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The Passenger Pigeon

TO ENCOURAGE STUDY OF WISCONSIN BIRDS

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No. 12

A comparison of the displays and vocal performances of the Greater Prairie Chicken, Lesser Prairie Chicken, Sharp-tailed Grouse and Sooty Grouse.

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Wisconsin Conservation Department

In April, 1932, while with the U. S. Biological Survey, I had the opportunity to observe the Lesser Prairie Chicken (*Tympanuchus pallidicinctus*) in Ellis county near Arnett, Oklahoma, on the Davison ranch through the courtesy of Mr. Verne Davison. Since I was familiar with



Heath hen booming. The performance is identical with the prairie chicken.

Photo by Dr. Alfred O. Gross

Courtesy Wisconsin Conservation Dept.

the Greater Prairie Chicken (*Tympanuchus cupido americanus*) in Wisconsin and Minnesota, the experience was of special interest, particularly when it became apparent that the calls and the behavior of the two birds were surprisingly different. Comparisons of the vocal differences noted may be of interest.

I should first remark that the Oklahoma bird appeared to me, in the field, considerably grayer and lighter than the Wisconsin bird. When it was possible to examine a fresh specimen, this difference was verified. The cast of the Oklahoma bird is even somewhat greenish, while the Wisconsin bird tends toward brown.

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Wisconsin's Greater Prairie Chicken

Our Wisconsin bird in "crowing", "booming" or performing in the
 typical spring manner, utters a very pleasing, deeply resounding call
 composed of three syllables. These have always been expressed for me
 by the following, "Zooooo . . . woooo . . . youoo" the second syllable
 lower than the first, the last rising above the first. (Possibly "Zoo" is
 the cock bird's name, and his remarks are addressed to "You" who is,
 theoretically, a hen!) Be that as it may, the sound is highly musical, and
 carries over the countryside in the early morning hours up to two miles
 depending upon atmospheric conditions. Curiously, however, the loud-
 ness of the sound close by is much less than might be anticipated, giving
 the impression of muffled reserve power. At a considerable distance,
 the sound becomes a low cooing in the background, detected only by
 those listening for it. Without advance knowledge of the nature and
 origin of the sound, it would be a mystery indeed, particularly inasmuch
 as the direction of origin is frequently difficult to ascertain at once.
 This confusion element is especially noted by those who have not yet
 learned to listen properly.

The Wisconsin birds also engage in a great number of vocal out-
 bursts of the usual call type, including what may be termed a shriek, and
 also what I myself term "cat-calls". There is also a loudly expressive
 "Hoo-wuk" audible for a long distance. Most of these true calls are
 uttered "at the top of their voices", as it were, with great energy and
 with obvious satisfaction. They contrast with, and punctuate much of
 the subdued and ritualistic booming. The height of shrieking and cat-
 calling is often reached during fights by the combatants. The high,
 petulant "Wheaya, wheaya" whine or shriek, has an irritating qual-
 ity. At times the calls are heard for some moments or minutes without
 booming, and at such times an impression of bitter animosity is certainly
 conveyed to the listener. In auditing the booming sound, however, the
 listener receives a pleasant, harmonious, and soothing impression. The
 two types of sounds, booming and fight-calls, thus contrast remarkably
 with what, if it were a human radio or platform performance, would be
 considered effective accoustical variety combined with excellent dra-
 matic emphasis.

Similarities Among Gallinae Generally

The actual fighting of Wisconsin birds is energetic, but to my knowl-
 edge has not been reported as serious. The combatants "pull hair" a
 good deal, as we might say, dislodging some feathers and at times ex-
 hibiting downright viciousness. The other bird has only to run away,
 however, for protection. The full significance and the sequence of be-
 havior is not entirely understood. The fighting is typical of several
 Gallinae, notably of the Ring-Neck Pheasant, and parts of it suggest
 Stoddard's account of the Bobwhite. Similarities would no doubt be noted
 with any species of Gallinae, not excepting the barnyard fowl. Most up-
 land game birds are prone to do a great deal of bluffing and glaring at
 one another in times of combat, often resorting to a position of pre-

paredness (squatting down almost flat, poised for a leap) but for minutes at a time merely "talking about it", accompanied by a variety of head and neck gestures. This is also true of the Wisconsin prairie chicken, perhaps to an exaggerated degree.

