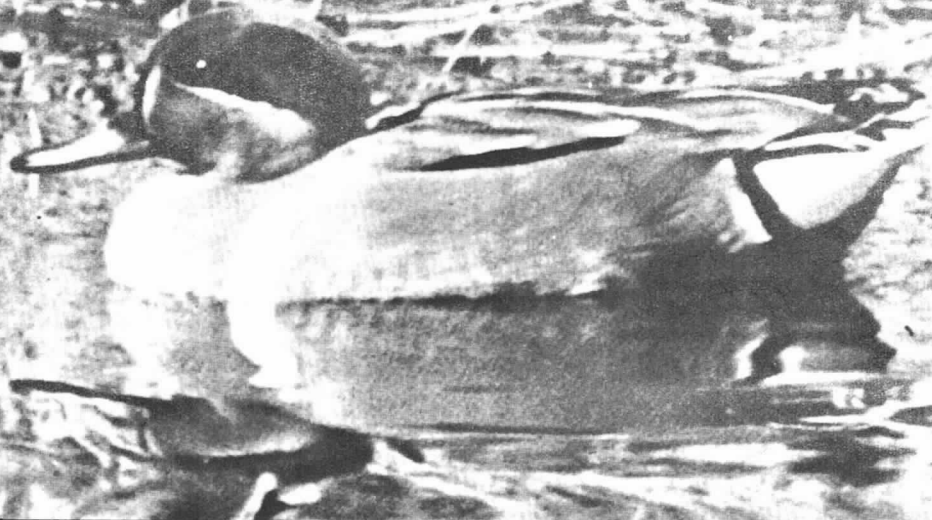


# MARYLAND BIRDLIFE

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*2101 Bolton Street, Baltimore 17, Maryland*



Volume 10

DECEMBER 1954

Number 4

THE MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
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Photograph by Charles J. Stine, Jr.  
HEADINGS: Irving E. Hampe

M A R Y L A N D B I R D L I F E

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### SUMMER BIRDS OF CAMP ROOSEVELT

Donald Power

Camp Theodore Roosevelt, the Boy Scout camp for Washington, where most of these observations were made, is located along the shore of the Chesapeake Bay in Calvert County, Maryland, about five miles south of North Beach. The camp covers about one hundred twenty-five acres of rolling country, mostly covered with a good stand of timber, the predominant trees being the tulip, southern red oak, chestnut oak, sweetgum, beech, mockernut hickory, and Virginia pine. In addition, thirty-seven other species of trees were found in the area.

Our observations were not limited to the camp area alone but included some of the nearby farming area, the roadside, Willows Beach, the beach and swamp at Breezy Point, and an interesting swamp bordering Fishing Creek near Chesapeake Beach.

During the ten weeks we were at Camp Roosevelt, from June 16 to August 26, 1952, we saw a total of one hundred species of birds, and found thirty-two nests of ten species. Walks were usually conducted from 5:30 to about 8:00 every morning. The remainder of the day was occupied by nature instruction to the nearly two thousand scouts who came to camp.

The most common birds around the camp area itself were: Carolina Wren, Acadian Flycatcher, Wood Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo, Eastern Wood Pewee, Hooded Warbler, Cardinal, and Laughing Gull. The nature lodge, which is deep in the woods surrounded by a fine growth of timber, was the starting place of all our early morning walks and was rich in bird life. Not fifteen feet from its south side, an Acadian Flycatcher made its home in a beech tree. The nest was first discovered on June 25 and put under close observation. The young hatched on July 16, and ten days later they left the nest, after having been photographed by Mr. W. Bryant Tyrrell. The Yellow-throated Vireo sang constantly near the lodge and must have had a nest nearby. A pair of Scarlet Tanagers was seen intermittently, along with the Hairy Woodpecker and Yellow-billed Cuckoo. The Wood Thrush was very common and we found one of its old nests a short distance away. Both the Hooded and Kentucky Warblers made the lodge area their territory. The Kentucky, common during the first two weeks, gave way to the Hooded, which remained for the rest of the season. The Bob-white also lived close to the lodge and, on August 2, one was observed leading a string of young across a nearby trail.

On August 19 the birds illustrated that they knew a friend when they saw one. During the night we had a severe storm and Mr. Tyrrell found, on awaking in the morning, that a Tufted Titmouse and a Red-eyed Vireo had slept with him in his little room above the nature lodge. After a good rest with good company, they departed.

The route of our hikes took us up out of the woods to the main camp road. There, in a honey locust tree, early in August, we saw the first Black and White Warblers of the season and also caught a glimpse of a pair of American Redstarts, a bird that was very rare in the area. Moving on down the road toward the flagpole, which was the center of camp, we passed under a high canopy of leaves formed by towering oaks. There, every morning, we heard the lisping call of the Parula Warbler. The birds were so high, however, that they were seldom seen.

Continuing on to the flagpole, we entered the concentration point of the nesting birds. Five of the ten nests of the Acadian Flycatcher were found in this area. Three were located in the characteristic beech tree, but one was in a holly tree and another in a sweetgum. The nest in the sweetgum was discovered on July 3, and young were in the nest on July 18. Also, on July 18, a nearly gull-grown Acadian Flycatcher was found sitting on the branch of a small tree about one foot above the ground. It was located by its parents and fed throughout the day. The next morning it flew off. In addition to the Acadians, three other nesting birds were present. A Carolina Wren nested behind the mess hall. Late in June, an Eastern Wood Pewee was discovered nesting on a horizontal branch of a sweetgum thirty feet above the ground. On the 25th of June, we found the nest of a Red-eyed Vireo. Young were first observed in the nest on July 18, and by the end of July the nest was abandoned.

