

## In Other Journals

Two issues (Vol 88. Nos. 1 and 2) of *The Auk* have been received since our last review. In subject matter they cover a wide spectrum of ornithological study, and while they concentrate on birds of the Americas, roam as far afield as Antarctica, the Mascarene Islands, and Senegal. There is much of interest in both issues, but it will be our policy in this column to take especial note of what is significant in our major fields of interest: distribution, migration, population, as well as breeding, winter bird population and other census studies, of the birds of North America.

In the January *Auk* (88:61-74) Henry A. Hespenheide studies nesting habitat preferences among the Least and Acadian flycatchers, the Wood Pewee (sic-Eastern) and tangentially, of the Crested Flycatcher (sic). Emphasis is placed on the two *Empidonax* flycatchers, to show that although the ranges overlap, the two species rarely if ever coexist in the same territories, with the Acadian preferring forest with denser foliage than that favored by the

Least. The wood pewee, on the other hand, chooses forest openings or edge locations considerably more open. The Great Crested Flycatcher may coexist with any of the others, but in eastern forests the pattern seems to allow for a maximum of "one large and one small" flycatcher in proximity.

In the same issue (88:97-107) Vance A. Tucker and Klaus Schmidt-Koenig study birds migrating in the open sky, and simulating migration in a wind tunnel. They come up with the startling conclusion (which they seem not quite to believe) that birds fly faster against than with the wind (air speed). Birds in free flights were observed and timed with twin theodolites, using free balloons to measure the wind speed. Air speeds of 21 species are given, which range from 26 mph for the Common Egret to 50 mph for the Gadwall. Interestingly, of four species measured in head and tail winds, all showed higher speeds in headwinds. For the Pintail it was 44 mph in headwinds and 37 mph in tailwinds. Reasons for this apparent anomaly are discussed.

In *The Auk* for April, 1971 (Vol. 88 No. 2) several articles are of especial relevance. John T. Emlen, who has devoted much time and thought to the techniques of bird censusing, suggests a new method he has tested for

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estimating populations of non-flocking birds in a variety of habitats, in all seasons, with less effort than other methods. His system consists basically of visual and aural counting of birds encountered on strip transects of certain fixed lengths and widths, then dividing the totals detected for each species by a previously calculated "coefficient of detectability"—different for each species—representing the percentage of those birds actually present that will normally be detected. This "C.D." factor is adjusted for thickness of foliage, and other factors. The system, Emlen states, promises to give results comparable in accuracy to the best methods now employed, but with far fewer man-hours required.

Sidney A. Gauthreaux, Jr., one of our Changing Seasons authors, presents part of his doctoral dissertation, a study of spring migration in s. Louisiana, aided by telescopic and radar observation. Fascinating data is presented on the volume of trans-Gulf migration (20,000-50,000 birds per mile front per day), on the hourly volume of diurnal and nocturnal migration, on weather conditions that precipitate trans-Gulf migrants on coastal (or inland) woodlands, and other aspects of this migration. Gauthreaux concludes that trans-Gulf migration is an almost daily phenomenon during April and early May, and that migration is triggered not by especially favorable weather factors at take-off points across the Gulf, but the absence of unfavorable ones. Cold fronts, adverse winds or rain not only deposit more migrants near the coast in Louisiana, but often delay that day's subsequent departure northward.

Another method of studying migration is presented by Frank C. Bellrose, who took to the air at night in a light airplane equipped with extra landing lights, and flew cross-country with an observer at port and starboard windows, counting the forms of small birds as they streaked past, briefly visible in the light. Small bird densities and distribution in space could be roughly calculated, and were measured at various altitudes, in various weather conditions, at different hours of the night, and across wide transects of e. North America in different seasons. It was found that small birds normally flew at altitudes below 5000 ft., with maximum densities between 500 and 2000 ft., that altitudes flown were highest during the first hours of the migration, with gradual descent beginning shortly after midnight. In east-

west long distance transects, birds were observed to migrate on very broad fronts, with increased traffic along certain expected major routes. One unexpected finding: the birds seemed to prefer to fly in strata of turbulent rather than calm air, when there was a choice.

The March, 1971 issue of *The Wilson Bulletin* (Vol. 83, No. 1) is devoted in large part to the birds of Latin America, where the climate is warmer, living costs lower, and it is easier to find species not well known in distribution, habit, and habitat. Major papers include studies of the Dwarf Jay in Mexico, of the Blue-backed Manakin (in Guyana and Trinidad), motmots in Costa Rica, and rails in Mexico. But all is not foreign: Douglas Morse tells what happens when a new species of thrush (the Wood) intrudes upon a habitat formerly inhabited only by Hermit Thrush and Veery. (They coexist, with very little hostile interaction and territorial overlap.) A study of nesting Henslow's Sparrows by Jerome D. Robins sheds light on the habits of this secretive species.

The *Condor* for Spring, 1971 (Vol. 73, No. 1), goes south of the border too, with papers on Little Hermits in Trinidad, Long-tailed Hermits in Costa Rica, distribution of birds verti-

cally in a dry tropical forest in Peru, notes on some Central Panama Birds, and even on a colony of Adelie Penguins in Antarctica. A major paper by Lowell Spring investigates anatomical differences between the Common and Thick-billed Murres, and their effects in competition between the two species for nesting sites and food. White-crowned Sparrows are the subjects of two studies, as is the Alaskan Red-backed Sandpiper (=Dunlin; the A.O.U. Check-List seems to be losing its grip) and the Yellow-headed Blackbird. In the latter paper, banding recoveries are analysed for the 246 birds recovered from 40,000 blackbirds banded, to show that mid-Mexico seems to be the favored wintering ground for the species.

## Going Places

Following is a partial listing of nature and bird-watching trips and tours scheduled for the months of August–November, 1971. It has been compiled from information supplied by tour sponsors, and AMERICAN BIRDS



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