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**IMMATURE  
HAWK OWL**

PHOTO BY  
MARTHA LOUND



*The*  
**PASSENGER PIGEON**

**A Magazine of Wisconsin Bird Study**

*Published Quarterly By*

**THE WISCONSIN SOCIETY  
FOR ORNITHOLOGY, INC.**



SUMMER ISSUE  
VOL. XXV NO. 2

# IN THIS ISSUE

	Page
<b>Hawk Owls Invade Wisconsin</b> .....	47
By Richard F. Bernard and Bernard Klugow	
Hawk Owls invaded northern United States during the winter of 1962-63. Here is an account of this unusual event in Wisconsin, highlighted with details of two nests in Douglas County.	
<b>Wisconsin Owl Survey</b> .....	50
By Fred and Fran Hamerstrom	
Announcing another WSO cooperative research project. This survey will map the distribution of owls in Wisconsin. The first phase—fall and winter owl survey—will be carried on during the fall and winter of 1963-64 and a report form is included in this issue. All WSO members are invited and urged to participate in this venture.	
<b>Spring on the Arctic Tundra</b> .....	54
By Helen Northup	
A fascinating report on the bird and animal life of the Hudson Bay area near Churchill.	
<b>The Visitometer, a Simplified Mechanical Counter</b> .....	60
By Donald J. Hendrick	
A device for measuring the number of visits birds make to their nest is described and discussed. The visitometer is simple in design and construction and is accurate to within 10 percent.	
<b>By the Wayside</b> .....	68
<b>Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts: Lake Koshkonong</b> .....	72
By Melva Maxson	
<b>Field Trip Reports</b> .....	74
By Edward Peartree	
<b>Book Review</b> .....	76
<b>Field Notes: The Autumn Season</b> .....	79
By Charles A. Kemper	
Thirteen record dates were reported for the 1962 autumn season. A record number of observers contributed field notes for this season. TV tower kills were again substantial during the fall migration.	

**Cover photo:** The beady-eyed Hawk Owl staring at you is one of two fledged on the Roy Johnson farm near Cloverland in Douglas County in the spring of 1963. Careful observation by Richard Bernard and Bernard Klugow and expert photography by Martha Lound document a most unusual ornithological event.

**Volume XXV, Number 2**

**Summer (April-June) 1963**

THE PASSENGER PIGEON, official publication of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Inc., is published quarterly at 101 Roby Road, Madison, Wisconsin 53705. Classes of membership and annual dues: Active \$3.00 (Students \$2.00). Husband-and-Wife \$4.00. Sustaining \$5.00. Life \$75.00. Patron \$100 or more. Library \$2.00. At least \$1.75 of each annual membership (\$1.50 in the case of student membership and Wisconsin library subscriptions) is set aside to cover subscription to The Passenger Pigeon. Send membership dues to the treasurer, Mrs. Alfred O. Holz, 125 Kolb St., Green Bay, Wisconsin. Send change of address to the treasurer. Manuscripts are invited. Send them to the editor, Nils P. Dahlstrand, 814 Birch Street, Rhinelander, Wisconsin. Second class postage paid at Madison, Wisconsin.



# HAWK OWLS INVADE WISCONSIN

By RICHARD F. BERNARD and BERNARD KLUGOW

The many reports of Hawk Owls (*Surnia ulula*) during the fall and winter of 1962-1963 indicate that the recent invasion may have been the largest we have yet witnessed in the northern United States. Bird watchers in Maine, Minnesota, New York and Wisconsin, as well as in many parts of southern Canada, noted unusually large numbers of the birds.

According to the March, 1963, issue of *The Flicker*, a total of 109 observations of Hawk Owls were submitted for Minnesota during the fall and winter periods. In southern Ontario, the Hawk Owl invasion was reported to be the largest ever recorded for that part of Canada (1963 *Audubon Field Notes* 28, 30).

The picture in Wisconsin is still incomplete, but incoming reports may show that the recent owl migration established a new high for the state.

## Wisconsin Hawk Owl Records

In Wisconsin, the Hawk Owl usually occurs as a rare fall and winter visitant, and with one exception, all previous state records are of birds collected or observed during the fall and winter months. Schorger, in his revision of Kumlien and Hollister's *The Birds of Wisconsin*, cites past records of specimens collected at Racine (winter of 1869), the Lake Koshkonong area (early day ?), Dunn County (April 1885, December 1898, December 1900), Bayfield County (winter of 1892), Milwaukee County (October 1892), Oconto County (January 1899), and Vilas County (November 1925). No specimens or observations of Hawk Owl were reported between 1926 and 1943. In 1944 one was observed in Dodge County on January 2 (1944 *Passenger Pigeon* 52), another was seen in Milwaukee on February 28, 1951 (1952 *Passenger Pigeon* 104), and in 1955 one observer reported seeing a probable Hawk Owl in Dodge County on December 19 (1956 *Passenger Pigeon* 88).

The appearance of Hawk Owls in Douglas County was first noted when the senior author observed a Hawk Owl within the city limits of Superior on November 25, 1962. In the Dairyland area, Tony Jelich of the Wisconsin Conservation Department, saw a Hawk Owl some 3½ miles north of town (in early March), and on March 17, 1963, he picked up a dead owl 10 miles west of Solon Springs. The specimen is presently in the possession of the junior author. Three days later on March 20, 1963, Mr. Jelich saw another Hawk Owl five miles northeast of Dairyland.

In early March of 1963 Roy Johnson of Cloverland, Wisconsin, informed us that four or five Hawk Owls were present on his farm in Cloverland. He further stated that the birds were first seen the previous fall (since November) and at least two of them were observed daily in an oak tree next to his house. The birds appeared each morning and again in the late afternoon.

On March 23 the senior author along with two ornithology class members observed one of the Hawk Owls at close range in a woodlot



located on the Johnson farm. The bird was easily approached and except for an occasional low shrieking call, showed no sign of fear.

The Hawk Owls remained in the vicinity of the Johnson farm, and on March 30 Klugow noted that the birds were copulating and noticed one of the birds entering a presumed nest cavity. The birds were also observed copulating by Roy Johnson on the following day. On April 7 as well as on April 19 the nesting owl did not flush when the nest tree was approached.

On April 5, 1963, the junior author found a second Hawk Owl nest some two miles northeast of the Johnson farm in a woodlot owned by Ray Granstrom of Cloverland.

Joint observations by the authors at the nest sites on May 1, 1963, established that both nests were still active. Data was collected and colored slides of the owls and nest cavities were taken. The following remarks represent a summary of our field observations.

### **Details of Hawk Owl Nests**

The first nest, on Roy Johnson's property, was located in the hollow of an old pine stump. The nest tree was close to the edge of the woodlot and the entrance to the nest faced an open field. The opening to the nest was about 20 to 22 feet from the ground and was approximately five inches in diameter. Since the nest chamber was exposed through a vertical slit for most of its depth, the incubating Hawk Owl could be seen when on the nest. During our stay at the nest site, one bird appeared to be incubating, but we could not determine the nest contents. The incubating bird did not flush but was observed changing its position on the nest several times. The other Hawk Owl appeared soon after we arrived and perched some 40 feet from us. The second bird was easily approached and seemed undisturbed.

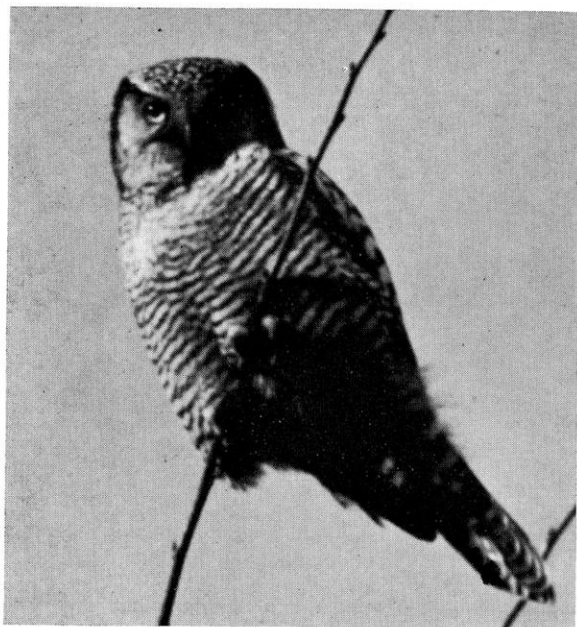
On our arrival to the second nest on May 1, we found it empty but soon a Hawk Owl appeared. The bird alighted nearby and moved only as we approached to within a few feet. After a few minutes the bird flew directly to the nest and disappeared inside the nest cavity. In this case, the nest was located in a black ash and the opening to it was some 25 feet from the ground. The contents of the nest could not be determined on May 1, but after flushing the bird it quickly returned to the nest. Only one owl was observed at the second nest site and it appears that the other adult was killed as we never saw more than one adult at the second nest. It is interesting to note that during our visit to both nests the birds remained quiet except for an occasional note best described as a shriek.

During a subsequent visit to the nests on May 11, the junior author observed the male Hawk Owl feeding a vole or field mouse to the incubating female at the first nest (we assume that the incubating bird was the female as usually only the female incubates in most owls). Both birds emitted their usual shrieking alarm call (ah-eeek) and, in addition, the birds made a number of sounds poorly described as ee-e-ek woo-oo-oo ahoo-oo. On the same day, Klugow managed to climb the black ash containing the second nest and found five unspotted white eggs.

On May 17 a young owl was seen near the entrance to the first nest and a second owl was heard inside the nest cavity. The exposed nest-

ling was covered with a thick coat of grayish down and remained close to the nest entrance.

Two downy nestlings were observed on May 23. Both were outside the nest. On the same day only one of the adult birds was present at the first nest and we assume that the other was killed as it was never again seen. The young remained close to the nest until May 27 and



ADULT HAWK OWL

PHOTO BY DON GUNN

then left the nest area but remained in the same woodlot for a few more days. During this time the adult owl was observed feeding the young.

On May 30 all three birds were observed for the last time slowly moving along a gravel road adjacent to the woodlot in which they nested. Oddly enough, the birds were heading south.

Our observations at the second nest were abruptly ended on May 23 when we found that all five eggs had been destroyed. Apparently the early disappearance of one adult forced the other to leave the nest in search of food. At any rate, it seems unlikely that the lone bird could have raised five young even if the eggs had hatched.

Following the departure of the Hawk Owls, Klugow examined the second nest cavity and noted that the scanty nest consisted only of a few twigs, wood chips, and feathers.

The normal breeding range for the Hawk Owl in North America is restricted to Alaska and northern Canada, but there are several records of nesting Hawk Owls in southern Canada. Roberts (*Birds of Minnesota*,

1932:614-617) cites two cases of possible Hawk Owl nestings in Minnesota, one in 1884 and the other in 1906, but he expresses some doubt as to the correct identity of the birds. Roberts also states that a Hawk Owl nest was found at Delavan, Wisconsin, on April 21 (1889 ?) but we were unable to find any reference to this in the Wisconsin ornithological literature. In Michigan, a young Hawk Owl was taken on Isle Royale, Lake Superior, on August 4, 1905, and it seems probable that the species nested in the state (Barrows, **Michigan Bird Life**, 1912:333-334).

In closing, we wish to commend Roy Johnson for his cooperation and particularly for his efforts in safeguarding the birds. Mr. Johnson took great pride in protecting the owls and set aside the nesting area as a sanctuary. We can only wish that all individuals were as thoughtful in conserving our wildlife.

Wisconsin State College  
Superior, Wisconsin  
and  
Brule, Wisconsin



A Cooperative Research Project

# WISCONSIN OWL SURVEY

By FRED and FRAN HAMERSTROM

WSO Research Committee

Illustrated by Alfred O. Holz

Once again WSO members are being called upon to assist the research committee in a cooperative project to broaden our knowledge of Wisconsin birds.

The distribution of Wisconsin owls is not well known, except for the Great Horned Owl and Barred Owl which are found throughout the state. This survey proposes to determine the distribution of all other owls.

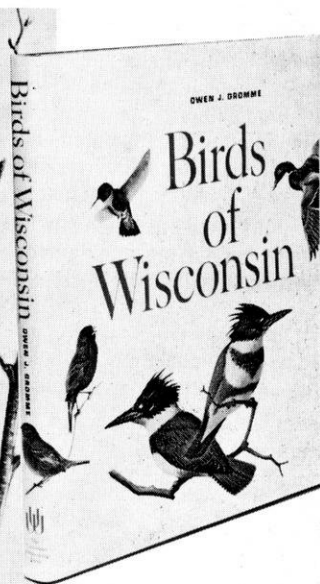
There are some curious gaps in the ranges of certain species. For example, Screech Owls and Long-eared Owls are rare in the vicinity of Plainfield. Screech Owls come in two color phases—red and gray. We hope to map the color distributions of these two phases.

Some owls, such as the Short-eared Owl, appear to shift about in a gypsy-like manner, possibly taking up residence where the mouse population is high.

Barn Owls often migrate to the deep south. However, they sometimes spend the winter in Wisconsin, and the winter range has not been mapped.