As we continued on, we walked down a long hill to the Bay. The road passed through a stand of mature Virginia pine. Here, on three occasions near the end of July, we saw a pair of Cedar Waxwings. Here, also, was the stronghold of the Yellow-throated Warbler. It was seen regularly during the first part of the season, up to the 17th of July. It was then forgotten until one lone bird was observed on August 1.

At the base of the hill we came to a small swamp bordering Fisherman's Creek. The swamp consisted mainly of narrow-leaved cat-tail with an outer margin of bayberry. On numerous occasions a Green Heron was observed walking slowly along the edge of the stream. A few times we came suddenly upon a Louisiana Water-thrush which went scurrying to cover. The swamp was also a major gathering place for some of the woodland species. As many as ten Carolina Chickadees and Tufted Titmice might be seen moving through the bayberry, to be joined by groups of Red-eyed Vireos. Goldfinches perched on exposed branches and on two occasions Eastern Kingbirds were sighted. After looking over the swamp, we walked north along the beach until we came to the home of a Rough-winged Swallow. Then we headed south. Every morning we saw at least three Common Crows on the beach and twice heard the call of a Fish Crow.

As we approached the pier, we invariably met a Spotted Sandpiper hurriedly running ahead of us. The Eastern Wood Pewee was very common

along the beach, often seen perched on overhanging shrubs or pieces of driftwood. Beyond the pier, a pair of Cardinals nested in the thick vines. Walking out on the pier, we often saw the Bald Eagle glide gracefully from towering cliffs south of camp far out over the Bay. At least one, and sometimes as many as five, Ospreys were at their vigil of fishing over the Bay. Early in July, gulls began to arrive. At first there were only a few Laughing Gulls. As the season advanced the numbers increased. The Laughing Gulls were followed by Forster's and Common Terns, with Herring and Ring-billed Gulls ending the seasonal procession. On visits by canoe to the fishing nets in the Bay in mid-July, we counted as many as twenty gulls and ten terns. By the end of July, however, the number had increased, with daily counts running up to one hundred thirty.

Toward the end of the camp period, the gulls and terns came close to shore, some perching on the swimming nets at the end of the pier. On July 26, one of the counselors, while swimming in the netted area, decided to get as close as he could to one of the birds on the nets. His success surprised him as he swam quietly to the net and picked up an immature Forster's Tern. He brought it up to the nature lodge and Mr. Tyrrell photographed it. It seemed to be sick, for it offered little resistance. We took it back to the beach and placed it on one of the net stakes. Later that day it flew off to the south.

As we continued our walk, we passed up a flight of stairs to a plateau overlooking the Bay. Here the Downy and Red-bellied Woodpeckers fed on a few dead trees. Nearby was the handicraft lodge and beside it a large tent set up to take care of the overflow of boys. In this tent, under rather unique circumstances, nested a Carolina Wren. The nest was constructed in a flap of the tent not two feet from the entrance. It was discovered on July 2. The eggs were laid around July 9 and the young hatched on July 19 about noon. The young were successfully reared and left the nest around the first of August. Exactly how the birds were raised is a question for a bird psychiatrist. The handicraft lodge is the noisiest place in camp. However, this was not the only unusual nesting site selected by Carolina Wrens. Down in a valley below the handicraft lodge is located the campcraft lodge. There a Carolina Wren moved into a box of rubbish. Down from the mess hall, one built its nest in a cinder block supporting a tent platform. Across Fisherman's Creek, another constructed its nest on the ground at the base of a tree. The Carolina Wren was not the only bird seen on the plateau. It was the exclusive area of the Summer Tanager. Chipping Sparrows and Indigo Buntings were also present.

Moving on down the hill to the campcraft lodge, we saw regularly, during the last two weeks of camp, the Black and White Warbler, along with a pair of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers. It was here also that Mr. Tyrrell heard the Horned Owl on August 23. Passing on by the campcraft lodge, we followed the road up out of the valley and joined the main road, which leads to the activities field. Along the side of the road we often observed the insect-like Ruby-throated Hummingbird darting in and out of the blossoms of the trumpet vine.

Our entrance on the activities field always sent three or four Common Crows flying into the trees. Walking through the field, the call of the Bob-white was a background for the songs of the Prairie Warbler, Field Sparrow, and Indigo Bunting. Off to the left, Yellow-breasted Chats could be counted upon to add their saucy chatter. It was here that, about July 20, we heard the Yellow-billed Cuckoos switch from their characteristic clucking to single, dove-like notes. Toward the end of camp, in mid-August, the cuckoos slowly went back to their normal calls.

A short walk from the field brought us to the camp entrance on Route 261. We turned left on this road and continued on for about three hundred yards. The first part of the road was bordered by pines which provided shelter for a pair of Towhees. On down the road, we passed the favorite habitat of the White-eyed Vireo. Finally we came to the farmhouse which marked the end of the trip. Twice, in a mimosa tree in the front yard, we saw the Ruby-throated Hummingbird perch and sit quietly, unperturbed by the funny creatures prying into its affairs with big, dark objects through which they gazed. On two occasions, the telephone wire near the house provided a gathering place for a flock of Eastern Bluebirds. The Mockingbird chattered from nearby trees as Goldfinches and Field Sparrows added accompaniment. Also from the road we saw birds soaring through the skies. Both Black and Turkey Vultures were seen along with the Red-tailed and Cooper's Hawks.

