



# **The passenger pigeon. Volume 39, Number 4**

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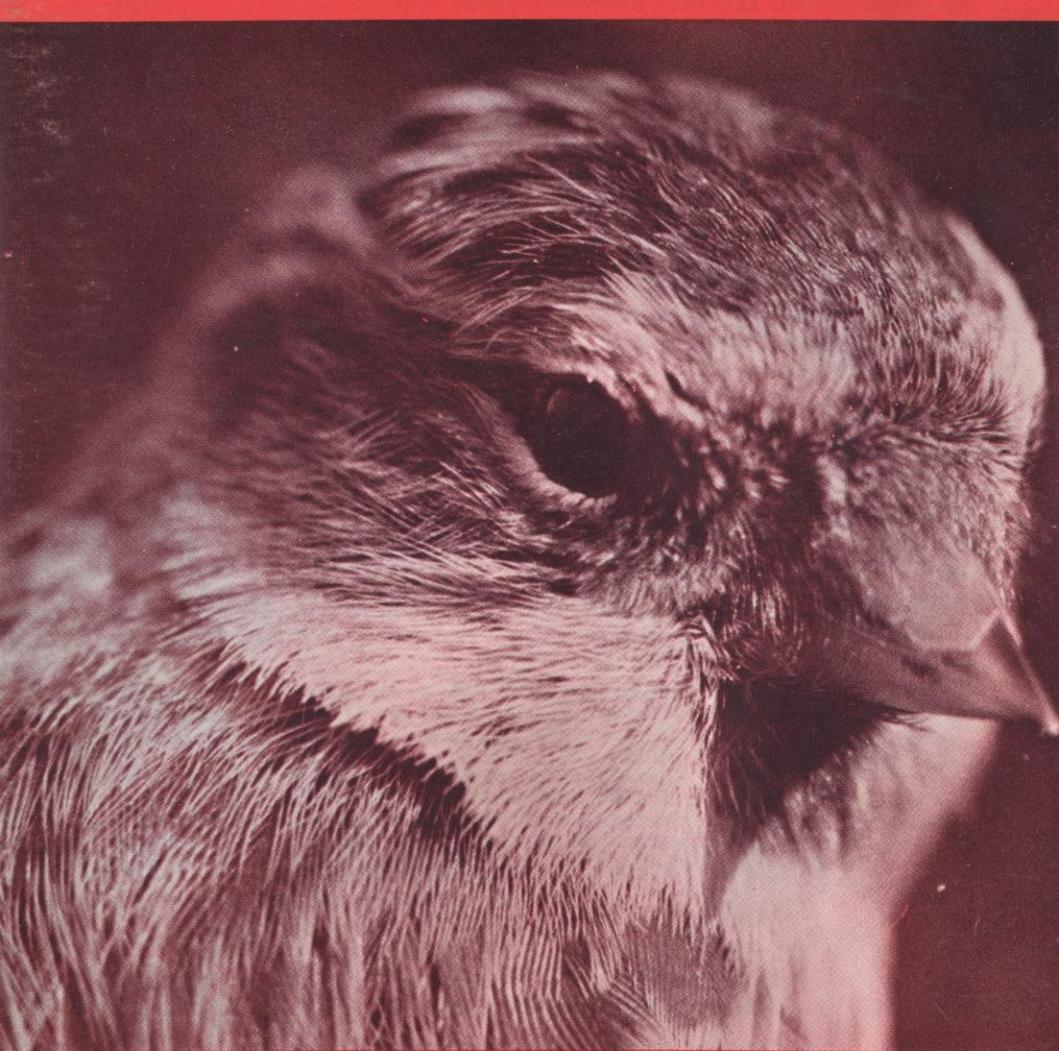
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# *The Passenger Pigeon*



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# IN THIS ISSUE

	Page
<b>Avian Utilization of Small Woodlots in Dane County, Wisconsin .....</b>	<b>313</b>
By Robert W. Howe and Greig Jones	
<b>In Memoriam: Herbert Lee Stoddard .....</b>	<b>321</b>
By Owen J. Gromme	
<b>Field Notes .....</b>	<b>331</b>
By John Bielefeldt	
<b>By the Wayside .....</b>	<b>341</b>
<b>Letters to the Editor .....</b>	<b>342</b>
<b>Book Review .....</b>	<b>344</b>
<b>Comparison of Iowa and Wisconsin Checklists.....</b>	<b>345</b>
By Charles Kemper	
<b>WSO Board Meeting Highlights .....</b>	<b>347</b>

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# AVIAN UTILIZATION OF SMALL WOODLOTS IN DANE COUNTY, WISCONSIN

By

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September 27, 1977

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank the following landowners for use of their woodlots: Sylvester Hellebrand, Cyril Kalscheur, Edmund Karls, Carl Kurt, Bernard Loper, George Meier, Arthur Suchomel and Lawrence Ziegler. District officers of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Soil Conservation Service cooperated in a number of other ways, and we gratefully acknowledge their assistance.

## INTRODUCTION

One of the most obvious consequences of agricultural development in southern Wisconsin has been the division of large continuous forests into small isolated patches (Curtis, 1956). This process has undoubtedly affected the flora and fauna in numerous ways. For example, it is generally known that small patches support fewer species than equivalent but larger areas (MacArthur and Wilson, 1967). Furthermore, forest deterioration surely affects different species in different ways, such that certain types have replaced others on today's less extensive woodlots.

Galli et al. (1976), Fermen et al. (1976), Whitcomb (1977) and others have studied avian populations on forest "islands" of eastern United States. Their results are consistent with the idea that area is an important factor determining the number and kinds of resident species. This paper summarizes the preliminary findings of a similar study in southeastern Wisconsin. Our goals are to 1) describe the avian communities occupying different-sized forest "islands" and 2) to discuss the differential success of various species.

## STUDY AREA

Sites were located in northwest Dane County, about 12 miles from Madison. On the basis of vegetational similarity, we chose nine small woodlots ranging in size from .2 - 4.4 ha. All are dominated by oaks (*Quercus alba*, *Q. velutina*), with varying amounts of hickory (*Carya ovata*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*) and several other species. The floristic composition approximates the southern xeric forest described by Curtis (1959). We also selected an equivalent "mainland" plot (1.2 ha) along the edge of a much larger continuous forest.

## Methods

Each site was visited once in May and three times between 1 June and 15 July 1977. While following a series of lines perpendicular to a site's

longest axis, we noted all birds seen or heard; duration of each census depended on the forest's area (about 2 hr/ha). Two or more individuals of a given species were recorded only if observed simultaneously. We conducted all censuses on sunny days between 530 and 1000 hr, with the exception of those for the two largest sites, which continued until mid-day.

## RESULTS

Table 1 summarized the three summer censuses. As noted in previous studies, the number of species increased more or less linearly with area when plotted on a double-log scale (Figure 1). Deviations from the least-squares regression can be partly explained by isolation; sites located near other forest areas supported unusually diverse communities, while isolated patches were relatively species-poor. Indeed, the moderately-sized mainland plot contained nearly as many species as the largest forest "Island". Deviations from a consistent species-area pattern were probably also associated with subtle habitat differences, which themselves might have been correlated with area.

Below is a brief description of individual species' distributions.

**Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*)** Catbirds were apparently area independent, being found on all but one of our forest "islands." We located broods on two woodlots and suspected nesting on most of the others. Although they foraged primarily in dense shrubs along the edge, Catbirds also frequented the forest interior.

**Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*)** Blue Jays were also encountered on all but one site. Unlike Catbirds, however, they commonly flew to and from the isolated forest patches, and individuals were usually present on the small sites for only a short time. Flocks of several birds (presumably family groups) utilized the largest sites.

**Robin (*Turdus migratorius*)** Robins usually foraged in nearby fields or clearings, only occasionally penetrating the edges of our woodlots. Especially on the small sites, these birds utilized the forest itself primarily for roosting and, probably, nesting. Curiously, Robins occupied the forests more frequently in the late summer after juveniles had fledged. At this time they often occurred in family groups.

**Northern Oriole (*Icterus galbula*)** We commonly observed pairs of Orioles even on the small sites. Both the males and females commuted between closely spaced woodlots, hedgerows and large forest tracts. Isolation seemed to influence the distribution of Northern Orioles, perhaps since they were able to use two or more nearby habitat patches. We recorded nests or evidence of nesting only on the large sites.

**Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*)** Thrashers favored thick undergrowth along the forest edge in addition to narrow hedgerows near several of the woodlots. We observed successful nesting on the second smallest site, so area was apparently not a critical factor for individuals in our study area. Brown Thrashers seldom travelled between woodlots.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*)** The Rose-breasted Grosbeaks recorded on small woodlots were probably transients, since we

observed male-female pairs and evidence of nesting only on the larger sites. A possible exception occurred on Site 2, where a pair was seen during our first two visits. Grosbeaks foraged primarily in the forest understory but, like Northern Orioles, they also used the upper canopy. Both of these species were encountered more frequently early in study period.

**Indigo Bunting (Passerina cyanea)** Although we usually saw Indigo Buntings near the edges, they also frequented shrubby undergrowth in the forest interior. In mid-summer several birds used cornfields adjacent to the woodlots. We did not find evidence of nesting on the five small sites, but on all of the other "islands" we consistently observed two or more pairs. Singing males were conspicuous well into July.

**Woodpeckers** Red-headed Woodpeckers (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) were easily the most frequently encountered woodpecker species. They did not occur on the small sites, but nested successfully on large woodlots with a number of large dead trees. We observed two pairs on Sites 8 and 9. Flickers (*Colaptes auratus*) nested on the largest sites and, like Red-headed Woodpeckers, commonly flew between isolated forest patches. Downy Woodpeckers (*Picoides pubescens*) nested on Site 9 and perhaps the "mainland" plot. Like the congeneric Hairy Woodpecker (*P. villosus*) this species requires relatively large continuous forest.

**Flycatchers** Eastern Wood Pewees (*Contopus virens*) briefly visited several of the small sites, but the species as a whole was apparently area dependent. Pewees were conspicuous on the larger areas, frequently chasing intruders of several species from their territories. The two largest sites each supported two pairs. With only one exception, Great Crested Flycatchers (*Myiarchus crinitus*) were never observed on sites smaller than 1 ha. We found nesting pairs on the "mainland" plot and three largest woodlots.

**Sparrows:** Song Sparrows (*Melospiza melodia*) exhibited no consistent response to area, being found along the edges of both large and small woodlots. Savannah Sparrows (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) and Vesper Sparrows (*Pooecetes gramineus*) are characteristically open-country birds, but we commonly observed males of both species singing from exposed perches at the perimeter of several sites.

**Other Forest Species** Both species of non-migratory passerines, White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*) and Black-capped Chickadee (*Parus atricapillus*) were restricted to large forest areas. The latter occupied only Site 9 and the "mainland" plot. A nuthatch was seen on one of the small sites but it was present for less than five minutes. We encountered Red-eyed Vireos (*Vireo olivaceous*) on the "mainland" plot and one of the large woodlots; again, this suggests area dependence. Cardinals (*Richmondena cardinalis*) were likewise absent from the small sites, even though we have evidence that they occasionally use more than one forest patch. Cardinals were never observed nesting on our study areas. House Wrens (*Troglodytes aedon*) were not clearly area dependent but seemed to favor either large woodlots or small "islands" close to a more extensive forest tract. Yellowthroats (*Geothlypis trichos*) were encountered infrequently along the edges of several sites. A pair of Great Horned Owls (*Bubo virginianus*) raised two offspring on Site 6, and we observed

a Screech Owl (**Otus asio**) on Site 9. Several other species were seen only once, probably representing the occurrence of transient individuals.

**Field Species** A number of birds spent most of their time feeding in nearby fields, using the forest primarily for nesting or roosting (Table 2). Starlings (**Sturnus vulgaris**), for example, nested on most of the sites and perhaps effectively out-competed other hole-nesting species. Red-winged Blackbirds (**Agelaius phoeniceus**) and Grackles (**Quiscalus quiscula**) were almost invariably observed flying to and from the forest edges, often in flocks of five or more birds. We intermittently observed other open-country species, none of which exhibited any evidence of nesting or feeding on the woodlots.

### DISCUSSION

Clearly, certain types of birds are more successful than others on small isolated woodlots. It is interesting to note that the six species most commonly observed in our study are known to eat both insects and plant material (Bent, 1919-1968); perhaps such generalized feeding preferences rendered them well-adapted to small habitat patches. Since a number of these birds commonly foraged along forest edges, the prolific growth of herbs and shrubs (especially **Rubus** sp.) around small woodlots probably also promoted their ubiquity.