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THE UNIVERSITY  
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PRESS

114 North Murray Street  
Madison 15, Wisconsin

Hawk Owls, which hunt by day and can easily be mistaken for hawks, made an exceptional flight from the far north into Ontario and Minnesota last winter. There were a few Wisconsin records, and two nests were found in Wisconsin. It is conceivable that Hawk Owls or Snowy Owls, both northern residents, may invade this state in numbers this winter.

The Great Gray Owl also nests farther north, and its presence has not been recorded in Wisconsin recently. The Burrowing Owl, a prairie species, is very rare in the state.

The research committee is interested in plotting the distribution of those owls that appear to be absent in parts of Wisconsin. Negative reports are of value and should be reported.

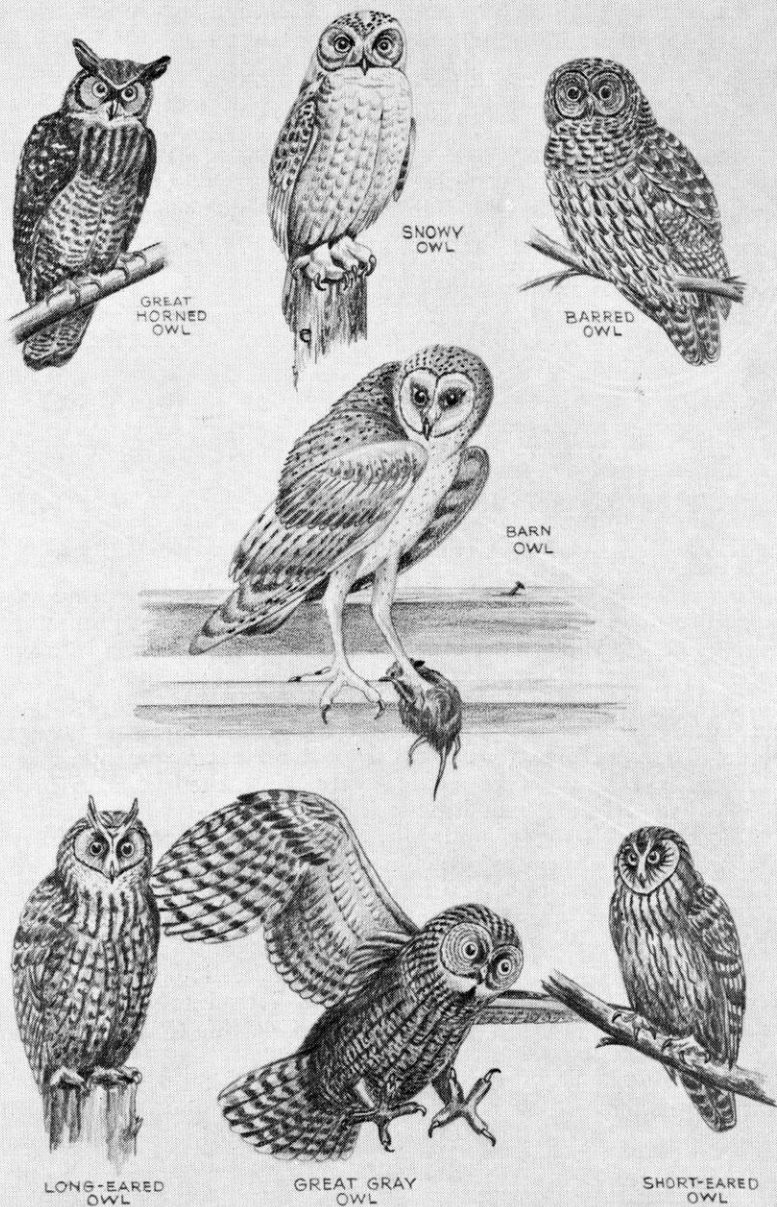
We also wish to learn more about the movements of some of the rarer owls. This can only be done by banding. Therefore, please notify Fred and Fran Hamerstrom, Plainfield, Wisconsin, by post card if you see any of the following: Hawk Owl, Snowy Owl, Great Gray Owl, Barn Owl and/or Burrowing Owl. It may not always be possible for a bander to come, but we will do our best. Bird banders who have appropriate equipment and who would like to cooperate in this study should notify the Hamerstroms.

The first phase of the owl survey will be conducted during the fall and winter of 1963-64. A report form is included in this issue as an insert on page 86A. The second phase, owl nestings, will be carried on in the spring and summer of 1964. A report form for the second phase will be included in a future issue of **The Passenger Pigeon**.

The field key and illustrations on pages 52-55 will be helpful in identifying the 12 species of owls in Wisconsin.

### A Field Key to Wisconsin Owls

- A. Crow size or larger, Figure 1 (B):
  - B. White, may have some dark barring .....**Snowy Owl**
  - B. Not a white owl (C):
    - C. White breast, few spots .....**Barn Owl**
    - C. Breast streaked or barred (D):
      - D. Ear tufts present (E):
        - E. Ear tufts far apart, large owl .....**Great Horned Owl**
        - E. Ear tufts close together, crow size (F):
          - F. Ear tufts conspicuous, well above crown .....**Long-eared Owl**
          - F. Ear tufts tiny, hardly noticeable .....**Short-eared Owl**
      - D. Ear tufts absent or apparently so (G):
        - G. Streaked breast and throat, crow size, eyes yellow .....**Short-eared Owl**
        - G. Streaked breast, throat barred, eyes black ....**Barred Owl**
        - G. Breast and throat streaked and barred, black chin-spot, large, eyes yellow .....**Great Gray Owl**



ALFREDO HOLZ - 1963

Figure 1



A. Smaller than crow size, Figure 2 (H):

H. Ear tufts conspicuous (widely spaced) .....Screech Owl

H. No ear tufts (I):

I. Breast plain brown, tiny .....Immature Saw-whet Owl

I. Breast streaked or barred (J):

J. Breast streaked (K):

K. Black beak, no spots on  
forehead, tiny .....Adult Saw-whet Owl

K. Yellow beak, spotted forehead,  
black facial frames .....Boreal Owl

J. Breast barred (L):

L. Long tail, heavy black facial frames,  
bobs its tail when perched .....Hawk Owl

L. Short tail, long legs, prairie habitat.....Burrowing Owl



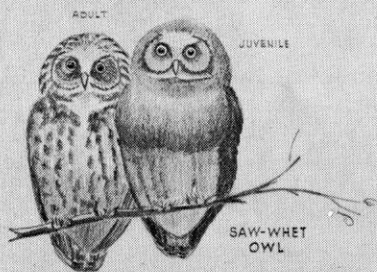
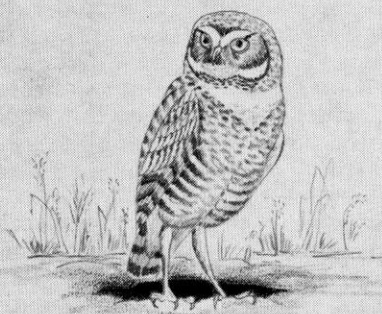
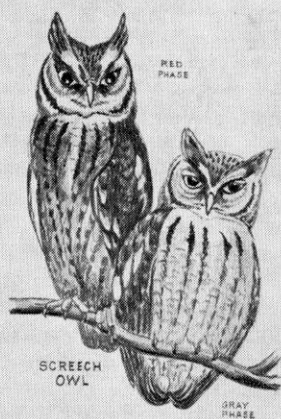
## *Spring on the Arctic Tundra*

By HELEN NORTHUP

It was long past the Arctic dawn on the sixth of June when I wakened in my berth and looked out eagerly for my first glimpse of the tundra. There it was—a gray-brown, almost treeless world, a vast expanse of uneven, spongy-looking ground dotted with many pools. Here and there a clump of scrawny little spruces stood like a tiny oasis. For here the tundra begins at the northern edge of the great spruce forests of Canada. To my surprise the snow, except in a few tiny patches, was gone. And above was the immense Arctic sky, to be watched with joy for many days in all its dramatic moods.

The four of us—Mr. and Mrs. John Fiske of Petersham, Massachusetts, Judge Simpson of Racine and I—had come to Churchill because we had learned from many ornithologists that here, at this remote spot on Hudson Bay, 500 miles south of the Arctic Circle, we would find the breeding grounds of a great variety of birds. Here in early June, where the tundra merges with the northern timberline, and the Churchill River with wide mudflats along its shores flows into Hudson Bay, we would enjoy a unique experience in witnessing this tremendous concentration of migrating and breeding birds.

That first day in Churchill was unique, as it turned out, for the temperature registered 60°, the sun shone all day, and we wandered about in summer clothes as if we'd been at home. Exploring the town and surrounding area, we found a small, treeless, dust colored community, the little "bay" houses all discouragingly alike. Groups of squalid huts, inhabited by Indians and Eskimos, with lean husky dogs chained in many yards, fringe the town. Two small hotels and a comfortable new motel accommodate the few visitors to the town, many of whom make the long



ALFRED O. HOLZ-1963

Figure 2

journey to do business at the military post at nearby Fort Churchill. (We found the motel and meals at the hotels to be less expensive than we had expected and very satisfactory.) The well stocked Hudson's Bay Company store and another "general" store supply the needs of the townspeople and the Eskimos, Indians and trappers who visit the town. On the river bank nearby, like a huge escarpment towering over a low lying landscape, a gigantic grain elevator stands, symbol of the importance of this faraway northern outpost to the economy of Canada. From here in the short summer months when the ice is gone from Hudson Bay, ocean-going freighters carry the grain to Europe from the vast inland prairies.

Eager to see what birds were in the area, we were immediately aware of Snow Buntings, Horned Larks and Lapland Longspurs busily feeding in the dust near the elevator. Out on the ridge that partially protects the town from the icy winds of Hudson Bay, we found these birds and Water Pipits walking about on the great boulders and little, richly colored tundra "meadows" among them. From here we gazed out at the vast expanse of ice on the bay, with a rim of deep blue, iceberg-studded water on the far horizon. On our left the Churchill River was still ice bound, and Snow Buntings walking about on the ice looked like tiny ghosts. Behind the elevator lay a muddy lagoon where various birds were pottering about—Green-winged Teal, Scaup, Buffleheads, and a Killdeer. Here, and on the nearby mudflats in the days following, we saw Semipalmated Sandpipers, Semipalmated Plovers, Sanderlings, Turnstones and Dowitchers. Other sandpipers seen elsewhere in the area—for the shorebirds were surely the chief actors on this wonderful stage—were Stilt, White-rumped, Solitary and Least Sandpipers.

### Belugas and Seals

As the days passed, we watched the river ice breaking up, and then it was gone. Red-throated and Arctic Loons now appeared on the river, and a long skein of American Scoters flew low over its quiet surface. On our last day in Churchill, June 15, we saw at last the "white whales" rolling happily about, the belugas that come in at high tide and follow the fish up the river. The belugas are not whales, but a kind of porpoise, twelve to fourteen feet long. A small processing plant near town prepares the oil and blubber of these animals for commercial uses.

With the coming of summer warmth to this land, we began to notice black dots far out on the ice of Hudson Bay. Then, through our binoculars, we saw them move—seals! They emerged through holes in the ice to bask luxuriously in the June sunshine. But their comfort was short-lived; soon, one day, we noticed men approaching them, guns in hand, wriggling closer on their stomachs and imitating the seal's habit of raising its head, as they approached the animals. The pantomime of the raised gun, the sudden leap of the seal to its hole or its subsiding in death, and the eager approach of the hunter held our fascinated attention as we watched from the distant ridge.

A few days after our arrival, the car we had rented arrived by freight from Winnipeg. We were now free to roam at will over the entire area, using the restricted roads with the permission of the officers at Fort Churchill. Securing this permission was quite an adventure, for it involved us ultimately in an interview with no other than the command-



ing officer of the Canadian troops! We visited many times the various ponds, lakes, patches of woods, favorite parts of the tundra and mudflats by the river to watch the wonderful variety of birds. The shorebirds were already nesting, and one of our greatest pleasures was to watch the same birds day after day until we had found and photographed their nests. A Golden Plover was observed in the same place many times, but it never divulged the secret of its nest; it was another plover's nest that we finally found, far out on the open tundra and completely unprotected. This stately bird reminded me of an old-time English judge with his long wig falling over his shoulders. A Scaup's nest was found, well hidden in a tuft of long grass, and a Whimbrel's nest with four big green eggs we finally traced to a thick clump of sedge beside a pond. By far the most belligerent of the four nest-owners we visited was a Bonaparte's Gull, who dive-bombed us repeatedly with angry screams while we attempted to photograph its nest. Its revenge was our chagrin, upon retreating, to discover that we had been liberally spattered by the furious bird!

### Bird Songs on the Tundra

There was a tremendous amount of bird song and bird cries during our ten days in the area. Over the tundra on these cold windy days we heard often the eerie, monotonous courting cries of the Lesser Yellowlegs. Professor Arthur Allen suggested they were saying, "Keep-a-going! keep-a-going! keep-a-going!" Mingled with these cries were the winnowing sounds of Wilson's Snipe and the calls of the Whimbrels. We saw many Whimbrels and all seemed to be in pairs, busy with nesting activities. Only once did we see a Hudsonian Godwit, beside a tundra pond. The honking of Canada Geese was a fairly familiar sound, and once we saw a flock of swans in flight.

