



LIBRARIES

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

The passenger pigeon. Vol. III, No. 6 June 1941

Madison, Wis.: Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, June 1941

<https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/E7VMCRO5KPRJT9A>

<http://rightsstatements.org/vocab/InC/1.0/>

The libraries provide public access to a wide range of material, including online exhibits, digitized collections, archival finding aids, our catalog, online articles, and a growing range of materials in many media.

When possible, we provide rights information in catalog records, finding aids, and other metadata that accompanies collections or items. However, it is always the user's obligation to evaluate copyright and rights issues in light of their own use.

The Passenger Pigeon

TO ENCOURAGE STUDY OF WISCONSIN BIRDS

Bulletin of the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology

Vol. III

June 1941

No. 6

WISCONSIN BIRD BANDING FOR 1940

BY HAROLD C. WILSON, EPHRAIM, WIS.

Editor, Bird Banding Department

Of the 46 annual bird banding reports sent to the Wisconsin Conservation Commission, 10 showed no banding had been done the past year. The 36 active cooperators tagged 748 game birds and 8365 non-game birds representing a total of 148 species.

The banders listed by locality within the state are:

Locality & Banders	No. banded
CLEARWATER LAKE Charles R. O'Brien	6
EPHRAIM Arthur Gorski* Harold C. Wilson	2156
HAYWARD Karl W. Kahmann	69
MADISON Leon J. Cole* Walter E. Scott Theodore M. Sperry George Wagner F. R. Zimmerman *	7 434 267
MEDFORD George R. Ruesch	36
MERRILL Lewis W. Klitzke	23
MILTON Melva T. Maxson	283
MILWAUKEE Dorothy I. Barnett Eugene C. Bosl Warren P. Dettmann* Murl Deusing Wm. I. Du Mez Mr. and Mrs. O. J. Gromme Lawrence A. Hautz* Mrs. Fred Hook Mrs. C. S. Jung Earl L. Loyster Irving J. Perkins* Hermann W. Schaars Richard Schwartz Mrs. R. Frank Thomas Samuel A. Thorn Alvin L. Throne	162 129 60 33 456 65 230 262 16 18 15 233 50
NECEDAH Burns T. Carter and Robley W. Hunt Mr. and Mrs. F. N. Hamerstrom	276 233
OCONOMOWOC Edward W. Peartree	65

PLATTEVILLE		
	Carmen A. J. Beining	413
RACINE		
	B. L. Von Jarchow	133
	Edward Prins	109
RHINELANDER		
	Deane W. Mather*	
RIPON		
	A. E. Steinbring	91
VIROQUA		
	Margarette E. Morse	13
WAUKESHA		
	Robert Adams	22
	Vernon C. Rossman	2009
WAUWATOSA		
	Paul Wm. Hoffmann	489
WEST ALLIS		
	Norbert A. Meyers	37
WESTFIELD		
	Agnes E. Russell	43
	Frederick E. Ludwig, Port Huron, Mich., did no banding in Wisconsin in '40.	
	Total	9113
	* Not active in 1940.	

About one-half of the banders are located within the Milwaukee area including Wauwatosa and West Allis, although not all birds they reported were banded in those cities. Mr. and Mrs. Gromme, for example, banded over 400 birds in Sheboygan County.

The following shows the number of each species banded: Common Loon, 1; Pied-billed Grebe, 4; Great Blue Heron, 6; Baldpate, 89; Black Duck, 8; Mallard, 120; Pintail, 24; Wood Duck, 111; Blue-winged Teal, 146; Green-winged Teal, 3; Am. Golden-eye, 1; Red Head, 1;

Turkey Vulture, 1; Cooper's Hawk, 58; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 119; Goshawk, 1; Rough Legged Hawk, 2; Broad-winged Hawk, 1; Red-shouldered Hawk, 5; Red-tailed Hawk, 27; Marsh Hawk, 146; Duck Hawk, 7; Pigeon Hawk, 16; Sparrow Hawk, 8;

Greater Prairie Chicken, 134; Prairie Chicken X Sharp-tail, 1; Prairie Sharp-tailed Grouse, 45; Ring-necked Pheasant, 59; Sora Rail, 2; Virginia Rail, 1; Am. Coot, 10; Killdeer, 3; Ruddy Turnstone, 2; Woodcock, 2; Upland Plover, 1; Spotted Sandpiper, 7; Knot, 2; Semipalmated Sandpiper, 26; Sanderling, 12;

Herring Gull, 1997; Black Tern, 4; Common Tern, 3; Mourning Dove, 21; Yellow-billed Cuckoo, 1; Gt. Horned Owl, 2; Short-eared Owl, 2; Screech Owl, 6; Nighthawk, 2; Chimney Swift, 6; Y. B. Sapsucker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 26; Hairy Woodpecker, 3; Red-headed Woodpecker, 13; Flicker, 28; Kingbird, 14; Phoebe, 8; Bank Swallow, 262; Barn Swallow, 79; Cliff Swallow, 15; Rough-winged Swallow, 6; Tree Swallow, 4; Purple Martin, 7.