As apparent as the success of "edge" species was the almost total absence of insectivorous foliage gleaners. Six warbler species were seen in May, yet none remained on the study sites past June 1. During the spring migration we also observed Red-eyed Vireos on more than half of the woodlots, but they eventually abandoned all but the "mainland" plot. Another characteristic inhabitant of oak-hickory forests, the Scarlet Tanager (**Piranga olivacea**), was encountered only during May censuses. Reasons for the absence of such birds are not known, although possible explanations might include their relatively specialized diet, inadequate habitat, or even the effects of agricultural pesticides. In conclusion, the size of a woodlot can dramatically influence the composition of forest bird communities. In this study, small sites were occupied primarily by edge species and occasional visitors from nearby habitats; in general, the least isolated of these small patches supported the most species. Somewhere between approximately .5 and 1.25 ha, a number of more characteristic forest birds were added. Woodlots above this range are therefore especially valuable as avian "refuges," and more diverse communities can be expected on even larger areas.

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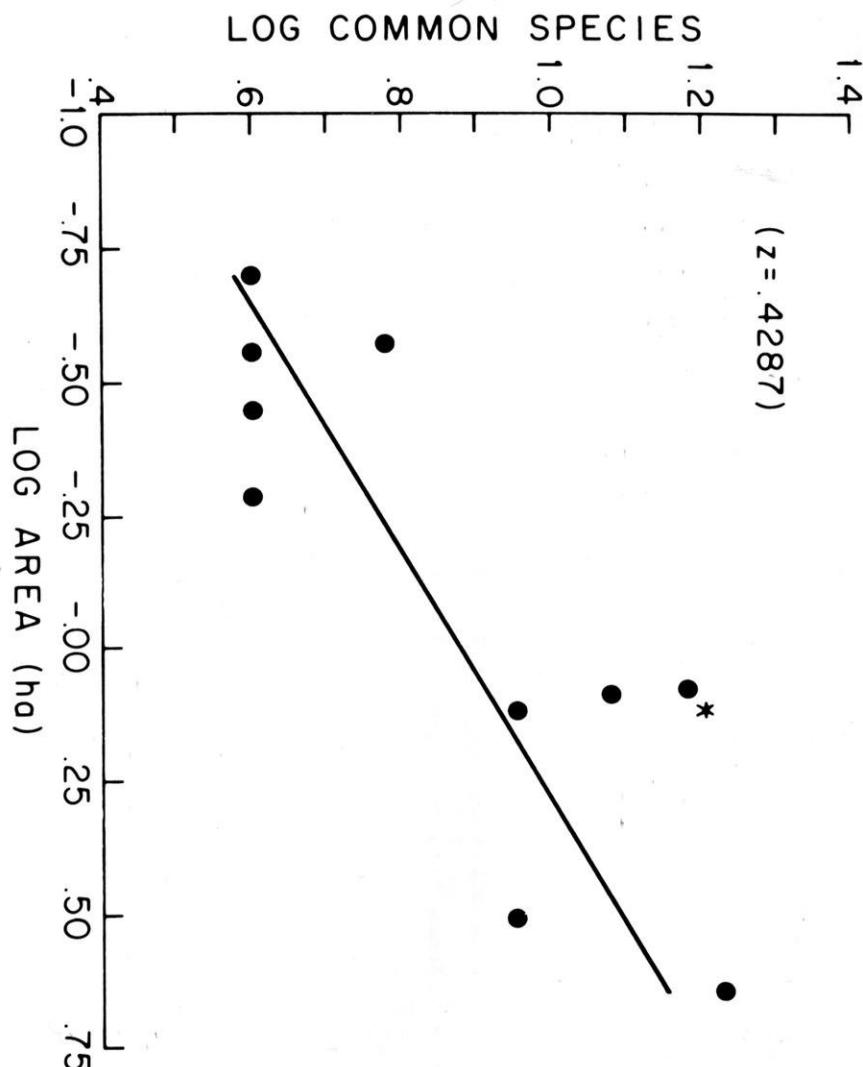
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**Figure 1.** Double-log plot of area vs. the number of species illustrating that larger sites support more species of birds. The "mainland" plot is indicated by a starred point.  $Z$  is the slope of the least-squares regression line.

TABLE 1.

Species	Site	Number of censuses during which species was observed									Frequency (%)
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Area (ha)		.20	.27	.28	.36	.52	1.23	1.32	3.24	4.41	1.20
Isolation index		(.83)	(.75)	(.87)	(.81)	(.94)	(.70)	(.98)	(.79)	(.82)	(.73)
Catbird		1	3	3	2	2	3	1	3	3	90
Blue Jay		2	2		3	1	3	2	3	3	90
Robin		3	2		1	2	2	1	3	3	80
Northern Oriole		2	2		2		2	3	1	3	80
Brown Thrasher		2	3	1		1	3	2	2	1	80
Rose-breasted Grosbeak		1	2		1	2	2	2	3	2	80
Indigo Bunting		3		2	2	3	3	3	3	2	80
Eastern Wood Pewee		2		1	1	1	3	3	3	1	80
Song Sparrow			3	1	2	2	2		3		60
White-breasted Nuthatch	1						3	1	2	3	2
Red-headed Woodpecker	1						1	1	3	3	2
Great Crested Flycatcher	1						1	3	3	2	60
Northern Flicker			2	3			3	3	3	2	50

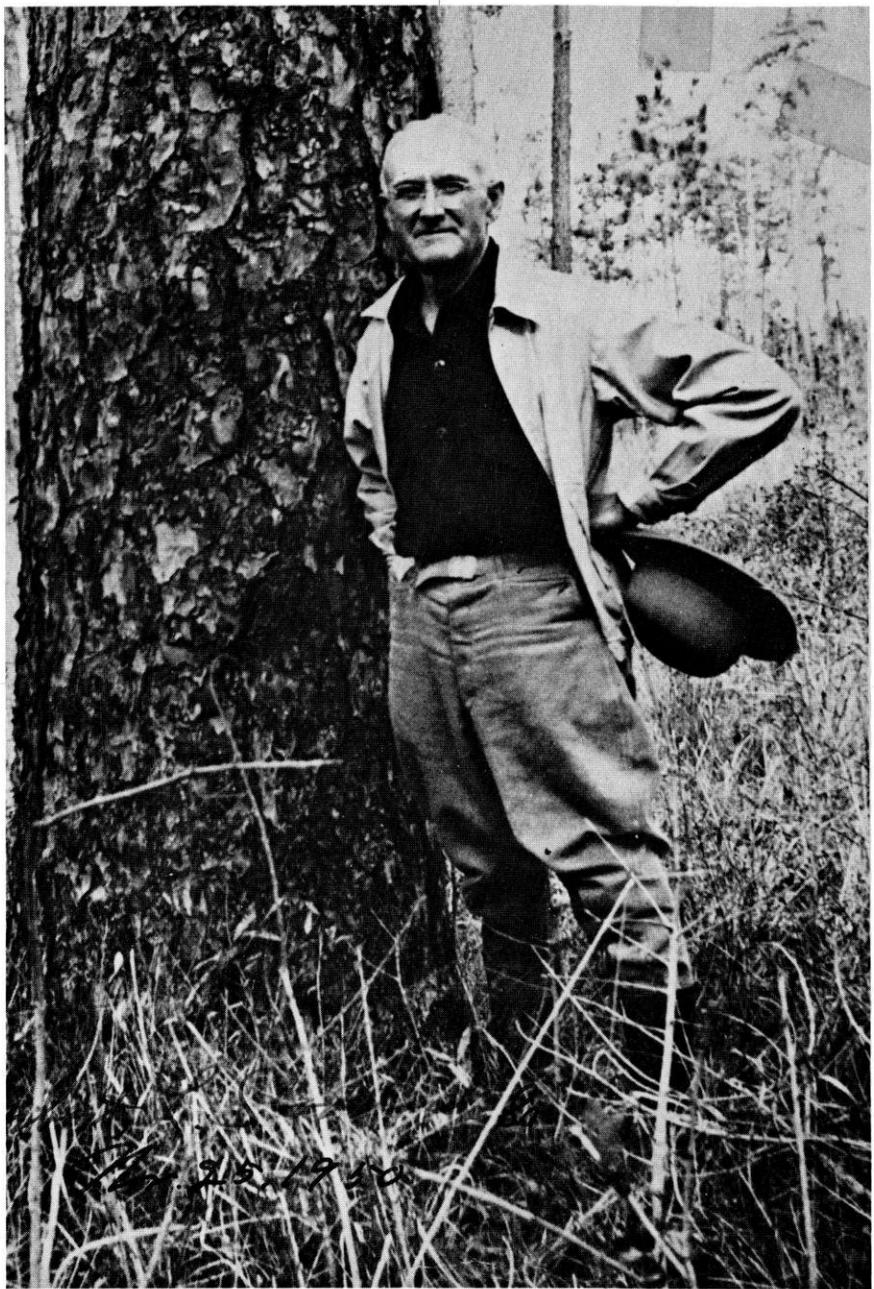
**Table 1.** List of forest species observed during the three summer census periods. Isolation indices were calculated by superimposing a grid of 100 points (within an area representing approximately  $\frac{1}{2} \text{ mi}^2$ ) on a map of the study area, the center of the grid being placed over the center of a particular site. The fraction of points touching non-forested land gives a crude measure of isolation, ranging from 0 for sites completely surrounded by forests to 1 for maximally isolated habitat "islands". Note that sites having low isolation indices (i.e. those near other forest area) generally supported more birds than similar-sized but more isolated patches.

TABLE 1. (continued)

Species	Site						Frequency (%)			
	1	2	3	4	5	6				
Downy Woodpecker	1				1	1	2	3	50	
Yellowthroat	1				1	1	2	2	50	
Cardinal				3	1	2	2	40		
House Wren	1			2		2	1	40		
Hairy Woodpecker	1		1	1			2	40		
Red-eyed Vireo					1		3	20		
Black-capped Chickadee					1		3	20		
Great-horned Owl	3							10		
Screech Owl					1		3	10		
Woodcock						1		10		
Eastern Kingbird					1			10		
<u>Empidonax</u> sp.					1			10		
Yellow-throated Vireo						1		10		
Chipping Sparrow					1			10		
<b>Total</b>	7	12	4	7	8	17	18	20	20	
Common Species	4	6	4	4	4	12	9	9	17	15

\* "mainland" site

Table 2. Occurrence of species that used forest habitats for nesting or roosting but foraged primarily in surrounding clearings or agricultural fields.



Herbert Lee Stoddard  
February 24, 1889 - November 15, 1970  
Photograph by Wallace B. Grange, November 25, 1950

## IN MEMORIAM: HERBERT LEE STODDARD

By Owen J. Gromme

**(Ed. Note:** *This obituary previously appeared in The Auk, (Vol. 90, Oct. 1973) in an abbreviated and edited version. Because Herbert Stoddard was an honorary life member of the W.S.O. and a close friend of many of our members and since most of our members do not see The Auk, we felt it would be fitting to reprint this in its entirety.*

*I first became acquainted with Mr. Stoddard when he visited me in 1963 to discuss TV tower mortalities. This was one of Mr. Stoddard's last great preoccupations. He was a man of obvious keen intellect, great personal magnetism and tremendous energy. I found him extremely stimulating in my own on going studies of TV tower casualties.*

*Mr. Gromme has written a moving and interesting account of his close friend - truly a monumental figure in Wisconsin ornithology as well as a national figure of deserved reknown.)*

The words ecology and environment stand out in headlines of the current news media of the world. The science of ornithology plays a valuable role in our attempt to solve our problems, and our knowledge is based upon the pioneering efforts of the giants of the past upon whose shoulders our biological scholars, technicians and administrators of today stand.

Herbert L. Stoddard was one of those giants of his time, and was not only an outstanding ornithologist but also a great naturalist whose interest in nature was as wide as his horizons. Being academically tied to no particular school of discipline, his keen and inquiring mind was free to roam the gamut of the interrelationship of all living things. His special emphasis was on ornithology and all of its interesting avenues of pursuit. His accomplishments in his field and his mode of life stand out as examples to the career men who wish to apply their ornithological knowledge to the betterment of our living space in our trying times.

He was born in Rockford, Illinois on February 24, 1889, the second son of Herbert A. Stoddard and Helen Eugenia Wallace Stoddard. He was married to Ada Wechselberg of Milwaukee on June 26, 1915, and is survived by a son Herbert Lee Stoddard, Jr. of Tallahassee; a sister, Mrs. Rupert J. Stibbs, Rockford, Illinois; two grandsons, Herbert Lee Stoddard III and David Spencer Stoddard, both of Tallahassee; and one grand daughter, Marie Louise Stoddard, Tallahassee.

In the case of such a complicated but simple man, the biographer's task is to find the key to "just what makes such a man tick." The fact that he possessed no college degree and that his academic training did not take him beyond the high school years makes his career the more remarkable. He was self-taught and educated so superlatively that he was offered a full professorship in one of our great universities and the directorship of one of our important museums of natural history. Probably his most outstanding contribution was his book, **The Bob White Quail**, which is a classic in its field and one of the most important and

thorough studies in wildlife management ever published. This book is a must for all those interested in applied ornithology, and the A.B.C.s of ecology. For this monumental work, he received the coveted Brewster Medal by the American Ornithologists' Union in 1935.

