, had 15 columns: Club No. Name A.O.U. Occurrence Remarks 1936 1937--1945.

As this form was used by our bird club members, the club number refers to the numerical order in which the birds were listed. This system does not allow for a monthly recording, but only for arrival dates.

After I was requested to be the "Passenger Pigeon" reporter for this area, I needed a form in which monthly records could be made. Form No. 3 was similar to form 2 except that it allowed for a monthly instead of yearly record. For our summer residents, their last appearance here is marked in red, and for the migrants, last appearances in both spring and fall migrations are marked in red. (continued on page 65)

## THE PASSENGER PIGEON

Monthly Bulletin of the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology  
Membership fee of \$1.00 includes 75¢ (or more) for  
subscription to THE PASSENGER PIGEON.

Send membership applications and dues to the treasurer.  
Manuscripts should be sent to the editor, except that  
bird field notes and bird banding data go to respective  
editors of these departments.

Treasurer: J. Harwood Evans, 517 Jackson Dr., Oshkosh, Wis.

Editor: W. E. Scott, Conservation Department Annex,  
20 N. Carroll St., Madison

Field Note Dept. Editor: N.R. Berger, 450 N. Few St.  
Madison, Wis.

Bird Bander's Dept. Editor: Harold C. Wilson,  
Ephraim, Wisconsin

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### BULLETIN TO BE PRINTED

Officers of the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology met at the home of President Alvin Throne in Milwaukee on May 25 and decided, among other things, to begin publishing a printed bulletin beginning with the July 1940 issue. There will be but 8 pages in each issue during this year, but it may expand to a larger size in 1941 if support warrants such procedure.

With over 260 paid members at the present time, it was felt that even much greater support could be expected with a printed paper. In number of words, 8 pages printed will equal about 12 pages mimeographed. Benefits to be gained by printing include mailing by second class matter permit, better readability, possible use of pictures and other illustrations, possible reprints for contributors, and a greater permanency and general recognition among scientific circles.

The board in making this move has shown its appreciation of the support of the members as well as its confidence in the support which may be expected. Without sufficient support the printed paper in 1941 may have to be changed to a bi-monthly, but it is hoped that instead the reception given a printed bulletin will expand the membership to warrant a larger monthly edition.

Each member is urged to advise his friends of this new development, for future issues of THE PASSENGER PIGEON may be expected to increase in value as an indispensable journal of field ornithology.

## HOW MY BIRD RECORDS GREW

As only one year's record could appear on a page in form 3, making it difficult to compare dates from year to year, I devised still another form. I now use an 8x5 card index file. One Species record appears on each card and the cards are filed in the A.O.U. order. Under the bird's name I have its occurrence, as "Common Summer Resident," or "Rare Migrant," also its check number.

The rest of the card is divided into 14 columns, the first for the years, the next 12 for the months and the last column, wider than the others, for "Remarks." This large size card allows for 15 years' record. Form No. 4 is organized as follows:

<u>Brown Thrasher</u>													
C.S.R.												A.O.U. No. 7	
Year	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Remarks
1939			23	x	x	x		x	x			xl	

The back of the card can be used for noting any unusual records or other notes of interest. Last appearance dates are marked in red in this system also.

Folders, one for each month, were made to fit the card index file and in these I keep all records sent to me by bird club members and other observers.

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(Editor's Note: This method of keeping arrival and departure dates as developed by Strehlow may encourage other bird students to develop a permanent file system according to their particular desire. Probably there are as many methods of keeping records as there are observers, but the important consideration is that such records are preserved. Special note should be made of the fact that Strehlow's cards do not show the abundance of the various species except by special notation on the back of the cards. The value of a record of the numbers of each bird observed and the number of hours in the field has definitely been recognized as necessary for studies of comparative abundance and should not be overlooked. Likewise, every observer should keep a field notebook for observations on bird habits as such items have not only a definite interest value but help the observer to fix the experience in mind and thereby develop more quickly as a field observer.)