Blue Jay, 262; Crow, 43; B. C. Chickadee, 72; Wh. Br. Nuthatch, 34; Brown Creeper, 5; House Wren, 45; Short-billed Marsh Wren, 1; Long-billed Marsh Wren, 5; Winter Wren, 3; Catbird, 144; Brown Thrasher, 75; Grey-cheeked Thrush, 15; Hermit Thrush, 20; Olive-backed Thrush, 29; Veery or Willow Thrush, 10; Wood Thrush, 9; Bluebird, 7; Robin, 252;

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 1; Cedar Waxwing, 23; Northern Shrike, 2; Starling, 309; Blue-headed Vireo, 1; Red-eyed Vireo, 3;

Warblers: Bay-breasted, 6; Black and White, 3; Blackburnian, 4; Black-poll, 1; Black-throated Green, 6; Canada, 3; Cape May, 6; Chestnut-sided, 13; Magnolia, 34; Mourning, 2; Mvrtle, 3; Nashville, 7; Palm, 1; Parula, 1; Tennessee, 7; Wilson's, 2; Yellow, 3; Ovenbird, 57; Redstart, 17; Northern Water Thrush, 2; No. Yellow Throat, 2;

English Sparrow, 5; Bobolink, 1; Meadowlark, 12; Giant Red-winged Blackbird, 34; Red-winged Blackbird, 109; Baltimore Oriole, 43; Bronzed Grackle, 248; Cowbird, 35; Scarlet Tanager, 6; Cardinal, 22; Pine Grosbeak, 1; Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 17; Indigo Bunting, 5; Purpie Finch, 1; Goldfinch, 7; Towhee, 92.

Sparrows: Chipping, 19; Clay-colored, 6; Field, 16; Fox, 176; Grasshopper, 3; Gambel's, 4; Harris, 7; Leconte's, 3; Lincoln's, 49; Song, 125; Swamp, 36; Tree, 93; Vesper, 1; White-crowned, 38; White-throated, 1416; Junco, 1163; Miss. Song, 30. Total 9113.

The average number of birds banded by each person was 254, of which only 8 had more than that number. Rossman banded 70 species, a number of which were the only ones of their kind banded in the state. Sperry followed with 39 species to his credit. The bulk of Wilson's birds were Herring Gulls (1974). Kahmann banded the only Loon, while Scott banded 7 of the 10 Coots. Sperry banded 50 of the pheasants.

Ruesch headed his list with the only 6 Great Blue Herons tagged. Melva Maxson and Dorothy Barnett banded the only Grasshopper Sparrows last year, the latter also trapping 1 Gambel's Sparrow. Dr. Von Jarchow caught the only Turkey Vulture last year. The Grommes banded 11 species of hawks totalling over 350 birds. Mrs. Jung banded the only 2 Wilson's Warblers. Burns, Carter, and Loyster reported the greatest number of ducks and shore birds. Thorn reported banding the only 2 Night Hawks, and Thorne two Northern Yellow-throats of the 3, Adams securing 1.

Hamerstroms and Deusing each secured a Great Horned Owl and all of the Prairie Chickens were captured by the Hamerstroms. Beining banded the greatest number of Starlings, 139. Prins banded more Downys than any other person and also two of the 3 Hairy Wood-neckers. Steinbring trapped the only 3 Leconte Sparrows in 1940. Hoffmann banded the 5 Long-billed Marsh Wrens.

In case anyone receiving this report did bird banding work in Wisconsin last year under their federal permit but are not mentioned in this listing, it is called to their attention that a state permit and reports are also required and that this summary is made from such reports filed at the end of each year when all state bird banding permits are renewed.

MAY FIELD NOTES

BY N. R. BARGER, EDITOR

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

Migration in May brought many early arrivals, few big waves, but many rarities.

Eared Grebe In Dane County

On May 3, Schorger identified an Eared Grebe in Dane County. He was kind enough to show it to some of the other Madison observers the following day. There are no recent state records for this species, although in early days it was recorded very rarely. The Double-crested Cormorant lingered in Green Lake County until May 30 (Robbins). Zimmerman came across a Great Blue Heron at Hope Lake with a steel trap on one leg; evidently a muskrat trap. Frank Schaeffer saw a Great Blue Heron in Washington County alighting on the water in the same manner as would a duck. Seven American Egrets, flying in a "V", were observed by Jones in Waukesha, May 16. Jung saw a little Blue Heron on the Milwaukee River, June 10.