Although the great majority of our time was spent covering the camp area, we made a few trips outside of camp. The first of these, on July 30, was to Willows Beach located about one mile south of camp. Walking along the beach there we sighted what we took at first glance to be a Killdeer. However, closer investigation proved it to be a Semipalmated Plover, the only one seen during the season. While watching the plover, our attention was directed to two small terns flying over the water. They turned out to be Least Terns and, as we watched, one dived into the water and emerged with a small fish. Walking inland from the beach, we came upon a tree containing three Yellow Warblers. Eastern Phoebes, absent from the camp area, were common near the houses. We then turned right and entered a large field bordered on all sides by thick forest. Scattered all through the field were clumps of blackberry bushes. As many as five Yellow-breasted Chats could be found there. The White-eyed and Red-eyed Vireos sang constantly from the bordering trees. Occasionally a Song Sparrow would add its song to those of the Field Sparrow and Bob-white. Overhead, Chimney Swifts cartwheeled through the sky, often joined by Barn Swallows and Purple Martins. On the road leading back to camp, Chipping Sparrows and Mourning Doves were common on the telephone wires.

Even more interesting, however, were the beach and swamp at Breczy Point. Small cedar trees planted at the edge of the beach provided a favorite nesting place of numerous Eastern Kingbirds. The nearby telephone wires were often crowded with Purple Martins exceeding a hundred in number. Countless numbers of Barn Swallows made their little mud nests in the boathouse bordering the swamp. Amid the swirling of Barn Swallows, one day early in August, we caught sight of a solitary Tree

Swallow. Walking along the edge of the swamp, we would scare up scores of Red-wings. We also saw there a few city birds almost completely absent from camp, such as the Purple Grackle, English Sparrow, Robin, and Starling. On three occasions we made trips into the swamp in canoes. The swamp was not too big, but it required about two hours to explore. The first bird encountered there was invariably the Green Heron. Approximately eight of them resided in the swamp and it was possible, on several occasions, to approach them very closely. Shortly after entering the swamp we passed the favorite roosting place of a small colony of Black-crowned Night Herons. Although we usually saw but one or two of the birds, the first trip produced seven. A pair of Great Blue Herons lived at the end of the swamp and, on our last trip, we identified an American Bittern. Long-billed Marsh Wrens and Maryland Yellow-throats called continuously from the reeds. Red-wings were everywhere and we found three of their nests. Two nests of the marsh wrens were also found. In the woods bordering the swamp, Red-eyed and White-eyed Vireos, Carolina Wrens, Wood Thrushes, Yellow-breasted Chats, Yellow-billed Cuckoos, Carolina Chickadees and Bob-whites were common.

The third location was by far the most interesting of the three. It was the swamp at Chesapeake Beach, about four miles north of camp. It is much larger than the swamp at Breezy Point, taking over five hours to explore. Our first trip, made on August 19, was limited to two hours. Our subsequent trip, on August 26, the last day of camp, was a fitting climax to the season's activities. We set the canoe in the water about ten o'clock in the morning and started down a long, straight channel cutting back into the swamp.

We had scarcely begun our journey when a Green Heron flew across our bow. Soon we heard the Long-billed Marsh Wren, then the Yellow-throat. After paddling for half an hour, we came to a little side channel and immediately headed into it. Thirty feet back from the main channel we crossed the inlet to a small, shallow pond. As it came into view, we glimpsed a rail as it slid into the grass. We beached the canoe and climbed onto the matted vegetation. At the far end of the pond, two Green Herons stalked through the deep mud while a little sand-piper scurried back and forth just out of range of our binoculars. Suddenly a movement was spotted in the grass not twenty feet from us. A Virginia Rail slowly walked down to the water under an archway of reeds. Soon it was joined by its mate. We had hardly recovered from our surprise when a Least Bittern, the first of four for the day, flew up and away from us, landing farther back in the swamp. Almost simultaneously, a female Mallard sprang out of the swamp, giving us time to identify it.

When we had entered the swamp, the camp list stood at ninety-three. In less than five minutes, three more birds had been added. We made our way back into the main channel and continued on. Within fifteen minutes a Bald Eagle was spotted sitting on the dead branch of a towering tree. Our attention, however, was soon wrested from the eagle as a bird was sighted soaring high over us. The Red-shouldered Hawk was number ninety-seven. Moving on, we came upon the strangest sight of the trip. Coming around a bend in the stream we saw, to our amazement,

a Canvas-back sitting calmly on the water. As we approached, it looked at us and then, unperturbed, it turned away. We paddled up on it until the end of the canoe was within six inches of the bird. It didn't mind, so we left it alone and continued on. We finally reached the end of the swamp and no sooner had we turned around than a brilliant yellow Prothonotary Warbler was spotted pausing for an instant on a sunlit branch. The remainder of the trip out was rather uneventful until we neared the entrance of the swamp. It was there, on a little mudflat, that we achieved the goal we had been striving for. A pair of Sanderlings and a pair of Semipalmated Sandpipers became numbers ninety-nine and one hundred!

