

MARYLAND BIRDLIFE

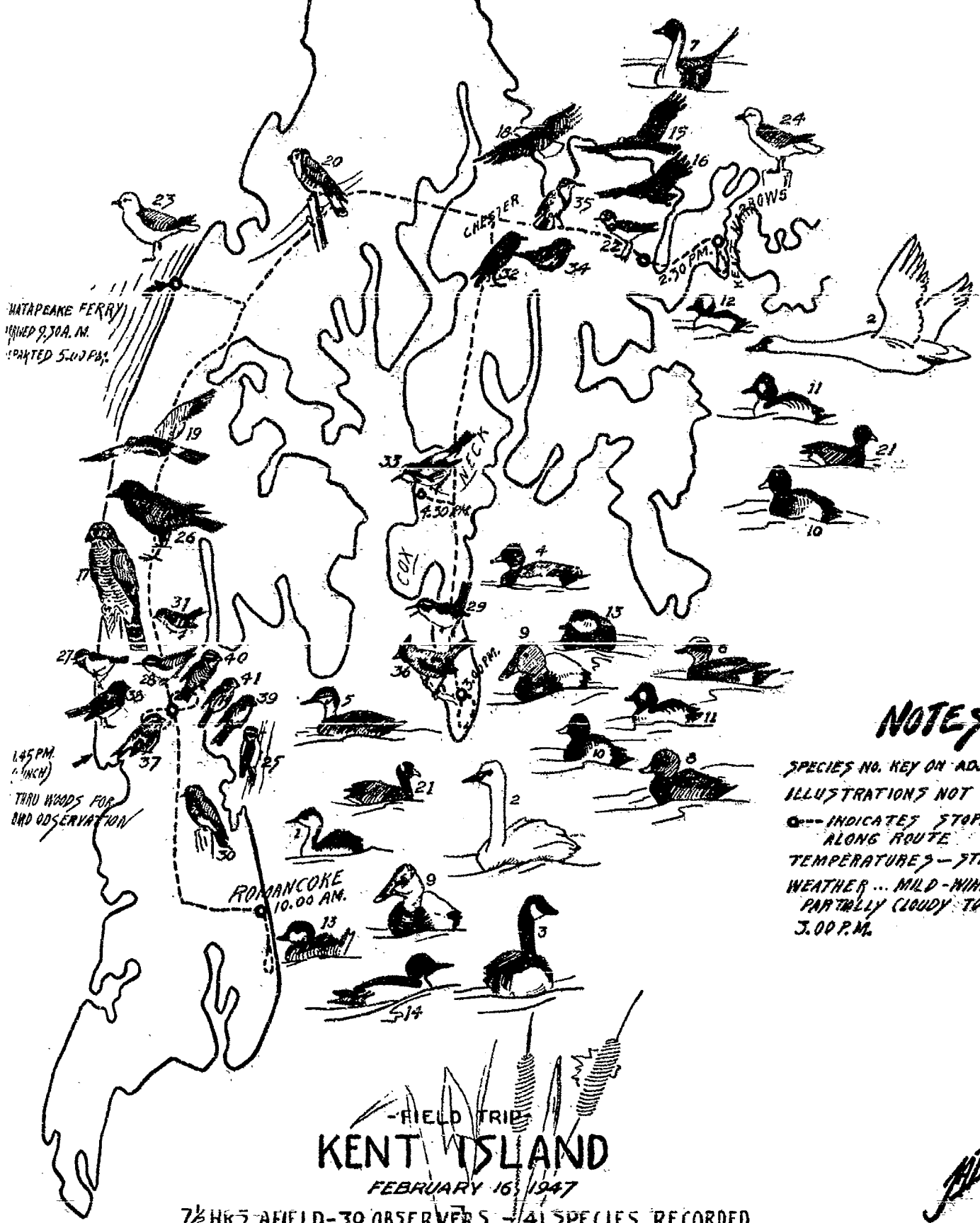
Bulletin of the Maryland Ornithological Society

2101 Bolton Street, Baltimore 17, Maryland

VOL. III

MARCH - APRIL

No. 2



NOTES!