Yellow-Crowned Night Heron In Milwaukee

Gromme checked a live specimen of this species in Milwaukee, during May. We do not have the date or the name of the original observer. Certainly a spectacular record—we believe the first for the

state. The Least Bittern arrived early in Dane County, May 8 (Robbins). Six Whistling Swans lingered in Door County until May 15 (Kendall).

Brant On Green Bay

Paulson, who has been working with water-fowl consistently for seventeen years, sends a note of a small flock of Common Brant in Green Bay, May 1. There are but few records of this species for the state, since it is a salt-water variety. A flock of about sixty Snow Geese were seen in Wisconsin Rapids, May 9, by Searls. A few Blue Geese were in the flock. Paulson observed eight Snow Geese in Green Bay, May 21. Large flocks of Lesser Scaup lingered into June at Manitowoc (King). Strehlow mentions six White-winged Scoters in Green Bay, May 4. A Hooded Merganser was out with her brood, May 21 near Babcock (Grange). Robbins found ten Red-breasted Mergansers at Green Lake, May 31. Zimmerman also noted two, May 29, in Dane County.

More Turkey Vulture Records

Turkey Vultures were found as follows: Two in Richland County, May 17 (Barger); this may have been a pair as they were flying together. One near Babcock, May 15 (Grange). Still more northerly is a pair inusk County, May 23, by Feeney. Strehlow records a Goshawk as late as May 18 for Green Bay. Sharp-shinned Hawks were nesting, May 23 in Rusk County (Feeney). Pigeon Hawks were seen in several places: Oshkosh, May 16 (Evans); Eau Claire County, May 9 (Feeney); Green Bay, May 18 (Holterman); and in Dane County, May 11 (Robbins). The Sparrow Hawks have not been a menace to other birds in Gatterdam's yard. He states that his little place attracted two pairs of Robins to nest; two pairs of Chipping Sparrows; pair of Wrens; pair of Bluebirds; pair of Flickers; pair of Starlings; pair of Erown Thrashers; fifteen pairs of Martins in addition to the pair of Sparrow Hawks. Five years ago the spot had neither trees nor shrubs on it—something to try!

Sandhill Cranes were found in three counties: Three in Sawyer County, May 5 (Ruegger)—first in his thirty-five years of field work in that part; two pairs nesting in Wood County, May 18 (Searls); and a nest with eggs reported in Jackson County, May 6 (Fairfield). Twelve Yellow Rails were counted by Hammerstrom and Walkinshaw in Adams County, May 7.

Two Piping Plovers were noted in Manitowoc, May 25 by King. No other observers have mentioned this species this year. A Killdeer nest containing four eggs was found by Mueller in Milwaukee May 5. These hatched May 27—first egg at seven A. M.; the second followed before noon; the third hatched between two and four; and the fourth hatched that night. Golden Plovers came through Oshkosh, May 14 (Evans), the first in seven years as far as he could determine. The Fuddy Turnstones of May 18 in Oshkosh are the only ones noted in the state from our reports this season. Dahlberg records Upland Plovers in the vicinity of Frederic, Burnett County, in May. Solitary Sandpipers reached Hayward by May 4 (Kahmann).

Western Willet Observed

Three Western Willets were observed by Strehlow in Green Bay May 18. A flock of ten White-rumped Sandpipers were in Dane County, May 29 (Zimmerman). Least Sandpipers had reached Oshkosh by May 3 (Evans). Fifty Red-backed Sandpipers were counted by Robbins in one pond in Dane County, May 24—probably about the height of their migration. Mr. and Mrs. Philip of Waukesha made a sight record of a Hudsonian Godwit, May 9, near Madison, and requested others to go out and check it. No one else located it. While quite a possible record, Godwits are extremely casual here. King noted several Sanderlings in Manitowoc, May 25—the only records received of this uncommon species. Mueller counted about thirty pairs of Wilson Phalaropes in Ozaukee County, May 25.

The Forster's Tern occurred in Dane County, May 24 (Robbins); and several times, in May, at Green Bay (Strehlow). Caspian Terns

were noted at Manitowoc, May 25 (King); and in Green Bay, May 18 (Kendall).

The Yellow-billed Cuckoo arrived in Hayward, May 10 (Kahmann). A nest of this species contained three eggs, with the brooding bird May 18, in Grant County (Barger). The Black-billed Cuckoo also was early, arriving in Dane County, May 5 (Robbins).

Juvenile Great Horned Owls were seen flying about in Vilas County, May 23 (Jung). Birds of this stage were found near Babcock, from May 9-11 (Grange).

The Nighthawk arrived on time, May 6, in Oshkosh (Evans). The earliest Hummingbird was May 18, in Green Bay (Strehlow). An albino Flicker occurred again in Appleton (Mrs. Rogers). Newly-hatched Flickers were found by Grange, May 24, near Babcock.