It was a most unexpected surprise to us to come occasionally upon Dowitchers, Whimbrels and Lesser Yellowlegs perching precariously and calling from the very tip-tops of stunted spruce trees!

The songs of the songbirds were heard everywhere, on tundra and at timberline, for most of them were mating and had scarcely begun to nest. Most often heard were the White-crowned, Tree and Savannah Sparrows. I had expected the song of the White-crowned Sparrow to be melancholy, like that of its cousins the White-throated and Harris' Sparrows, but we thought it a cheerful, bright little song and heard it constantly. The Harris' Sparrow's song is a gentle mellow song in minor key on one pitch, or sometimes several notes on one pitch and several on another. The gay little song of the Tree Sparrow was heard everywhere, and once we heard the unmistakable song of the White-throat. The handsomest, most striking of the songbirds here were the longspurs. We who see the Lapland Longspur only in winter are amazed at his stunning black, white and chestnut-colored headdress on the breeding grounds. The Smith's Longspur has a striking face pattern of black and white in summer and a warm rosy buff color on the underparts. The female is a most beautiful buffy yellow, with darker back. I also had the good fortune to glimpse a Chestnut-collared Longspur, its yellow face edged with black and white, the rich chest patch at the back of the head, the underparts solid black. The longspurs sing their sweet, tinkling songs

on the wing as they pursue their mates over the tundra. They scarcely seemed to notice us as we walked among them.

As we drove about among the open spruce woods, we came occasionally on a conspicuous large white bird with richly brown head and neck, its red comb swollen at this season, the white tail feathers mixed with brown. This is the "cock of the barrens," the Willow Ptarmigan in its spring dress matching its environment of snow mixed with bare ground at this time of the year. Its nonchalance in our presence was vastly amusing; we could often photograph it from only a few feet away.

### **The Majestic Glaucous Gull**

One day we visited the vast garbage dump of the big military establishment of Fort Churchill. Here were thousands of gulls, terns and shorebirds foraging happily and creating a tremendous cacophony as they milled about. In their midst, more majestic than all the others, was a Glaucous Gull. We found Herring and Bonaparte's Gulls nesting on tiny islands on the ponds, and the Arctic Terns were wheeling and nesting everywhere. One Black Tern was glimpsed one day in flight.

Flocks of redpolls were common along the spruces. It was a bit startling one day to find a Blackpoll Warbler in the same grove with the redpolls. We often heard the Blackpolls' thin little song. These tiny birds are prodigious travelers, migrating each spring from South America to the Arctic. We found two other warblers here, the Northern Waterthrush whose song we heard in the muskeg, and a Yellow Warbler singing among the stunted willows near the town.

Often we stopped to watch a Horned Grebe which seemed to be haunting a pond beside the highway. Its ear tufts were a brilliant reddish tan in the sunlight. The Northern Phalaropes twirled about in various ponds; the sight of gay little groups of carefree females indicated the males were busy with the nesting chores. One day it was our good luck to see six Red Phalaropes, rarely seen here as they migrate to their Arctic breeding grounds offshore along the Atlantic coast. The jaegers, which we had expected to see abundantly, were only noted, rarely, in flight. We never saw them harrying the gulls and terns to force them to drop the fish in their bills—the jaeger's habitual method of obtaining its food!

### **Oldsquaws and a Common Eider**

One day we came upon a small lake, its waters tossing boisterously in the stiff breeze. There we spied a strange diving duck, its face marked by a large white cheek patch, its underparts white, its body a somewhat confused pattern of black and reddish-tan stripes. It took us a good half hour to conclude that we had an Oldsquaw without a tail! Elsewhere and often after that there were Oldsquaws, quite normal ones in whose presence we could relax. Once a Common Eider flew over, the white body and broad black band on its wings unmistakable, and later we saw a pair of them sitting companionably together. There were White-winged Scoters, Red-breasted Mergansers, Black Ducks, American Wigeons and Shovelers in this area, but the most common of the ducks were the Green-winged Teal, Pintails, Scaup and Oldsquaws.

The weather, after that first summer day, reverted to the more normal type for Churchill. The next afternoon it turned bitterly cold; by

five o'clock there was rain and snow and a howling wind. On the third day the temperature was 33° and the wind so violent that we were glad to take refuge in the little Catholic mission church. On another windy day the Eskimo Museum, opened for us by the mission's handsome young Father Belair, was found to be intensely interesting. The incessant wind prevailed during most of our stay, and the shelter afforded by our car was welcome indeed. On June 10 the temperature was 25°; then some one recalled that the record low for Churchill had once been -57°. We immediately felt warmer. (The average temperature there in July is 53.7°).

A delightful feature of our stay in Churchill was making friends with some of the people who live there. Angus McIver is a trapper, steeped in the lore of the northern wilderness, who with Mrs. McIver proved a veritable goldmine of information for us. Mr. Watson, factor of the Hudson's Bay Company store, and his charming wife were our hosts for another memorable evening. On two occasions they took us on a tour of the vicinity during sunsets at 10:30 p. m.!

There were many other birds which we spotted in the area, some of them familiar birds such as Robins and Flickers. The only thrush we saw was the Gray-checked, whose beautiful song reminded us of chimes. (Olin Pettingill called it "bell-like"). The only swallow observed was the Tree Swallow, which was so tame it was even nesting in porch boxes in town. We saw occasional Crows, but the Raven was the commoner bird here. Marsh and Pigeon Hawks comprised our hawk list. A huge owl perched on a stump out on the tundra we believed was a great horned owl. We saw no other owls, except a Hawk Owl in flight, though we had fully expected to see Snowy Owls.

All in all, we sighted some 75 different birds in our ten days at Churchill. Our departure was most reluctant, for we had found this great barren land a fascinating and truly beautiful place at the arrival of spring in the sub-Arctic.

### Some Reading Suggestions

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## CORRECTION

In the Hudson count summary of the 1961 Christmas Bird Count (1961 **Passenger Pigeon** 130), 126 Northern Shrikes were reported. This is an error. Instead, the summary should show 126 Starlings and no Northern Shrikes for the Hudson count.

# The Visitometer

## A Simplified Mechanical Counter

By DONALD J. HENDRICK

Much work has been done to determine the number of times Eastern Robins (*Turdus migratorius*) visit their nest during the incubation period and while feeding their nestlings. Schantz (1939 and 1944) has some interesting all-day observations on incubating Robins. Accounts of the feeding behavior have been made by individuals who have observed the nests for limited periods of time and who recorded the number of visits per hour (Eaton, 1914; Howell, 1942). Others have made observations throughout the entire period of activity of the species for one day and have counted each visit (Copeland, 1909; Gabrielson, 1922; and Hamilton, 1935). This is not by any means a complete survey of the work which has been done in this field, but it is sufficient to provide some basis for comparison in the present study, which is to discuss the testing of a simplified mechanical counting device, the visitometer, which was designed for making such counts.

### The Visitometer

Most of the recording devices so far described are electrically controlled and the trend seems to be toward more and more sophisticated machines paid for by wealthy grants. This device is effective, primarily in its simplicity in design. There are few moving parts to get out of order, and it requires no outside power source, other than the weight of the bird, to activate it. This allows the convenience of use in any situation, especially in remote areas. The lower cost (around \$3.00) of the instrument makes it readily available for field studies to amateur ornithologists with no access to lush research grants for their equipment.

The veeder-root counter, available from LaFayette Electronics, which records the visits, is continuous acting and requires no resetting.

The dimensions in Figure 1 were arrived at experimentally and seem to be right for the species used in this study to test the device. These dimensions allow a ring movement of  $7/16$  inch at the far end of the ring and  $1/4$  inch at the near end of the ring to actuate the counter with sufficient force when a bird sits on any part of the ring. The spring returns the ring arm to the up-position and is adjusted so as to counter balance the weight of the ring arm. The size of the ring is right for most Robins' nests.

Pine was used for the base board of the visitometer for special reasons: (1) it is light enough to allow easy mounting in the many and varied situations one might encounter with a device such as this in the field, and (2) it is also soft enough to allow easy nailing in any position.

However, pine does have a definite limitation which was evidenced by swelling from absorbing water during rainstorms, especially in the spring recess hole. This swelling crowded the spring so the arm would not return to the up-position, and rendered the device inoperative. This



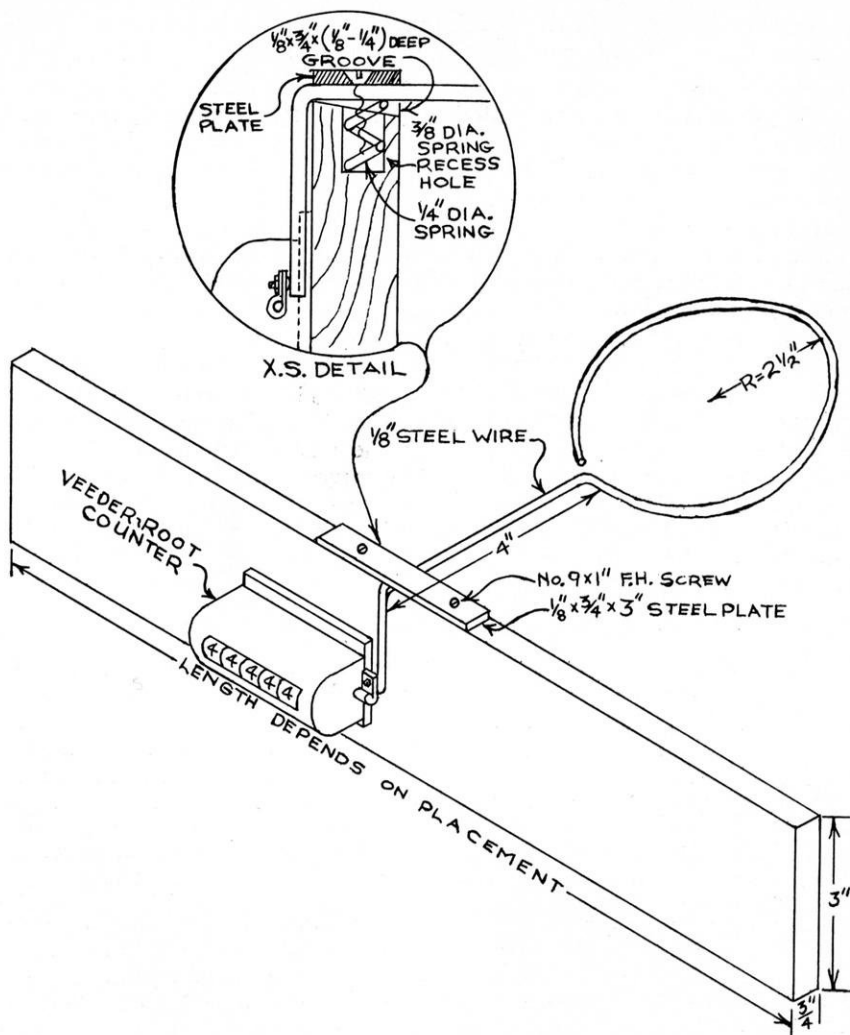


Figure 1. Details of the Visitometer

situation can be eliminated, however, by making the spring recess hole sufficiently large to allow for any swelling which might take place; a  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch diameter spring set into a  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch diameter hole seemed to work the best.

### How the Device Was Tested

To test the visitometer, the Robin was selected as the test species for three reasons: (1) The species is a convenient, early nester, and does not seem disturbed by minor changes about its nest, or about the stability of its perch. (2) The species' weight is enough to activate the counter easily. (3) There is a wealth of information available on observational

accounts of nest visits of this species so that a comparison between visual and mechanical counts could easily be made to test the validity of the visitometer.

The visitometer was installed on May 2, 1962, at 6:00 p. m. at nest No. 1, which was located in an American elm in my yard, and was about 12 feet from the ground. The nest is one which has been in use for four consecutive years. The female had been incubating three eggs for 9 days, and had to be flushed from the nest in order to install the device, but returned 5 minutes after the installation was completed, investigated the newness of the device for a minute, and then returned to normal incubating behavior.

### Failure of Nest No. 1

All three eggs were hatched by May 9, 1962, and the feeding of the nestlings in the nest was normal until May 13, when the feeding tempo slowed considerably. Investigation of the nest at 1:00 p. m. disclosed that all three nestlings were dead. The cause of death is unknown, but I assume that the young died of exposure when the female was driven from the nest during the violent thunderstorm which was accompanied by hail early that same morning.

The visitometer was kept on the nest for the next 7 days, after the dead nestlings were removed from the nest, to determine whether or not the pair would renest in the same location. On May 31, renesting began about 20 feet up in an American elm 80 feet south of the first tree in the same yard.