The similarities of such behavior among gallinaceous birds impress us strongly. While the booming note of the Wisconsin prairie chicken is unique in the bird world in some of its qualities, we cannot feel that it is in any fundamental way particularly different from the crowing of the barnyard cock, the pheasant cock (*Phasianus colchicus torquatus*), or the drumming of the Ruffed Grouse, (*Bonasa umbellus*) in its significance or utility. Prairie Chickens are very sociable, have a well-developed gregarious disposition, and express most of their exhibitionism while associated in groups. This, however, is not always the case. Under conditions of domestication, one sees a rough counterpart in the group display, even among Ring-Neck Pheasants, when several braces of cocks happen to fight in some localized area, sit glaring at one another, or crow occasionally.

I anticipated noting strong similarities, if not identical performances, between the Oklahoma and Wisconsin varieties of the Prairie Chicken. Dr. Alfred O. Gross has reported that the booming of the now extinct Heath Hen (*Tympanuchus cupido cupido*) was almost identical to that of the Wisconsin variety of the Prairie Chicken. But in this case the noteworthy thing is the remarkable dissimilarity which I shall attempt to describe.

Most notable was the complete absence of any sound that could appropriately be termed "booming". In fact, I do not believe such a term would occur to any observer of the Oklahoma performance. It did not occur to Verne Davison, who was somewhat puzzled about the use of a term, applied to Wisconsin birds, that was so obviously inappropriate when applied to his birds.

Oklahoma's Lesser Prairie Chicken

Davison called the Oklahoma performance "gobbling". His term was appropriate and expressive, although facetiously, the three of us (Herbert L. Stoddard was the third member of our party) considered "gobbling", since it does actually connote a different shade of sound, and is less directly associated with the call of the turkey. Nevertheless, a number of marked suggestions of the turkey are to be noted in the Lesser Prairie Chicken's call.

Neither did I hear any of the "*boo-wunk*" calls in Oklahoma. There was the counterpart of such a call in a high-pitched whine that was frequently uttered. There was also a long series of "*Quat, quat, quat, quat, quat, quat, quat, quats*", rising in the middle syllables, trailing off into indistinguishable, and I believe descending, notes. The main display sound I would express as "*quoodle-ooook, quoodle-ooook*", rapidly uttered, and I think most accurately described as a "*bubbling*" sound. In fact, the term "*bubbling*" may be more appropriate than "*gobbling*."

A strikingly similar performance (not to be confused with the sound itself) compared with some elements of the Sharp-tailed Grouse (*Pediceetes phasianellus campestris*) display, was apparent in the behavior of the Oklahoma chickens, so much so that I would say their display behavior is closer to that of the Sharp-tail than to that of our Wisconsin Chicken. This might also be said of the sounds produced, but the similarities are less evident. Possibly the behavior patterns of the Lesser Prairie Chicken and the Sharp-tailed Grouse, showing strong elements suggestive of one another, may trace back to the common ancestry of our prairie grouse, reflecting divergent development of social relationships and expression by the two "true prairie chickens".

The Sharp-Tailed Grouse Display

In the Wisconsin Sharptail, we have a bird whose spring display by the cocks on their hooting grounds is a synchronized performance. I have seen Prairie Chickens perform singly. I have never seen a lone Sharp-tail perform. The Prairie Chicken booming is carried on by several males upon the same grounds, either at the same time or alternately,

or several at once, with no active coordination or cooperation so far as I have been able to discern. The Sharp-tail display, on the other hand, appears always to be coordinated, and always to be in cooperation with other males. It is among the most spectacular of all bird performances I have seen.

It seems that at some unidentified signal, all of the Sharp-tail display birds start their rapid patting of feet upon the ground, which is their "dance", and this very fast stepping produces a somewhat ludicrous movement of the birds in a stiff, mechanical manner. This is made the more grotesque in that each bird has his wings stretched out roughly horizontal, or parallel to the plane of the ground, but with the tips curved down toward the ground. The heads are, of course, outstretched, the air sacs distended and standing out with purple brilliance. The birds go round and round, one in this direction, one in that, with as many as a dozen males joining in, and all within a few yards of one another. They give out their typical hoot, which is a very low, muffled "Hoo-wuk" all in one syllable, sounding as if expelled with considerable force. It is such an unspectacular sound, that many people living close to regular hooting grounds have never been aware of it. This can scarcely be said of the chicken. The Sharp-tail hoot does not carry very well—possibly three-fourths of a mile may be its audible range. All of the Sharp-tail dancers cease motion at the same instant, as if some precision instrument controlled each identically. To me, this amazing synchronism is the most remarkable thing about the whole performance.