In his recently published "Memoirs of a Naturalist," Stoddard presents us with a comprehensive account of his professional life and a bibliography of his 65 published works. He casually mentions many of the honors that came to him during his long career. At the Brookwood School of Thomasville, Georgia, a memorial building dedicated in his honor and at the Tall Timbers Research Station near Tallahassee, Florida a laboratory bears his name engraved in stone. Since his early years, he was associated with the A.O.U. and rose up through its membership, and finally became a fellow. He cherished his association with this distinguished group of colleagues, and considered his fellowship among his highest and most important honors. The following is a list of positions held by Mr. Stoddard as listed by him in **American Men of Science**: assistant taxidermist, Milwaukee Public Museum, 1910-13, associate taxidermist, 1920-24; taxidermist, Field Museum, 1913-20; co-operative agent, Bureau Biological Survey, 1924-30; director, co-operative Quail Study Association, 1930-43; consultant, upland game and forestry management, 1943-61; and vice-president, Tall Timbers Research Station, 1961-72.

For the benefit of those who have not read his memoirs, some repetition will be proper here, but other interesting accounts by one who was closely associated with him during several years of his professional as well as his personal life will be of interest.

Self-discipline was one of his characteristics, and his closeness to nature during his early Florida years stimulated his interest in someday becoming a naturalist, and all of his activities both physical and otherwise were geared to that end. His interest in taxidermy gave him an opportunity to work closely with birds and mammals and was a logical approach to a more intimate study of natural history.

While learning taxidermy under the late Edward Ochsner of Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin, who was a professional taxidermist of local fame, and an intimate of the famous Ringling Brothers, he had an exceptional opportunity. The Ringlings had their winter quarters at Baraboo, Wisconsin, and it was Ochsner's good fortune to obtain many of their animals that became superannuated or died from other causes. This was very exciting to young Stoddard who thus had opportunity to handle specimens that other taxidermists would have "given their eye teeth for". He also met preparators from the large museums from both Milwaukee and Chicago, and thus he came to the attention of Mr. George Shrosbree who was the chief taxidermist at the Milwaukee Public Museum. Mr. Schrosbree realized that here was a rare find, and he lost no time in making overtures which later resulted in Stoddard's employment at the museum.

During his spare time as an apprentice to Ochsner, Stoddard read the works of Carl Akeley and Hornaday and other famous museum collectors and preparators. He hoped that some day he would be chosen to go to some of the far off places that he had dreamed of and read about as a member of one of the expeditions sent out by the great natural history museums.

It is interesting to note that Sauk County, Wisconsin, can boast of being the "spawning ground" of two of America's most distinguished naturalists. Both Stoddard and Alexander Wetmore shared almost contiguous territory in their very early birding. Herbert once told me (if my memory serves me correctly,) that the Baraboo Bluffs was their overlapping territory. Alexander Wetmore spent his early boyhood at North Freedom, Wisconsin. I do not know whether these two famous men knew each other at the time.

Stoddard knew that the hunting of big game as well as the collecting of exotic birds in the fever-ridden jungles of the tropics or in the Arctic cold required a rugged physique and a clear brain and that the field naturalist be in perfect health. With that fact in mind, he never smoked nor consciously abused his body in any way. He would be ready for the call when the big day came and disciplined himself to serve that end.

In March 1910, he joined the staff of the Milwaukee Public Museum as an assistant taxidermist and thus began his career as one of America's greatest bird taxidermists and field naturalists.

During all of his years of employment both at the Milwaukee Public Museum and the Field Museum at Chicago, he stuck to his physical regimen and in the morning walked the hard concrete to work "just to keep fit"; the Milwaukee beat was over five miles. Often during the severe winter blizzards, he by-passed the street cars and always arrived at work on time. He was very punctual and never through his own fault missed an appointment. His walking discipline was the more remarkable because he wore a leg brace since he sustained a bad knee injury while chopping out a bobcat tree den on one of his early museum expeditions to the Baraboo Bluffs of Wisconsin. He often complained about his "squeaky" knee brace if he forgot to oil the joint in the morning and several times said jokingly that he was going to "have the damn leg cut off".

While in training for his expedition to Bonaventure Island in 1922 (during his second term of employment at the Milwaukee Museum), he climbed a rope hand over hand every morning upon arrival at work just to harden his muscles for any possible work "over the cliff" on that island famous for its sea birds and he soon has us all doing it. His expedition work was strictly business, with no time limits, and in his opinion anything that distracted a field collector beyond reasonable necessity was taboo. He frowned upon women accompanying museum expeditions and suspected them as the reason why some costly expeditions ended up with members not talking with each other. This restriction may have seemed severe, but he always "came back with the goods". without exception, he was one of the most capable field men I ever knew.

In my opinion, one spectacular event in his life stands out above all others as a measure of his courage and determination. It was upon the occasion of his collecting a Northern Phalarope and I will take the liberty of a direct quote from page 168 of his Memoirs.

"It was at Bar Creek on October 8, 1921, that I collected my first specimen of the red phalarope. And it was nearby, on August 28, of the following year, that my most exciting

experience with phalaropes occurred. On that occasion, I happened to be collecting alone, camping at the mouth of the creek. Late in the afternoon I saw flocks of small shore birds, perhaps five hundred in all, in the water well out from shore. The birds would circle and fly a short distance and then settle on the water and swim about like ducks, feeding in an oil slick from some commerical fishing nets. In the field of my binoculars the scene was an animated one.

I identified the little birds as phalaropes. But were they northern or red phalaropes--or both? For the observation to be of much scientific value it was necessary for me to get out among the birds and perhaps collect some specimens. I was well aware of the absence of records of phalaropes in numbers on the waters of the Great Lakes. But how was I to reach them? There were no unlocked boats for miles, and the water was too rough and cold for swimming. I was almost frantic, for I had to leave for home soon, and time was getting short.

Finally I could stand it no longer. Loading both barrels of the Parker with fine bird-shot shells, I strapped the gun between two pieces of driftwood and dived into the rough waters of Lake Michigan. I swam out until I was among the birds, pushing the driftwood before me. First I would be on top of a wave looking down on the swimming birds; then I would be plunged deep into a trough looking up at them. I unstrapped the shotgon and, draping my left arm over the driftwood to keep it with me, tried desperately to swing the heavy gun to cover one of the swimming birds. But it was no use in that pitching water. I was rapidly becoming exhausted when finally a massed flock flew overhead and I managed to fire into them and drop a bird. I could see at a glance it was a northern phalope. Since all the birds were marked alike, the identification was satisfactory. But it was a struggle to get gun and specimen back to shore, for I was unable to lash the gun to the driftwood again. With one of the bird's legs between my teeth, the gun, under water, in my left hand, and the driftwood under my arm, I battled it out and made the shore, about as exhausted as I have ever been in my life. But I had my specimen, and I even made it home on time, feeling pretty cocky, you may be sure.

That experience also solved some mysteries of the past. I now felt certain that other flocks of shore birds I had observed, barely discernible through binoculars far out in Lake Michigan from the Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana shores had been northern phalaropes. For years those observations, always made in late August or September, had mystified me. As far as I know, to this day we have no further information about the migrations of the phalaropes in the Lake Michigan region. It should prove a fertile field for investigation for some ornithologist with a good boat."

In his Memoirs, Stoddard describes his years of preparation for his career from the time he took up work with Ochsner through his career at two museums until he left in March 1924, for his work with the quail. He learned a great deal about taxidermy from his superior at Milwaukee, George Shrosbree, who began his career at the Rowland Ward establishment in London. Possessed of a very inquiring mind, his aim was always to improve his techniques, and he was an absolute perfectionist. He had the ability to instill this spirit in all those with whom he came in contact, and I am very grateful for the opportunity to have worked with him.

He greatly admired Carl Akeley whom he considered the most accomplished taxidermist-naturalist that ever lived, and they became good friends. Undoubtedly a great deal of the Akeley spirit of adventure and inventiveness was transmitted to him through their association both at the Field and Milwaukee Museums.

Among his many accomplishments was his very complicated method of mounting the most lifelike reptiles that were done in his day. In order to do so, it was necessary for him to go rather deeply into chemistry which he learned the hard way. Fortunately, the Milwaukee Public Library and Museum were housed under one roof, and he had an uncanny way of ferreting out the books that would help him. He delved into the chemistry of electroplating and to my knowledge was the first and only one to use this method in the preparation of naked bird nestlings. He developed the use of cork carved to conform to the anatomy of the bird he was mounting and later was the first to use balsa wood on account of its light weight. He was never satisfied with the commercially produced glass eyes and painted his own. He had a good working knowledge of the chemistry of color, and I shall never forget my amazement at the result when he applied Prussion blue in the reverse side of the glass eye, and like magic produced the glowing red characteristic of the pupil of a Double-crested Cormorant when viewed from a certain angle in certain light.

The last environment museum group he did was that of the Double-crested Cormorant which he came back from the Sherwood project to complete after he left museum work for good. This and the Bonaventure Island Gannet group for which he made the studies and partly completed should stand as monuments to his great skill as a museum preparator.

He was always very careful of the type of food he ate, but eating was usually done in a hurry at the museum in order that he could use a major part of his noon hour to keep informed and up to date on all the periodicals of the day--particularly **The Auk**, which he always read from cover to cover. I am quite sure that it was his hope that someday he could produce a complete up-to-date check list of the Birds of Wisconsin, but it was a great source of satisfaction to him to have had a large part in the publication of **The Birds of Georgia** in which his good friend George Sutton produced many of the fine bird portraits. He gave a fine account of his association with Sutton on many of their expeditions together in his later years, and Sutton paid him a most fitting tribute in the introductory chapter of **Memoirs of a Naturalist**.

While in Wisconsin, he was undoubtedly the foremost ornithologist of our state in his day, and his publications in **The Auk**, **Wilson Bulletin**,

**Yearbook of the Public Museum of Milwaukee, etc.**, are all referred to in his Memoirs. Among his close Wisconsin ornithological associates were A.W. Schorger and Warner Taylor of the University of Wisconsin, William I. Lyon of Waukegan, Illinois, S. Paul Jones of Waukesha, and Clarence Jung of Milwaukee.

The great respect that his colleagues had for him and his scholarly opinions in his chosen field had a profound effect upon many of the men who came to know him well. In my own case, my whole adult career was considerably molded by several years of contact with him.

Edward Ochsner, who gave Stoddard his early training and who was primarily responsible for Stoddard's early museum placement, was also responsible for my introduction to Stoddard and a museum career in 1916. Ochsner told me that there was an opening in the taxidermy department at the Milwaukee Museum as a result of a long-time vacancy left when Stoddard went to the Field Museum at Chicago. Due to a misunderstanding on my part, I went to the Field Museum, where I was recommended to the director by Stoddard who had previously heard from Ochsner about my progress, and I was hired as a result.

Our association at the Field Museum was not to last long, however, because in 1917 Stoddard informed his colleagues that he had volunteered for the army.

So intent was he in his determination to give "the country which had been so good to him" his very best that during his pre-induction period while still working at the museum, he drilled every morning before work with a broomstick. He went overseas, and his army career was to bring him together with one of his future life-long ornithological friends, S. Paul Jones of Waukesha, Wisconsin, who later became a member of the A.O.U. at Stoddard's urging and sponsorship.

Due to the fortunes of the first World War, in which I also later became involved, Stoddard and I both ended up at the Milwaukee Public Museum; but fate was again to intervene, and we worked together there for only two years after which he had launched upon his new career and his work with the quail.

In referring to the great men of the world, Stoddard often cited the old expression that "you can't hide your light under a bushel". In his own case, this fact brought him to the attention of the U.S. Bureau of Biological Survey through William I. Lyon of Waukegan, Illinois. Mr. Lyon was an active bird bander and recognized Stoddard's keen interest in the same subject. Mr. Lyon and Stoddard became close friends, and Lyon quickly realized that this man, with an inquiring mind and wide-ranging interest, could be very useful to the Biological Survey.

It is possible that many of the ideas of modern game management began to take form as a result of Stoddard's contacts with the then-embryonic bird-banding section of the Biological Survey. Bird-banding, Stoddard pointed out to Lyon, could be a useful tool in the study of the life cycles of birds.

One of Lyon's friends in the Survey was W.L. McAtee who had been contacted by Lewis S. Thompson about finding a man to conduct a Bobwhite quail study in Georgia on the old Sherwood Plantation.

What happened after that is ornithological history, and the resulting book, **The Bobwhite Quail**, has contributed mightily to the development of the technique and principles used in the new science of game management.