Caution was exercised in installing the visitometer to make sure the counter was plainly visible from the ground. This made it possible to read the numbers on the counter very conveniently with the aid of 7x50 binoculars, so that no climbing was necessary to make any of the readings.

Thick foliage on the renest tree of this first pair made it necessary to locate another nest to continue the study. On May 30, at 7:30 p. m., the visitometer was moved to nest No. 2, which was located 11 feet off the ground on the flat roof of a birdhouse under the eaves of a garage. This new nest had four nestlings in it that had hatched 2 days previous to the installation. All the nestlings appeared to be healthy and were being fed by both the male and female. As in the installation at nest No. 1, the female was flushed from the nest and flew to a nearby tree and scolded while the device was installed. Installation took about 12 minutes, after which the female returned to her brood with no apparent concern for the newly installed ring about her nest. The female in nest No. 2 was a little more nervous than the female in nest No. 1 and had a tendency to flush more readily when anyone approached within 20-30 feet of the nest site. Other than this difference in the behavior of the adult birds, the activity at the nest was normal.

The ring of the visitometer was positioned in such a manner around and over the nest (approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch above) so as to allow the Robins to stand on the inside edge of the nest without touching the ring, but require them to hop upon the ring in order to enter or to leave the nest area. Also, the ring was positioned around and above the nest in such a manner as to be completely out of the way of the nesting

female when she was on the nest incubating the eggs or brooding the young. It was not touched by the female until she hopped out of the nest in preparation for leaving.

A record was kept of the visitometer's readings at regular intervals of 4 hours each. The all-day observational counts by Gabrielson (1922), 15 hours 12 minutes, Hamilton (1935), 14 hours, and Schantz (1939), 14 hours 12 minutes and (1944), 13 hours 58 minutes, which are being used in this study for comparison, were made from approximately 4:00 a. m.



THE VISITOMETER AT NEST NO. 1

PHOTO BY DONALD J. HENDRICK

to 8:00 p. m. As the activity of the adult bird began at about 4:00 a. m., the first reading was made at 8:00 a. m. for an account of the early morning activity (4:00 a. m.-8:00 a. m.). Next a reading was taken at noon for a record of mid-morning activity; at 4:00 p. m., for a record of early afternoon activity; and finally at 8:00 p. m., for a record of later afternoon activity. As the activity would almost stop by 8:00 p. m., this last reading of the day was used as the beginning reading for the following morning. Thus, it was possible to keep a relatively accurate record of the 16-hour period of activity by making only four convenient readings per day.

In order for the counts made by the visitometer to be meaningful, observation must be made of the behavior of the birds as they approach and leave the nest area. By making such observations, a standard count can be determined for this particular pair, and then this standard count can be used to calculate the number of times the nest is left by the incubating female, or the number of visits made to the nest during the nestling period.

The observations below are not a result of any one long period of time but are a summary of six different observations made at nest No. 1 while the male spelled the female at the nest during the incubation period. During the incubation period, the pair reacted to the visitometer in the following manner:

1. The female hopped onto the ring for a short duration before leaving the nest area.

2. The male hopped onto the ring before positioning himself on the inside edge of the nest to watch the nest in the female's absence.

3. The male hopped onto the ring before leaving the nest area upon return of the female.

4. The female hopped onto the ring before setting on the eggs.

Each time the male spelled the female at the nest, the counter was tripped 4 times. The female was seldom observed leaving the nest without being relieved by the male, who never took part in incubating the eggs. However, when the female was frightened from the nest, which did not occur too often, she jumped out of the nest, and over the ring without tripping the counter. Upon returning to the nest, she did hop upon the ring, thereby tripping the counter one time. This would introduce a slight error, but not enough to make it significant.

In nest No. 1, when the female left the nest after brooding the nestlings, she hopped onto the ring in preparation to leaving, while the female on nest No. 2, jumped out of the nest and over the ring without touching it, thereby not tripping the counter upon leaving. No accurate account of feeding trips could be made at nest No. 1, since much time had to be spent making preliminary adjustments of the visitometer due to the swelling mentioned previously. Counts were made on nest No. 2 until the nestlings fledged.

### Observations at Nest No. 2

Nest No. 2 was observed for 90 minutes on June 6 from 2:25 p. m. to 3:55 p. m. During this period, the nestlings were fed 6 times by the male and 5 times by the female. In the 11 visits made to the nest to feed the nestlings, both of the adults reacted to the visitometer ring in generally the same manner, which is summarized as follows:

1. The adult flew to the roof of the birdhouse on which the nest was built, landed next to the nest, and fed the nestlings.

2. The adult hopped onto the ring of the visitometer to receive the excrement from the nestling, thereby tripping the counter, then either ate the excrement or flew off with it.

The adults tripped the counter of the visitometer once each time they visited the nest, with the exception of one time out of the 11 visits observed. The one exception occurred when the male fed the nestling in the manner described above, but accepted the excrement without hopping onto the ring.

During the 90 minutes that nest No. 2 was observed, the visitometer recorded 10 out of the 11 visits made by the adults to feed their nestlings, thereby illustrating the visitometer is a relatively accurate means of recording nest visits of Robins. The small error (less than 10 percent in this one case) could very well be compensated for by the convenience that the device offers in keeping a record of nest visits throughout the entire nestling period.

### Discussion

A summary of the number of times the female left the nest during the last 6 days (May 2-7) of the incubation period of nest No. 1 is shown in Table 1. These data compare favorably with the observations of

Schantz (1939) who recorded 13-19 departures per day with an average of 16.2 per day for 6 days during the first incubation and 10-18 departures per day with an average of 16.3 per day for 10 days during the second incubation, while the visitometer recorded 15-23 departures per day for 6 days of incubation with an average of 18.5. The Robin in Schantz's study ended its incubation April 7-12, while the Robin in this study ended its incubation May 2-7, almost a month later.

**Table 1. Departures from Nest No. 1 During Incubation**

Date	No. of Departures per Time Period				Total Departures per Day
	4AM-8AM	8AM-12N	12N-4PM	4PM-8PM	
5-2	3.5	3.5	3.8	5.0	15.8
5-3	3.7	3.3	3.0	5.0	15.0
5-4	4.3	2.5	2.8	5.5	15.1
5-5	10.8	2.0	5.3	4.8	22.9
5-6	8.5	3.3	4.3	5.5	21.6
5-7	6.0	7.8	4.3	2.8	20.9

The number of visits to nest No. 1 declined after the nestlings died and were removed from the nest (Table 2). No long periods of time were spent observing the nest after the nestlings were removed, but since the nest was located only 16 feet outside the living room window, it was watched at varying intervals in anticipation of the pair returning to re-nest so that the testing of the visitometer could be continued. During the period May 13-18, only 10 out of the 70 visitations recorded were observed, and in each case it was the male that returned to the nest. After 4:00 p. m. on May 13, he did not have any feeding material with him. Previous to this time he was observed three times with feeding material, but I could not determine whether he ate the food or flew off with it. During the following 12 days, Robins were observed in the nest tree, but none were seen in the immediate vicinity of nest No. 1. The visitometer was kept on nest No. 1 until May 30, when I placed it on nest No. 2. The data collected by the visitometer on this particular nest seem to indicate that nest abandonment is not a definite thing but,

**Table 2. Record of 70 Visits to Nest No. 1 After Failure**

Date	No. of Visits per Time Period				Total
	4AM-8AM	8AM-12N	12N-4PM	4PM-8PM	
5-13	14	6	6	1	27
5-14	7	7	3	3	20
5-15	12	5	0	0	17
5-16	5	0	0	0	5
5-17	0	0	0	0	0
5-18	0	1	0	0	1



rather, a gradually declining process, although I could find no reference in ornithological literature to substantiate this finding.

Table 3 summarizes the activity at nest No. 2 through the last 9 days (May 31-June 9) of the nestling period. The last nestling fledged from the nest at 8:30 a. m. on June 9, and the visitometer's record of the activity at the nest during this time of fledging indicates not only feeding activity of the adults, but also the activity of the young as they hopped upon the ring of the device in preparation for leaving the nest. For this reason, none of the counts made on June 9 are included in the averages given in Table 3, but are included in the table only to indicate the visits made to the nest during and after the nestlings fledged.

Table 3. Visits to Nest No. 2 During Nestling Period

Time	4AM-8AM		8AM-12N		12N-4PM		4PM-8PM		Total	Average
Date	No. of Visits	Visits per Hour	No. of Visits	Visits per Hour	No. of Visits	Visits per Hour	No. of Visits	Visits per Hour	Visits per Day	Visits per Hour
5/31	59	14.8	54	13.5	73	18.2	73	18.2	259	16.2
6/1	59	14.8	76	19.0	66	16.5	70	17.5	271	16.9
6/2	67	16.7	57	14.2	51	12.8	64	16.0	239	14.9
6/3	90	22.5	41	10.3	45	11.3	54	13.5	230	14.4
6/4	60	15.0	93	23.2	67	16.8	44	11.0	264	16.5
6/5	46	11.5	48	12.0	47	11.8	21	5.3	164	10.1
6/6	62	15.5	28	7.0	31	7.8	23	5.8	144	9.0
6/7	35	8.8	25	6.3	33	8.3	27	6.7	120	7.5
6/8	45	11.3	68	17.0	32	8.0	46	11.5	191	11.9
6/9	121	30.3	56	14.0	3	.8	.....	.....	179	11.3
Ave.	58.1	14.5	54.4	13.6	49.5	12.4	46.9	11.7	206	12.5

During the time the visitometer was on nest No. 2, it recorded a total of 2,061 visits made to the nest and recorded a daily average between 7.5 and 16.9 visits per hour with an over-all average for the entire period of 12.5 visits per hour. The number of daily visits ranged from 120 to 271 with an average of 206.

These results seem credible when they are compared with those obtained by other researchers who obtained their results by direct observation. Eaton (1914) observed four nestlings being fed ripe cherries at the rate of 16-30 times per hour, while Hamilton (1935) observed four nestlings which received 140 daily visits, and estimated 1,400 trips as the total throughout the entire nestling period. Peterson (1947) observed three nestlings being fed from 11-15 times per hour and estimated the daily number of visits at 200 per day. Others have recorded lesser numbers of visits per hour, but these were results of observations on nests containing only two nestlings, and did not seem to offer favorable bases for comparison.

Schantz (1939) concluded that there were several outside influences on the type and amount of food obtained by the adults. This is also indicated (Table 3) in the number of trips made to nest No. 2 throughout most of the first 5 days the visitometer was on the nest. The number of visits per hour recorded for the early morning of June 3 (22.5 visits per

hour) and for the late morning of June 4 (23.2 visits per hour) both followed a period of cloudy skies and steady, ground-soaking drizzle. During this time, there was an abundance of earthworms on the lawns surrounding the nest area. Throughout most of the 5 day period, the sky was overcast and there were intermittent rains, with the heaviest rainfall occurring through the night of June 2 and the early morning of June 4. The rain did not seem to be a deterrent factor in the activity of the adults.

Schantz (1939) also noted that the greatest activity of the birds was in early morning and late afternoon. My results agreed with this finding for the incubation period, but showed the greatest activity in the early morning with a gradual decrease in activity throughout the day for the nestling period.

Finally, in comparing the device against itself, the 90-minute observation made at nest No. 2 on June 6, showed that the adults visited the nest 11 times for an average of 7.3 times per hour. The visitometer, during the 4-hour period (12 noon-4 p. m.) in which this observation was made, recorded 31 visits for an average of 7.8 times per hour.

### Conclusion

In view of the evidence outlined above, it is reasonable to conclude that the visitometer is a practical, and relatively efficient mechanical device which can be used to accurately record the visits made to Robins' nests. Further experimenting could show the versatility and adaptability of this device for other species by changing the dimensions of the arm length and ring size for different size nests. It could be adapted for use with cavity nesters by eliminating the ring, thereby producing a perch in front of the hole of the cavity. Further use of this device would be limited only to one's imagination.

### Summary

The visitometer is an inexpensive, practical, and relatively efficient counting device, which can be constructed with the limited mechanical knowledge from easily obtained components, and is used to count the number of visits made to birds' nests. By making observations of the behavior of the birds to this counting device, a standard count may be obtained to determine the number of visits made to the nest to an illustrated accuracy of 10 percent. The device is continuous acting and a schedule for the readings can be set up so as to obtain visiting data for the entire period of activity of the birds throughout the day. The visitometer can be especially useful to amateur ornithologists who would like to engage in field work but do not have access to grants to supply funds for their work.

### Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. J. J. Hickey, Wildlife Department, The University of Wisconsin, Madison, for his suggestions, advice, and critical reading of this paper. Thanks also must be extended to Joselyn Van Tyne, Memorial Library, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, for the loan of periodicals used in this study, and a special thanks to my good friend and neighbor, Evan Hoff, for allowing me invade the privacy of his yard to use "his" Robin's nest to complete the testing of this device when the nest in my yard failed.

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- 228 E. Somo Avenue  
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## By The Wayside...