The Sharp-tail is much less vocal than the chicken in Wisconsin, and inclined to be rather quiet and inconspicuous. Their hooting grounds are less well advertised and more difficult to find, the "pure Sharp-tail" grounds being a fairly quiet spot. Mixed grounds (used by both species) have both shows on the same ticket, so to speak, independently, while the booming ground occupied solely by the chicken in Wisconsin, is an interminable bedlam of noise most of the time.

Now, continuing with our remarks about the Prairie Chicken of Oklahoma (*pallidicinctus*), this species has apparently gone the Sharp-tail one better in coordination and cooperation during the display. While the Sharp-tail exhibits **group** synchronization of display, the Lesser Prairie Chicken in Oklahoma shows a **dual** synchronization between two individuals.

The Sharp-tail makes use of its stiff tail feathers for increasing the sound effects accompanying its performance, expanding and shutting the tail quickly and vigorously to create a rustling, scraping, or even scratching sound. This rustling of the tail feathers is pronounced, and repeated very often. It accomplishes a sort of rattling noise that I might compare with the noise of the rattlesnake, but perhaps more aptly with an intermittent shaking of a dry rattlesnake rattle by hand. It is a characteristic of the display. If our Wisconsin Prairie Chicken makes similar use of the tail feathers, it has escaped me.

Author's note: Since the preceding was written, conclusive evidence in the form of motion pictures taken by Mr. Cleveland Grant in Wisconsin, has been presented. We find, too, that other observers who have recently had an opportunity to do close-up work from blinds, have reported the tail feather sound for the Greater Prairie Chicken. In any event, we believe that, comparatively, the sound produced by the Wisconsin bird is much less conspicuous.

I wish to point out that since I am reporting **original** observations, I have in no particular way amended or emended my notes to conform to published descriptions, since the value of the present comments is in the factual recital of direct observations. If I have failed to note what others have seen, the fault is mine.

Similarly, I am unable to reconcile the observations given for the Oklahoma birds (*pallidicinctus*) with the published description of the vocal performance of the same species by Walter Colvin. (Bent—Life Histories of Gallinaceous Birds, p. 281.) My only suggestion would be the possibility that the range of the two species has not been determined with certainty).

More Details On The Oklahoma Bird

The Oklahoma Prairie Chickens made the most remarkable use of their tail feathers for sound production effect that I have thus far witnessed. To my mind, they completely eclipsed our Wisconsin Sharp-tail's efforts in this part of the repertoire.

The Oklahoma birds, as mentioned, performed in braces. The two cocks either came running at one another from some little distance, or they were squatting glaring, ready for the show. At this point I quote directly from my field notes: "When but a few feet separates the birds, each having its pinnae erect (straight up above the neck), they face one another, whine, and utter a few cackling calls". This whine, I should mention, is a new note to me. Whine is the only word I can employ. Possibly the general nature of the sound will be conveyed to the reader by recalling the piercing **ruse cry** of the hen Ruffed Grouse fluttering away from her nest. This is not the nature of the cry I seek to describe, but something of the same tonal quality is involved.

"Generally, they squat down, sometimes facing each other in a squatting position for several minutes at a time. Finally one dashes at the other and they jump into the air. Occasionally they come together with an audible striking of wings, and a feather or two floats away. The fighting may become quite vigorous, and in one case we saw a bird retreat at a run. But generally they squat down again, or if they are six or ten feet away, they may indulge in gobbling. In this case, one bird, neck outstretched, pinnae up, tail vertical above the back, begins a rapid stamping or patting of the ground with its feet. This makes an audible drumming sound. The air sacs which have been inflated most of the time, stand out prominently. The bird utters his gobble . . . "*quoodle ook*". . . and as he makes the sound, the neck is jerked down somewhat. Just following the "*quoodle ook*", the tail is jerked open and shut, making a rustling sound. But this is not the whole performance separately given, for the second male as soon as the first has said "*quoodle ook*", starts the same display (or rather has already started) with the result that the two birds each go through the same exhibition but at different intervals. Number one says "*quoodle ook*", and number two says "*quoodle ook*" just after him. Thus they go, one after the other in rapid succession, apparently three times each as the rule, but I heard five from each bird on one occasion. The duet runs:

- No. 1 (Stamping) "*quoodle ook*" (tail rustling)
 No. 2 (Stamping) "*quoodle ook*" (tail rustling)
 No. 1 (Stamping) "*quoodle ook*" (tail rustling)
 No. 2 (Stamping) "*quoodle ook*" (tail rustling)

Sometimes this is ended with the high pitched "*quat, quat, quat,* *quat*" call.