751 Silver Spring Ave., Silver Spring

#### BEWICK'S WRENS WINTERING AT OWING MILLS, BALTIMORE COUNTY

Jean Reese Worthley

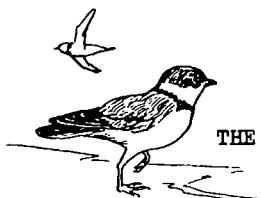
On November 27, 1953 I noticed a small, brown bird with a long tail on our window sill feeding tray. After seeing it several more times that day feeding on suet on the tray and observing its long bill, white eyestripe, and the way it flicked its tail I suspected that the bird was a Bewick's Wren. I had not seen this species here before but had been looking for it as it occurs regularly in summer in Frederick County where we lived a year ago. With the help of Peterson's field guide and a brief glimpse of white patches along the outer tail feathers, the bird was identified as a Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*). My husband, Elmer Worthley, confirmed the identification the next day and Richard Cole and Haven Kolb also identified the bird on November 28. On December 15 the wren was trapped and banded. During this time it came to the feeder several times daily and was seen around the farm in the chicken houses, pigpen, garage and also in brush piles.

On December 26 a second Bewick's Wren was captured by my twelve year old brother, Andy Reese, on our screened-in porch. It had evidently flown through a hole in the screen and could not find its way out. This second wren was banded and photographed before being released. After that one wren was seen almost daily but never two at once. On February 28, 1954, a Bewick's Wren was retrapped and determined to be the first one banded. On the 23rd a Bewick's Wren sang for the first time in the tops of trees in the yard, and it has continued to do so several times each day except on very cold days. As of this writing, March 16, at least one wren is still with us though it now feeds on the ground rather than on the feeder. Pough states in the Audubon Bird Guide that the Bewick's Wren will not allow the House Wren on its breeding territory and in some areas gains an advantage by wintering and establishing territory long before the House Wren returns. It will be interesting to see what happens when our House Wrens return and try to take up the territories they have used for many years here on this farm.

This is the first known instance of Bewick's Wrens spending the entire winter in Maryland.

Lone Hickory Farm, Owings Mills





# THE SEASON



THE SEASON - July through December 1953

Chandler S. Robbins

The latter half of 1953 was characterized meteorologically by slightly above-normal temperatures and a serious deficiency of precipitation. Rains during the fall were infrequent and local. Except for the Eastern Shore, Maryland consistently received subnormal rainfall each month from June through November. The driest period was the six-week spell ending on Oct. 19, during which time most of the State had less than 25 percent of its customary precipitation. The mild weather helped to delay bird departures. Except in the western counties, there was no hard freeze before the premature snow storm of Nov. 6, which left as much as 12 inches along our northern border. December was almost snow-less, and the warmest December in 12 years.

Loons, Herons. The eastern shore of Fishing Bay along the Elliott Island road is one of the best places to watch for concentrations of Common Loons during their migration periods. Possibly many of the other estuaries on the east shore of Chesapeake Bay are equally attractive to this species. While cruising on the Chester River and Eastern Bay on Oct. 31 and Nov. 1 the W. L. Henderson and the R. Hendersons recorded 50 Common Loons each day. The late summer flight of southern herons was poor again this year. Few areas reported more than one or two dozen birds. The only notable count in the Piedmont was 30 American Egrets at Lake Roland just north of Baltimore City on Sept. 6 (Charles Buchanan); a late straggler of this species was seen at Denton on Dec. 26 (A. May Thompson, Mrs. A. J. Fletcher).

Ducks. The only ducks that nest regularly in Maryland are the Black Duck, Wood Duck, Blue-winged Teal, a few Gadwalls, and some Mallards, the latter of questionable origin. Cripples of almost all wintering species are seen from time to time throughout the summer and are hard to separate from legitimate records of summering birds. The following reports, however, are believed to be of some significance: A male Baldpate which arrived at Seth Low's farm pond on July 12 and stayed through the 16th; a pair of Ring-necked Ducks which stayed till mid-summer (the male all summer) at the Patuxent Refuge (F. M. Uhler); 8 Ruddy Ducks on Whitehall Creek on July 7 (Judge and Mrs. W. L. Henderson); and 2 female American Mergansers at Patuxent Refuge on Aug. 8 (Robert Stewart). There is always the possibility that some of these strays may be nesting, so we should not pass up any opportunity to watch for breeding evidence.

Hawks. Douglas Hackman, as usual, supplied the first news of migrating hawks. In 75 minutes on Aug. 16, 4 Red-tailed Hawks, 2 Red-shoulders, 5 buteos too distant to identify, and an Osprey passed over his home atop the eastern boundary of the Piedmont above White Marsh.

The most spectacular flight this year was the one that passed over Dr. John Richards' home near Emmitsburg on Sept. 18; in 15 minutes he estimated 2,500 Broad-wings. Unfortunately, the weekends designated for hawk counting this fall were jinxed by bad weather.

Gallinules. R. R. Kerr provided the fourth State record for the Purple Gallinule when he found one near Seneca on July 19 and July 25. This secretive southern species may be more common than we give it credit for being. Migration dates for the Florida Gallinule in fall are hard to obtain since this species also keeps well under cover most of the time; this year, however, Caroline County observers came through with six reports ranging from Sept. 23 at Denton to Nov. 1 at the same place (Fletchers).