**Hudsonian Godwit.** On October 28 my hunting companion had left me at our blind about 11:30 a. m. to return about 1:00 p. m. During the noon hour of that day I was scanning the water when I noted a large shorebird some distance out over the bay (Green Bay). It was coming toward shore to the right of the blind, some one-eighth of a mile to the south. I did not give it much thought, but as I was still gazing in that direction, it came to rest on a sand bar. The bird, seeing our decoys soon left the bar, and while coming toward me, uttered a call just before alighting between the blind and the decoys on a bar not 25 feet from me. At first I took it to be a big Yellowlegs, but its call caused me to open my eyes. The first thing I must have looked for was the color of the legs, which were a sort of bluish cast. This I noticed before I noted the upturned long bill as it settled broadside of me. I had a very good view. No sooner had the bird set down when it scampered to the water's

edge near the decoys and began probing a few times with its long bill. Then it probably spied me, or not being satisfied in the company of duck decoys, it took flight again, giving voice to a call I had never heard before. Unlike the Yellowlegs, it did not call as it flew on farther up the shore. I did not see it alight again. This bird seemed lost and appeared to be looking for a companion. It had a white rump—this I noted as it left—like several other shorebirds.—Carl Richter, Oconto.

**Late Cape May Warbler.** A Cape May Warbler suddenly appeared in our yard on November 22 and was around from dawn until dusk daily through November 27. It appeared to be a normal, healthy bird during the entire time it was present. It also was quite tame, as often we could approach as close as a couple of feet. This is the second time we have had a late date for a Cape May. In 1956 we had another individual that lingered until November 18.—Daryl Tessen, Appleton.

**Western Kingbird at Crystal Lake, Columbia County.** I spotted this bird on a telephone wire while marking roadside cover plots on September 12. After several attempts to out-manuever the bird I finally got the bird in excellent light at less than 100 feet with 7x35 binoculars. Several flycatcher-like sorties after some unseen insect convinced me it was a flycatcher. The white outer tail feathers were clearly evident as was also the gray throat and yellowish breast. The lack of wing bars and the dark tail clearly distinguished this bird from the similar Crested



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Flycatcher which I seldom observe away from woody cover.—Alan J. Rusch, Madison.

**Gull-billed Tern in Sheboygan.** On Friday, September 14 about 7 p. m. we saw a bird sitting on a rock at North Point (a rocky portion of shoreline which juts into Lake Michigan on Sheboygan's north side). My mother and her sister were with me and they also saw it through my 8x30 Rodenstock binoculars. The distance from the car was about 40 feet. There was only one bird and it seemed quite tame. I didn't flush or chase the bird as we had an appointment at 7:15. When first seeing the bird I immediately noticed the tern cap on the head. When I looked at the bill, however,—well, that's what really struck me. It had a blackish gull-like bill. All other terns I ever saw had the pointed tern bill except the Caspian Tern which I also saw at North Point several years ago. The underparts were white and extended around the neck. As it was sitting, not perching, on the rock I didn't see the legs. I took my aunt to church and then wrote down my notes as I didn't have my bird guide along. When I got home I, of course, immediately checked my Peterson guide. I realize the Gull-billed Tern is rare in this part of the country, and it had no yellow on the head such as the Long-tailed Jaeger. I guess my only hope is that others have seen or will see this bird. Although it was 7 o'clock at night it was still quite light and there was nothing hiding the bird from view such as another rock or a bush—it was in plain view. I went back to the same spot Saturday afternoon (the next day) but didn't see it.—Harold Koopman, Plymouth.

There is no doubt that this bird was a rarity of some sort. But considering both the rarity of Gull-billed Terns and the variance in plumages of Jaegers in the fall, the editors feel we would be on shaky ground in accepting this as a *bona fide* hypothetical record.—Autumn Seasonal Editor.

**Abundance of Robins.** I was very pleasantly surprised to have our usual high count of Robins here during fall migration. They stayed to feed on a bounteous crop of gray dogwood and other berries. They began to build up early in October. Paul and I noticed small flocks of 15 to 25 rise from the woods and fly south over the house in the early evening apparently going to roost. On October 11 we made a count of individuals and in a 40 minute period counted 1,007 robins as they passed over the house. This was a more or less daily occurrence until the 19th and 20th when their numbers rapidly tapered off.—Emma Hoffmann, Oconomowoc.

**Late Date for a Green Heron.** One individual was brought in by an eighth grade science student on November 3. It had been caught in a muskrat trap and died. According to the checklist, this was a very late date. Positive identification was made of the individual and measurements were as follows: length, 56.6 cm; wing span, 65.5 cm; tarsus, 6.2 cm; weight, 182 grams. This bird was dead about two days and the left foot was missing when the weight was taken.—Donald Hendrick, Tomahawk.

**Peregrine Falcon at Wind Point.** He was standing on the pier, just finishing a meal. His dark back, barred chest and dark cheek marks were clearly visible. He walked along the pier and jumped when he came to a crack. Then he went down on the shore and perched on a



beer can with his talons grasping around it. This was hard to balance on so he had to flap his wings every so often. Then we went closer, about 100 feet, before he flew off low over the trees—a wonderful sight. If we only had had a camera.—Robert and Louise Erickson, Racine.

**Bird Anting.** In a maple tree near our house several birds indulged in what appeared to be “bird anting.” The top of the tree had been injured and the upper leaves appeared to be twisted and without color. Perhaps there was some insect infestation there. The birds were fluttering and flitting in and out among the branches, rubbing up against them with their bodies and wings. They were all warblers: three Redstarts, three Cape Mays and one Blackburnian. This went on for 15 or 20 minutes.—Robert and Louise Erickson, Racine.

**Red Phalarope at Wind Point—**On October 25 we saw one phalarope swimming and bobbing near many Bonaparte Gulls and some Sanderlings. He was very tame, letting us walk to within 10 feet without flying, and then he would fly only 10 or 20 feet away. He was all white underneath with a plain gray back with no stripes or markings. His legs were pinkish, a bit gray but not at all black. His head was lightish with a blackish-gray ear patch. His crown was light down the center with dark stripes on the outside meeting in back and extending as one stripe down the back of the head about an inch. His bill was thick, somewhat like a plover, but black. It did not show yellow. (Peterson says immature Red Phalaropes do not always show the yellow). In flight the tail had the dark center stripe, the back showed no stripes. His wing stripe was long but somewhat pale. His back and wing stripe looked a little washed out or blurred compared to the Northern Phalarope we saw later. We watched him about 20 minutes feeding along the rocks, in the seaweed, walking, flying, swimming and bobbing near the shore. About 15 minutes of this time was within 25 feet.—Robert and Louise Erickson, Racine.

**Golden Eagle Chasing Ducks.** On October 20 we drove to Goose Pond, Columbia County for the day. A cold rain fell all morning and it was very windy. However, the birding was excellent. Immature Black-bellied Plovers, Snipes, Dowitchers, both Yellowlegs, Dunlins, and Pectorals were plentiful close to the road in the east pond. On the north side of the large ponds, Killdeer raced over the furrows in the plowed fields, as did some Lapland Longspurs. Pipits walked up and down the road and balanced on the wires everywhere. Near noon the skies cleared. Then from the road south of the pond, we were thrilled to watch a Golden Eagle, his enormous wings outspread. He swooped down low several times and dived at the ducks near the railroad track, scattering them in all directions. We watched as it accommodately perched in a tree near the southwest end and was carefully observed by four people for about a half hour before it took off. It was evidently an adult bird. We studied it through binoculars and a scope. The upper back and neck were a golden brown in the sun. We were able to see the feathered legs through the scope. It didn't chase the ducks again but finally flew off, leaving some thrilled birders.—Mrs. Elizabeth Degner, Fort Atkinson.



# WISCONSIN'S FAVORITE BIRD HAUNTS

## LAKE KOSHKONONG

In the latter part of the nineteenth century Lake Koshkonong was probably the best known location in Wisconsin for bird study. The Milton-Lake Koshkonong region was widely used by Ludwig Kumlien and Ned Hollister for their collecting and bird study, and much of the data for their **Birds of Wisconsin** was secured here. Many of the marshes have been drained since then, and much of the forest denuded; yet there are still quite a few lakes and ponds, a few marshes, and some beautiful wooded spots left for nature lovers. Wild flowers—such as Lady Slippers, Wild Ginger, Pasque Flowers, Fringed and Bottled Gentians—are found in this region. And unusual birds can still be found in any season—winter, summer, or in spring and fall migration.

### Area A

About four miles northwest of Milton, easily visible from Highway 59, are two lakes: Grass Lake to the north, Clear Lake to the south, and Davis Marsh extending south from Clear Lake. Clear Lake Road runs between the lakes, and makes a good vantage point for watching migrating waterfowl in spring. Ducks of many kinds have been seen here,



along with Whistling Swans, Canada Geese, Loons and gulls. The European Widgeon and the Caspian Tern have been seen here. In later summer Common Egrets have frequently appeared here, along with other species of herons.

There is a fine wooded area just west of Clear Lake: white-black oak woods with plantations of Norway, white and jack pines. Where Highway 59 turns north at Milton Junction, go west on C.T.H. "M" for 1¼ miles, north on Pine Road for almost another mile to where Trescher Road turns off. A lane leads off here to the woodlot and the west shore of Clear Lake.

This is private property, but visitors are welcome. During the spring months, when the road is wet, the gate may be locked; but one can park, climb the fence and walk down to the woods. Resident birds include Cooper's and Red-tailed Hawks, Great Horned and Long-eared Owls, Wood Ducks, Woodcocks, Scarlet Tanagers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Wood Thrushes, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Tufted Titmice, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Ovenbirds and Cerulean Warblers.

### Area B

Area B includes Storrs, Round and Bowers Lakes just east of Milton. As Highway 26 passes through Milton, watch for the Milton House and

a road just back of it. This road leads eastward and ends up between Round and Storrs Lake, with Bowers Lake just to the north. This is an extensive public hunting and fishing ground, containing fields, trees and much marshy land.

Pheasants and Gray Partridges nest here, and in migration when water levels are right, good numbers of ducks and shorebirds may be found. Yellow-headed Blackbirds nest on Round Lake. The habitat is particularly good for finches and sparrows in winter. White-crowned, White-throated and Fox Sparrows have been noted during the winter months, and in years when there is a heavy finch flight, one is apt to see such things as Purple Finches, Pine Grosbeaks and Red and White-winged Crossbills here.

### **Area C**

Another wet area is to be found two miles southwest of Milton Junction along Kennedy Road. Following Highway 59 through Milton Junction, turn south on John Paul Road a distance of 0.7 mile to the city dump; turn west on Manogue Road, and then take the first road (1½ miles) south. A very small pond and marshy spot will soon be seen. This spot has the distinction of attracting the first Cattle Egret known to visit Wisconsin in 1960. Other herons, ducks, terns and shorebirds will be found here in season.

### **Area D**

Otter Creek, which is responsible for the marshy areas in Area B, develops into another interesting area north of Milton as the creek approaches Lake Koshkonong. Going north from Milton on Highway 26 for 2½ miles, turn west on C.T.H. "N," and after 0.7 mile turn north on Vogel Road. Otter Creek winds around on both sides of Vogel Road, and there is a small pond where ducks, herons and kingfishers are often seen. This is a particularly good spot for viewing warblers during migration. The road can be followed to within a short distance of the point where the creek enters the lake.

### **Area E**

The spot where Highway 59 crosses the Rock River near the southwestern corner of Lake Koshkonong is known locally as Newville. There is good birding both east and west of the Newville Bridge. Briggs Resort off Highway 59 east of the Newville Bridge is an excellent spot to observe geese and ducks during spring migration. The river is usually open in winter; both near Briggs Resort and on the road going west from Highway 59 on the south side of the river a variety of ducks and gulls can be found wintering. Sometimes a Bald Eagle can be seen here in winter.

### **Area F**

Any of the other roads leading in to Lake Koshkonong—from Highway 26 to the east, or from Highway 106 from the north—may prove profitable. In early autumn the flocking of swallows may be spectacular, and if water levels permit, various species of shorebirds may be encountered along the shore. Situated near the north end of the lake, and approached by a town road leading from Highway 106, is Blackhawk Island. There is an active heron rookery here, containing nests of Great Blue and Black-crowned Night Herons, and a few Common Egret nests. Little

Blue Herons have been seen here in years when southern herons have invaded Wisconsin in late summer.

The road which follows closely the Rock River at the east end of the lake is worth cruising slowly. The Prothonotary Warbler spends the summer in this region, and probably nests. The whole Lake Koshkonong region is now a far cry from its productivity in the heyday of its nineteenth century greatness, but it is still a rewarding study area for a wide variety of species.

Melva Maxson

This is one of 30 stories in **Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts**, available from the WSO Supply Department at \$1.75.



## **FIELD TRIP REPORTS**

By **EDWARD PEARTREE**

### **PETENWELL BALD EAGLE TRIP**

On Sunday, January 27, some 34 hardy souls gathered at Petenwell Dam to view the wintering Bald Eagles. All that can be said for the weather is that it was up to  $-4^{\circ}$  at 3:00 p. m.