The duet is very musical, liquid and clear . . . as regular and rhythmic as can be. On not one occasion was it in unison; always alternate. On not one occasion did a single bird "*quoodle ook*" more than twice . . . frequently started it saying "*quoodle ook*" once, but did not continue unless joined by another."

Elsewhere in my notes, I mention that the "alternating "*quoodle ooks*" of the two birds synchronize as perfectly as the hammer blows of two professional stake drivers". Subsequently, I heard a distant gobbling call, delivered by a single bird with no apparent reference to other birds and without preliminary stamping, with the bird in what would be a typical Wisconsin crowing position, tail and pinnae up, air sac inflated, neck and head out, feet somewhat spread, etc. This gobble had many tonal elements in common with certain conversational notes of the turkey, but was of course characteristic in itself. It did not especially resemble the turkey's actual gobbling, being quite a different sound and delivery. It was less energetic, less vigorous than the "*quoodle-ook*" synchronized display and call. It would also appear that the Oklahoma bird had developed some of the conversational tones and calls (possibly of great ancestral age) into its main performance, relegating the typical Wisconsin type of booming, both sound and display, to a minor and only partially developed place. The stance of the two species is remarkably similar, but the sound is completely dissimilar as noted.

A Few Observations on the Sooty Grouse

While on the subject of comparative display and vocal efforts of grouse, and realizing that perhaps only a few modern students of ornithology have been afforded the opportunity to observe one species and then another, it may be of interest to also set down some notes on the Sooty Grouse (*Dendragapus fuliginosus fuliginosus*). These are very limited, and were made possible through the cooperation of Mr. George Ressler and others at the State Experimental Game and Fur Farm at Poynette, Wisconsin, maintained by the Wisconsin Conservation Department. Here a pair of Alaskan Sooty Grouse were secured through the interest of Mr. William F. Grimmer, and have been held in captivity. The male bird showed no hesitation in performing frequently and at length, which led me to make some notes.

The hoot of this captive bird appeared to be of one syllable, although at times I was uncertain whether a second syllable occurred. The hoot was a low, expulsive "*whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo*", usually repeated six times in succession with a short interval between each hoot. On two occasions it was delivered five times rather than six. It was resonant, quite loud, like the muffled sound of the Sharp-tail and extremely suggestive throughout of the Sharp-tail. I should say that a Sooty Grouse set down in Sharp-tail country would almost completely baffle the observer, who might certainly be confronted with an understandable confusion. The following are quoted from notes:

"In hooting, the cock held his tail down, not over the back, and seemed to straighten up somewhat erectly in preparation. He then inclined his head downward and forward grotesquely. The supraorbital enormous yellow patches were spectacularly contrasted with the black of the crown, giving the head a striped, yellow-black appearance of great beauty. Simultaneously, the cock inflated the neck sacs. These sacs are of an orange color with interesting reticulations of a darker hue that impressed me as purplish. The sacs are marvelously set off by the raising of the feathers immediately surrounding them to form a brilliant white circle or ring completely enclosing the bulging sacs. Thus, while the bird has no ruff, it achieves the same appearance, and like the Ruffed Grouse, makes wonderful use of the neck feathers in creating its display. The striped yellow and black pattern of the crown set off by the circular white ring, and the half spheres of orange on the neck combined with this, attains a color design that is unique not only in coloration and contrast, but in the symmetry of line and curve. It is one of the most gorgeous patterns I have seen in birdlife.

"As the bird utters the hoot, the head drops downward and the tail does so also. This combination is again unique. While the Pinnated, Sharp-tailed, and Ruffed Grouse use their tails effectively for display, the Sooty Grouse, while hooting, seems to have forgotten his. The Ruffed Grouse in drumming holds his tail almost or quite against the log (not over his back), but the Sooty Grouse holds the tail up a few inches from his stand and then lowers it. The hooting is very suggestive of the Sharp-tail, but still differs from it. It has the same low quality, the same somewhat restrained effect as compared to the Pinnate.