Shorebirds. Nearly all of the shorebirds that occur regularly along the coast should occur occasionally on the exposed flats of reservoirs, ponds or large streams in all other counties. Several inland counties obtained their first record of one or more species of plover or sandpiper during this period. On Aug. 22 the W. L. Hendersons obtained the first Piping Plover record for Talbot County when they observed one closely on Deepwater Point on the shore of the Miles River. Six Golden Plovers were studied at Mount St. Marys College in Emmitsburg on Oct. 8 by Dr. and Mrs. Richards and Paul O'Brien; 5 remained through the 11th. A single bird of this species was seen on the late dates of Nov. 21 and 22 at Sandy Point (P. A. DuMont). Pectoral Sandpipers were identified in Montgomery, St. Marys, Caroline, Dorchester, Somerset and Worcester Counties. The White-rumped and Least Sandpipers were added to the Caroline County list on Oct. 16, when Marvin Hewitt recorded them at Ridgeley.

Gulls and Terns. On July 30 Judge and Mrs. Henderson found 3 Great Black-backed Gulls at the mouth of the Little Choptank River in Dorchester County; this is the earliest this species has ever been known to arrive in fall. Forster's Terns, presumably from nesting areas in Sinepuxent and Chesapeake Bays or colonies farther to the south, wander regularly throughout tidewater Maryland each fall. In Charles County, Allen Stickley and Catherine Crone found them this fall from Aug. 27 to Dec. 6, while at Gibson Island they were seen by the Hendersons and Mrs. Gail Tappan from July 6 through Oct. 31. They remained near Sherwood in Talbot County until Nov. 15 (R. L. Kleen). The Hendersons closely observed a single vagrant Caspian Tern at Love Point, Queen Annes County, on July 6. A rarity for Anne Arundel County was a record of 2 Royal Terns at Gibson Island on July 15, also by the Hendersons.

Land Birds (General). Tables 1 and 2 show comparative arrival and departure dates for the more common migrant land birds in representative areas of the State. The Emmitsburg material was contributed by Dr. and Mrs. John W. Richards and Paul J. O'Brien; Baltimore primarily by Charles Buchanan and Douglas Hackman; Laurel by Chandler Robbins and Robert Stewart; Gibson Island mostly by Judge and Mrs. W. L. Henderson and Mrs. Gail Tappan; Southern Maryland largely by Allen R. Stickley, Jr., Catherine Crone, Mary Goldman, Katherine Keeley and Robert Farr; Caroline County by Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Fletcher, Mr. and Mrs. M. W.

Table 1. Fall arrival dates, 1953

	Emits -burg	Balti -more	Lau- rel	Gibsn Is.	South Md.	Caro- line	Tal- bot
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	9/27	<u>9/18</u>	9/20	9/28	10/4	9/26	9/25
Red-breasted Nuthatch	0	0	10/10	0	0	9/17	0
Brown Creeper	10/10	10/10	9/30	<u>8/30</u>	10/4	10/15	10/3
Winter Wren	10/11	---	9/28	0	10/4	10/8	---
Hermit Thrush	10/14	<u>10/4</u>	10/11	---	11/1	10/21	10/8
Golden-crowned Kinglet	10/3	---	<u>9/30</u>	10/14	11/1	10/2	10/3
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	10/3	10/3	<u>9/29</u>	10/13	10/4	10/4	10/2
Cedar Waxwing	9/3	---	<u>8/18</u>	10/11	9/17	9/26	10/18
Tennessee Warbler	9/16	9/11	9/18	9/1	0	9/9	<u>8/29</u>
Nashville Warbler	9/7	9/17	<u>9/5</u>	0	0	9/23	0
Magnolia Warbler	<u>8/27</u>	---	<u>8/27</u>	9/15	9/15	9/9	---
Cape May Warbler	<u>9/6</u>	9/17	9/9	0	9/8	9/16	---
Black-thr. Blue Warbler	<u>8/23</u>	9/7	9/7	0	0	9/9	---
Myrtle Warbler	<u>9/19</u>	10/3	9/24	9/30	9/27	9/26	---
Black-thr. Green Warbler	<u>9/2</u>	---	9/9	0	9/8	9/21	---
Blackburnian Warbler	<u>8/30</u>	---	<u>8/27</u>	9/9	<u>8/27</u>	9/17	---
Chestnut-sided Warbler	8/27	---	<u>8/16</u>	0	<u>8/27</u>	0	---
Bay-breasted Warbler	9/19	---	<u>8/26</u>	9/13	9/17	0	---
Black-poll Warbler	9/27	9/17	<u>9/23</u>	10/7	<u>9/15</u>	0	---
Western Palm Warbler	<u>9/16</u>	---	10/1	10/5	<u>9/27</u>	---	---
Yellow Palm Warbler	10/5	<u>9/26</u>	10/18	10/12	9/27	---	---
Northern Water-thrush	<u>8/22</u>	---	8/30	0	9/17	9/1	0
Canada Warbler	<u>8/23</u>	---	<u>8/6</u>	---	<u>8/27</u>	9/4	---
Rusty Blackbird	10/25	---	<u>10/11</u>	10/13	11/1	0	---
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	9/12	---	<u>9/8</u>	9/9	9/15	0	9/10
Purple Finch	<u>10/13</u>	10/18	<u>10/13</u>	0	11/1	0	---
Pine Siskin	0	0	11/8	0	0	11/9	---
Savannah Sparrow	<u>9/11</u>	---	10/20	10/13	---	10/13	10/1
Slate-colored Junco	10/1	<u>9/15</u>	10/10	10/12	11/1	10/4	10/1
White-crowned Sparrow	10/10	10/11	0	0	0	<u>10/9</u>	0
White-throated Sparrow	9/23	10/3	9/23	10/13	10/4	<u>9/29</u>	<u>9/18</u>
Fox Sparrow	11/8	<u>10/31</u>	11/1	11/7	11/1	11/14	11/14
Swamp Sparrow	10/3	<u>10/3</u>	9/28	---	<u>9/27</u>	<u>9/27</u>	---