SPECIES NO. KEY ON ADJACENT PAGE
 ILLUSTRATIONS NOT TO SCALE
 ○--- INDICATES STOPPING POINTS
 ALONG ROUTE
 TEMPERATURES - START 36°F, FINISH 45°F
 WEATHER ... MILD-WINDY IN MORNING,
 PARTLY CLOUDY TO CLEAR AFTER
 3.00 P.M.

FIELD TRIP
KENT ISLAND
 FEBRUARY 16, 1947

7½ HR. FIELD - 39 OBSERVERS - 41 SPECIES RECORDED

FIELD TRIPS

January 19, 1947

At 8:30 on this crisp, 30° morning eighteen people met by the Court House Square in Towson. Under the leadership of Mr. and Mrs. Kent the group drove out the Dulaney Valley Road to Long Quarter Branch. The grass and brush were covered with a heavy frost. The group divided into two sections, one of which covered the territory south of the branch and the other that north of the stream. One member of the south group was surprised by a mallard taking off over his head from its feeding ground in the stream. Other bird life was very quiet and scarce. The north group did not fare much better in their bird study but were rewarded by sighting three deer in their natural habitat. Moving to the Dulaney Valley Road bridge the whole group scanned the upper Loch Raven waters on which were a good-sized flock of American mergansers. In a thicket of pine red-breasted nuthatches were feeding. In this same vicinity some golden-crowned kinglets were observed. A cold breeze sprang up by midforenoon and it turned partly cloudy. A stop in the wooded area near Peerce's corner at the eastern extremity of the lake revealed nothing of interest. Observation was continued in an upland woods on Providence Road, where the only reward was a brown creeper. Juncos appeared to be the most numerous bird in every section covered. Coming to the dam, a search of the lake revealed another flock of ducks. At Cromwell Bridge we found many song sparrows and white-throats along the banks of the Gunpowder Falls. The most outstanding find was a winter wren. For many of the group this was the first time that they had observed this industrious little bird. The trip ended with twenty-four species accounted for.

H. P. Strack

February 16, 1947

When we asked Joe Bures to submit some notes on the field trip he led to Kent Island, he responded with the unusual - and pleasing - graphic report which appears on the cover of this issue. The birds appear on the map where we saw them in the field, the route of the trip is indicated and the time data are shown. There is even a hint of the enthusiasm and good fellowship of this field trip, with its glorious weather, crowds of observers and very co-operative birds.

Following is the key to the species numbers on the map:

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Horned Grebe | 9. Canvas-back Duck | 17. Red-should. Hawk |
| 2. Whistling Swan | 10. Scaup Duck | 18. Bald Eagle |
| 3. Canada Goose | 11. Amer. Golden-eye | 19. Marsh Hawk |
| 4. Mallard | 12. Buffle-head Duck | 20. Sparrow Hawk |
| 5. Black Duck | 13. Ruddy Duck | 21. Coot |
| 6. Baldpate | 14. Amer. Merganser | 22. Killdeer |
| 7. Pintail | 15. Turkey Vulture | 23. Herring Gull |
| 8. Redhead Duck | 16. Black Vulture | 24. Ring-billed Gull |

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| 25. Downy Woodpecker | 31. Ruby-cr. Kinglet | 37. Pine Siskin |
| 26. Crow | 32. Starling | 38. Slate-col. Junco |
| 27. Car. Chickadee | 33. Myrtle Warbler | 39. Field Sparrow |
| 28. Red-br. Nuthatch | 34. English Sparrow | 40. White-thr. Sparrow |
| 29. Carolina Wren | 35. Meadowlark | 41. Song Sparrow |
| 30. Bluebird | 36. Cardinal | |

Orville W. Crowder

BREEDING BIRD CENSUS AT LAKE ROLAND, 1946

The following report, although already published elsewhere, is presented here to indicate the results to be obtained by a breeding bird census in our region. Much of the value of such an undertaking lies in continued study of one area so that results of changes in the environment can be accurately shown. It is hoped that many of our members in the Baltimore region will be encouraged by this report to aid in working out the project for this year.