"While hooting, the grouse often went into a half dance, highly suggestive of the Sharp-tail. However, this bird's dance was less vigorous.

"Between performances of hooting, the cock Sooty Grouse made considerable effort to attract the attention of the two hens in the pen, especially by spreading the tail over the back, turkey-fashion, and by dragging the wings while darting toward the hens."

Let's Appreciate Wisconsin Prairie Grouse

These observations on the display behaviors and vocal accomplishments of the Greater Prairie Chicken, the Lesser Prairie Chicken, the Sharp-tailed and the Sooty Grouse, are certainly fragmentary. But for comparative purposes it seems of considerable interest to give the fore-

going account. Perhaps at some future time it may be my good fortune to observe the queer display of the Sage Grouse, the Spruce Grouse, and the Attwater's Prairie Chicken, and to place on record any similarities and differences that seem noteworthy.

Possibly this account would not be complete without adding the comment that, in my mind, we in Wisconsin have in our Prairie Chicken one of the finest of all bird songs and perhaps the most remarkably developed of all the vocal efforts of the grouse family, while our Sharp-tailed Grouse provides an unsurpassed dancing display. I hope we are duly appreciative of both species.

Literature Cited:

Stoddard, Herbert L.—The Bobwhite Quail, Its Habits, Preservation, and Increase. Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1931.

Gross, A. O.—Progress Report of the Wisconsin Prairie Chicken Investigation. Wisconsin Conservation Department, 1930.

Remarks on Bibliography

There are a number of published accounts of the display and vocal performance of grouse, including those species which may be roughly lumped into one category of "boomers and hooters" having the common characteristic of an air sac (possibly sacs in some species?), that is inflated on the neck for display and sound purposes. A partial listing of these accounts follows, with brief comments:

THE HEATH HEN (*Tympanuchus cupido cupido*)—A. O. Gross in his monograph, "The Heath Hen", Boston Soc. Nat. History, 1928. Gross has pointed out (Progress Report of the Wisconsin Prairie Chicken Investigation, 1930) that the Heath Hen and the Greater Prairie Chicken (in Wisconsin) have displays and vocalization that he could not distinguish, one from another. Since Gross had the best opportunity perhaps, of any modern naturalist to observe both species, his comparative remarks are of especial significance. **THE GREATER PRAIRIE CHICKEN (*Tympanuchus cupido americanus*)**—numerous accounts in most standard bird books and elsewhere. Gross (1930) has perhaps given the most painstaking account. See also, Hamerstrom (1939), "A Study of Wisconsin Prairie Chicken and Sharp-tailed Grouse," T. S. Roberts, "The Birds of Minnesota" (1939), Main, "The Dance of the Prairie Chickens, etc." **THE LESSER PRAIRIE CHICKEN (*Tympanuchus pallidicinctus*)** as quoted in Bent's "Life Histories of North American Gallinaceous Birds," (1932). This account describes *pallidicinctus* in Kansas as booming much like the Greater Prairie Chicken. **THE SHARP-TAILED GROUSE**—Roberts (1933), Bent (1932).

THE SOOTY GROUSE—Major Allan Brooks quoted in Bent (1932). Partly through differences noted in the hooting habits of various varieties of "Blue" Grouse, the group was separated into two main branches, both hooting, with the southern group producing a very audible sound of considerable carrying power, and the northern group producing a hoot audible only close by.

It may also be of interest that good accounts exist of the performances of the **CANADA SPRUCE GROUSE (*Canachites canadensis canadensis*)**, and of the **SAGE GROUSE (*Centrocercus urophasianus*)** in Bent (1932).

In recent years (since about 1930) considerable attention has been devoted to the photographing of the unique displays of various hooting or booming grouse. Mr. W. J. Breckenridge of the University of Minnesota, procured some excellent reels of the Canada Spruce Grouse performance, and also of the Minnesota Sharp-tails and Pinnates. In Wisconsin, Mr. Cleveland P. Grant of Covington, Kentucky, has produced wonderful motion and still photographs of the Prairie Chicken and of the Sharptailed Grouse.

By N. R. BARGER, Editor

(Kindly send field notes to N. R. Barger, 132 Lathrop St., Madison, Wisconsin, at the end of each month. Use A. O. U. order.)