When I joined the Milwaukee Public Museum staff upon Stoddard's recommendation in 1922, he was already engaged in bird banding. At that time, he was associate taxidermist, but for all practical purposes, his duties embraced the normal activities of curator birds and mammals. He had convinced the main office that bird banding should be part of the activity of a Department of Ornithology. He was completely convinced that banding would provide answers to much of the mystery of bird migration and age as well as other ornithological unknowns, and he plunged into this new activity with characteristic enthusiasm.

His chief colleague in banding at Milwaukee and life long friend was Clarence Jung who worked very closely with him in the development of traps, nets and other techniques, and he was usually accompanied upon local banding ventures by Jung and myself, and often S. Paul Jones, a previously mentioned excellent amateur ornithologist from Waukesha, Wisconsin.

At this time, Stoddard's banding activities embraced three main projects: (1) The Purple Martins and Robins that used a communal roost in Washington Park, (2) shorebirds along the Lake Michigan shore at a point where a stagnant and polluted creek entered Lake Michigan near Cedar Grove, Wisconsin, where the insect life attracted the shore birds, and (3) crude attempts at hawk banding at the same place. He never developed a technique for capturing hawks at that place because he was called to his new duties with the Biological Survey.

However, the Cedar Grove site was later developed by museum personnel as one of the important hawk-banding stations in the Mississippi Flyway. These activities were later taken over by the University of Wisconsin and are now maintained by Daniel D. Berger and his associates as the Cedar Grove Ornithological Station.

Stoddard developed a large and cumbersome but very successful hand net which is described and figured in detail in his Memoirs, and he figured out many innovations for the capture of shorebirds. This preliminary work aided him greatly in his later research at Sherwood which resulted in his great work **The Bobwhite Quail, Its Habits, Preservation and increase** (1932).

He kept very complete field notes on his major expeditions as well as lists made on his local weekend collecting trips.

The cabinets of both the Milwaukee and Field Museums will attest to his boundless energy. His bird skins are of a quality to arouse the envy of the most gifted museum preparators. While I was working with him at the Field Museum in 1916, he taught me how to make painted color notes in oil of those parts of a bird from which the color was "fugitive" soon after death such as eyes, feet, bills, etc. This early instruction in color application had much to do with my own career as an ornithological painter. Incidentally, the Conover Collection of the ducks and geese of the world, which is part of the Field Museum Collection, contains many skins made up by Stoddard.

I had the rare privilege of his company on most of his trips into the field while he was in Wisconsin and am happy to say that, as my superior, he strongly influenced me and my general outlook on life.

It is well to point out some of the difficulties and handicaps under which Stoddard and colleagues of his day did field collecting.

Neither Stoddard nor the museum could afford an auto, and the street car was his means of transportation out to the city limits. Use of the railroads had its limitations and consequently local travelling was done "Shank's Mare."

No insulated underwear or other light-weight warm clothing was available, and much of his collecting was done during very severe weather.

The old Marble Game Getter, a combination 22-calibre rifle and 410-gauge shotgun which also chambered a 44-calibre ball for large game, was the standard gun. It, however, had its limitations. In those days the old twist Damascus-barreled shotgun could withstand the heaviest load of the day and was useful for collecting larger birds and small mammals but unhappily blew small specimens to pieces. Stoddard's answer was an auxiliary barrel which was an old Springfield rifle barrel re-bored to 410-gauge calibre and about 12 inches long. This barrel was milled down to a size to slip into the breach of his 10-gauge Damascus barrel "Rabbit-eared" or hammer shotgun, and was fired by the same pin that discharged the regular standard shell. He hand-loaded the old brass shells and used "dust" or number 12 shot for small birds. When he was collecting larger birds, he simply used the gun in the regular way.

This particular old gun, however, had the drawback of frequently firing both barrels simultaneously. While goose collecting on the Wisconsin River, he once forgot to inform me of this fact and, when from a prone position, flat on my back on a sandbar, I shot at an overhead goose, the full force of two heavy loads with no kicking space but the frozen ground put my arm in a sling for a week. Needless to say, the big 12 $\frac{3}{4}$  lb. goose came down. To add insult to injury, when I picked up the still-living goose with my good left arm, it struck out, and with its wing spur hit me squarely between the eyes. To rid myself of the tears, I blew my nose and soon had a blood clot into both ducts which resulted in two black eyes--Stoddard got a big laugh out of that.

The bird was out of a flock we saw the day before, and we thought it was the same goose that stood a good two heads above the rest of the flock. We were on a general collecting trip and our headquarters were at the home of Herb's old riverman friend, Bert Laws. To Herb, this was almost sacred ground, because it was on this section of the Wisconsin River at Ferry Bluff that the last known nesting of a Golden Eagle in Wisconsin took place. Herb showed me the still visible remnants of the nest on a shelf of a rocky "face". The savage and wild call of the Peregrine could still be heard there, and several pairs were nesting along a stretch of about ten miles. It was there that Stoddard collected the material for the Peregrine group in the Milwaukee Public Museum. That is all past history now for the so-called falconers and egg collectors "cleaned them out" well before the widespread broadcast of DDT and other biocides.

To Herb the duck hawk represented all that was wild and free, and I think that it was his favorite bird. He predicted to me what would happen once the then-infant sport of falconry took hold in this country.

His usual collecting gear was his old 10-gauge shotgun and in a "beat up" leather bag he carried his "aux," ammunition, skinning kit, and lunch. He also carried a bag of peanuts, raisins and a few staples and figured on using the edible flesh of specimens for food. A gourmet would probably revolt at the variety of our field menus which I remember one day consisted of young Great Horned Owl and Crow--both of which at that time were unheard of as delicacies.

We were building up the museum bird-skin collection for use in small portable, habitat exhibits, and we often returned to our base late at night. Herb was a dedicated public servant, and in those days union hours--to the true scientist and field man--were unheeded. His motto was "give a full day's work and them some, for a good day's pay," and therefore it was necessary to "keep in skinning material" to keep us occupied until bedtime. On that particular trip, bedtime was midnight or later, and it was hard for me to get into the spirit of "setting up" exercise at 5 A.M.

We prepared small bird skins in 30 minutes or less. It was a violation of the field man's code to leave any of the day's collecting untended until the next day.

Herb was an exacting but kindly taskmaster, but to work for or with him was the finest and most thorough training that a young field naturalist could have had.

One of the saddest days of his life was the day we returned to Milwaukee and he found his auxiliary gun barrel missing. We went back to the point where he remembered last seeing it and retraced our steps for hours, but that valued piece of equipment has long retired to the elements at some campsite or resting place.

In keeping with his general code of ethics was his deep loyalty to his friends. He was a strong advocate of the principle "Believe nothing that you hear and only half of what you see", but he could be a worthy adversary in defense of a principle or a viewpoint right up to the point straining a friendship. I will never forget his reaction to a remark I made while visiting him at Sherwood in his later years. I was criticizing the Fish and Wildlife Service for opening the hunting season on Swans and Sandhill Crane. His defense of the bureau was magnificent, though I feel it was one of the few times that his judgement on that type of subject was wrong.

After he left the Museum, my contacts with him necessarily became less frequent, but he kept in close touch with his good friends up north through an active correspondence, and his expanded interests particularly in the field of forestry and ecology caused us all to marvel at his capacity to master new problems.

His work with the quail necessitated delving into the whole relationship of his subject to its environment, and local forestry practices became directly involved. Some of the techniques he advocated--particularly the use of controlled burning--were in conflict with long established ideas of forest

management. His impact on the forestry situation in the South is well known and in his late years much of his time was given over to consultant work, and management of his own Sherwood plantation near Thomasville.

His efforts and persistence to "sell" his ideas on the use of fire in forest management in the South are well known, and he dwells at length on this subject in his memoirs. A recent article by Claiborne entitled "Can There Be a Good Forest Fire?" in **Readers Digest**, condensed from "Smithsonian," bears out the soundness of his ideas. His wisdom and persistence are now appreciated though reluctantly admitted by the entrenched bureaucrats and forestry interests, and his proven ideas are now widely applied.

He was fond of relating a little story among his close friends and associates--particularly those friends in the Forest Service who did not always appreciate his sense of humor at their expense.

He told of the young forestry graduate--resplendent in his new uniform and bursting with authority and knowledge--who stopped to pass the time of day with an elderly colored lady. She was giving her small wooded acreage the "burn treatment". He remarked to her that when she got through everything would be as black as she was, and the wise old lady replied: "Young fella after the first rain, my yard will be just as green as you is". That little anecdote tells a great deal in very few words.

During his later years he was joined by Mr. Leon Neel, a promising young forestry graduate of Thomasville, as his assistant. Mr. Neel is carrying on the forestry end of things in the true Stoddard tradition.

His contribution to the whole field of natural history is well documented in the pertinent literature and his published memoirs. He became much interested in building up the bird skin collections at Tall Timbers Research Station and observing the bird kills at the television tower there near Tallahassee. The skins of many of the songbirds thus killed ended up as scientific specimens at that institution. In addition, he did considerable collecting of water birds in the St. Marks area along the Gulf Coast to add to these collections.

Sherwood was a "Mecca" for many of his ornithological friends as well as others of the world's great. Fortunately, the old hunting lodge, which later became Sherwood, Stoddard's home, had ample room for his numerous guests, many of whom arrived unannounced but all of whom were made to feel perfectly at home by Herb and his gracious wife, Ada.

Many ornithological and ecological problems were discussed in his living room before a large picture window. The whir of avian activity on the other side of the window on a feeding tray, which consisted of a hollow log cut length-wise and well stocked with crushed pecans, provided much of the subject matter.

His love for dogs and particularly dachshunds was well known to all of his friends. I shall never forget how he sadly related the fate of one of his little pets who, during an unguarded moment, dug into a hole and was struck in the face by a large diamondback rattler. Herb reacted instantly as he would had the victim been a fellow human being. He cut open the wound and sucked out as much of the venom as he could, but the little dog died in spite of his efforts to save it.

In his Memoirs, he goes into considerable detail about the deep personal respect that existed between him and Aldo Leopold, and I am sure that the influence that one exerted upon the other was profound. Their ecological ideas were very similar, and this close kinship of ideas shows up in the writings of both. In my opinion, these two great ecologists are among the immortals, and together they probably influenced modern game management more than anyone else. Although Stoddard was not as gifted a writer, I feel that they both must stand as equals in the modern ecological concept. It is significant that Herb died with **A Sand County Almanac** in his hand, as related by Roy Komarek who, with his brother, Ed, were Herb's good friends and neighbors and collaborators for years. It was the family custom for the Komareks to have Sunday morning breakfast with the Stoddards at Birdsong—the Komarek plantation. Edward Komarek was Stoddard's close associate over the years, in his studies of fire ecology.

It was with great sadness that his many friends learned of his death on November 15th, 1970. With a simple service attended by some of his close friends and family, he was buried alongside his beloved wife, Ada, on Sherwood plantation on November 16th, 1970.

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*Mary and Charlie Nelson*

# FIELD NOTES



By John Bielefeldt

## **The Winter Season**

**December 1, 1976-February 28, 1977**

Slow....sporadic....depressing....disappointing, said many observers of the winter of 1976-77. Amazing rarities were absent and northern invaders were few, but the long winter had quiet virtues that might be overlooked in a milder more spectacular season.

A House Finch reported from Madison adds a third sighting for the state's hypothetical list. This winter's Harlequin Duck, Iceland Gull, two Black-backed Three-toed Woodpeckers, two Varied Thrushes, and ten White-crowned Sparrows--all headline winter rarities not many years ago-- are now found almost every year by Wisconsin's increasing corps of active observers.

Winter finches, taken together, made their poorest showing in the state (and much of the nation) since 1970-71; only the American Goldfinch was abundant, or even present, statewide. Bohemian Waxwings and Snowy Owls did stage moderate flights as far as but not much beyond the Upper Midwest. The Northern Shrike outshone all its boreal companions in its biggest Wisconsin invasion since at least 1972-73, but most finches and other irruptive species simply stuck close to their northern breeding range where food supplies were presumably adequate. Only the Purple Finch, abundant in the eastern and southern U.S. this winter, seemed to migrate past Wisconsin.

If the season were judged by its lack of such dramatic birds it would indeed have been slow and disappointing. The weather, however, was persistently harsh, so uniformly severe that it gave an unusual chance to examine some of the minimal conditions of birds' range and variety in a Wisconsin winter.

Extreme cold seemed the worst of all the persistent hard weather. One of the coolest Novembers on record preceded real winter, with sub-zero nights throughout the state at the end of the month and into December's first week. Although there was a brief warming before Christmas, the daytime high temperature failed to reach 32°F anywhere in Wisconsin between December 24 and February 9. Northern counties' temperatures dropped below zero almost every night through mid-January, bottoming out at an unofficial -60° F near Rice Lake on January 9.