BIRD BANDERS' DEPARTMENT  
Harold C. Wilson, Editor  
Ephraim, Wisconsin

This is one editor who, it seems, will never have an opportunity to use a rejection slip. Material for this page is almost as hard to collect as the bird our bulletin, with its name, honors in memory.

J. M. McCarthy, Superior, writes: "On Feb. 20th one of my students brought to me an Evening Grosbeak with bird band No. 239258. The specimen was a handsome male, slightly injured, but very pugnacious. We put him in a parrot cage and fed him sunflower seeds which he ate with relish. He came from a flock that was feeding on seeds still found on box elder maples. We kept him for a few days until he became well. Released, he flew away with the flock.

These grosbeaks are very numerous in Superior this year for some reason and they are fed by at least half a dozen bird lovers on their window ledges and back yards. These birds come to us about the first of January and leave in March usually."

Mr. and Mrs. F. Hamerstrom, Plainfield, reported a Chickadee, banded at Necedah February 23, 1937, was retrapped one mile from point of banding, March 19, 1940. They have banded about 125 Pinnated Grouse in the past winter.

Karl W. Kehmman, Hayward, was a bird banding enthusiast until 1933 when a fire destroyed all of his records. However, in 1939 he staged a comeback, banding 141 birds of 18 species. Last June 7th he banded a Great Blue Heron nestling which had come to grief during a storm and had to be hand raised. This bird was last seen at his station on September 11th and was found injured at Laven, Texas just 30 days later.

Samuel E. Thorn, Milwaukee, contributes a new idea for examining small birds. He says, "I slip the bird into a cellophane tube that is open at each end. The tube should fit snugly. I find that when the bird is inserted head first all the feathers are in a normal position, the bird is comfortable and keeps still, giving maximum ease of identification.

Very large test tubes with a vent put in the closed end should work just as well. To release the bird, hold the tube so that the bird is hanging head down and gravity does the rest. If the "fit" was too tight, simply tap the tube a time or two."

## APRIL FIELD NOTES

by N. R. Barger, Editor

Kindly send field notes to N.R. Barger, 450 N. Fay St., Madison, Wisconsin, at the end of each month.

As promised we will begin to introduce our observers to the membership a few at a time. The three following are members of the Benjamin F. Goss Bird Club and are all over 18 years of age.

Vernon C. Rossman has been studying birds for 14 years, 12 of which have been spent in Waukesha. He is very active in bird banding which he has been doing since 1933. He is boys' secretary of the YMCA.

Harvey E. Philip has 6 years of bird study to his credit. He is very active and watches the migration very closely. He is superintendent of the Wisconsin Industrial School for Boys at Waukesha.

S. Paul Jones of Waukesha, has been active in bird study for 24 years; has migration records for that period and is actively observing. He has done some banding but is not active at present in this work. His business is insurance.

Dr. Von Jarchow had a Turkey Vulture with a completely shattered tibia brought to him. After setting and splinting the leg, the bird thrived very well on raw beef heart and was able to limp after eight days, and in ten days held the meat down while tearing it with his bill. He was released after fourteen days in the presence of Hans Zell, and he had no difficulty in flying away. Of course, he was banded. We do not have any records of this bird in most counties, and but few in the southern half of the state.

Ducks were scarce from our reports, some observers estimated the number to be about half of what we have been used to. Another record of a Barrow's Golden-eye at Green Bay was received, this time from Strehlow. The American Golden-eye was last seen in Dane County, April 20 by Robbins, which is the average date of departure. Mrs. Rogers noted a great decrease in the Golden-eye population at Appleton, April 2 but also an influx of immature males at the same time. A White-winged Scoter, male, was picked up dead at Racine by George Prins, Apr. 27. Carleton Toppe, of Chippewa County counted three Wood Duck, April 13.

An extremely interesting record was made by Jones, when he sighted a single White-fronted Goose on the Deleven Prairie, April 28. The more common L. Snow Goose was recorded by Richter at Oconto, Apr. 27 when he saw 57. The usual date of departure for the Canada Goose from Dane County is about April 18. Ten days later six were seen there by Robbins. Whistling Swans were abundant and showed up at many unexpected places.