No Turkeys were found on the Necedah wildlife refuge this year, but eagles, a Barred Owl and Canada Geese were recorded.

### **MILWAUKEE LAKE SHORE TRIP**

March 3 found 76 members and guests gathered at McKinley Beach for the annual lake shore trip. Bird watchers came from many spots in Wisconsin and Illinois. Ducks were hard to get close to in most cases due to the heavy ice, but the male and female Oldsquaw viewed at 15 feet in full sun gave us the finest view of this species that you can imagine. The Long-eared Owl and Red-breasted Nuthatch, also viewed at close range, were other highlights of the day. Twenty-five species were seen.

### **HONEY CREEK HIKE**

Our annual hike up the valley of WSO's Honey Creek Natural Area on May 19 drew 90 people from throughout the state. Only 43 species were recorded on this cool day. A Pileated Woodpecker, Kentucky Warbler, and many Blue- and Golden-winged Warblers were the best finds for the day. Phoebe and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher nests were seen. The showy orchids in full bloom gave everyone who saw them a real thrill.

### **SUMMER CAMPOUT**

Only 33 members and guests came to the Lake George campground near Rhinelander on June 15-16 to enjoy the hospitality of member-owner Afton Bassett. The Saturday field trips led by Nils Dahlstrand were fine until rained out in the afternoon. Purple Finch, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Canada Warbler and nesting Osprey were Saturday morning highlights. Sharp-tailed Grouse, Raven and a Cliff Swallow colony were interesting observations during the afternoon.

The Sunday morning trip to Rainbow Flowage and Pickerel Lake was led by Ed Peartree. At these places the group saw many Red-eyed Vireos, Juncos and White-throated Sparrows.

Eighty-four species were recorded over the weekend. Pine Warblers were seen at the campground, and the bonfire on Saturday evening plus the popcorn by Edna Fuller and Claire Peartree helped to make this a most enjoyable outing.

### FALL CAMPOUT

The Chute Lake campground near Mountain found 52 campers on hand to scour the countryside for birds on the weekend of September 7-8. Botany vied with birding with fringed and bottled gentian, prairie gay feather, and red and blue lobellia competing for attention with Sandhill Cranes, Broad-winged Hawks and Bald Eagles.

Saturday morning found the group at the Peshtigo Brook conservation area and in the afternoon at president Al Holz' "River's Edge." Here we birded in the bogs and enjoyed supper supplied by Phyl and Al Holz. A special thanks to them for their hospitality and letting us share the beauty of their little corner of nature.

Sunday was spent birding at Chute Lake after a bonfire and popcorn by Dorothy Frister and Claire Peartree on Saturday night. The birds moved out on Saturday evening in large numbers from 9:00 p. m. to daylight.



WSO PRESIDENT AL HOLZ BECKONS THE GROUP TO "COME AND GET IT"  
AT THE FALL CAMPOUT.

PHOTO BY JAMES F. FULLER



# Book Review

**BIRDS OF WISCONSIN.** By Owen J. Gromme. The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, Wisconsin, 1963. 9 x 12 in., xvi + 220 pp., 105 color plates. \$22.50 (\$18.00 until February 1, 1964).

For more than twenty years Society members have been reading in this magazine about Owen J. Gromme's forthcoming book. On September 20, 1963, it came forth. On that date the life work of a great Wisconsin artist and naturalist was realized, and as a result ornithologists now have a definitive treatment of the birds of Wisconsin.

It is impossible to describe the beauty and artistry of the book. Each plate depicts birds in the setting you would expect to find them afield, and in a manner that makes you think you are actually viewing live specimens. There is depth and character in this work. It is a book that all serious ornithologists and nature lovers will want to have.

**Birds of Wisconsin** was published for the Milwaukee Public Museum and was sponsored by Friends of the Museum, Inc.

Books reviewed in **The Passenger Pigeon** may be purchased from the WSO Supply Department. The 10% member discount applies on all purchases.

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Mr. Gromme is curator of the division of birds and mammals of the museum. His association with this institution began in 1922. He has represented the museum on a number of expeditions. His painting of three Shoveler ducks was chosen for the 1945-46 federal duck stamp.

**Birds of Wisconsin** is divided into two sections. The first, "Bird Portraits," consists of 89 identification plates, 88 of which were done in watercolor and one in oil. The second section, "Birds in Action and in Habitat," consists of 16 paintings of birds in their natural environment.



OWEN J. GROMME, WISCONSIN ARTIST-NATURALIST

PHOTO COURTESY OF  
THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN PRESS

The author says of the paintings in the latter section, "They represent attempts to share with the reader a few of the actual events or observations of many years of field work."

Three hundred-twenty-eight species are illustrated in the bird portraits section. On the page opposite each plate information on the species depicted is succinctly presented. This includes common and scientific names, sex (next to the silhouette), status, range and seasonal distribution. Much of this information was obtained from Society members and publications of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology.

Mr. Gromme is now writing the accompanying text for **Birds of Wisconsin** which will be published as a second volume.

WSO members of long standing have followed the progress of Mr. Gromme's book since its inception in the pages of this magazine. At irregular intervals members were appraised on how they could help by

submitting their bird observation records to Mr. Gromme. At other times Mr. Gromme issued progress reports on the status of the book and exhibited some of his paintings at WSO conventions. Throughout this time WSO members followed with interest the author's patient and diligent efforts in producing this masterful work. For the record (and newer members) here is a brief summary from back issues of this magazine.

In 1940 Mr. Gromme said, "I would like to have it announced that work has begun on 'Wisconsin Birds.' Our new director, Dr. Ira Edwards, ordered me to proceed just as soon as possible to the end that a book similar to that put out by Dr. Forbush and Dr. Roberts shall be in the hands of the Wisconsin bird loving public at the earliest date." (1940 *Passenger Pigeon* 2)

"Owen Gromme has made several definite steps forward in his work on 'The Birds of Wisconsin' . . ." (1940 *Passenger Pigeon* 44)

"A large proportion of the paintings by Owen J. Gromme for the Milwaukee Public Museum's book, 'Birds of Wisconsin,' already have been completed. Although no definite publication date has been set, efforts are being made now to secure all possible contributions and subscriptions for the 'Birds of Wisconsin Trust Fund' which is attempting to raise a fund of \$20,000 to underwrite the color work . . ." (1943 *Passenger Pigeon* 60)

At the 1947 convention Mr. Gromme stated, "I realize that the public is clamoring for a good work. I hope that the members of this society realize the enormity of this task and the necessity of great care and long hours in its preparation. It will be at least four years from now before the work can be brought to completion barring any other upsets such as the recent war." (1947 *Passenger Pigeon* 140)

"Gromme has already finished better than 80% of the paintings. . . . Every effort is being made to reduce costs on the publication, which will come out in two volumes. . . . It will be at least another three years before the text of the book has been completed and the publication is ready for sale." (1950 *Passenger Pigeon* 84)

"Publication of Owen Gromme's forthcoming 'Birds of Wisconsin' received a setback in December when fire destroyed all 22 engravings of Gromme's original bird paintings for the book. Two of the original plates were also lost, and two others damaged. Gromme is now working on these plates, in addition to preparing the text for the book." (1956 *Passenger Pigeon* 186)

Such is the story of a book—conception, long, endless hours, frustration, spurts of progress, setbacks, dogged determination, encouragement, and, finally, completion.

Wisconsin ornithologists and the bird loving public are, indeed, fortunate to have this beautiful and authentic work on Wisconsin birds.

—Nils P. Dahlstrand.



## 1963 Christmas Bird Count Dates

The big event of the year for many bird watchers—the annual Christmas Bird Count—will take place this year from December 19, 1963 through January 1, 1964.

The count area should fill or fit within a 15-mile diameter circle, if possible. Participants are strongly urged to document unusual observations.

Associate editor Sam Robbins will mail report forms to last year's compilers, the same as he has done in the past. If you need additional forms, or if you are initiating a new count, send your request to Rev. Robbins, Roberts, Wisconsin.



# FIELD NOTES

By CHARLES A. KEMPER

Autumn Season

August 16-November 30, 1962

This was the third fall season in a row that saw warm weather prevail almost through the season. Again migration seemed delayed and an abundance of new late records appeared. More observers contributed this season than in any year since I have been editing the fall notes. This is a healthy sign and we welcome it even though it makes the job of compiling more time consuming. It would help the editor if the contributors would use the blank sheet provided, or else a WSO check list.

## Record Dates

There were two record early arrival dates and eleven record late dates. See Rough-legged Hawk, Northern Phalarope, Black-billed Cuckoo, Wood Pewee, Cliff Swallow, Warbling Vireo, Golden-winged Warbler, Cape May Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Ovenbird, and Least Flycatcher.

Television tower studies continue at Eau Claire. With tall towers going up elsewhere, there is an opportunity for study by people in every sizeable city in the state. Between September 9 and September 11, a total of 2,228 birds were killed, pick up, identified and sent to museums. Of these, 285 were Tennessee Warblers and 462 were Red-eyed Vireos.

Another peak was August 29-30 with 575 birds destroyed. I hope to publish more details later.

The Hudsonian Godwit made a fall appearance in the state for only the second time according to WSO files.

Cedar Grove Ornithological Station submitted their migration synopsis but their more detailed figures were not received. There is no doubt that this is one of the great and unique bird study centers in the U. S.

Much of the migration began in early August. Perhaps the cool summer induced an unusually early migration. Robbins reported Tennessee Warblers beginning migration as early as July 21 and noted much passerine migration throughout all of August. He observes, "It would appear to me that a sizable portion of the early fall passerine migration took place in the latter half of August and that observers who were not in the field at that time missed out on part of the fun." It is this writer's opinion that this July and August migration is not just a one-time thing. I believe it occurs yearly and that increased scrutiny is just beginning to document this phenomenon. To illustrate, I have banded Tennessee Warblers in three of the four previous Julys, and early August is not at

all uncommon. Yet we have no nesting records in all of Wisconsin for Tennessee Warblers.

The following records document the many late records and the lingering of migrants into an unusually warm and pleasant November.

The fall season sometimes gives a hint of winter visitors. The Hawk Owl made its appearance in northwest Wisconsin, but the Snowy Owls of the previous year were absent. It was obvious this early that Evening Grosbeaks, Pine Grosbeaks, Bohemian Waxwings, Redpolls and Crossbills were quite scarce.

Shorebirds were average. Habitat was favorable in Dane County and Horicon. Racine's Wind Point provided some good records. Elsewhere observers reported high water conditions flooded out much shorebird habitat. Robbins reported, "On August 10th I found water levels too high at Superior for favorable shorebirding. Shorebirds were very poor in St. Croix County; some areas that were good in 1960 and 1961 were flooded out this year; some areas that were moist this year, where they had been dry previously, were too overgrown with rushes to offer good mudflats." Daryl Tessen wrote that many of the shorebirds left a good month earlier than in past years.

One of the encouraging events was the reported upturn in Bluebird populations. This is reason to believe that the Bluebird Trails project of WSO is paying dividends. Some comments also were received of Robin abundance.

### The Season's Summary

**Common Loon:** Tom Ashman, for the second year in a row, has come up with the last one of the season, November 30, Dane County.

**Horned Grebe:** Two late reports: November 27, Brown County (Ed Paulson) and November 30, Dane County (Tom Ashman).

**Pied-billed Grebe:** Al Bradford writes that there is almost a complete absence of this bird from its usual nesting and resting grounds in Outagamie County.

**Great Blue Heron:** Reports have declined the past two successive seasons. Latest for 1962 is November 21, Dane County (Tom Ashman). Is this species declining?

**Cattle Egret:** No fall reports for the second year. It will be interesting to see if the expected explosion of this species will continue into Wisconsin or if it is subsiding. Our prediction made three years ago, that this bird would be common in Wisconsin by 1970, may not turn out to be correct.

**Common Egret:** Only two or three noted at Horicon on August 25 (Roy Lound). Fewer reports this season. One in Outagamie County, August 16 (Bradford).

**Green Heron:** Noted October 7, Waukesha County (John Bielefeldt), October 17, Rock County (Glenn and Andrews), October 28, Racine County (Bob and Laurie Erickson). November 3, Lincoln County (Donald Hendrick) is a late departure date for Wisconsin.

**Yellow-crowned Night Heron:** Two carefully checked observations—Waukesha County, August 20 (John Bielefeldt), and Dane County, August 14 (Robbins).

**Least Bittern:** Reported in Waukesha County on September 29 (Bielefeldt).

**Whistling Swan:** Arrived at Crex Meadows on November 19 (N. R. Stone). Seen in Brown County, November 30 (Ed Paulson) and December 2 in Marathon County (Mrs. S. W. Doty). More fall reports than usual (Robbins).

**Canada Goose:** Peak at Horicon from October 14-20 of 102,850 (William Carter). Peak at Crex Meadows on October 25 (N. R. Stone).

**Snow Goose:** Arrived September 23, Brown County (Paulson) and October 1, Crex Meadows, Burnett County (Stone). Peak at Horicon from October 14-20 of 1,240 (Carter) and October 25, Crex Meadows (Stone). Last seen December 1 at Arlington, Columbia County (Barger).