The winter as a whole was apparently the second or third coldest in the state's weather history but the cold was perhaps rougher on birdwatchers than it was on birds. Probably only the most dedicated observers were outside very much or very long in January, and a shortage of midwinter fieldwork may have contributed something to the season's bad reviews. Nevertheless, at least 35-40 species of this frigid winter equalled or exceeded their reported northern limits of last year's warm winter, among them such stragglers as Northern Mockingbirds, Rusty Blackbirds, and White-throated Sparrows plus of course most of the winter finches. Observers who still need to abandon the old idea that sheer cold forces birds south ought to find their proof in the 1976-77 season.

In the unremitting cold, open water was very scarce. Small and shallow lakes froze in Mid-November and the big inland lakes of the south iced by December 6, driving migrant waterfowl beyond Wisconsin. Lake Michigan came near to freezing over in January. Creeks and rivers, their flows reduced by drought, were also locked in ice at midwinter, when springholes, fast races, dam spills, and aerated ponds held the only open water. There is evidence that early freezing and the later even sharper constrictions of habitat reduced number but not, substantially, the range of water-dependent birds (see Coot, Kingfisher, Bald Eagle). The total number of goose, swan, duck, grebe, and heron species equalled last winter's total even though many individual species were reported less frequently (yet see Hooded Merganser). Common Snipe showed a striking ability to survive in shrunken habitat.

Snow cover was another persistent feature of the winter. Late November falls, with light but frequent additions and only the mid-December melt, kept the whole state snow-covered until February. Except in the Lake Superior snowbelt, and briefly 1-2 feet in north-central counties at January's end, depth was never excessive. Most of the state had less than 7 inches of snow on the ground in December and 4-12 inches in January. Although other hawks were not especially uncommon at midstate, Harriers and rough-legs were scarce and confined during January to the zone of shallower snows; perhaps early snow cover is one of the important factors here. At any rate, quick fluctuations in snow depth and melt did not confuse the patterns of winter bird numbers.

Drought of 8-10 months' duration was the final constant of winter weather. It seems obvious that food supplies of some fruits and seeds might fall short for lack of summer rain, yet there were no unmistakable signs that bird numbers suffered from lack of food over wide areas. Abundant statewide Snow Buntings and "numerous" Horned Larks in central counties plainly found plenty of food on the many patches where wind swept away the "cold" fluffy snow. Several sparrows, including American Trees and record-breaking numbers of juncos and goldfinches, were abundant on Christmas counts. Fruit-eating waxwings and robins did not seem less numerous than in many other recent winters. In short, little faith can be put in general estimates of winter bird food supplies for any area of diverse habitat--the state, most regions and many counties of Wisconsin. There are far too many local variables of vegetation, soils, snow depths and types, micro-climates months earlier, etc.

Rigorous weather is easily blamed for a decline in Christmas count totals and vacant bird feeders, but constant cold, ice, snow, and drought had little clearcut influence on bird abundance, at least over the span of a single winter. Water birds, their habitat ice-bound, did drop in numbers but did not disappear. Impressions of scarcity were probably formed by coinciding lows among invaders--especially winter finches--and not by any real effects of the weather.

Survival of common winter residents during the prolonged harsh weather preoccupied many national observers. Weather-related deaths among various water, game and insect-eating species were alleged in other parts of the country but not mentioned much in Wisconsin. Of course, substantial losses among the state's chickadees, woodpeckers and other less migratory birds could easily go undetected. Yet it is possible that winter's toll was greater in south-southeast areas of the U.S. where the departure from normal cold and snow was greater than in Wisconsin. The careful week to week, season to season, and year to year censuses needed to address these questions in any informed way are not available for Wisconsin.

This is the first winter summary under a return to the old reporting period of December 1-February 28. March data will again be assigned to the spring summary. Moderating temperatures in February, and particularly the snow melt which bared ground over the state's southern half February 12-25, did however bring some early migrants. A typical spring storm from the Plains passed along the Wisconsin-Illinois border February 22-24 and carried heavy rain, but warm air and southerly winds entered Wisconsin only barely and briefly on the 23rd.

Hilsenhoff has already discussed the 1976 Christmas count and count period observations (**Passenger Pigeon 39:173-187**). Only other December records of special interest will be added here, and contributors should not include Christmas count sightings on their winter report forms.

Full January-February reports came from 36 observers in 29 counties in an effort slightly less than last year's. Fragmentary records were also received from 24 other counties, and the Ned Hollister Bird Club again submitted a valuable list from its February rerun of the Beloit Christmas count. Major gaps in coverage were once more certain northern counties (Florence, Forest, Oneida, Lincoln, Taylor, Rusk, Sawyer, Washburn, Douglas) and southwestern counties (Green, LaFayette, Iowa, Grant, Crawford, Richland, Monroe).

All the following reports of regional or seasonal rarities were documented when necessary.

#### CONTRIBUTORS

Marjorie Albrecht, John Bielefeldt, John & Edith Brakefield, Jeannine Burbach, Mary Butterbrodt, Ed Cleary & Brother Columban, Robert Drieslein, Eric Epstein, Jim Evrard, Craig Faanes, Alta Goff, Dennis Gustafson, Mary Hafeman, Maybelle Hardy, Dorothy Harmer, Don Haseleu, William Hilsenhoff, Paul Hunter, Charles Kemper, Rockne Knuth, Randy Koroter, Steven Krings, Fred Lesher, Harold Lindberg, Ken & Jan Luepke, Mrs. Joseph Mahlum, Carol Rudy, Daryl Tessen, Linda Thomas, Richard Verch, Viratine Weber, Melvin Wierzbicki, John Woodcock.

## SEASONAL SUMMARY

**Pied-billed Grebe:** Perhaps overlooked in midwinter, perhaps borne north by the spring storm of Feb. 22-24 were single birds Feb. 24 Dane Co. (Koroter) and Feb. 26 Ozaukee Co. Epstein, Tessen).

**Great Blue Heron:** One photographed in Waukesha Co. Feb. 4 (fide Bielefeldt) only midwinter record.

**Mute Swan:** One Dec. 4-15 Milwaukee Co. (John Idzikowski, Gustafson) is presumably the bird reported as a Christmas Count Period sighting. Also two, as in past seasons, Feb. 24 Bayfield Co. (Koroter).

**Whistling Swan:** Solitary winterers in Brown (Cleary, Columban) and LaCrosse (Lesher) Cos.

**Canada Goose:** A big southbound move Dec. 6 over Dane, Jefferson and Waukesha Cos., at least, and the usual spring scouts Feb. 23-24 in Dane Co. (65--Koroter) and at Horicon (150--Drieslein). Winterers reported only from Rock (1--Hollister recount), Portage (1--Krings), and Brown (up to 500--Cleary, Columban) Cos.

**Snow Goose:** Three wintered Brown Co. (Cleary, Columban).

**American Black Duck:** Johnsgard and Disilvestro have recently summarized the black duck's decline in eastern North America by comparing the numbers of blacks and mallards on Christmas counts (*Am. Birds* 30: 904-908, 1976). A similar Wisconsin analysis would be interesting. The five observers who listed peak midwinter numbers of both species totalled 2191 mallards and just 25 blacks in Dane, Rock, Waukesha and Portage Cos.

**Gadwall:** Wintered Dane (max. 188--Hilsenhoff) and Waukesha (15--Bielefeldt) Cos.

**Common Pintail:** One wintered Milwaukee Co. (Epstein, Tessen) and two Winnebago Co. (Tessen). Seen Jan. 12 Brown Co. (1--Cleary, Columban) and Feb. 19 Walworth Co. (1--Tessen).

**Green-winged Teal:** Wintered Winnebago Co. (Tessen); one seen Jan. Dane Co. (Koroter).

**Blue-winged Teal:** One seen Jan. 24 Waukesha Co. (Bielefeldt).

**American Wigeon:** Seen Feb. 19 Walworth Co. (2--Tessen) and Feb. 21 Milwaukee Co. (Epstein).

**Northern Shoveler:** Up to 25 wintered Dane Co. (Hilsenhoff, Tessen).

**Wood Duck:** Wintered Winnebago (Tessen), Milwaukee (Epstein), and Dane (4--Hilsenhoff, Koroter) Cos. "Present" LaCrosse Co. (Lesher) and seen Jan. 9 Portage Co. (1--Krings), Feb. 19 Walworth Co. (2--Tessen), and Feb. 20 Rock Co. (3--Hollister recount).

**Redhead:** Wintered Winnebago (Tessen) and Milwaukee (Epstein) Cos. Seen very far north in Ashland Co. Jan. 29 (Verch).

**Ring-necked Duck:** One "Present" LaCrosse Co. (Lesher).

**Canvasback:** Seen Feb. 11-22 Milwaukee Co. (3--Epstein) and Jan. 22 Ozaukee Co. (1--Tessen).

**Lesser Scaup:** One wintered Waukesha Co. (Bielefeldt), one "present" LaCrosse Co. (Lesher), Seen Feb. 21 Portage Co. (Luepke).

**Bufflehead:** Reported only from Milwaukee Co., where it wintered (Hunter, Epstein, Tessen).

**Oldsquaw:** No inland reports after a migrant Dec. 5 Dane Co. (Koroter).

**Harlequin Duck:** One male Jan. 25-26 Milwaukee Co. (Harold Bauers, Epstein).

**White-winged Scoter:** A migrant Dec. 5, Dane Co., (Koroter). In midwinter, one to two Milwaukee Co. Feb. 6-21 (Tessen, Gustafson, Epstein) only record.

**Ruddy Duck:** No post-Christmas count reports.

**Hooded Merganser:** One seen Jan. 22 Ozaukee Co. (Tessen) was the only report from southern districts where most winter sightings are expected. Birds listed from Brown Co. (probably wintered--Cleary, Columban), Winnebago Co. Jan. 1 (2-Tessen), and Adams Co. Jan. 20 (Luepke) were near the northern edge of the typical wintering area, but observations in or near Chippewa Co. Feb. 2 (Kemper) and in Barron Co. Jan. 17 (1--Faanes) lie beyond that edge.

**Common Merganser:** Wintered on Lake Michigan and along the state's major rivers.

**Red-breasted Merganser:** Reported only from Lake Michigan.

**Northern Goshawk:** Both the nine Christmas count birds and the subsequent records from six northern and southern counties were fewer than last year's mediocre results, and easily the lowest reported number since the winter of 1971-72.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** Midwinter reports from just four counties--LaCrosse (Lesher), St. Croix (Faanes), Chippewa (Kemper), and Brown (Cleary, Columban)--although Christmas counts matched the average sharp-shin tally of the past six winters. See also Cooper's Hawk.

**Cooper's Hawk:** Excluding Christmas counts, undetailed reports Dec. 27-Feb. 9 Brown Co. (Cleary, Columban), Jan. 3 Calumet Co. (Rudy), Jan. 9 Ashland Co. (Verch), Feb. 4 Manitowoc Co. (Woodcock), Feb. 18 Price Co.

**Cooper's Hawk:** Excluding Christmas counts, undetailed reports Dec. 27-Feb. 9 Brown Co. (Cleary, Columban), Jan. 3 Calumet Co. (Rudy), Jan. 9 Ashland Co. (Verch), Feb. 4 Manitowoc Co. (Woodcock), Feb. 18 Price Co. (Hardy), and all winter Ozaukee Co. (Roger Sundell). The difficulty of separating some Cooper's from some sharp-shins makes documentation of all Cooper's much appreciated.

**Red-tailed Hawk:** Once again wintered north to Barron Co. in the west and Brown Co. in the east, but not listed this year by Portage-Wood Co. observers, so the usual midstate valley in winter range was apparently a little deeper this season.

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** Wintered St. Croix Co. (Faanes) and seen Jan. 1 Winnebago Co. (1--Tessen) and Jan. 25-31 Waukesha Co. (2--Bielefeldt).

**Rough-legged Hawk:** Far less numerous on Christmas counts than in either of the two preceding winters. Until mid-February wintering birds were reported only from Rock, Jefferson, Waukesha, Dodge, and Manitowoc Co., where snow cover was shallowest at 6 inches or less. Reports from Fond du Lac Co. Feb. 11, Oconto Co. Feb. 13, Juneau Co. Feb. 19, and Clark Co. Feb. 20-27--presumably all migrant birds--followed the warm spell of Feb. 9-12 and a rapidly receding snow cover at midstate.

**Golden Eagle:** One seen Jan. 7-18 Burnett Co., as usual (Evraud), and one adult found Jan. 20 in Adams Co. at Petenwell (Luepke, Don Follen Sr.).

**Bald Eagle:** Icing may have reduced midwinter numbers in the far northern reaches of the Wisconsin, Chippewa, and St. Croix Rivers (e.g., maximum of one in Burnett Co. observations) but there was no obvious contraction of midwinter range.