The most notable flock we heard of was that of Evans at Oshkosh, when he estimated about 2200. Two birds that arrived on time were the Great Blue Heron, Apr. 2, at Oconto, (Richter); and the Pied-billed Grebe, Apr. 5, at Oshkosh (Abrahamson).

Throughout April there was an even distribution of from one to two a day of the Sharp-shinned, Cooper, Red-tailed and Broad-winged Hawks, according to Robbins, of Dane County. Richter has noted a pair of Red-shouldered Hawks as far north as Oconto (Apr. 21). As usual about two pair have been found in Dane County nesting. (Jackson & Feeney). Early dates for the Osprey were noted in Chippewa County, Apr. 13 (Toppe); and in Dane County, Apr. 9 (Robbins). There is an even distribution of Sparrow Hawks, but one being found as a rule per day, but Evans saw 3, April 28.

But few records of game birds came in. Scott noted the Prairie Chicken in Vilas County, Apr. 29, and Palmer of Janesville, Apr. 20 observed 3 Bobwhites at a place within a few miles of Janesville where they had not been noted in many years.

The Upland Plover came in on time this year according to Buss, who is making special studies of them, but few in number. Jackson, Apr. 29, observed one in Dane County, and Scott, one on Apr. 27.

The following Sandpipers arrived early: Spotted, Apr. 14, Dane County, Stephenson; Solitary, Apr. 29. Marquette County Scott; Gr. Yellow-legs, Apr. 2, Dane County, Barger; Lesser Yellow-legs, Apr. 8, Oshkosh, Evans; Pectorial, Apr. 1, Dane County, Jackson; Least, Apr. 4 Racine, Zell and Semipalmated Apr. 28, Dane County, Mrs. Walker.

Both adult and immature Bonaparte's Gulls migrated through Appleton according to Mrs. Rogers, Apr. 30. Richter noted them early at Oconto, Apr. 18; and Evans at Oshkosh, April 19. The Common Tern appeared about two weeks early at Green Bay, Apr. 14, Krawczyk; and at Milwaukee, Apr. 19, Strelitzer. The Black Tern was about a week early in Dane County, Apr. 28, Barger; Oshkosh, Apr. 28, Evans; and Dane County Apr. 29, Scott. Mrs. Weber of Green Bay noted the Caspian Tern Apr. 29, about a week early.

Extremely early records were secured for the Wood Pewee. Apr. 17, Dane County, Jackson; and Apr. 21, Green Bay, Strehlow. The first Hummingbird we have record of appeared Apr. 27, Sturgeon Bay, L. Petersilka.

The entire family of Swallows made its appearance on time this year, as is shown from numerous reports. A bird not so usual was the Raven, which appeared at Oconto Apr. 25 (Richter); and at Sturgeon Bay, Apr. 15 (Sister M. Martha). A Catbird, which had wintered at Sturgeon Bay, using Mrs. Stuebs barn as shelter, died as Spring set in. This is a very unusual record for the Catbird. Strehlow also contri-



buted a notable record, Apr. 23, for Green Bay, when he identified Bohemian Waxwings in company with Cedar Waxwings. Black and White Warblers, Orange-crowned, Nashville, Yellow, Pine, Palm and Ovenbird appeared during the last week in April in the southern half of the state. The Louisiana Water-thrush and Myrtle Warbler were the only other species noted in April.

Western Meadowlarks made first appearances in Chippewa County, Apr. 1 (Toppe) and in Dane County, Apr. 9 (Feeney). These dates seem to be about average. Langosch of Green Bay found the Bobolink a week early, Apr. 25; but the Yellow-headed Blackbird appeared on time at Appleton, Apr. 24, Mrs. Rogers. Two records, both for Dane County were made of the Brewer's Blackbirds. April 9, Feeney saw a small flock, and April 23, Scott noted a pair.