Hewitt, Miss A. May Thompson, Miss Alicia Knotts and others; and Talbot County by Richard L. Kleen. As in the past, "0" indicates that the species was not recorded at all during the migration season; a dash means that it was recorded but no significant arrival or departure date was obtained. Underscored dates are the earliest or latest on file for the species this fall. Where none of the dates in the table is underscored it means the extreme date came from an area not included in the tabulation. Arrival dates on the whole were a little later than in 1952, and departures tended to be a little earlier. There were several notable exceptions, however. Note the departure dates of the Tree Swallow--over a

month later on the Eastern Shore than on the Western Shore; this is typical of that species; over 99 percent of the migrants through Maryland in fall move through the Eastern Shore. For birds such as the Nashville and Tennessee Warblers, which are consistently earlier in arriving and later in departing in the western areas than on the Eastern Shore, the difference in dates between these areas is seldom more than a week or two. Most of the thrushes arrive in, and depart from the eastern counties at about the same time they do in the central and western parts of the State. As we would expect, all the real late stragglers (those birds that are a month or more later than the normal last date) were found in the comparatively warm tide-water or Eastern Shore areas: Gibson Island, southern Maryland, and Caroline and Tolbot Counties. This was an "off year" for Red-breasted Nuthatches and Pine Siskins; note the small number of reports and the late arrival dates.

Owls, Woodpeckers. A Short-eared Owl specimen obtained at Beltsville on Oct. 16 by S. F. Blake is the earliest migrant on record for Maryland. Another of this species to be recorded inland was seen at Emmitsburg on Nov. 25 by Dr. Richards. A Saw-whet Owl was shot by a boy at Tilghman on Oct. 21. Single Saw-whets were trapped and banded at Halethorpe (Oct. 24, Irving Hampe) and Laurel (Nov. 2, Robbins). The Flicker migration reached its peak in the closing days of September. No figures are available from the famous Hooper Island concentration area, but counts of 40 on Sept. 26 and 30 on Sept. 28 were received from Emmitsburg and Gibson Island, respectively. A Pileated Woodpecker, rare in the Catoctin Area, was seen at Emmitsburg, Sept. 26, by Dr. Richards. A count of 12 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers at Gibson Island on Sept. 28 by Mesdames Tappan and Henderson is the second highest on file for Maryland.

Flycatchers, Swallows. An Olive-sided Flycatcher seen at Royal Oak on Sept. 26 is the second Eastern Shore record for this species (R. L. Kleen). The small Empidonax flycatchers are seldom identified in their autumnal migration; in fact, they are difficult to identify even in the hand. For that reason we receive little information on the fall movement of Yellow-bellied and Alder Flycatchers through our State. The recent use of nets by bird banders is helping to clarify the status of the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher as a fall migrant. One was banded at Unity on Sept. 7 (Low), one seen at Lake Roland the same day (Buchanan), and single birds banded at Laurel on Aug. 28, Aug. 30 and Sept. 8 (Robbins). Five Cliff Swallows seen at Emmitsburg on Sept. 19 (Richards) are four days short of the latest record for Maryland.

Jays, Chickadees, Nuthatches. There was a fairly heavy flight of Blue Jays and an unusually high wintering population; in addition to high figures on several of the Christmas Counts, a tally of 130 at Port Tobacco on Dec. 6 is noteworthy (Crone and Farr). The only Black-capped Chickadees east of the mountains were 6 at Gibson Island, Dec. 7-15, by Col. and Mrs. Amoss. It was a poor year for the irregular White-breasted and Red-breasted Nuthatches. Early wanderers of the former species were noted at Laurel on July 25 and Emmitsburg on Aug. 12. The first to be reported from the Coastal Plain were single birds at Patuxent Refuge and Gibson Island on Oct. 14. Except for 9 Red-breasts on the Christmas Counts, the only reports were of single birds at Chalk