**Northern Harrier:** The Christmas count total was the lowest in this decade, and the only later reports were one Washington Co. Jan. 23 (Haseleu) and up to three (on Jan. 20) at Horicon Marsh (Drieslein).

**American Kestrel:** A third consecutive winter of high Christmas count numbers and wide distribution, with midwinter range limits almost identical to the red-tail's.

**Common Bobwhite:** Midwinter reports from Rock (Mahlum) and LaCrosse (Lesher) Cos. repeat Christmas count sightings there.

**Gray Partridge:** Listed from Rock, Milwaukee, Manitowoc, Calumet, Brown and St. Croix Cos.

**American Coot:** Midwinter numbers and five-county range much down from last year's 11 counties, with maxima of 40 Dane Co. (vs. 450 in 1976-Hilsenhoff) and 8 Waukesha Co. (vs. 61 in 1976-Bielefeldt) spending the whole season. Tessen found nine wintering Winnebago Co. and 11 in Walworth Co. Feb. 19. The Hollister Club's recount listed four in Rock Co. Feb. 20.

**Common Snipe:** The record-breaking Christmas count total dwindled to two midwinter reports--Jan. 15-Feb. 11 Ozaukee Co. (Gustafson) and Jan. 18-25 Waukesha Co. (3--Bielefeldt). One in Bayfield Co. Dec. 26 (Koroter) was not the same bird seen on the local Christmas count. The snipe's capacity to resist even the severest Wisconsin winter could probably be better documented if more observers would carefully search springholes in late winter.

**Glaucous Gull:** Milwaukee Co. reported at least three--an adult Dec. 15-18 (Gustafson--apparently the Christmas count bird) and the same or another adult Dec. 20 (Epstein), plus a first-winter immature Dec. 19 and a second-winter bird Feb. 21-28 (Epstein). Also one Feb. 13 Racine Co. (Tessen, Louise Erickson) and present in December Douglas Co. See also Iceland Gull.

**Iceland Gull:** In Milwaukee Co. second-year bird(s) Dec. 27 (Jim Frank) and Feb. 25 (Epstein), both under ideal conditions. Recent collecting on the East Coast shows that supposed body size difference between Glaucous and Iceland Gulls are quite unreliable field characters; observers must note bill sizes and colors, as Frank and Epstein (see *By the Wayside*) did.

**Herring Gull:** February movement included appearances Dane Co. Feb. 12 (Hilsenhoff) and Fond du Lac Co. Feb. 19 (Knuth). This gull's migrations, not to be confused with long daily feeding flights, deserve more reporting.

**Ring-billed Gull:** Milwaukee Co. the only midwinter report. One wandered to Dane Co. Feb. 28 (Koroter).

**Mourning Dove:** The trend of regular increases in the Christmas count total faltered somewhat this year but numbers remained well above those of the early 1970's Wintered north to Marinette (Lindberg), Shawano (Hafeman), Marathon (3--Luepke), Chippewa (Kemper), and St. Croix (Faanes) Cos.

**Common Screech Owl:** After Christmas counts, reported in Grant, Rock, Dane, Waukesha, Milwaukee, Fond du Lac, Calmet, Brown, and St. Croix Cos.

**Snowy Owl:** No big invasion but the third straight winter of fairly good numbers. Midwinter reports from Milwaukee, Waukesha (1), Ozaukee (2), Dane, Dodge, Fond du lac (1), Calumet (1), Brown, Douglas, and Ashland Cos., plus December birds (excluding Christmas counts) in Manitowoc (1), Clark, Barron (1), Burnett, and Marinette Cos.

Wisconsin marked the southeastern limits of this year's main flight. Snowies were scarce in all eastern parts of Canada and the U.S. and in Illinois, "average" in the Dakotas and Minnesota, remarkably common in Iowa, and relatively frequent south to Kansas in the Plains states.

**Long-eared Owl:** Reported only in Milwaukee Co., up to three Jan. 13-22 (Epstein, Tessen).

**Short-eared Owl:** The 20 at Bong Recreation Area in December (Fred Faraca) are presumably the birds of the Christmas count period from Kenosha Co., where one to three were also seen Jan. 22-25 (Tessen, Mary Donald, Louise Erickson). Wintered Brown Co. (Max. 3--Columban *et al.*). Seen Milwaukee Co. Feb. 1 (Epsetin), Waukesha Co. Feb. 4-5 (Bielefeldt), and Feb. 11-16 Horicon Marsh (2--Drieslein, Koroter).

**Saw-whet Owl:** A dead bird Dec. 24 Juneau Co. (Epstein) only report outside the Christmas Counts.

**Belted Kingfisher:** Midwinter reports only from Waukesha (5--Bielefeldt), Portage (1--Krings), LaCrosse (Lesher), and Barron and St. Croix (Faanes) Cos. Fewer than last year, these sightings seem to show the drop which might be expected in an ice-bound winter, but observer inactivity might also play a part.

**Common Flicker:** Seen Jan. 5 Brown Co. (Wierzbicki) but not listed by midstate or western observers at similar latitude.

**Pileated Woodpecker:** One in Ozaukee Co. Dec. 3-Feb. 26, no doubt the Newburg Christmas count bird, was the only out-of-range sighting.

**Red-bellied Woodpecker:** Reported north to Barron and Brown Cos., as usual, plus a more exceptional bird Marathon Co. Jan. 9 (Luepke).

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** Christmas counts totalled slightly fewer than last year but slightly more than the 1970-75 average. Birds in Sawyer Co. Feb. 19 (Faanes) and Marathon Co. Feb. 14-26 (1--Luepke) were past some years' reported range limits.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** One in January Waukesha Co. (Linda Safir) only midwinter report.

**Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker:** The bird discovered in November in Outagamie Co. reappeared Jan. 21 (Dar Tiede, Mike Brandell). Koroter, Al Shey and Robert and Jorn Ake saw one in Douglas Co. Feb. 27.

**Horned Lark:** Winterers reported for January or earliest February in Brown, Marathon (where numerous), Chippewa, and Barron Cos., probably a little farther north than last winter. Warmth and snow melt Feb. 9-12 got southern migrants underway by Feb. 10 with possible new arrivals distinguished Feb. 11-20 Fond du Lac Co., Feb. 13 Oconto Co., and Feb. 26 Marinette Co.

**Gray Jay:** Midwinter reports from Oneida (4--Luepke), Vilas (3--Thomas), Price (8--Hardy), Iron (1--Butterbrodt), Ashland (Verch), Sawyer (at least 7--Faanes, Koroter), and Burnett (above normal number--Ervard) Cos. All those areas lie within expected winter range but Evrard's comment from a northwestern county may mark the Wisconsin edge of a southward and westward Minnesota irruption that took birds to the Twin Cities and one to Iowa.

**Northern Raven:** Midwinter reports south to Door (Roy Lukes), Langlade (Rudy), Taylor (Luepke), and Barron (Goff, Faanes) Cos., plus one Feb. 12 at normal Portage Co. range limit (Krings).

**Boreal Chickadee:** Listed in Forest (Koroter), Vilas (Thomas), Price (max. 3--Hardy) and Sawyer (18!--Faanes) Cos., all within the usual range, in midwinter.

**Tufted Titmouse:** Midwinter reports in Rock, Waukesha, Dane, Vernon, Chippewa and Barron (1) Cos.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Widely distributed throughout the state and moderately numerous on Christmas counts and--unlike last year--in midwinter too.

**Brown Creeper:** Apparently wintered statewide. Midwinter reports of this inconspicuous bird included such northern counties as Sawyer, Vilas, and Marinette.

**Carolina Wren:** Single post-Christmas count report was one Racine Co. Jan. 22 (Tessen).

**Northern Mockingbird:** Winter-long residents in Milwaukee and Racine Cos. were confirmed by Gustafson and Tessen, respectively. Also one Jan. 13 Dane Co. (Susie Nehls).

**Brown Thrasher:** Two Brown Co. (Cleary, Columban) and one Waukesha Co. (Linda Safir) overwintered.

**American Robin:** Not listed north of Brown and LaCrosse Cos. in midwinter.

**Varied Thrush:** One Jan. 10-Feb. 14 Chippewa Co. (Kemper) one in January, Door Co.

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** It often seems that January-February records might be scant because observers fail to make a thorough search for this kinglet, which can winter in some numbers in conifers, including plantations. This year, however, had much the worst Christmas count total since 1972 and only one midwinter report--Feb. 15 in far northern Ashland Co. (Verch).

Golden-crowns are seldom treated as one of the boreal "flight" species, but in another northern bird few analysts would hesitate to connect a Wisconsin winter dearth with a fall migration in which they "flooded the southern tier, from the 'best invasion of recent history' in Florida to 'unprecedented numbers' in southern California." Kaufman, in *Am. Birds* 31:148 (1977), goes on to say: "I suspect that most of these birds -- including the majority of the western ones--originated in the boreal forests of Canada. While one might expect Golden-crowns from western mountains to be the more likely visitors in western lowlands, the opposite is indicated by specimen records in Arizona, where previous lowland invasions have been of [the subspecies] ... from the eastern half of Canada. Thus I believe that the Florida and California kinglets and those in between probably all represented a single movement."

**Bohemian Waxwing:** Christmas count and subsequent numbers certainly improved on last winter and approached the minor invasion of 1972-73. Birds were most prominent in the northwest to central state and again, like last year, failed to reach the south.

In midwinter seen Ashland Co. "sporadically" (Verch, Koroter), Marathon Co. Jan. 21 (22--Luepke), Portage Co. Feb. 5 (30--Krings), Waukesha Co. Feb. 26 (12--Tessen), and Milwaukee Co. all winter (max. 36--Jim Frank et al.).

**Cedar Waxwing:** Overwintering range not clearly defined because most reports and maximum counts came as observers were able to get afield during the more tolerable Feb. 9-28 weather when the start of the typical late winter invasion may have stretched north to Manitowoc, Portage, Jackson and LaCrosse Cos., and possibly Shawano Co.

**Northern Shrike:** The third strong Christmas count in a row, but this year's total of 162 birds shattered last year's record of 97. Midwinter reports from every corner of the state. The shrike invasion was widespread yet was called "excellent" and near the "heaviest ever" only in the northern Great Lakes states (western New York, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota) and in all of Ontario. Despite a Wisconsin flight which seemed almost a November-December migration, with fewer birds in some southern counties

thereafter, midwinter Illinois sightings were relatively scarce--only three individuals, for example, in the Chicago area. Shrikes were fairly common in Iowa and it is tempting to infer a southwest trend in the supposed Wisconsin movements.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** A Barron Co. bird died on Dec. 24 (Goff).

**Meadowlark spp?:** Present all season Outagamie Co. (Tessen) with one Jan. 18 Waukesha Co. (Bielefeldt) and one Feb. 20 Rock Co. (Hollister recount) the only other midwinter reports.

**Red-winged Blackbird:** Wintered north to Brown, Chippewa and St. Croix Cos., with an Ashland Co. record Feb. 27 (Koroter). Strong southeast winds carried small flocks of migrants to Walworth, Waukesha and Milwaukee Cos. during the Feb. 22-24 spring rainstorm.

**Rusty Blackbird:** Wintered Dane (6--Koroter) and LaCrosse (Lesher) Cos. Seen Dec. 23 and Feb. 27 Ashland Co. and Dec. 27 Bayfield Co. (Verch, Koroter) although not listed on Christmas counts there. Also Seen Feb. 1 Calumet Co. (1--Rudy) and Feb. 12 Waukesha Co. (1--Bielefeldt).

**Brewer's Blackbird:** Seen only Jan. 22 Kenosha Co. (1--Tessen).

**Common Grackle:** Wintered to LaCrosse, Brown and possibly Shawano Cos.; seen Marathon Co. Jan. 13 (1--Luepke). Three probable migrants Feb. 26 Walworth Co.

**Brown-headed Cowbird:** Seen well beyond other midwinter areas in Ashland Co. Jan. 18 (Verch).

**Northern Cardinal:** Midwinter reports north to Barron, Chippewa and Marathon Cos.

**Evening Grosbeak:** Except for some birds from Lake Winnebago north to Door and Marinette Cos., northwestern and north-central regions held almost all the Christmas count and subsequent reports in by far the poorest flight of the decade. In midwinter not noted south of Brown (Max. 30--Cleary, Columban), Portage (12--Krings), and Barron (Faanes) Cos.

**Purple Finch:** An average Christmas count total, concentrated in the southern half of the state, was followed by a poor midwinter showing. Some wintered on the Lake Michigan shore north to Brown, Marinette and Door Cos.; all others after early January were reported from Dane, Waukesha and Rock Cos. Unlike other winter finches, most flew beyond Wisconsin.

**House Finch:** Koroter reported on Feb. 19 Dane Co. See **By the Wayside**. Wisconsin records, theoretically from the rapidly expanding introduced population of the East, can be expected to increase.