H.K.

The area consists of a field 2000 ft. long and 200 ft. wide, uncultivated since 1936. It is bound on one side by a railroad and on the other by a stream. In the open areas the most common plants are: sensitive fern (Onoclea sensibilis), grass (spp?), nettle (Urtica), sweet clover (Melilotus), jewelweed (Impatiens biflora), Queen Anne's Lace (Daucus carota), dogbane (Apocynum), Joe-Pye weed and boneset (Eupatorium spp.), goldenrods (Solidago spp.), Aster, Erigeron, Black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia hirta), giant and common rag-weeds (Ambrosia spp.). This large area is interspersed with islands of staghorn sumac (Rhus typhina), black locust (Robinia Pseudo-Acacia) and blackberry (Rubus). Where the field is too wet for cultivation there is about an acre of American elm (Ulmus americana), willow (Salix), Carolina poplar (Populus deltoides), white ash (Fraxinus americana) and red maple (Acer rubrum) with trunk diameters up to 5" at breast height.

SIZE: 15 acres. LOCATION: Outlet of Lake Roland, Baltimore Co., Md. TOPOGRAPHY: Level plain cut by three rivulets several feet wide. EDGE: About 4000 ft. provided by narrow band of trees along stream, and about 2000 ft. by isolated clumps of trees. COVERAGE: May 22, 25, 26, 30. June 4, 11, 15, 22, 26, 30. HOURS: 31. CENSUS: Least flycatcher 1P; catbird 8N; robin 3P, 5N; wood thrush 2N; starling 1N; warbling vireo 2P; yellow warbler 6P, 6N; Maryland yellow-throat 9P; yellow-breasted chat 5P, 1N; red-winged blackbird 5N; orchard oriole 1N, 1Y; Baltimore oriole 1N; cowbird 2P (4 parasitized nests found); cardinal 1P; indigo bunting 2P; goldfinch 4M; towhee 1P; song sparrow 9P; 4N. Total 75 pairs. DENSITY: 500 prs./100 acres. FREQUENT VISITORS: Black-crowned night heron 3; bob-white (male called through June 11, probably nested outside area; spotted sandpiper 1; chimney swift 20(?); downy woodpecker 2; phoebe (young moved into area about June 1, but adults fed there regularly); kingbird 2P; wood pewee 2; rough-winged

(Continued on Page 14)

BREEDING

BIRD

CENSUS

Lake Roland

1946

KEY:

- 1 - Least Flycatcher
- 2 - Catbird
- 3 - Robin
- 4 - Wood Thrush
- 5 - Starling
- 6 - Warbling Vireo
- 7 - Yellow Warbler
- 8 - Md. Yellowthroat
- 9 - Yellow-br. Chat
- 10 - Redwing
- 11 - Orchard Oriole
- 12 - Baltimore Oriole
- 13 - Cowbird (*)
- 14 - Cardinal
- 15 - Indigo Bunting
- 16 - Goldfinch
- 17 - Towhee
- 18 - Song Sparrow

SYMBOLS:

- 12 - Singing male
- (12) - Nest found
- 12-Y - Parent feeding young

(*) Cowbird: 4 parasitized nests found



Woods or thicket

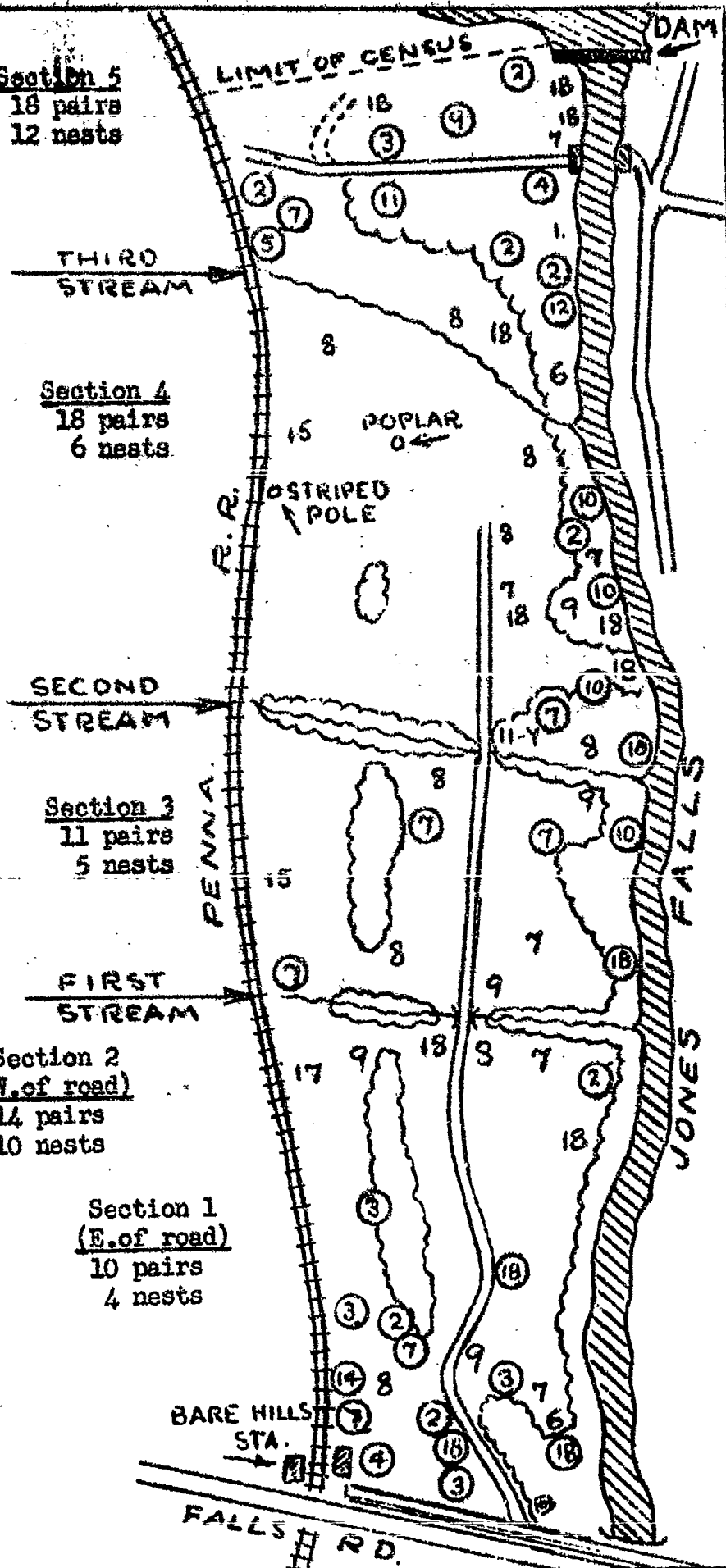
Section 5
18 pairs
12 nests

Section 4
18 pairs
6 nests

Section 3
11 pairs
5 nests

Section 2
(W. of road)
14 pairs
10 nests

Section 1
(E. of road)
10 pairs
4 nests



swallow 25P (?) (nested just below area); barn swallow 10; tufted titmouse 1P (seen feeding young on area); red-eyed vireo 1P; red-start 1P (seen feeding young); English sparrow 1P and young. REMARKS: Baltimore is south of the regular breeding range of the least flycatcher. Another pair of these birds had its territory across the stream from area. Cedar waxwings were seen until early June, but no censuses were made after June to check their nesting. Goldfinch numbers were based on territorial song flights.

Allen W. Stokes

OBSERVATION ON THE LONG-BILLED MARSH WREN

During late July and August, 1946, I had the opportunity to observe many long-billed marsh wrens at a bird sanctuary, which consists largely of marshland, near the Hanover Street Bridge in Baltimore. The marsh wrens were usually seen in cattails, but sometimes they were seen about 20 feet from the marsh, among deciduous vegetation, probably searching for food. Usually their common note, which sounds like the striking of two pebbles together, was heard before the bird was seen.