Flycatchers as follows: Kingbird, Hayward, May 4 (Kahmann). Phoebe feeding four young beginning to fledge, May 24, near Babcock (Grange). The Cliff Swallow arrived May 9, in Hayward (Kahmann). A nest of three young Blue Jays was found, May 25 by Mathiak near Babcock. Crows had young in the nest in Bayfield County, May 6 (Feeney). The Brown Creeper lingered in Green Bay until May 16 (Strehlow).

Mockingbird Again In Milwaukee

Adams of Milwaukee reports that a Mockingbird has been heard singing at night in three different places in eastern Milwaukee. Will it nest? A Catbird's nest contained two eggs, May 24, near Babcock (Mathiak). The same observer found three eggs in a Brown Thrasher's nest May 19; and three eggs in the nest of the Bluebird, May 12. Young Starlings able to chatter were in the nest, May 15, in Dane County (Barger).

Bell's Vireo In Grant County

A single specimen of this variety was observed by Robbins and Barger in Grant County, May 18. The Philadelphia Vireo was mentioned as follows: Oshkosh, May 2 (Evans); Green Bay, May 9 (Mrs. Hussong); and in Madison, May 6 (Robbins).

Worm-Eating Warbler At Two Places

The Worm-eating Warbler, a straggler in the state, was found in Green Bay, May 7 by Mrs. Hussong. Not quite so unusual was the sight record in Grant County, May 18 by Barger and Robbins. A great aid in finding this species is its song—similar to that of the Chipping Sparrow but heard in shady woods.

Warblers reached their peak as follows: Golden-winged Warbler, May 9; Tennessee Warbler, May 10; Nashville, May 5; Magnolia, May 15; Cape May, May 6; Black-throated Green, May 5; Blackburnian, May 9; Chestnut-sided, May 15; Bay-breasted, May 10; Northern Water-thrush, May 9. This schedule was worked out for Dane County by Robbins. Poe, of Milwaukee, found a nest of the Nashville Warbler, containing two Cowbirds eggs, at Spruce Lake. Not common in Milwaukee is the Cerulean Warbler, found May 11 by Mueller and others.

Kirtland Warbler Reported

Mrs. Rogers and another observer recorded this species in Appleton, during the warbler wave. She feels confident of the record, in spite of the fact that this warbler is probably the rarest of our warblers. The Kentucky Warbler, often sought by Wisconsin observers, is very abundant along the Mississippi. Many were seen in Grant County, May 18 by Robbins and Barger. The Connecticut Warbler arrived May 18 in Green Bay (Strehlow). The only record that has come to our attention of the Chat, this year, is that of S. P. Jones, for Dane County, May 18.

Yellow-headed Blackbirds: Wood County, May 10 (Mathiak); Jefferson County, May 19 (Zimmerman); Sheboygan County, May 10 (Kin^o); and in Green Bay, May 18 (Strehlow). But few Orchard Orioles have been seen: Dane County, May 18 (S. P. Jones); Green Bay, May 14 and 18 (Strehlow); and Milwaukee, May 16 (Mueller). Brewer's Blackbird: Hayward, May 11 (Kahmann) and a nest in Wood

County, May 10 (Mathiak). A Bronzed Grackle was nest-building, May 3 in Wood County (Allen). Cardinals were feeding young in Milwaukee, May 4 (Mrs. Jackson).

Blue Grosbeak In Green Bay

Six members of the Green Bay Bird Club claim this record. It was made on May 4. The Dickcissels apparently arrived in numbers, May 18, in southern Wisconsin. They were seen from several sections on this date where none were noted the day previous. Jung located a nest of the Purple Finch in Vilas County, May 24.

Red Crossbill In Wood County

A Red Crossbill was found dead near Babcock, May 13 by Allen. This is a very interesting record of an erratic species. Mathiak located the nest of a Towhee, May 19, containing one egg. Several Leconte's Sparrows are mentioned May 18 for Green Bay. Evans records the Clay-colored Sparrow in Oshkosh, May 2; and Strehlow one, May 13 in Green Bay. Harris's Sparrow occurred May 5, in Ixonia (Rupnow) and in Juneau County, May 9 (Grange). Juvenile Song Sparrows were observed by Jung in Vilas County, May 25. Lapland Longspurs remained until May 17 in Oshkosh (Evans).

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETS AT OSHKOSH

The Executive Committee of The Wisconsin Society of Ornithology met at the home of J. Harwood Evans in Oshkosh on June 17 to act on several important items of business. Those present included Mrs. Hussong, Mrs. Rogers, and Messrs. Duesing, Scott, Evans, Gromme and Barger.

The committee again voted to continue publication of The Passenger Pigeon monthly and felt it advisable to continue this procedure rather than publish a bi-monthly or quarterly bulletin. The treasurer's report, however, showed that a number of members were in arrears for their dues and action is to be taken to secure renewals or to drop them from the mailing list.