The storm of Nov. 11 brought interesting phenomena particularly among waterfowl. From the following notes it will be observed that many species were caught entirely unprepared. Another characteristic of the period was the universal poor success of bird banders.

Red-Throated Loons on Lake Michigan

A large flock of Red-throated Loons, three of which were still in summer plumage, were observed near Racine, Nov. 23, by G. E. Prins. Thorn, of Milwaukee, records a Great Blue Heron Nov. 10 (late). Two American Bittern were flushed on the same date by Richter in Oconto County. Whistling Swans began to arrive in Oconto County, Nov. 5. Mrs. Rogers of Appleton, observed a large flock, Nov. 7. Strehlow records the last Swans, Nov. 24 at Green Bay, while Bert Barger saw one individual in Columbia County, on the same day.

Scarcity of Ducks in Northwestern Wisconsin Very Pronounced

Zimmerman and Hubbard, in making a state-wide survey of ducks, found them nearly lacking in the northwestern section. One flock of about two-thousand Mallards was the only concentration found in St. Croix County, Nov. 11. After the storm they noted a better migration. Scaup Ducks at Madison, Nov. 19, were still partly in the eclipse plumage stage (Zimmerman). Walworth County contained large flocks of Canada Geese, Nov. 26. Dr. Von Jarchow saw eight flocks of Blue, Snow and Canada Geese in two hours at Racine, Nov. 12. This was during the storm period. Kendall reports a rather large flock of 200 Redhead Ducks in Door County, Nov. 19. American Golden-eye began to arrive in numbers, Nov. 4, at Oconto (Richter). Paulson, of Green Bay, notes them for the first time, Nov. 10. He observed both the American and the Barrow's. With the first real freeze at Oconto, Richter observed Scaup going through in numbers, Nov. 6. Both Hooded and American Mergansers became abundant until Nov. 15, when the latter species was observed at Oconto in flocks miles long. On Nov. 12, Richter states, all open water was teeming with ducks that arrived the night before.

Another record of the Red-shouldered Hawk comes from Green Bay, Nov. 17 (Wetli). Last date of the Broad-winged Hawk received was Nov. 3, at Racine (G. Prins). A good flight of Rough-legged Hawks occurred this fall according to King of Manitowoc. One was seen by Hopkins and Hartman on the 14th near Castle Mound, Jackson County. Sharp-tailed Grouse were found in Price County by Damsteegt and in Monroe County by Warden Koppenhaver. Sperry sighted a Black Mutant Pheasant in Madison, Nov. 19. A flock of eighteen Sandhill Cranes were found in Walworth County, Nov. 6, by T. Deerwester. A late date for the Virginia Rail was secured by Bob Kendall in Madison, Nov. 10.

Killdeers Remain Late This Fall

On Nov. 24, two Killdeer were still in Dane County (Barger) and on Nov. 27, five were still in Racine (Prins Bros). The latter observed their last Golden Plover, Nov. 16; and their last Black-bellied Plovers, Nov. 23. Dettmann has a later date for the Golden Plover—Nov. 27, in Sheboygan County. At the latter place Stevens found a late Woodcock Nov. 12. The flight song of the Woodcock was heard by Sperry in Madison, during the last week of October. Late shore-bird records: Pectoral and Red-backed Sandpiper in Racine, Nov. 16 by Prins Bros. Red-backed Sandpiper in Manitowoc, Nov. 17 by King. One Long-billed Dowitcher in Oconto County by Richter, Nov. 10.

Parasitic Jaeger Near Racine

Lloyd Simonsen, who has had acquaintance with the Parasitic Jaeger elsewhere, saw one near Racine, Nov. 10. On Oct. 31 he also saw two, but the report did not reach us in time for publication. The Prins Bros. record two Franklin Gulls Nov. 16 for Racine. There were many Bonaparte's Gulls at Manitowoc early in November says King, but they were absent by the 24th. Kendall observed about twenty-five in Door County, Nov. 20. King observed one Common Tern (immature) in Manitowoc, Nov. 2. Mourning Doves remained until Nov. 23 in Racine (Nelson); in Jefferson, Nov. 25 (Mathiak); and in Waukesha, Nov. 26 (Rossman).

Barn Owl Found in Jefferson County

Scott sends a record of a Barn Owl found dead in a silo at Watertown Nov. 21. In one days ride he also saw two Screech Owls dead by the roadside, one in the brown phase and one in the gray. Of considerable interest is the record of a Saw-whet Owl in Milwaukee, Nov. 7, by J. Schaeffer. The latest record we have of the Nighthawk was sent by Anthes of Waukesha—Nov. 2.