**Pine Grosbeak:** Christmas count numbers, and later reports from nine counties, were a close match for last winter's fair flight. Again midwinter birds failed to move into southern parts of the state but an eastern component of its range along Lake Michigan and Lake Winnebago was lacking last year. January-February sightings were listed from Door (max. 27), Brown (max. 30), Manitowoc (max. 20), and Milwaukee Cos. (plus Christmas count birds in Outagamie and Calumet Cos.) as well as the northern counties of Ashland, Iron, Price, Vilas and Forest.

**Common Redpoll:** Recent invasions have come in alternate years, with this season's lower numbers comparable to those of 1972-73 and 1974-75--poor but not disastrous. Midwinter reports from Barron Co. Dec. 9-Jan. 21 (Goff), Sawyer Co. Feb. 26 (Koroter), Price Co. Jan. 20-Feb. 28 (Max. 9--Hardy), Vilas Co. Feb. 5-24 (Max. 5--Thomas), Marathon Co. Jan. 17 (75--Luepke), and Brown Co. Jan. 6-9 (max. 10--Cleary, Columban) failed to expand on Christmas count range. Scattered count birds in east-southeast counties went undetected thereafter.

**Pine Siskin:** Recent Christmas counts have followed the alternate-year fluctuations of redpolls, but this year's siskin total was clearly the lowest since 1970. Midwinter reports from just four counties--Dane and Door ("very few") all season, Lacrosse Jan. 22, and Shawano Feb. 20 (2)--were also at a very low ebb.

**American Goldfinch:** A record-breaking Christmas count for the only winter finch which occurred statewide. Seen all season in Vilas (Thomas) and Iron (Butterbrodt) Cos.; only the far northwest may have lacked wintering birds. Also abundant in states immediately below Wisconsin.

**Red Crossbill:** Reported only three times all winter--8 on the Wausau Christmas count, 30 on Dec. 1 Barron Co. (Faanes), and Jan. 30 Ashland Co. (Verch).

**White-winged Crossbill:** Christmas count sightings at Grantsburg and Hudson were the only reports all winter.

**Field Sparrow:** One wintered Ozaukee Co. (Roger Sundell); one seen Waukesha Co. Jan. 6 (Bielefeldt).

**White-crowned Sparrow:** Up to 10 Kenosha Co. until at least mid-January (Tessen et al.).

**White-throated Sparrow:** Single birds surviving all winter in Marinette (Lindberg) and Price (Hardy) Cos. were north of the usual seasonal limits. Also all winter in Dane (max. 3-Koroter), Outagamie (5 in January but only 2 in February--Tessen), and Brown (1-Cleary, Columban) Cos.

**Fox Sparrow:** Seen Jan. 15 and 18 Waukesha Co., possibly separate individuals (Tessen, Bielefeldt), and Feb. 20 Rock Co. (1--Hollister recount).

**Swamp Sparrow:** Despite record Christmas count numbers unreported in midwinter. A big fall-off of this sort is expected because field effort drops so drastically after Christmas but this species--strongly attached to the marshy and brushy edges of open water--might be one bird truly affected by the extraordinary cold weather.

**Song Sparrow:** Reported north to Brown (1), Marinette (1), and LaCrosse Cos. in midwinter.

**Lapland Longspur:** Midwinter reports only from Marathon Co. Jan. 16 (70--Luepke), Kenosha Co. Jan. 25 (Mary Donald, Louise Erickson), and Rock Co. Feb. 19 (10--Tessen).

**Snow Bunting:** Very high Christmas count numbers for the second consecutive year plus midwinter reports from 27 counties in every state region. Non-Christmas count maxima of 1260 Clark Co. Dec. 26 (Luepke) and 400 Oconto Co. Dec. 25 (Koroter) preceded the deeper northern snows, but 500 Marathon Co. Jan. 23 (Luepke) and 500 Barron Co. Jan. 17 (Faanes) did not. Also 300 Door Co. (Roy Lukes), 700 Ozaukee Co. (Tessen), and 1000 Fond du Lac Co. (Ed Dietrich) in January. The 500 Rock Co. Feb. 19 (Tessen) was the only reported high count which might involve post-thaw migration. Also widespread and/or abundant in adjacent states, Ohio, New York and Ontario.

**FIND THIS BIRD  
ONLY IN  
RACINE**



**W.H. PUGH OIL CO.  
Racine, Wisconsin**



# By the Wayside...

House Finch in Madison. February 19, 1977, about 10:00 A.M. Sunny but hazy, about 10 m.p.h. wind, about 25° F. Glass: Bushnell 7x50 Featherlite with Instafocus.

A female Purple Finch flew into the tree above my head. I remember studying it and thinking that it had particularly round breast spots... My attention was drawn away from the Purple Finch. A few moments later I looked back to find the Purple Finch gone, but instead another similar looking bird in the same tree. It was similar in color, size and shape (it may have been slimmer; however that was not one of my impressions at the time). The bird differed from a female Purple Finch in the following ways:

1) The breast markings were very different. Instead of spotty streaks or actual spots, it was streaked. The streaks were narrower and covered the chin, breast and flanks (extending to the tail). The streaking was strong and obvious, particularly on the flanks, but not as contrasting as that of a Song Sparrow or even a Pine Siskin. The color was dark brown against off-white or dirty white.

2) The face appeared to have no markings. It did not have the Rose-breasted Grosbeak-like eye line or any hint of it. It did not show any triangular face patch like a sparrow.

3) Its head was slightly smaller than that of a Purple Finch.

4) The overall color of the bird was gray-brown with little variation. I looked for other colors--particularly yellow--but saw none. There was streaking on the back, but it was not strong. It had a slight beige wingbar not as strong as that of a Tree Sparrow. The bill was brown, short and stubby. The bill profile was nearly that of an equilateral triangle, not the sharper bill of a Pine Siskin. The wings were never observed to be crossed over the rump.

I was only able to study the bird directly above me for 5-10 seconds... I didn't get a chance to study the tail well. My impression was that compared to a sparrow the same size, the tail was shorter. I do not know if it was notched or not. The sun was illuminating the bird and my back well during these observations.

I caught several glimpses of the bird high in the alders during the next 20 seconds (it was feeding on the strobiles, as were two siskins).

Although the distance was greater and the bird often obscured by branches, I could see its sides well occasionally. Again I noticed the distinct breast and flank streakings, lack of face markings, and lack of any bright color.... Although I have had some brief experience with House Finches in the West, I have not studied the females to the extent I examined this bird.

Randy Koroter, Madison

### **Glaucous and Iceland Gulls Compared in Milwaukee**

Glaucous Gull--bird in pale cinnamon 1st winter plumage seen on 12/19... Primaries very white, contrasted markedly even with the generally pale coloration. Bill was heavy, light colored with a dark tip....An adult was on the ice with Herring Gulls on 12/12. Pale gray mantle, white wing tips, large size, heavy yellow bill....From 2/21 until the end of the period, four sightings of a 2nd winter Glaucous were made. Best view was on 2/25....Conspicuously larger than any Herring Gull, plumage near immaculate white throughout, heavy pale bill with dark tip, pinkish legs.... Because this bird seemed particularly large, the possibility exists that a white-plumaged gull in the Juneau Lagoon on 2/28 was a different bird. Plumage was dingier, size only slightly larger than average Herring Gull. Bill was heavier than Herring Gulls', light with dark tip.

2/25 Iceland Gull--a rather "dirty" whitish-plumaged individual... was obviously smaller than all but the very smallest of the 400-500 Herring Gulls present. Bill was comparatively slight, dark blackish-brown for its entire length. Wing tips were quite white, unmarked, as was the tail.... The White Glaucous Gull mentioned above was standing only a few yards away. This excellent (and for me unprecedented) opportunity to compare the three species at 70-80' range was indeed fortuitous. The size difference between Iceland and Glaucous was striking (at least in these individuals) as were head and bill proportions.

Eric Epstein, Milwaukee

## **Letters to The Editor**

Dear Dr. Kemper:

The recently reported sighting at Sheboygan Point of a Yellow Wagtail, which will become the state's most unusual observation if it is accepted and added to the state's hypothetical list, illustrated a deficiency that I believe can be easily filled. How many of the 26 species on Wisconsin's hypothetical list could have been substantiated with a photograph if a suitable camera had been available? Over three-fourths of these species were recorded in the 60's and 70's, a period when birders owning cameras equipped with telephoto lenses have become more numerous.

Of course, another alternative to a recognizable photograph is the actual specimen. The pros and cons of scientific bird collecting have been discussed by birders through the years, and most recently in two papers in *Bird-Banding* (Pro-Phillips, A.R. 1974. The need for education and collecting. *Bird-Banding* 45:24-28; and Con - Tatum J.B. 1974. On killing birds, *Bird-Banding* 45:315-319.). I believe that most amateur and professional ornithologists feel that photography is the preferable alternative in documenting a bird rarity.

I would like to propose that the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology solicit and then publish a directory in the *Passenger Pigeon* with names, addresses, and phone numbers of those with cameras who are willing to "rush to the scene". Of course, each photographer upon receiving notification of a rare sighting must make the difficult and sometimes costly decision whether or not to make a photographic attempt. If a camera could have been quickly produced in Sheboygan, would we now have a picture of the state's and possibly the lower 48's first Yellow Wagtail?

As a start, my home address is 6753 Knollwood, West Bend, 53095, Phone (414) 675-2443, and at business, 231 W. Michigan, Milwaukee, 53201, (414) 277-2179.

Sincerely,  
Noel J. Cutright

Dear Dr. Kemper:

I have just been talking with Tom Ellis about my sighting of a Gray Jay the opening day of deer season, November 19, at my deer stand just north of the fire tower, north of Wisconsin Dells, east of Highway 13. This is the first time I have ever observed a Gray Jay so far south. I had lots of time for positive identification with a larger Bluejay attacking this one and driving it to within about 20 feet of my stand where I watched it quite awhile through the field glasses. It had a very distinctive black stripe through the eye that probably was even stronger than is shown in most of the paintings. It was a rather small sized Jay.

Also we have had quite an invasion of Grosbeaks at this place just north of Wisconsin Dells which I guess was a little unusual this year.

Sincerely, yours,  
Robert E. Tracy

On October 12, 1976 while having lunch at the Leopold Shack, a Gray Jay (*Perisoreus canadensis*) flew into the yard, perched on a post by the outside fireplace. We tossed a few bread crumbs in his direction. In typical Gray Jay behavior, he hopped toward us, devoured the crumbs, and then unhurridly took off in the direction of the Wisconsin River.

Gromme<sup>1</sup> states that the Gray Jay is "an uncommon permanent resident" in the northern third of Wisconsin. This record places the Jay in Fairfield Township, Sauk County, Wisconsin - directly in the southern third of the state.

Nina Leopold Bradley  
Route #1, Box 145A  
Baraboo, Wisconsin 53913

1. Grome, Owen J., 1963 - Birds of Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin Press (p. 56)

## Book Review

**The American Robin**, Len Eiserer, Nelson-Hall Inc., Chicago, Illinois, 175 pp., \$12.50.

Can an experimental psychologist, who knows little about birds outside the laboratory and his own intense and emotional involvement with one species write a "good" book about the American Robin? Well, yes and no.

The "yes" part is two-fold. Dr. Eiserer does present a well-organized, reasonably thorough overview of the species, one that will be appreciated by fellow robin fans and bird lovers in general, and one that will fill many gaps in the general knowledge of this oh-so-familiar bird. How many people know, for example, about the robin's communal roosting habits? Moreover, Eiserer writes with charm. He seems to love words almost as well as he loves robins, and he cannot resist punning and alliterating all over the place in his lively, amusing descriptions. The omnipresent anthropomorphism, which can be seen in the cartoon-like marginal drawings even before a word is read, is deliberate, and while it might put off some more scholarly readers, I think it can be forgiven in the name of Style.

The "no" part stems from Dr. Eiserer's stated intention to systematically synthesize the information gathered by ornithologists and bird watchers "into a comprehensive description of the Robin's entire life cycle...". That is a pretty tall order, and despite the six years of observation and library research (1000 sources), I have a feeling a lot has been left unsaid. It just wouldn't be possible in a book of 175 pages to say it all, and there is no comprehensive bibliography to which to refer. In short, this is not a technical book, and will not be much help to anyone needing one.

Unfortunately included in the book (and the author should not get the blame for this - he says he never approved it) are, among the nine beautifully produced color photos, four pictures of dead robins, stuffed and posed in "natural settings"! It is to be hoped that these will be overshadowed by the "alive" text.

While \$12.50 is a pretty steep price for stuffed robins, the buyer also gets a neat little package of information about America's favorite bird, Len Eiserer's agreeable writing, and some interesting (if somewhat off-beat) reflections on the robin's destiny and its relationship to man.