The University of Wisconsin library was selected to be the future home of the library of the Society which already contains a number of books and many copies of other ornithological bulletins secured through exchange with other societies. Members are urged to send their duplicate copies of any books or papers on birds to the editor for placement in our library. The University Library will bind all material received and send any desired publications to any members of the Society on a loan service. More details on this matter will be published later.

President Duesing was authorized to appoint a special committee to study the advisability of affiliation of the Society with the Wisconsin Ornithological Club. They are to report at the next annual meeting when action will be taken on this matter.

Owen Gromme reported for the Passenger Pigeon Monument Committee that they had secured an offer from the Loeffelholz Company's brass foundry in Milwaukee to mould a life-size model of the Passenger Pigeon (to be made by Gromme) and also prepare the bronze marker free of charge to the Society. With this excellent offer the committee is proceeding rapidly to secure drawings of a possible monument from Phil Sanders in Kenosha and also to secure details on building materials for the monument. The Executive Committee endorsed and congratulated the committee for their fine work and also recommended that they proceed with their plan to attempt to secure permission to erect this monument on the grounds of the State Capitol in Madison when further details had been worked out. At a later date members of the Society will be given an opportunity to contribute small donations to the fund for erecting this monument to the Passenger Pigeon—commemorating the largest nesting grounds once located in this state and also the last bird killed at Babcock, Wood County, over 40 years ago.

NEWS NOTES AND BY THE WAYSIDE

Of two pair of Spruce Grouse captured by Feeney and Scott for the Conservation Department in Forest County on March 21, one male and two females were still alive and well at the State Game Farm at Foynette on July 17, almost four months later. Special credit should be given to Bert Barger of the game farm for keeping these birds alive, and for the fact that the hens laid 14 eggs of which 6 hatched. He was able to keep the chicks alive for a number of days with the oldest getting 16 days. He expects more success on this venture in the future.

Lloyd W. Hein of Madison found a brood of young downey Jack-snipe in the city limits of Madison on May 22 and actually caught three by hand while the old bird within feet did not feign.

Kirkpatrick at Purdue University had a banded Marsh Hawk brought to him on June 25 which proved to have been banded by Owen Gromme at Cedar Grove, Wis., on October 15, 1940. The bird had been captured in a steel trap near Lafayette, Indiana.

Grange reports an Acadian Owl captured by a farmer in the Town of Remington, Wood County, on March 25 and released three weeks later. He also reports 5 Whistling Swan at Cranmoor, Wood County on April 5.

Kuegger of Radisson, Sawyer County records a Snowy Owl there on January 4 and 6 Whistling Swans on Sand Lake, Sawyer County on April 14. Dahlberg also reported 6 Whistling Swans northwest of Drummond, Bayfield County on April 9.

Of 18 Willow Ptarmigan banded and stocked by the Wisconsin Conservation Department in Wood County during this past winter, four were reported to have moved over 100 miles northward after the spring breakup according to word received from people who recaptured the birds and observed the band numbers. A bird recaptured by a farmer, Henry Baldwin, of Benoit, Bayfield County, on April 28, almost got to the shores of Lake Superior. Robert Jakoubek of Phillips found two of the birds in a farmer's yard near Minocqua Lake, Vilas County, on May 14. He believed them to be a pair of birds as they were already partly in summer plumage. They were feeding with the farmer's chickens and he thought that he observed them eat some bran. They were so tame he was able to get close enough to see the bands, while the farmer at Benoit was actually able to capture the bird he found and record the band number. Another bird was reported seen at Phillips, Price County, but no further data is available.

President Murl Deusing announces that the Passenger Pigeon Monument Committee appointed by him consists of the following members: Owen Gromme, Chairman, Clarence Jung and Elizabeth Oehlenschlager. This committee reported on their activities at the Executive Committee meeting in Oshkosh on June 17.

A new leaflet prepared by the Fish and Wildfire Service, Washington, D. C., entitled "Aids for Bird Study" is available free of charge to those interested. Simply ask for Wildlife Leaflet No. 180. It is largely a detailed bibliography of papers and books and how to secure them.

A. W. Schorger's recent article in the Wilson Bulletin, entitled "The Crow and Raven in Early Wisconsin" should be of interest to all members, and will be furnished to them in the near future in the form of a reprint through the courtesy of Mr. Schorger.

Owen Gromme has another field party studying birds in northwestern Wisconsin this summer but details as to the members of the party are not available at this writing.

Both Elder and Hochbaum are working at the Delta Duck Station in Manitoba this summer and they were recently visited by Professor Aldo Leopold who is supervising their work there.