Birds always of interest were: Evening Grosbeak, at Oconto, Apr. 16 (Richter) and on three later dates; Pine Grosbeak at Sturgeon Bay, Apr. 1 (Sister M. Martha); Redpoll, at the same place, Apr. 9 by the same observer; and Lark Sparrow in Dane County, Apr. 28 by Jackson. The Towhee arrived on time at all points as did the Savannah Sparrow. The last Tree Sparrow record secured for Dane County was Apr. 28 (Robbins), the usual date of departure. The White-throated Sparrow arrived early at Green Bay, Apr. 3, (Strehlow); and the White-crowned also there, Apr. 3, (Mrs. Works). According to Jackson (Dane County), Lapland Longspurs reached their peak about Apr. 19, when many were seen at several points.

#### NESTING RECORDS WERE SECURED AS FOLLOWS:

Apr. 28	Blue Jay	Dane Co.	Bob Kendall
	Kingfisher	Dane Co.	Bob Kendall
	Gr. Horned Owl 2	Dane Co.	Jackson
	(three young)		
	Pileated Woodpecker	Dane Co.	Jackson
	(three young)		
Apr. 29	Cardinal	Appleton	Mrs. Rogers ✓
Apr. 25	Robin (setting)	Green Bay	Mrs. Colburn
Apr. 21	Red-shouldered Hawk	Oconto	Richter
	(two eggs)		
Apr. 30	Crow (several)	Oconto	Richter
	Double-cr. Cormorant	Marathon Co.	Scott ✓
	(15 or more)		
	Gr. Blue Heron	Marathon Co.	Scott
	(5 or more)		



BY THE MAYSIDE

On March 31 Arnold Jackson found one Short-eared Owl, two Broad-winged Hawks, one Rough-legged Hawk, 25 Green-winged Teal, 7 Pileated Woodpeckers, 10 Red-bellied Woodpeckers, and 17 Prairie Chicken in the town of Mazomanie, Dane County.

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Mr. C. Toppe of Bloomer observed the Blue Goose on March 29 in Chippewa County.

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Warden Al Koppenhaver reports that on April 30 a farmer by the name of Clinton Beirson observed a hen Pheasant with 8 very small chicks in the town of Ostego, Columbia County. This is quite an early record for Pheasant nesting in Wisconsin but there have been other less authentic records of even earlier dates.

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A belated record comes from Warden Wm. Ozburn of Kenosha County. He reports that the last Pinnated Grouse he had seen in that county dates back to eight years ago when six birds were observed. However, in the fall of 1939, a good observer, according to Ozburn, Mr. Ben Zanders, 5th Ave., Kenosha, observed a single one of these birds near the Hill Farm on Williams Slough in that County.

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J. Harwood Evans, on April 5, made the trip from Oshkosh to the Waupun road across the north end of Horicon Marsh in the hope of seeing great numbers of waterfowl. He writes that instead of finding many birds he saw 3 big fires, one pair of Mallards, one Pied-billed Grebe and some Blackbirds. The marsh has been very dry this Spring but according to Sterling Brackett, who visited the south end near Horicon about the same time, there were good numbers of nesting ducks around the pond holes in that area.

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Albert Gastrow of Prairie du Sac, who was in the field regularly this past winter in his work on the Prairie du Sac Quail Census Project, reports the following interesting observations during that period: Dec. 23, 1939 - 3 Hungarian Partridge west of Prairie du Sac (Sauk County); Dec. 31, 1939 - 2 Canada Jays; Jan. 8, 1940 - several Purple Finches; Jan. 30 - about 60 Goldeneyes on the Wisconsin River; and March 21 - a flock of Cedar Waxwings. (The latter records were probably all from the town of West Point, Columbia County.)

A letter from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. advises the Editor that the National Museum Bulletin No. 167 which is Part I of Bent's "Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey", is being reprinted and may be completed in several months. Orders are now being taken at \$2.25 per copy. Bulletin No. 170, which is Part II of the "Birds of Prey" is still available at 60¢ per copy. Evidently it is only lack of interest or demand which keeps the other valuable bulletins from being reprinted and it is up to the ornithological societies to see that their demand for these publications is made known to the Superintendent of Documents.