Table 2. Fall departure dates, 1953

	Emita -burg	Balti -more	Lau- rel	Gibsn Is.	South Md.	Caro- line	Tal- bot
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	10/11	9/20	9/20	10/7	9/27	10/7	---
Chimney Swift	10/11	10/13	10/12	---	9/27	9/25	9/29
Ruby-thr. Hummingbird	10/1	9/11	9/19	9/14	9/17	9/12	---
Eastern Kingbird	9/13	---	8/21	9/13	9/15	9/13	9/10
Crested Flycatcher	9/11	9/11	---	0	9/17	---	---
Eastern Wood Pewee	10/2	10/4	9/30	9/15	9/27	10/8	9/26
Tree Swallow	0	9/14	9/5	---	10/24	10/21	---
Barn Swallow	9/18	9/11	9/7	---	---	9/19	---
Purple Martin	9/3	---	9/7	---	---	9/5	9/1
House Wren	10/31	10/11	10/11	9/1	---	9/24	10/1
Catbird	11/1	10/31	10/3	---	10/4	10/20	12/5
Brown Thrasher	9/26	10/11	10/28	---	11/1	9/27	10/2
Wood Thrush	9/26	10/11	10/11	9/15	9/17	10/4	9/24
Olive-backed Thrush	10/11	10/10	10/1	10/2	---	9/30	10/3
Gray-cheeked Thrush	9/27	10/10	10/3	10/14	---	9/26	9/23
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	8/30	0	8/27	9/28	8/27	12/20	9/26
White-eyed Vireo	9/7	9/26	9/29	9/9	9/27	9/23	9/1
Yellow-throated Vireo	9/19	9/17	9/9	0	10/4	9/6	0
Blue-headed Vireo	9/26	10/18	0	0	10/24	0	---
Red-eyed Vireo	9/27	10/11	10/1	10/15	9/27	10/7	9/26
Black and White Warbler	9/24	10/3	9/20	10/3	10/4	12/9	9/26
Tennessee Warbler	10/1	10/11	10/3	9/1	0	9/21	9/18
Nashville Warbler	10/1	9/26	9/29	0	0	9/23	0
Parula Warbler	9/27	10/11	10/2	---	10/4	10/20	---
Magnolia Warbler	10/2	10/10	10/2	9/15	9/17	10/9	9/26
Cape May Warbler	9/27	9/26	10/12	0	9/8	9/16	---
Black-thr. Blue Warbler	10/3	10/3	9/28	0	0	10/2	9/26
Black-thr. Green Warbler	10/1	10/10	10/11	0	10/4	9/21	9/26
Blackburnian Warbler	9/23	10/11	9/20	9/15	9/8	9/27	---
Chestnut-sided Warbler	10/1	9/26	9/9	0	9/8	0	---
Bay-breasted Warbler	9/20	9/26	10/13	9/15	9/17	0	9/22
Black-poll Warbler	9/27	10/11	10/12	10/7	9/17	0	9/26
Pine Warbler	0	0	9/11	9/19	9/17	12/26	12/29
Western Palm Warbler	---	10/10	10/16	10/13	10/4	9/25	---
Yellow Palm Warbler	10/10	10/18	10/18	10/20	---	---	---
Oven-bird	9/11	---	10/3	10/6	9/15	10/7	10/4
Northern Water-thrush	9/7	---	9/7	0	10/4	9/4	0
Yellow-throat	10/14	10/11	10/17	9/1	10/4	---	10/3
Yellow-breasted Chat	9/16	10/10	9/13	---	9/17	9/5	---
Hooded Warbler	9/26	9/14	9/16	9/9	9/17	9/25	---
Wilson's Warbler	9/27	9/20	0	9/9	0	0	0
Canada Warbler	9/11	9/11	9/13	9/15	9/8	10/2	---
American Redstart	9/27	10/4	9/30	10/3	10/4	10/20	9/26
Baltimore Oriole	9/16	9/7	8/30	0	8/27	12/20	12/23
Scarlet Tanager	9/27	10/10	10/13	9/13	9/17	0	10/3
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	---	9/17	9/30	---	10/4	0	9/18
Indigo Bunting	10/10	10/4	10/3	10/1	9/27	9/9	---
Chipping Sparrow	11/8	---	11/18	12/30	11/29	11/3	---

Point on Sept. 15 (E. John and Adele Besson), at Greensboro on Sept. 17 (Hewitt), and migrating along the Fall Line at Laurel on Oct. 10 and 18 (Robbins).

Creepers, Wrens, Gnatcatchers. Thanks to an observation of a Brown Creeper at Gibson Island on the freak date of Aug. 30 (Col. and Mrs. Amoss, Mrs. Tappan and Mrs. Henderson), this species has now been recorded in or near the Coastal Plain of Maryland in every month of the year. The earliest State arrival date is Sept. 11; the earliest this year, Sept. 30. Edwin Willis found a wintering House Wren at Middle River on Dec. 14. The Worthleys' Bewick's Wrens are reported in a separate note on page 48. To the wide range of Blue-gray Gnatcatcher departure dates listed in Table 2, add an Oct. 3 observation near Seneca (P. A. DuMont) and a Dec. 1 bird at Turkey Point (mouth of the South River), seen by John W. Taylor, Jr. The latter was the latest on record for the State until the Fletchers saw one at their Garland Lake home near Denton, Dec. 20.

Vireos, Warblers. A Blue-headed Vireo seen at Emmitsburg on Aug. 30 broke by 3 days the earliest fall migration date for Maryland. The first Philadelphia Vireo record for the Eastern Shore was obtained at St. Michaels on Aug. 29 (R. L. Kleen). On June 20, Edward Fleisher and L. G. Worley watched a Swainson's Warbler feeding young out of the nest near Milburn Landing Park, just north of Pocomoke City. There is only one actual nest record for Maryland. Most of us do not watch early enough in the fall to spot the first migrating warblers. On Aug. 6 Robert Stewart found one Golden-winged Warbler and several each of the Blue-winged, Black and White and Oven-bird in migrating flocks in the Patuxent Refuge bottomland. And on the following day he saw a transient Prothonotary and Worm-eater, and several migrating Redstarts. On Aug. 8 a Cerulean Warbler was singing in the Patuxent gorge above Laurel (Robbins). Check Table 1 and records from other recent years to get a better understanding of the fall arrival dates of our warblers. Even more revealing are reports from the Gulf Coast states as compiled each year by George Lowery and Robert Newman in the October and February issues of Audubon Field Notes; these reports show that many of our breeding species reach the Gulf Coast earlier in fall than we can detect any movement within their breeding range. Another record-breaking arrival date this fall was a Wilson's Warbler at Gibson Island on Aug. 15 (Mesdames Tappan and Henderson). Among the rarities should be mentioned the first Tennessee Warbler records for Caroline County: Denton on Sept. 9 (Mrs. Fletcher) and Greensboro on Sept. 21 (Marvin Hewitt). Six Tennessees were seen in Talbot County, the first on the very early date of Aug. 29 (R. L. Kleen). A Yellow-breasted Chat at Mountain Lake Park on Sept. 5 (Catherine Crone) is the latest for that part of the State; and the one seen at Lake Roland on Oct. 10 (Charles Buchanan) deserves special mention as being the second latest for the State--excepting, of course, the three winter records. Another State record was a late Wilson's Warbler at Unity on Sept. 28 (Low), with a close runner-up at Emmitsburg on the previous day (Richards). The Black and White Warbler, never before found in Maryland later than