**Mallard:** Peak at Horicon from October 7-13 of 40,000 (Carter). Peak at Crex Meadows on October 21 (Stone). All departed by November 28.

**Black Duck:** Peak figures for Horicon, October 7-13, 40,000 (Carter).



**Gadwall:** Quite a concentration noted this fall in Dane County (Tom Soulen). Similar observation for Buffalo County (Kemper). Peak at Horicon from September 3 to October 13 of 400 (Carter).

**Pintail:** Peak at Horicon, 1,200, September 2-8 (Carter). One on December 1 at Arlington, Columbia County (Barger).

**Green-winged Teal:** Peak at Horicon, 1,160, October 28 to November 3 (Carter).

**Blue-winged Teal:** Peak at Horicon, 3,000 from September 9-15 (Carter). Noted October 26, Brown County (Paulson).

**American Widgeon:** Peak at Horicon, 3,000, October 7-13 (Carter).

**Shoveler:** Arrived in Outagamie County, August 21 (D. Tessen). 390 reported at Sheboygan by Bob and Louise Erickson. Peak of 250 at Horicon, October 14 to November 3 (Carter).

**Wood Duck:** Peak of 800 on September 2-8 at Horicon (Carter). Noted in Dane County on November 15 (Tom Soulen).

**Redhead:** Peak at Horicon, 500 September 2-8 (Carter).

**Ring-necked Duck:** Peak at Horicon of 70, September 2-8 (Carter). This number is trifling compared to the thousands on the rivers and lakes of the state.

**Greater Scaup:** An increase was noted by Ed Paulson in Brown County. "More this fall than since I stopped hunting in 1933."

**Lesser Scaup:** Peak at Horicon, September 2 to October 13 of 200 (Carter). Peak at Racine Harbor of 1,900, November 21 (Bob and Louise Erickson).

**Common Goldeneye:** Tessen reports that four "summered" on the Fox River.

**Oldsquaw:** Pair at Neenah at north end of Lake Winnebago, November 25 (Tessen).

**White-winged Scoter:** November 8, small flock of 5 to 15 seen in Ozaukee County (Howard Ganther and Tom Soulen) and in Brown County, November 8 (Ed Paulson).

**Ruddy Duck:** Thirty at Horicon from October 21-27 (Carter). Noted on October 27 at Kenosha (Bob and Louise Erickson) and in Dane County, November 8 (Tom Ashman).

**Red-breasted Merganser:** Seen November 30, Dane County (Tom Ashman).

**Goshawk:** Large numbers. At Duluth and Superior over 100 were reported during the season with 39 in one day (Janet Green). Date not given. At Cedar Grove 17 were seen on November 22. The flight began on October 9 and lasted through December 9. One was reported November 29 in Racine (Van Jarchow) and in Green Bay (Ed Paulson).

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** Exceptional numbers of this species. A peak of 361 was seen at Cedar Grove on October 17.

**Red-tailed Hawk:** Peaks of 53 on September 17, and 64 on October 16 at Cedar Grove. Contrast this with a peak of 104 in 1961 on November 5 and a peak of 563 on November 5, 1960 at the same place.

**Broad-winged Hawk:** 10,000 passed over Duluth-Superior on September 14 (Janet Green), while 5,564 passed over Cedar Grove on September 18 and 1,706 on September 19.

**Rough-legged Hawk:** Arrived September 7 at Cedar Grove (record early date) and September 9 at Marinette County (Lindberg) and Brown County (Ed Paulson).

**Golden Eagle:** Unusually widespread reports from Cedar Grove, Horicon, Crex Meadows, and Goose Pond, Columbia County. Three were present at Horicon from October 10 to mid-November. Three also noted at Cedar Grove on October 16—perhaps the same ones. Elizabeth Degner described an adult attacking ducks in Columbia County, October 20.

**Bald Eagle:** Here again widespread reports from Cedar Grove, Vilas County (F. D. Schaefer), Waukesha (E. Hoffman) and Bayfield County (Rita Masten). Also Menominee (Zimmerman), Burnett (N. R. Stone) and Forest counties (Richter).

**Marsh Hawk:** Peak migration October 16, Cedar Grove, 23 seen.

**Osprey:** Nine seen at Cedar Grove on September 18. Last one reported October 17, Cedar Grove.

**Peregrine Falcon:** Last one seen October 18 at Cedar Grove.

**Pigeon Hawk:** Last one October 9, Cedar Grove. Peak on October 16 of 22.

**Sparrow Hawk:** Peak of 32 at Cedar Grove, September 17-18.

**Spruce Grouse:** Pair seen in Nicolet National Forest on September 20 (Mary Donald). This is the first fall report to **The Passenger Pigeon** in a number of years.

**Sandhill Crane:** Departed from Burnett County (Stone) on November 18.

**Virginia Rail:** One seen on November 28, Milwaukee County (Elmer Strehlow) is an exceptional date.

**Yellow Rail:** One picked up at TV tower, Eau Claire (Kemper) on October 2.

**Coot:** Peak of 10,000 at Horicon, September 2 to October 6 (William Carter).

**Semipalmated Plover:** Arrived as early as July 20 in Racine County (Bill Weber). See summer field notes. Last seen October 19, Racine County (Ericksons) and October 14, Marinette (H. L. Lindberg).

**Golden Plover:** Reported in Marinette, Dane, Racine, Columbia, St. Croix and Douglas counties. The last was noted at Arlington on November 10 (N. Barger).

**Black-bellied Plover:** More numerous reports than most years. First report from Douglas County (Richard Bernard) on August 16. Last seen November 15, Sheboygan (Harold Koopman). Records from Marinette, Ozaukee, Dane, Milwaukee, Columbia and Bayfield counties.

**Ruddy Turnstone:** Last noted October 26, Racine County (Ericksons).

**Woodcock:** Al Bradford reports from Outagamie County, "Flight extremely disappointing. Cool weather in September pulled a lot of birds down early but even allowing for this the flight was very small." Remained in northern Wisconsin until November 4, Price County (Mrs. Spencer Doty).

**Spotted Sandpiper:** Last seen in Racine County on October 29 (Ericksons).

**Solitary Sandpiper:** Reported on October 7 at Milwaukee (Elmer Strehlow).

**Willt:** One report of this rare transient in Sheboygan in Sheboygan County (Harold Koopman) on September 3 and 9.

**Greater Yellowlegs:** Latest date, November 1, Dane County (Tom Soulen).

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** Not reported after October 21, Dane County (Tom Ashman). One report on October 20, Columbia County (Elizabeth Degner).

**Knot:** Arrived in Racine County, August 16 (Bill Weber). Reported also in Sheboygan and Milwaukee counties.

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** November 22, Racine County (Ed Prins-Bill Weber). This is a very late date.

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** Two on September 29, Outagamie County (D. Tessen).

**Baird's Sandpiper:** 200 seen on August 14 in Outagamie County (Tessen). Also noted in Door and Milwaukee counties. One in Douglas County, August 10 (Robbins).

**Least Sandpiper:** Last date, September 29, Marinette County (H. L. Lindberg).

**Dunlin:** Still present at end of season in Racine County (Ericksons). New late record.

**Dowitcher:** Non-specific reports from Columbia, Outagamie and Jefferson counties.

**Stilt Sandpiper:** One report for the season, August 25, Horicon (R. Lound). Not so scarce in recent years.

**Western Sandpiper:** One observed at Kaukauna, Outagamie County, August 18 (Tessen). Also seen at Wind Point, Racine County, September 2 (Strehlow) and at Horicon on August 25 (R. Lound).

**Marbled Godwit:** One carefully documented report from Dodge County, August 20 (Bielefeldt).

**Hudsonian Godwit:** One on October 28, Oconto County (Richter) is not only the latest fall record, but also only the second fall date in WSO files. See "By the Wayside."

**Sanderling:** Noted on October 13, Milwaukee (Strehlow) and on October 14 in Sheboygan (Ed Koopman).

**Red Phalarope:** October 25-28, Racine County (Ericksons, Weber, Prins).

**Northern Phalarope:** November 22, Wind Point, Racine County (Weber, Prins) is a record late date. Seen in Racine County from October 29 to November 18—three by Bob and Louise Erickson. Seen at Horicon on August 25 by Roy Lound and on September 30 by the Ericksons.

**Herring Gull:** Peak of 3,000 in Milwaukee, October 13 (Elmer Strehlow).

**Franklin's Gull:** Noted again in Pierce and St. Croix counties, September 20 to October 19, but the maximum count of 12 is well under that of the past two years (Robbins).

**Bonaparte's Gull:** Peak on October 13, Milwaukee (Strehlow).

**Caspian Tern:** Down in numbers in Outagamie County (Tessen). Ten seen at Hudson, September 5 (Robbins).

**Black Tern:** Last seen on October 3, Brown County (Paulson).

**Gull-billed Tern:** A bird on September 14 in Sheboygan County (Harold Koopman), if confirmed, would be a first Wisconsin sight record. See "By the Wayside."

**Mourning Dove:** Nestlings banded as late as August 27, Chippewa County (Kemper).

**Ringed Turtle Dove:** Again reported after nesting this season, on September 6 in Oconto (Richter).

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** Brown County, October 20 (Paulson) and October 24, Milwaukee County (Strehlow).

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** October 31, Vernon County (Viratine & Earl Weber) is a second late date.

**Hawk Owl:** The invasion that was to come later in the winter into northern Wisconsin was heralded by one observation at Superior on November 25 (R. Bernard). Interestingly, there were 35 observations in the vicinity of Duluth in 19 days (**Audubon Field Notes**).



BOREAL OWL TRAPPED AND Banded  
AT CEDAR GROVE.

PHOTO BY DAVID SEAL

**Boreal Owl:** One at Cedar Grove on November 3 (Helmut Mueller et al.).

**Short-eared Owl:** One in St. Croix County, November 12 (Robbins).

**Saw-whet Owl:** One at Superior, November 25 (R. Bernard). An influx at Cedar Grove from October 10 to November 12.

**Whip-poor-will:** Last one on October 10, Cedar Grove.

**Nighthawk:** Peak flight at Cedar Grove, August 30 and 31.

**Chimney Swift:** Peak flocks in Dane County, September 16 (Barger).

**Flicker:** One noted in Milwaukee on November 18 (Strehlow).

**Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker:** Two reports—one from Menominee County, October 7 (Jim Zimmerman) and one on August 21, Oneida County (Mr. & Mrs. W. D. Brown).

**Eastern Kingbird:** Peak of 100 in Marinette County on August 19 (Strehlow). Last dates, September 11, Chippewa County (Kemper), September 16, Lincoln County (Donald Hendrick), and September 17, Marinette County (H. Lindberg).

**Western Kingbird:** One on September 12, Columbia County (Alan Rusch). See "By the Wayside." One reported from Columbia County on August 31 (Mrs. R. B. Dryer). Locations about 13 miles apart. Same bird?

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** Last reported at Cedar Grove on September 28. Two killed at TV tower in Eau Claire, September 9 (Kemper).

**Trail's Flycatcher:** Last one was an injured bird which hit the TV tower in Eau Claire on October 3. Peak at Chippewa County was August 29 to September 1 (Kemper).

**Least Flycatcher:** Late dates, October 5, Eau Claire County (Kemper) and October 6 at Cedar Grove. Tom Ashman reports a Least Flycatcher coming to his feeder on November 13 and on December 2, Madison. Remarkable record date.

**Wood Pewee:** One in Lincoln County on October 16 (D. Hendrick) and one in Vernon County, October 25 (Earl & Viratine Weber) surpass old departure record of October 15, 1935.

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** Last seen September 16, Cedar Grove. Arrived August 17, St. Croix County (Robbins).

**Tree Swallow:** 2,000 seen at Horicon on October 21 (Strehlow).

**Barn Swallow:** Nestlings banded as late as August 20, Milton, Rock County (Melva Maxson).

**Cliff Swallow:** Recorded at Racine on October 11 (Bob & Louise Erickson). This is the latest record for Wisconsin.

**Purple Martin:** Last date, October 4, Brown County (Ed Paulson).

**Gray Jay:** Nineteen counted in Forest, Langlade and Oneida counties on October 15. One on October 26 in Outagamie County (Bradford) is the first one seen in that county since 1928.

**Raven:** One in Jackson County, September 24 (J. H. Zimmerman) is unusually far south.

**Black-capped Chickadee:** No flight at all this fall. Only three new birds banded and these became resident (Peggy Hickey), Dane County. Two new birds banded in Chippewa County against 37 in same period a year ago.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Described as numerous in Forest County (Mrs. Ronald Rill) on November 22.

**Brown Creeper:** A flight noted in Eau Claire County, October 2-7 (Kemper) when seven dead birds were picked up at TV tower.