A Passenger Pigeon (male) which was collected by Mrs. E. C. Wiswall near Prairie du Sac, Sauk County, in about 1878 was recently placed on sale in Madison with numerous other birds from her collection. The bird was purchased by Mr. Ed Richter of 344 State St., Madison, who is said to have secured the specimen for his son. Record data on the other specimens sold was not definite enough to be of value.

Dr. Leon J. Cole of the University of Wisconsin is again continuing his sex tally on Cowbirds in both adults and young and is also studying this same factor in Red-winged Blackbirds nestlings. Anyone having good data on this subject should contact Dr. Cole.

E. V. Strehlow asks the question "Why haven't we seen Evening Grosbeaks around here (Green Bay) this winter?" and answers his own question by stating that "Mr. A. V. Stearns, Supt. of the Wisconsin Public Service Corporation at Sturgeon Bay, furnished them with a steam-heated bath and all the feed they needed. So why travel so far south?"

Dr. Howard J. Lee of Oshkosh and Dr. Landis of Appleton went to Winnipeg, Canada, to photograph Blue and Snow Geese during April. Reports are that they saw "millions" of geese and used hundreds of feet of motion picture film and hundreds of still photographs.

Winfred O. Fonder and Chester Krawczyk were re-elected President and Secretary-Treasurer of the Green Bay Bird Club recently, while E. V. Strehlow is to remain Reporter. New officers elected were Ed Paulson, Vice-president, and Mrs. Clara Hussong, Field Director.

## NEW MEMBERS AND RENEWALS LISTED

The following charter members of the Society were not listed in the April issue either because they were overlooked or had not renewed in time:

- \*Gonjurske, H. J., 1271 Cedar St., Sturgeon Bay
- \*Finch, Mrs. Josephine, Nelson Hall, Stevens Point
- \*Martin, Edward, 2823-A West Vliet St., Milwaukee
- \*Sieker, Miss Josephine M., 1220 S. 11th St. Manitowoc
- \*Toppe, Rev. Carleton, Bloomer
- \*Walsh, Mrs. C. B., Box 630, Barron

The following are new members entered since April:

- Barnett, Miss Dorothy I., 3820 N. Newhall St. Milwaukee
- Batha, V. P., 119 N. Charles St. Waukesha
- Beers, Kenneth, 6645 W. Lloyd St. Milwaukee
- Broughton, C. E., Sheboygan Press, Sheboygan
- Buss, Irvén O., c/o Prof. Leopold, 424 Univ. Farm Pl. Madison
- Coleman, T. E., Maple Bluff, Madison
- Doll, Mark H., 1243 S. 76th St. West Allis
- Evans, Miss Lucille, 2125 E. Kenwood Blvd. Milwaukee
- Garneth, Mrs. Joseph, 938 Woodrow St. Madison
- Hart, Laurence A., 735 N. Water St. Milwaukee
- Jackson, Hugh, 2004 Winnebago, Madison
- Koenig, Stanley M., Hiles
- MacQuarrie, Gordon, Milwaukee Journal, Milwaukee
- Main, Jackson T. 2210 Van Hise Ave., Madison
- Mullon, Thomas, Route 3, Appleton
- Nelson, Charles E. Jr., 1240 Oxford Rd., Waukesha
- Parker, Kenneth, 1000 Milwaukee Rd., Janesville
- Playmann, Mrs. H. L., 217 N. Union St., Appleton
- Pyre, Russell, Wisconsin State Journal, Madison
- Ray, Mrs. M. T., Route 1, Madison
- Rossman, Vernon C., 218 Wilson Ave., Waukesha
- Seabourne, Ben, 815 E. Alton Pl. Appleton
- Thiede, Mrs. W. O., 532 N. Ida St. Appleton
- Uloch, Ray, 2040 N. 32nd St., Milwaukee
- Walter, Miss Dorothea, 4302 N. 14th St. Milwaukee
- Woods, Miss Ruth M. High School, Springfield, Illinois

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Study Sheets to Continue - Murl Deusing of the Milwaukee Public Museum has been delegated to organize future Range and Population Studies on Wisconsin birds. He is now organizing data received on the Bald Eagle and all co-operators should send him their Wisconsin records on this bird if they have not already done so.