The University of Wisconsin is conducting a field course in ornithology this summer under the direction of Phillip Wright. This is the beginning of a long-needed schedule in this field (we hope).

CORRECTION OF ADDRESS—

Kinzel, Carl
1805 No. 17th St.,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Hart, Kathryn
817 Prospect Place
Madison, Wisconsin

Thompson, Daniel
521 E. Mifflin St.,
Madison, Wisconsin

Peterson, Mrs. Charles E.
Madison, Minnesota

CHANGE OF ADDRESS—

Oldenburg, William R.
3284 No. 15th St.,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Allen, Donald G.
Ranger Station
Babcock, Wisconsin

Kjolseth, Karine
715 E. Main St.,
Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Bruegger, Harry W.
Box 617
Oshkosh, Wisconsin

Mattson, Oswald
Black River Falls, Wisconsin

Speirs, Mrs. Doris H.
11 Mossom Place
Toronto, Ontario,
Canada

Larratt, Avis
Hartland, Wisconsin

Sowls, Lyle
Illinois Natural History Survey
Urbana, Illinois

NEW MEMBERS—

✓ Curran, George A.
1107 Sherman Ave.,
Madison, Wisconsin

✓ Snyder, Leonard W.
700 Algoma Blvd.,
Oshkosh, Wisconsin

Eraman, C. H.
Box 147
Waupaca, Wisconsin

✓ Stearns, Forest
Dept. of Botany
Univ. of Wis.,
Madison, Wisconsin

✓ Roasch, Gilbert O.
Milwaukee Public Museum
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

✓ Sylvester, Walter R.
2414 No. 41st St.,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

✓ Williamson, M. J.
Mercer, Wisconsin

✓ Erown, Enid
444 Hawthorne Court
Madison, Wisconsin

Gregg, Clifford C., Director
Field Museum of Natural Hist.
Chicago, Illinois

✓ Weiss, A. H.
743 So. 26th St.,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin



A number of members are in arrears for dues owed to the Society. It is suggested that all members investigate their status as this bulletin will be sent only paid-up members in the future.

Editor: (Office of Publication) W. E. Scott, Conservation Department, State Office Building, Madison, Wisconsin.

Assistant Editor: F. R. Zimmerman, Conservation Department, State Office Building, Madison, Wisconsin.

Treasurer: J. Harwood Evans, 517 Jackson Drive, Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

Field Note Dept. Editor: N. R. Barger, 132 Lathrop St., Madison, Wis.

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

Membership fee of \$1.00 includes 75 cents for subscription to THE PASSENGER PIGEON, monthly bulletin of the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology.

Send membership applications and dues to the treasurer.

Send manuscripts to the editor, field notes to the field note department editor, and banding data to the bird banders' department editor.

Entered as second-class matter Sept. 4, 1940, at the Post Office at Madison, Wis., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Affiliated with the Wisconsin Conservation League.

Reprinted from THE WILSON BULLETIN, vol. 53, No. 2, June, 1941, pp. 103-6

THE CROW AND THE RAVEN IN EARLY WISCONSIN

BY A. W. SCHORGER

THE early writers on Wisconsin birds state that the Crow† was a comparatively rare bird while the Raven‡ was common. Settlement of the state produced a complete reversal, the Crow becoming very abundant and the Raven disappearing from the southern portion. While it is true that the Crow is seldom mentioned in the early accounts, this statement applies with almost equal force to the Raven. Both species have received only casual mention and the earliest records are easily overlooked.

Errors occur in the translations of the *Jesuit Relations* and other early French writings where *corbeau* appears indiscriminately as either Raven or Crow. In every case examined the French is *corbeau*. This criticism applies also to place names, such as Crow Wing River (*Aîle de Corbeau*). The only instance noted where Crow (*corneille*) was properly applied is mentioned by Schoolcraft¹ who was in Minnesota in 1820. A small stream called *Cornelle* by the French flows into the Mississippi between Saint Anthony Falls and Crow Wing River.

The Crow was long known to the northern Indians. Schoolcraft mentions that the Chippewa name is *andaig*. W. W. Cooke², who spent three years among the Chippewas at White Earth, Minnesota, states that the Raven is called *ka-gog-i'* and the Crow *an-deg'*, meaning those that migrate, in contradistinction to the Raven which is a permanent resident. Schoolcraft³, in spite of his vigilance, is inconsistent. He makes the interesting observation that the Magpie occurs at Lac du Flambeau, Wisconsin, and translates the Chippewa name, *wabish kagagee*, as White Crow.