Flickers Much in Evidence

Many late records were received of the Flicker, the latest being Nov. 26 by Strehlow in Green Bay. Damsteegt studied at close range two Arctic Three-toed Woodpeckers while in Price County in November. A Phoebe was sighted in Milwaukee Nov. 3 by Mason (late). While in Price County, Damsteegt counted 15 Ravens and two Canada Jays. One of the latter fed from his hand. Richter noticed a great increase of Chickadees, Nov. 29 in Oconto. Late dates in Vilas County, made by Richter, for Red-breasted Nuthatches were Nov. 24; and for Brown Creepers, Nov. 29.

Mockingbirds Again Show Up

Mueller, of Milwaukee, sends a record of the Mockingbird, Nov. 17. The same species also was seen in Madison, Oct. 14-17 by Sperry. Stephenson, of Madison saw a Bluebird, Nov. 24 (late). Richter found four Golden-crowned Kinglets in Vilas County, Nov. 29. Strehlow saw his last Ruby-crowned Kinglets (5), Nov. 24. About fifty Pipits were recorded Nov. 1, near Appleton, by Mrs. Rogers. This is late. On Nov. 30, Dr. Von Jarchow found a Northern Shrike on his sanctuary, so tame that it flew only when his hands were about to close about it. There has been but a scattering of reports of this species elsewhere. As usual, stragglers of both Meadowlarks and Rusty Blackbirds were noted in November, but the records of Bronzed Grackle, Nov. 21 in Waukesha (Jones) and of Cowbirds, Nov. 15 in Green Bay (Strehlow) are more rare.

Pine Grosbeak In Milwaukee County

Dietrich of Milwaukee reports a Pine Grosbeak, Nov. 21. This is of special interest. The Cardinal, scarce in the eastern part of the state, appeared Nov. 23 in Manitowoc (King). The only record received of the Evening Grosbeak comes from Richter, who found one at several times in Vilas County. An interesting observation of Redpolls was made by Richter, Nov. 29. A Great-horned Owl was being constantly encircled by a flock of from 8 to 10 Redpolls. They were fearless and continued to call as they attacked. This stopped only when he flushed the owl. Pine Siskins appeared in Green Bay, Nov. 15 (Kendall). This is the only record we received. King records a Vesper Sparrow in Manitowoc, Nov. 17 (late). The largest flock of Snow Buntings reported was that of Strehlow for Green Bay—two hundred and thirty individuals. Buss records the observation of 8 Spruce Grouse in the Town of Drummond,, Bayfield County, with R. Jones and A. Hageman on Nov. 26.

NEW MEMBERS—Daniel Thompson, 515 E. Mifflin st., Madison; Dr. Paul C. Gatterdam, 2539 Edgewood Place, La Crosse; Dr. R. A. Moser, Suite 612, 1504 Dodge st., Omaha, Nebraska; Elmer Becker, Rt. 1, Box 222, Elkhart Lake; R. Austin MacMullan, 346 M.A.C. Avenue, East Lansing, Michigan; Racine Public Library, Racine; Mrs. Ruth L. Francis, Farnsworth Public Library, Oconto; Miss Lucille May, Superior Public Library, Superior; Eau Claire Public Library, Eau Claire; Miss Helen Anderson, Wausau Public Library, Wausau; Miss Delia G. Ovitz, Milwaukee State Teachers College Library, Milwaukee; Mrs. Stella P. Owen, St. Croix Falls; Chandler Robbins, Windsor Mountain School, Manchester, Vermont; Edward G. Kromery, Scoutmaster Troop 42, Middleton; Lyle Sowls, 317 W. Mifflin st., Madison; Miss Avis Larratt, 2860 N. Maryland ave., Milwaukee; H. E. Philip, Box 120, Waukesha; Mrs. Ida L. Scott, 1711 N. 36th st., Milwaukee; Harry H. Klemme, Kiel; Anton F. Novy, 1021 N. 16th st., Manitowoc; Clarence A. Searles, 240 5th st., Wisconsin Rapids; Walter Boeger, 1017 Dillingham ave., Sheboygan; Mrs. A. H. Anderson, 2412 Hansen ave., Racine; Mrs. Arthur L. Schacht, Rt. 2, Box 102, Racine; Charles Prudent, 1619 N. Main st., Racine; George C. Becker, Port Edwards.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS—O. Warren Smith to Mondovi; Mrs. F. J. Harwood to care of J. A. Bellings, 53 Westland ave., Winchester, Mass.; Walter Mueller to previous Milwaukee address; Ralph Hopkins to care of Ranger Station, Ladysmith; W. S. Feeney to 808 E. Worden ave., Ladysmith; Wylock J. E. Scott, 409 Lemira st., Waukesha.