**Winter Wren:** Late straggler in Marinette County on November 18 (H. Lindberg).

**Carolina Wren:** One singing on September 28, Vernon County (Margarette Morse).

**Mockingbird:** One seen on November 19 at Superior (Elizabeth Fisher).

**Catbird:** Last October 21, Cedar Grove. Record numbers at Chippewa Falls (Kemper).

**Brown Thrasher:** In contrast to the Catbird, numbers of this species were down slightly, Chippewa County (Kemper).

**Robin:** More plentiful this season than last in Iron County (Norman Pripps). In Chippewa County numbers slightly better than past two seasons but only half of what it was in 1959. Numbers up elsewhere. See "By the Wayside."

**Wood Thrush:** Last October 7, Chippewa County and October 14, Cedar Grove.

**Hermit Thrush:** One seen as late as November 23, Brown County (Paulson).

**Swainson's Thrush:** Last noted October 9, Sheboygan (Lindberg) and October 20 at Cedar Grove. One hundred twenty-five banded there on September 6 and 104 on September 7. Forty killed at TV tower in Eau Claire between evening of September 9 and morning of September 11 (Kemper).

**Gray-cheeked Thrush:** Last seen October 19, Cedar Grove.

**Veery:** Large numbers killed at TV tower, Eau Claire—36 on August 29-31 and 41 between September 9-11. Peak at Cedar Grove September 26.

**Eastern Bluebird:** Vernon County—"More than past several years, but did not see flocks of them as used to" (Margarette Morse). Iron County—"None in past two years" (Pripps). Mazomanie, Dane County—"More than I've seen for some years, 15 on October 9 (Tom Soulen). Waupaca—"Numerous in houses" (Mrs. F. Pederson). Waukesha—"Most promising" (Irma Chapman). Chippewa County—"Slight comeback" (Kemper).

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** Cedar Grove peak October 12 and 18, Dane County peak October 17 (Peggy Hickey).

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** Last seen November 16, Cedar Grove.

**Water Pipit:** Large flock on October 20 reported at Goose Pond, Columbia County (Elizabeth Degner).

**Bohemian Waxwing:** Marathon County, November 19 (Mrs. S. W. Doty). Only seasonal report.

**Cedar Waxwing:** Six hundred seen at Milwaukee on September 23 (E. Strehlow). Peak numbers seen on September 1, Waukesha (E. Hoffmann) and on October 24, Wau-paca (Florence Peterson) counties.

**Gray Shrike:** Arrived very early in Lincoln County, October 9 (D. Hendrick). Reports from Outagamie, Marinette and Oconto counties.

**Loggerhead Shrike:** Last report October 9, Brown County (Paulson).

**White-eyed Vireo:** Two were banded at Cedar Grove on August 27 and one on October 5 (Helmut Mueller et al.).

**Solitary Vireo:** Numbers down. Last October 7, Cedar Grove. Five killed at TV tower, Eau Claire on October 3 (Kemper).

**Red-eyed Vireo:** Last seen October 10, Cedar Grove and October 9, Dane County (Ashman). Peak September 9-11 in Eau Claire County with 462 killed and collected at TV tower (Kemper).

**Philadelphia Vireo:** Last October 14, Cedar Grove.

**Warbling Vireo:** One banded at Cedar Grove on November 14 is more than a month beyond any previous fall record (Helmuth Mueller et al.).

**Black-and-white Warbler:** Peak of 66 killed at TV tower, Eau Claire County on September 10 (Kemper). Last date, October 9, Dane County (Ashman).

**Golden-winged Warbler:** New record departure date, October 17 Cedar Grove (Mueller et al.).

**Tennessee Warbler:** Migration began as early as July 21 (Robbins). Many October records. Last is October 31, Dane County, where one was banded by Peggy Hickey. Peak dates at Cedar Grove, August 21 to September 13. Two hundred eighty-two killed at TV tower, Eau Claire County between September 9 and 11.

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** Late dates—October 6, Chippewa County, October 21, Cedar Grove and October 25, Outagamie County (Tessen). Unusually numerous this fall, St. Croix County (Robbins).

**Nashville Warbler:** Cedar Grove peak September 18, last date October 10. Dane County peak September 20 (Soulen), last date October 12 (Peggy Hickey). Chippewa County last date October 7 (Kemper). In Eau Claire County, 50 killed at TV tower on September 10 (Kemper).

**Parula Warbler:** One on October 3, Chippewa County (Kemper).

**Yellow Warbler:** Last October 2, Chippewa County, 33 killed at TV tower, Eau Claire County on September 11 (Kemper).

**Magnolia Warbler:** One on November 7, Cedar Grove is an exceptional date. At Appleton the last was seen October 4 (Tessen). In Dane County (Hickey) and Eau Claire County (Kemper) the latest was October 7. On October 3, 20 were killed at TV tower in Eau Claire (Kemper).

**Cape May Warbler:** Last and a record date, November 27, Outagamie County (Tessen). Came to feeder almost daily. It arrived in Burnett County on August 9 (Robbins).

**Myrtle Warbler:** Late date, November 23, Dane County (Tom Ashman). Last date November 30, St. Croix County (Robbins).

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** Last date, October 10, Cedar Grove.

**Blackburnian Warbler:** Last date in Eau Claire County was October 1. Fifty-nine killed at TV tower between September 9 and 11. Arrived in St. Croix County, August 12 (Robbins).

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** Last date in Eau Claire County, October 6. Peak of 147 killed at TV tower, Eau Claire County, between September 9 and 11 (Kemper).

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** Arrived Dane County, August 14 (Robbins). Racine County, October 19 (Bob and Louise Erickson) is a new fall departure record for Wisconsin. One hundred eight-one killed at TV tower in Eau Claire between September 9 and 11 (Kemper).

**Blackpoll Warbler:** Last date October 11, Outagamie County (Tessen).

**Pine Warbler:** Last date, Racine County, September 30 (Bob and Louise Erickson).

**Palm Warbler:** November 3, Vernon County (Webers) is an exceptional date.

**Ovenbird:** Racine County (Bill Weber) reports a sighting at Sandors Park on November 1, another state record. Numbers sharply down in Chippewa County from previous year. At Eau Claire tower, 113 killed between September 9 and 11 (Kemper).

**Northern Waterthrush:** Last at Cedar Grove, October 12.

**Louisiana Waterthrush:** Last noted September 19 in Oconomowoc (Peartree).

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** Two seen in Waukesha County, August 24 (J. Bielefeldt).

**Kentucky Warbler:** Seen September 3, Rock County (Mahlum, Grenn, Andrews) and on September 9 in Columbia County (Dryer).

**Connecticut Warbler:** Last report October 6, Cedar Grove. Sixty-seven killed at Eau Claire TV tower, September 9-11 (Kemper).

**Mourning Warbler:** Last September 20, Chippewa County (Kemper).

**Yellowthroat:** Last seen November 12, Cedar Grove. One of few species up in numbers in Chippewa County.

**Wilson's Warbler:** Peak September 11, Chippewa County.

**Canada Warbler:** Peak September 9-11, Eau Claire County (Kemper). Thirty-six died at Eau Claire TV tower.

**Redstart:** Last dates October 2, Cedar Grove and October 7, Eau Claire TV tower.

**Bobolink:** October 12, Rock County (Glenn and Andrews) is a late date.

**Orchard Oriole:** One in Rock County, August 28 (Melva Maxson).

**Baltimore Oriole:** Last seasonal reports were September 15, Outagamie County (Tessen) and one at a feeder near Antigo in early November (Mrs. Chas. McLean). Details lacking from this last report.

**Scarlet Tanager:** Last seen on October 6 at Cedar Grove. Waukesha County last date was October 7 (Bielefeldt), Chippewa County last date on October 3 with a peak on September 9-11. Numbers were up (Kemper).

**Indigo Bunting:** Last seen October 6 at Cedar Grove and October 7 in Eau Claire County (Kemper).

**Evening Grosbeak:** Far fewer reports than previous years. First seen October 7 and 8 in Menominee County (Zimmerman). Florence County reports one on November 17 by Richter and one on November 3 from Marinette County by Lindberg.

**Common Redpoll:** Rare this fall in Chippewa County. Present on October 22 in Brown County, November 15 in Iron County (Pripps) and Rock County November 24 (Maxson).

**Pine Siskin:** Common in eastern Wisconsin. No reports from the western part of the state this fall. Arrived November 7, Waukesha (Hoffman). On November 19 at Waupaca hundreds were reported as feeding on birch seeds (Mrs. Florence Peterson).

**Crossbills:** No reports this season except for eight White-winged counted in Lincoln County, November 25 (Rusch).

**Savannah Sparrow:** Peak reported on September 22 in Door County (Ericksons).

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** One seen on October 16 in Waukesha County (Peartree).

**Slate-colored Junco:** Earliest arrival for southern Wisconsin was August 24 at Waupaca (Mrs. F. Peterson). Numbers were down in Chippewa County. Banding data reveals lowest numbers in the past eight years.

**Tree Sparrow:** Arrived October 1 in Rock County (Glenn and Andrews).

**Chipping Sparrow:** Departed October 28, Marinette County (Lindberg).

**Field Sparrow:** Latest recorded was November 13 in Vernon County (Webers).

**Harris' Sparrow:** More reports than usual. One seen on October 27 in Outagamie County was the first for a number of years in that area (Bradford). Reported also in Marinette, Oconomowoc, Waukesha, Rock and Chippewa counties. On October 5, 18 were seen St. Croix County (Robbins).

**White-throated Sparrow:** One on September 6 in Chippewa County was a record early date for this area (Kemper).



# FALL & WINTER OWL SURVEY

WSO Research Committee

	Owls You Have Seen In Your Area In the Past.	How Many Owls Seen This Fall and Winter?
*Barn Owl		
*Great Gray Owl		
Red phase Screech Owl		
Gray phase Screech Owl		
Phase not noted Screech Owl		
Snowy Owl		
*Hawk Owl		
*Burrowing Owl		
Long-eared Owl		
Short-eared Owl		
Boreal Owl		
Saw-whet Owl		

Additional comments: (Use back of page or extra sheet.)

This report covers the following locality: County .....

City ..... or Township .....

Name .....  
(Print or type)                      Mail address                      Date

\*Please send a card immediately to Fred and Fran Hamerstrom to make banding possible.

Return this questionnaire to:  
Fred and Fran Hamerstrom  
Plainfield, Wis.



**White-crowned Sparrow:** First arrival report for southern Wisconsin was September 14 (Mrs. E. Hoffman) in Waukesha County. Numerous widespread reports. Last date was at Waupaca (Peterson) on November 10.

**Fox Sparrow:** Arrived September 20, Chippewa County. Numbers down from peak year, 1960 (Kemper).

**Lincoln's Sparrow:** Most banded for any fall since 1958-62 in Chippewa County. Peak date September 20 (Kemper).

**Swamp Sparrow:** Peak September 23 to 25, Chippewa County (Kemper).

**Lapland Longspur:** Arrived September 29, Marinette County (Lindberg).

**Snow Bunting:** Reports from Oconto, Iron and Dane counties.



## NEWS...

**Paintings of Mark Catesby**, an unheralded 18th century botanist and engraver, are touring Wisconsin this fall. A group of about 20 prints, chiefly North American birds, will migrate throughout the state from the Milwaukee Art Center. They will be shown at small galleries, museums, schools and industries.

Mark Catesby, a roving, observant, self-styled British naturalist, painted American birds 100 years before John James Audubon. His paintings were published in a two-volume tome entitled, **The Natural History of Carolina, Florida and the Bahama Islands, 1731-1743**.

Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Polacheck, Milwaukee, are avid Catesby collectors. They have 65 prints in their private collection, and have donated four of them and sold others to the Milwaukee Art Center. Mr. Polacheck is chairman of WSO's endowments and advertising committee.

The Milwaukee Art Center plans to have other art collections tour the state in the future.

**Have you ever wondered** if there are other WSO members living near you and who they are? If you'd like to know, it's easy to find out. Mrs. LeRoy Mattern, WSO membership committee chairman, has compiled lists by cities so you may know and get better acquainted with nearby members. If you'd like the list for your city, drop her a card at 404 Fern Lane, Wausau, and ask her for your home town list.

**You will be interested** in a new publication of the Wisconsin Conservation Department called "Welcome to Sandhill." It is a guide to the famous Sandhill Wildlife Area near Babcock, formerly owned by Wallace Grange and acquired by the

department in 1962 as a wildlife demonstration area.

Winding through the many-thousand acre area is The Trumpeter Trail, named after the loud, trumpet-like call of the Sandhill Crane. The trail is a self-guiding drive that is open to the public. A number of stops (and many more are planned for the future) explain the many facets of nature and wildlife management.

Group tours of the area may be arranged at any time of the year, weather and road conditions permitting. For arrangements or information contact Oswald Mattson, Manager, Sandhill Wildlife Area, Babcock, or B. W. Hubbard, District Game Manager, Babcock.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Degner**, Fort Atkinson, a WSO member for many years and a regular field note contributor, died of a heart attack in early September.

**The Silver Acorn Award** for outstanding service to conservation was given to Owen J. Gromme, artist-author of the recently published book, **Birds of Wisconsin**. The award was presented to Mr. Gromme by the Citizens Natural Resources Association on October 5, 1963.



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