Perhaps the first mention of the Raven in Wisconsin is made by Perrot⁴. He visited the Mascoutin Indians at the site of modern Berlin, Wisconsin, in 1666, and relates that at a feast some Indians had the skins of Ravens with their feathers (*peaux de Corbeaux avec leur plumage*) attached to their girdles. Hennepin⁵, while coasting along the Wisconsin shore of Lake Michigan in October 1679, found a deer upon which Ravens and eagles were feeding. In keeping with tradition, the Raven is mentioned in connection with disaster. Marin⁶ in a letter dated May 11, 1730, describes his attack on the Fox Indians in their fort on Lake Winnebago. After the fifth day of battle, Ravens were seen to alight in the fort from which it was concluded that the enemy had departed. Rev. Cutting Marsh⁷ recorded in his journal on September 18, 1834, that one of the Stockbridge Indians had found at South Kaukauna a dead body marred beyond recognition by Ravens.

† *Corvus brachyrhynchos*.

‡ *Corvus corax*.

The Crow is not mentioned until well into the nineteenth century. The evidence for its presence and abundance is conflicting over a period of many years. This may be due to erratic distribution or to faulty observation. As late as 1905 Sayre⁸ wrote: "Forty years ago one never saw a crow in Wisconsin, and yet within but a year the supervisors of Rock County passed an ordinance to pay ten cents for each crow killed." Nevertheless, the Crow did occur throughout Wisconsin before the agriculture of the whites.

The Crow, according to Richardson and Swainson⁹, ranged to the fifty-fifth parallel of latitude as early as 1831. Schoolcraft¹⁰ found both the "Crow (*Corvus corone L.*)" and "Raven (*Corvus corax L.*)" in Minnesota in 1820. McKenney¹⁴ was on Madeline Island, Wisconsin, in late July, 1826, and wrote: "Tame crows appear common in this part of the world. I notice four here that fly after the family as if they were part of it and had never been wild." Crows were not confused with Ravens, for he mentions having seen the latter at the mouth of the Montreal River.

In 1823, Keating's²¹ party* travelled overland from Chicago to Prairie du Chien. "The Crow (*C. corone*)" was not encountered until the Wisconsin River was reached. This was the first heavily wooded area encountered, the significance of which will appear later. Mrs. Roseline Peck¹³, the first white woman to settle at Madison, mentions that in July 1837, some of her guests "shot my two little pet crows." This act is to be commended highly, as it is improbable otherwise that these Crows would have become historic. McLeod¹⁴ travelled through southern Wisconsin in the '40s and among the birds of the region mentions both the Crow and the Raven.

The contribution of Moses Barrett¹⁵ is particularly interesting, with respect to distribution. In the fall of 1850 he settled on the "Indian Lands" at Wautoma, then on the edge of the wilderness. Flocks of eight to ten Ravens were seen in winter and the species remained for two or three succeeding seasons. During this period numerous settlements were made and the Raven disappeared. A year or so later the first Crow arrived, soon followed by others. Barrett was of the opinion that the Fox River formed the boundary between the two species and that they would not intermingle. J. A. Allen¹⁶ immediately replied with the statement that in Dakota and Montana he found Crows and Ravens intermingling freely and even breeding in the same forests. On Madeline Island where Crows congregate by hundreds in autumn I have failed to observe any antagonism between the two species.

References become more numerous and scientific after 1850. Barry¹⁷, in his list of the birds of Wisconsin, states that the Raven is rare while

* This is known as Long's Second Expedition to which Thomas Say was attached as naturalist. Say was the first trained zoologist to travel in Wisconsin. He left but little information on the birds of the state due in part to the loss of many of his specimens in transit. I have been unable to trace any of his notebooks for this period.

only a few Crows have ever been seen in the state. Hoy¹⁸ considered the Crow one of the rarest birds at Racine and records that "it never takes up its quarters within fifteen or twenty miles of Lake Michigan." The Raven was more numerous, and resident. In a later paper Hoy¹⁹ states that the Crow was first seen by him at Racine in 1858 and that they began to nest in that section "about twenty years since," which would be about 1865. The Raven became scarce about 1850. R. M. Strong²⁰, writing in 1895, stated that thirty years earlier the Crow was considered by the old settlers to be a comparatively rare bird.

The curious conflict of opinion continues. Kennicott²¹ reported the Crow and Raven as common throughout the state of Illinois and stated that both species have been known to nest in Cook County. About twenty years later (1876) E. W. Nelson²² wrote that the Crow "is far from an abundant species in Northern Illinois, at any season or locality."

The report of King²³ on Wisconsin birds was based on field work done from 1873-7. He states that the Crow is common throughout the southern portion of the state and winters in considerable numbers. At that time the Crow was known to occur in the Mississippi valley as far north as New Richmond, Saint Croix County, but he had not observed it in the eastern portion of the state north of Stevens Point. However, at about this time Willard²⁴ reported the Crow as breeding near Green Bay while at the same time (1881-83) Grundtvig²⁵ found it common in migration, with a few nesting, in Outagamie County.