WISCONSIN WILDLIFE STAMPS AVAILABLE

The Wisconsin Society of Ornithology is selling Wildlife Stamps prepared by the Wisconsin Conservation League as a service to members. All commission on such sales goes to the Society.

A sample stamp is found on the envelope containing this issue of the bulletin. Sheets of stamps sold at \$1.00 each contain 96 stamps in 8 sets of 12 different photographs with 4 of birds.

Members desiring one or more sheets should contact W. E. Scott, Wisconsin Conservation Department, State Office Building, Madison, Wisconsin.

Rev. Francis S. Dayton, Director of the New London Public Museum, in a letter to J. Harwood Evans dated Nov. 28, gives the following information on the Sandhill Crane at New London Marsh in Outagamie County: "I have never found the Sandhill Crane breeding at New London, or heard of anybody else who ever did, but I rather thought they bred in the swamps just to the north of us in the region of the Embarrass River lowlands, for we have adults and young appearing so early (mid-August) at the congregation place in our great blueberry marsh. Here for instance we had a band of 7 come in mid-August, building up to a flock of 34 which is the most I have ever heard of here. They have been steadily increasing during recent years. They stay through September and into October, and evidently are attracted by the blueberries as well as other available foods."

John Collings reported two American Egrets seen on August 25 at Glen Haven, Grant County, on the Mississippi River, and states that more were reported seen there this year.

An early record of the Cardinal comes from Samuel Post who states that he fed one of these birds at his farm near Madison during the winter of 1922.

Mrs. Stella P. Owen of St. Croix Falls reports that from April 15, 1938 until September 4, 1938 they had a pair of Carolina Wrens in their yard many times. Although they search diligently for the nest, it could not be found, but on July 2 of that year they appeared with four group young. Also, in February, 1940, a male Red-bellied Woodpecker came to their feeding tray and remained in the vicinity for about three weeks. Neither birds ever returned, but contact with Dr. Roberts at nearby Minneapolis assured Mrs. Owen that these records were not impossible even though they are surely on the far northern limit of the range of both of these birds.

Send your CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS (taken any day Dec. 22-29 inclusive) to N. R. Barger, listing date, hours in field, species seen and total number of each, by January 10 at latest.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

With the publishing of this issue of THE PASSENGER PIGEON another year has passed in the life of the official bulletin of The Wisconsin Society of Ornithology. As many members have noticed through the twenty-four copies that have been published, this little paper has had its "growing pains," but never has it failed to take that expected step ahead to something better. Surprising even those who realized its value definitely from the beginning, back issues of the bulletin are in considerable demand and cannot even be secured at more than their previous value.

It has only been through the good support of Wisconsin bird students that this development was possible. Our monthly printed bulletin on ornithology, one of the very few in the United States, has received favorable comment throughout the country.

The New Year for THE PASSENGER PIGEON will again be a step forward in many respects. The co-operation of all members in submitting material and notes for publication, renewing their memberships promptly, and introducing prospective members to this educational bulletin, will surely be forthcoming as expected.

Our next annual meeting at Racine, during one of the first week-ends of April, will without doubt be a memorable occasion. Dr. B. L. von Jarchow, Vice-president, has already arranged for color motion pictures of birds photographed by Wright, Deusing, Dr. Lee and Dr. Landis, and also for an address by Professor Aldo Leopold. Various additional speakers will be featured as well as exhibits of wildlife photographs and bird specimens. All members should plan now to attend this meeting for the program as well as the business sessions, and everyone interested in presenting a paper or exhibiting material should contact Dr. von Jarchow (1601 Washington avenue, Racine) as soon as possible.

It is a distinct honor and pleasure for me to extend Holiday Greetings to the members and friends of The Wisconsin Society of Ornithology, and to wish for every one of you many interesting bird trips during the New Year. —Alvin L. Throne.