

## WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY MEETING 1967

By Dorothy Bordner

The 1967 W.O.S. meeting was held at Crawford House, Crawford Notch, New Hampshire, June 15 to 18, 1967. Members attending were thoroughly briefed on the geography and birdlife of the White Mountain region with movies Thursday evening and the first paper of the Friday morning session. The area surrounding the hotel had many tempting trails and roads which passed through carpets of wild flowers. The problem became whether to hunt for the many singing birds or photograph the flowers. Early mornings, lunch hours, and spare minutes could be spent hiking the trails in comfort.

The papers sessions were held in the ballroom of the Crawford House. Space does not permit reporting on every paper, but several may be of interest to EBBA members.

Ralph W. Dexter of Kent State University reported on banding and nesting studies of marine birds at Cape Ann, Mass. Three species have been banded since 1958 with special attention given to the Herring Gulls nesting on eight islands. Herring Gulls began nesting in the area in 1926 with increasing numbers annually. By 1938 they reached pest proportions and were nesting on all eight islands. 1,384 were banded between 1958 and 1965 from which 78 recoveries were obtained, all south of the banding site. Most distant recoveries were from North Carolina (740 miles), South Carolina (796 and 867 miles), and Florida (1,307 miles). 41% were recovered as first year birds but these had the greatest average distance (190 miles). The Great Black-backed Gull began nesting in 1956. The Double-crested Cormorant has increased steadily and has nested on four islands since 1956.

Kenneth Parkes observed that if banders would record more information (weights and wing lengths) on the birds they band, certain kinds of analyses based on large samples could be made. Statistical methods have been presented for determining graphically whether a fall migration consists of more than one independent migrating group. If the migration includes more than one group, and there is no evidence for independent migration of age or sex classes, analysis may show a difference in geographic origin. Banding recoveries would act as an independent check of the analysis.

Chan Robbins gave a progress report on the breeding bird survey. Man is changing his environment faster now than at any time in past history and this change is affecting bird populations. There has been much conjecture on the effects of expanding civilization, of urbanization, changes in farming practices, and pollutants such as insecticides. There is a need for determining changes in abundance of birds before they become endangered species. Random routes were mapped along roadsides so that statistical methods could be applied. It was determined that with the present sample size, annual changes of as little as 10% in the breeding populations of conspicuous and widely distributed species could be de-

ted. The survey makes it possible for amateurs to make a contribution to science and the protection of bird species.

The symposium on migration and orientation was very interesting. Although there are perhaps more questions to be answered now than when the studies were started, the methods of approaching the problem are many and varied. They range from the familiar methods of radar and telescope observations of the moon to tracking released birds with a helicopter and counting the birds in the lights of a small plane while flying at various altitudes. Many theories have been presented of the method of orientation and much more work needs to be done before the questions raised are answered in a satisfactory manner.

One last paper deserves mention. Flight Lieutenant A.D. Herbert discussed the possibility that birds may suffer from the same type of vertigo that affects pilots. This is a possible explanation of the kills that are recorded at TV towers and other objects. Most such kills occur under the conditions of low ceilings, artificial lighting, and poor visibility. It was noted that very few urban-dwelling species are involved in such crashes.

Several reports were given on spray programs being carried out this summer including a large DDT program in Maine. It is obvious that the problems of pesticide contamination will be with us for some time and many more protests must be raised.

926 W. Beaver Ave., State College, Pa. 16801