Linda L. Safir

# A Comparison of Iowa and Wisconsin Checklists

By Charles Kemper

The Iowa Ornithologists Union checklist of Iowa Birds was updated and printed in the **Iowa Bird Life - XLVII**, 1977, pp 31-40. It encompasses 378 species reliably identified in Iowa up to May, 1977. It was compiled by a committee composed of W.H. Brown, N.S. Halimi and R.R. Vane, assisted by P.C. Peterson. It is interesting to compare with the Wisconsin list of birds. Included are extinct species (Passenger Pigeon, Carolina Parakeet) and species that have not been seen for 50 years. One presumes these records are authenticated by specimens. They include the Magnificent Frigatebird, Trumpeter Swan, Swallow-tailed Kite, Mississippi Kite, Harris' Hawk, Eskimo Curlew, Long-tailed Jaeger, Sabine's Gull, Trick-billed Murre, Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker, Brown-headed Nuthatch, North American Dipper, Gray-crowned Rosy Finch, McCown's Longspur.

The Committee included several supported only by sight records provided these met the criteria of credibility used by P.D. Skaar in the compilation of the Montana Checklist (**Montana Bird Distribution**, Bogeman, 1975); their acronym, VALID, represents the compents:

View obtained  
Ability of observer (s)  
Likelihood  
Identification ease  
Details provided

This is comparable to the hypothetical records on the Wisconsin list.

There are three types of birds in this comparision. First the commonplace species that would be expected on both lists which makes up about 90 percent of the list. Then there is a second group of "eye popping" birds that appear on both lists (Artic Loon, Brown Pelican, Anhinga, Magnificent Frigatebird, White Faced Ibis, Ross' Goose, King Eider, Black Vulture, Mississippi Kite, Harris' Hawk, Prairie Falcon, Black Rail, Long-billed Curlew, Great Black-backed Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Little Turn, Poor Will, Brown-headed Nuthatch and Golden-crowned Sparrow.) The third group is like "Close Encounters of the Third Kind". It makes up the species that are unique for either the Iowa or Wisconsin list.

Strictly Iowa records are for the following:

1. Black-billed Whistling Duck
2. Fulvous Whistling Duck
3. Mountain Plover
4. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper
5. Thick-billed Murre
6. Band Tailed Pigeon
7. Smooth-billed Ani
8. Pinyon Jay
9. Carolina Chickadee
10. Pygmy Nuthatch
11. North American Dipper
12. Rock Wren
13. Townsend's Warbler
14. MacGillivray's Warbler
15. Great-tailed Grackle
16. Gray-crowned Rosy Finch.

The Wisconsin only list included:

1. **Brant:** This Atlantic coast species. Still it is surprising that there have been no Iowa sightings since there have been at least eleven recent Wisconsin records.
2. **Black Brant:** One hypothetical record in 1961 for this Pacific coast goose.
3. **White-checked Pintail (Bahama Duck):** A specimen on Sept. 21, 1929 at Winneconne.
4. **Masked Duck:** A specimen collected at Milton, Nov. 1870. What was this Caribbean duck doing in Wisconsin?

5. **Barrow's Goldeneye:** At least a dozen Wisconsin records. It seems surprising that this has not turned up in Iowa.
6. **White-tailed Kite:** Normally a southern species normally found in southern Florida, southwestern California, and eastern Central America. This appeared in Adams County the whole month of June, 1964.
7. **Spruce Grouse:** Regarded as a rare but regular breeder in northern Wisconsin.
8. **Willow Ptarmigan:** Two specimens from 1846 in Racine. This is hard to believe but they were trapped by Dr. Hoy. An unsuccessful attempt was made in 1941 to introduce these in Wood County.
9. **Snowy Plover:** Two records, one from Kenosha, 1934 and one in 1967 at Superior, Wis.
10. **Black Turnstone:** This Pacific coast turnstone appeared once on May 22, 1971 and was photographed.
11. **Curlew Sandpiper:** Still hypothetical but seen by lots of Wisconsin observers in 1971. Also in 1968. An interesting accidental Eurasian.
12. **Spotted Redshank:** A hypothetical record by Harold Winkler on April 28, 1960
13. **Thayer's Gull:** Still hypothetical is this new species - offshoot of the Herring Gull.
14. **Little Gull:** Just in the past 5 years has this European straggler began to get a toe hold in the Western Great Lakes. A few records as early as 1937.
15. **Roseate Tern:** Hypothetical record for this East Coast tern.
16. **Artic Tern:** Positively identified photo by Tom Erdman backed up several sight records.
17. **Royal Tern:** Hypothetical records that seems somewhat shaky.
18. **White-winged Black Tern:** One specimen from 1873, Fort Atkinson. An eastern hemisphere tern, that is in National Museum.
19. **Dovekie:** Two sight records.
20. **Ancient Murrelet:** Five sight records. One Specimen.
21. **Ringed Turtle Dove:** Probably escaped cage birds that have become established in parts of Northeastern Wisconsin.
22. **Ground Dove:** Two modern sight records and one specimen in Milwaukee Museum.
23. **Monk Parakeet:** Escapee species that is trying to establish itself. One confirmed nesting.
24. **Hawk Owl**
25. **Boreal Owl:** Quite rare in Wisconsin but a little surprising that there are no Iowa records.
26. **Rufous Hummingbird:** A hypothetical but judged valid record for Sept. 14, 1976 in Racine.
27. **Cassin's Kingbird:** Hypothetical lone record for this southwestern species.
28. **Vermillion Flycatcher:** One hypothetical sight record.
29. **Gray-headed Chickadee:** One hypothetical record that seems unlikely. Probably this species should not be accepted without a specimen.
30. **Wheatear:** Hypothetical records by Richard Gordon in 1952. A European straggler.
31. **Gray Vireo:** One record - bird collected May 11, 1964 at Cedar Grove by Helmat Mueller. Now in U. of Wisconsin Museum at Madison.
32. **Kirtland's Warbler:** About 7 Wisconsin records for this rarest of warblers. No specimens or photographs.
33. **Painted Redstart:** A lone hypothetical record.
34. **European Tree Sparrow:** Seen, photographed by Don Beimborn.
35. **European Siskin:** Hypothetical. Possibility of it being an escaped caged bird.
36. **House Finch:** Appearing sporadically in recent years. Will no doubt reach Iowa in future.
37. **Seaside Sparrow:** Although a specimen exists, there is still some doubt about whether it is truly a Wisconsin species.
38. **Black-throated Sparrow:** Several recent good sightings and photographs of this southwestern desert accidental.

## WSO BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

*(Note: It is not intended that this new feature report the complete proceedings of the Board of Directors meeting, but that it bring to the membership some points of particular interest.)*

### October 29, 1977

Attendance: Daryl Tessen, Louise Erickson, Carl Hayssen, Linda Safir, Cathryn Steuer, Frederik and Frances Hamerstrom, Mary Donald, Ed Peartree, Ruth Hine, Ray Anderson, Roy and Charlotte Lukes, Charles Gilmore.

Treasurer: Linda Safir reported that the operating income (mostly membership dues) seems to be meeting the 1977 operating expenses. The board decided to devote a large part of the April board meeting to discussion of budget and spending priorities for the monies in the savings accounts. A check was received from the 1977 Convention Chairman reflecting \$130.00 unused "fledgling program" money, and \$121.16 convention profit.

File Keeper: Ray Anderson reported that eleven years of summer records have been computerized, and print-outs by county have been completed. It costs about \$150.00 to key punch a season's records, and the board voted to make money available for this each year.

Vice-President: Louise Erickson presented for comments and additions a draft of a WSO Convention Planning Manual, prepared by her and her committee. This will become available to groups interested in hosting future conventions and will provide guidelines and information. Louise also talked about liberalized lobbying laws which would make it possible for WSO to participate in a certain amount of legislative lobbying.

Conservation: Dr. Ray Anderson will succeed Dr. Robert Cook as Conservation Chairman. Several conservation concerns were raised, with position letters to be written by appropriate board members, on such matters as: a land clearing and drainage project in an area north of Necedah Wildlife Refuge, one of the largest wetland and wildlife areas of the state; another eagle shooting from a helicopter in Texas; Alaska National Interests Land Conservation bill HR39; and the Redwoods Park Expansion Bills, HR3813 and S1976.

Membership: Katy Steuer reported a current total membership of 1136. Suggestions on how to distribute membership brochures and encourage new memberships were solicited.

Convention: It was reported through Ruth Hine that plans for the 1978 convention at Madison were progressing well. Dr. Richard Verch of Northland College, Ashland, has offered to host the 1979 convention. A decision on that must await the April board meeting, by which time all offers should be submitted in writing.

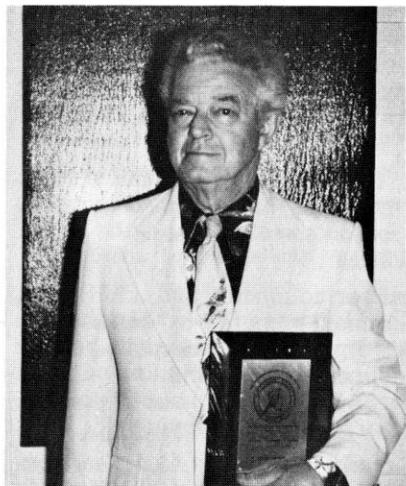
Supply Department: of the **2000 Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts** published, 1400 have been sold. Daryl Tessen has agreed to work on a supplement and index for the book in the next year or so. Prices for printing such a supplement were quoted. The board voted to authorize the printing of 1000 or more copies.

**Education:** Roy Lukes presented a plan to have some slide carousels on birds with accompanying narrative cassettes made for sale to schools, in hopes of promoting interest and knowledge of birds. It was agreed this would be a worthy WSO project, and should be pursued further. Guest Steve Lang of Madison showed the board some excellent bird slides he had taken and given to WSO.

**New Business:** The board agreed to donate as its yearly budgeted "outside contribution" \$100.00 to the Town of Clay Banks, Door County, toward its acquisition of land for a nature preserve.

The next meeting was scheduled for January 7, 1978.

By Linda Safir,  
from the Secretary's Minutes



Chuck Gilmore

### **1977 SILVER**

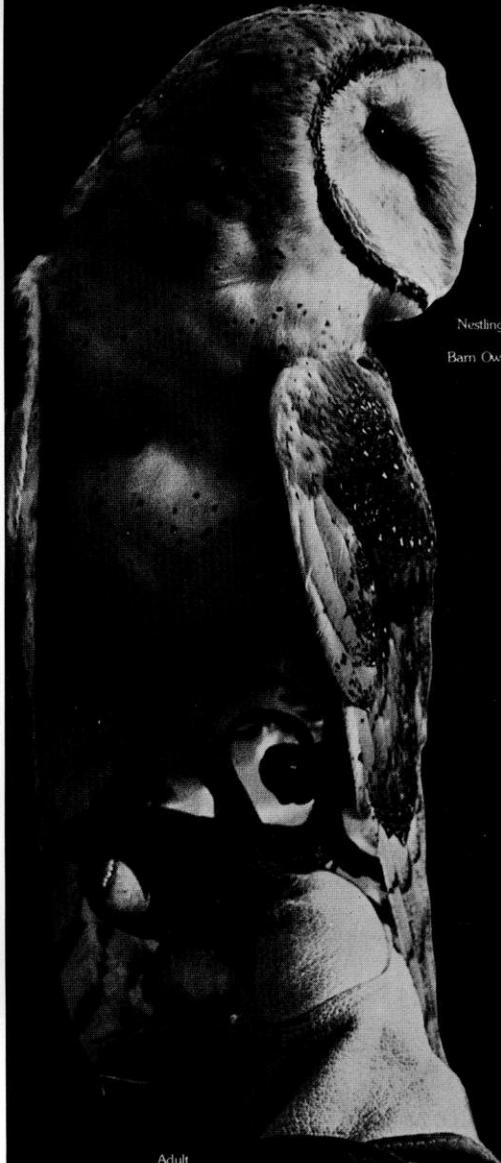
### **PASSENGER PIGEON**

### **AWARD WINNERS**



Harold and Nancy Roberts

# WANTED: Barn Owls



Adult

Nestlings

Barn Owls



Has been known to use the alias:  
"Monkey-Faced Owl."

Are frequently found in farm buildings, silos, church steeples, attics, abandoned houses, and sometimes, tree hollows.

Known to be ruthless killers of mice and other rodents.

Information needed to update barn owl distribution and abundance in Wisconsin.

If observed during the *past five years*, report date seen (month and year), and location (at least township and county.) Of particular interest are nesting observations.

Send reports to: LeRoy R. Petersen,  
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources,  
3911 Fish Hatchery Road, Madison,  
Wisconsin 53711.

Photos by Ursula & LeRoy Petersen, General Biological Inc.

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