Reports on the wintering of Crows in the northern half of the state do not appear until about 1870. The statement of Kumlien and Hollister²⁶, made in 1903, that Crows do not winter in north and north-central Wisconsin requires modification. In the winter of 1872-3 they remained in unusual numbers at Prescott²⁷, as well as at New Richmond²⁸ in the winters of 1872-3 and 1875-6. In the winter of 1883-4 they remained in Fond du Lac County.²⁹

The small population of Crows in southern Wisconsin in the early days was due in large part to the presence of great areas of prairie. Elliott Coues³⁰ mentions that the Raven ranged more over the plains, while the Crow was "partial to the wooded river-bottoms, and the immediate vicinity of the water-courses." There is general agreement that the Crow, in both Wisconsin and Illinois, was a comparatively rare bird in the prairie regions until the latter were brought under cultivation. Agriculture not only provided more food but permitted the growth of forests previously prohibited by prairie fires.

It may be stated in general that the Crow was distributed sparsely in the state prior to 1855, became common in the southern portion by 1875, and abundant by 1890. The Raven began to disappear from the southern half of the state about 1850 and became a scarce winter visitor about 1865. Its rarity in extreme southern Wisconsin may be

judged by the fact that the last record known to Kumlien and Hollister²⁶ was the one shot at Lake Koshkonong in November 1891. In October, 1934, one was shot by duck hunters at Crystal Lake, Dane County, and subsequently recovered by Leonard Wing.³¹ At the present time the species is confined largely to the northern third of the state.

REFERENCES

1. H. R. SCHOOLCRAFT, "Summary Narrative of an Exploratory Expedition to the Sources of the Mississippi in 1820." Philadelphia (1855):145 and 150.
2. W. W. COOKE, *Auk*, 1 (1884):245.
3. H. R. SCHOOLCRAFT, *loc. cit.*:104.
4. NICHOLAS PERROT: in Bacqueville de La Potherie, "Histoire de l'Amerique Septentrionale." Paris, 2 (1753):116.
5. LOUIS HENNEPIN, "Nouvelle Decouverte." Utrecht (1697):156.
6. MARIN, *Coll. Wis. Hist. Soc.*, 17 (1906): 99.
7. CUTTING MARSH, *Coll. Wis. Hist. Soc.*, 15 (1900): 98.
8. DAVID F. SAYRE, "Early Life in Southern Wisconsin." *Wis. Mag. History*, 3 (1920): 420. (Prepared in 1905).
9. J. RICHARDSON and W. SWAINSON, "Fauna Boreali-Americana," 2 (1831): 291.
10. H. R. SCHOOLCRAFT, *loc. cit.*: 127, 130, and 414.
11. T. S. MCKENNEY, "Sketches of a Tour to the Lakes." Baltimore (1827):262 and 260.
12. W. H. KEATING, "Narrative of an Expedition to the Source of St. Peter's River. Performed in the year 1823." 1 (1824):234.
13. ROSELINE PECK, *Coll. Wis. Hist. Soc.*, 6 (1872): 358.
14. DONALD McLEOD, "History of Wisconsin," Buffalo (1846):143-4.
15. MOSES BARRETT, *Amer. Nat.*, 7 (1873): 693.
16. J. A. ALLEN, *Amer. Nat.*, 7 (1873): 743.
17. A. C. BARRY, *Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. His.*, 5 (1854): 7.
18. P. R. HOY, *Trans. Wis. State Agric. Soc.* for 1852, 2 (1853): 356.
19. P. R. HOY, *Proc. Wis. Nat. His. Soc.*, March, 1885:5.
20. R. M. STRONG, *Wilson Bull.*, 7, No. 5 (1895): 11.
21. R. KENNICOTT, *Trans. Ill. Agric. Soc.*, 1853-4, (1855): 585.
22. E. W. NELSON, "Birds of North-eastern Illinois." *Bull. Essex Institute*, 8 (1876):112.
23. F. H. KING, "Geology of Wisconsin," 1 (1883):553.
24. S. W. WILLARD, *Trans. Wis. Acad. Sci.*, 6 (1885): 185.
25. F. L. GRUNDTVIG, "On the Birds of Shiocton . . . Outagamie County, Wisconsin, 1881-83," *Trans. Wis. Acad. Sci.*, 10 (1895):121.
26. L. KUMLIEN and N. HOLLISTER, "The Birds of Wisconsin" (1903): 86.
27. Ellsworth *Herald*, Jan. 23, 1873.
28. New Richmond *Republican*, Jan. 20, 1874, and Feb. 23, 1876.
29. S.B.D., *Forest and Stream*, 22 (April 3, 1884): 184.
30. E. COUES, "Birds of the Northwest," (1874):207.
31. L. W. WING, *Auk*, 52 (1935): 455.

168 NORTH PROSPECT AVENUE, MADISON, WISCONSIN