October, was observed on Nov. 26 at Seneca (Dr. Lawrence Kilham) and on Dec. 3 and Dec. 9 at Denton (Mrs. A. J. Fletcher).

Finches and Sparrows. Blue Grosbeaks in Talbot County at Lloyd's Landing on Oct. 24 and at Trappe on Oct. 18 by Mrs. W. L. Henderson and R. L. Kleen, respectively, are by far the latest for Maryland. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak noted at Broad Creek Scout Camp in Harford County on Aug. 22 broke the State migration record by 8 days (Duncan McIntosh). A Dickcissel at the feeding station of Mr. E. Poore in Greensboro, identified by Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Hewitt on Dec. 20, is the second winter record for Maryland, and the second Eastern Shore occurrence. It was a poor season both for variety and abundance of northern finches. Two Sharp-tailed Sparrows at Gibson Island on Oct. 13 are of interest not only as being the first local record, but as being one of the few records at hand of migrating birds. Since this secretive bird winters sparingly in most of the Maryland areas where it breeds, migrants are seldom detected. White-crowned Sparrows continue to increase on their new wintering grounds in Caroline County; during the Christmas Bird Count on Dec. 26 they were found at four separate places near Denton, Ridgeley and Greensboro. Only 2 Snow Buntings were recorded this fall, but one of them, at Gibson Island on Oct. 31 (Mesdames Tappan and Henderson), broke the earliest arrival date for Maryland.

Patuxent Research Refuge, Laurel

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#### CHECK-LIST OF THE BIRDS OF VIRGINIA

In February, 1952, the Virginia Society of Ornithology published a 113-page paper bound Check-List of the Birds of Virginia, by Dr. Joseph James Murray. A notice was circulated to M.O.S. members at that time offering us copies at the original pre-publication price of \$1.00. Within the first six months 79 members of our organization procured copies.

For the benefit of new members, who did not hear about the original offer, copies may be obtained from Mr. A. O. English, 2803 Rosalind Ave., S.W., Roanoke, Va.

Dr. Murray, widely known as the dean of Virginia ornithologists, is also co-editor of the Middle Atlantic Region "Season" reports in Audubon Field Notes. He gives in this book a sketch of the history of ornithology in his state, outlines the physical and faunal areas, and presents an annotated list of some 340 species of Virginia birds. For each species and subspecies the status, migration dates and nesting dates are given for the various parts of the state from which records were available.

This is a handy reference book for those planning trips to our neighboring state to the south. It is also an invaluable aid for those Marylanders interested in searching for new Maryland records.

C.S.R.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

May 19, 1952

Dear Editor:

I am very much interested in the article by Mr. Edward R. Grant in the March-December 1951 Maryland Birdlife on "The Last Maryland Flight of the Passenger Pigeon."

Mr. Grant is of course referring to large flights, but there were smaller bands of pigeons seen in Maryland and elsewhere, long after the date, the early '70s, he mentions. Believe it or not I saw a small flock several times near Hancock in 1889. I was twelve years old at the time, very much interested in shotguns and birds, and was staying at Harvey's farm, near Hancock, which is now a part of or adjoining the Woodmont Rod and Gun Club. This flock of Passenger Pigeons would come down in the wheat stubble nearly every morning; there were probably 8 to 10 birds as I recall; they were NOT Mourning Doves, for I knew the dove; I was told by the natives --old Mr. Harvey and others-- that they were the wild pigeons that "used to darken the sky." Since then, in later years I have discussed this with Maryland ornithologists, including Wm. H. Fisher, and Alfred T. Hoen, both now dead, and they verified the fact that small bands of pigeons were seen in Western Maryland as late as 1890.

There was a flock of wild Turkeys used this same field, and I had an old single muzzle loader, and used to lay in wait for these young Turkeys; I saw the pigeons a number of times but never got a shot at them; I did finally get a young Turkey, but I think it was in 1890.

But there is no doubt, in my mind, anyhow, that I did actually see some of the last of the Passenger Pigeons.

Yours truly,

Talbot Denmead

Game and Inland Fish Commission  
Baltimore, 2

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 REMINDERS

Deadline for sending in your 1954 county bird lists is May 20. Worcester County is in the lead, Anne Arundel is second. Mail lists to Charles M. Buchanan, 104 W. Melrose Ave., Baltimore 10. And don't forget to keep a list of all species you see in your county in 1955.