The late Dr. Frank M. Chapman, in his handbook of Eastern North American birds, describes a process known as "squeaking" which is employed to bring the birds close to the observer. "Squeaking" consists of vigorously kissing the back of the hand. This makes a sound similar to that emitted by a young or wounded bird.

Previous to my experience with the long-billed marsh wren, I had used "squeaking" with no success. But now I have found it an excellent method of getting the marsh wren close to me. I would often sit at the edge of the cattails, "squeak", and after a very short time there would be a wren within three or four feet of me. The wren would stay close as long as the "squeaking" continued. However, even at such close range, it was hard to see the bird's colors and patterns, for it would be constantly moving under cover of the cattails. If, upon walking from the cattails, the "squeaking" was continued, the wren would often follow.

Joseph Gentile

A NEW BULLETIN EXCHANGE

A recent addition to the list of ornithological publications on the "exchange" list of the society is THE PASSENGER PIGEON, club publication of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Madison, Wisconsin. Like other exchange items, it will be available for use at the club headquarters.

— MEETINGS —

GENERAL MEETING, January 10.

The January speaker was Joseph J. Hickey, familiar to everyone as the author of "A Guide to Bird Watching". He talked on "Territorialism in Birds", and the 60 people who attended were able to add much to their knowledge of this phase of bird behavior. The presentation was scholarly and the keen interest with which it was received was reflected in the close attention of the audience. Christmas census reports at this meeting included a description of the Solomon's Island census by Mr. Barry, of the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory. The membership report listed a sharp increase to 218 members.

GENERAL MEETING, February 7.

The February meeting had been moved to the Pratt Library auditorium on the assumption that our usual meeting room would not hold all who wished to hear Raymond Gregg's talk on Rocky Mountain National Park. The attendance of 138 nobly justified the decision. Mr. Gregg showed some fine kodachromes and gave a splendid account of the differences in bird, mammal and plant life at varying altitudes in the Rockies. In the short business session that followed, a revision to the club by-laws was passed, providing for election of officers in May instead of March as heretofore.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING, January 30.

The bi-monthly Executive Council meetings aim to transact the bulk of club "business" and leave the monthly club meetings free for features of greater general interest. The January meeting laid plans for changing the by-laws provision for elections, made preliminary provisions for a club budget, worked out details of plans for the Bert Harwell lecture, and decided we were not ready to undertake the full Audubon Screen Tours series for the 1947-48 season.

These Council meetings are open to any member of the Society who wishes to attend.

O. W. Crowder

THE SEASON

December 16, 1946 to February 15, 1947

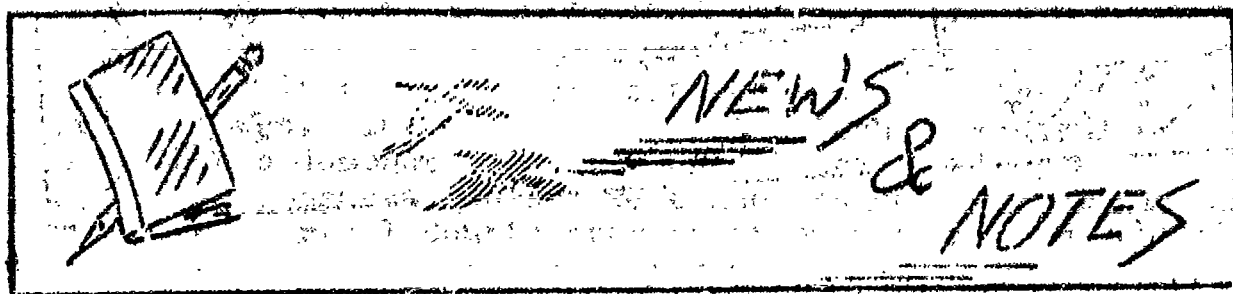
After a remarkably warm and open fall the latter half of December reverted to normal in the matter of temperatures and there was a little ephemeral snow. Christmas counts, however, reflected the mild fall rather than the return to normal (see reports in January-February number). And the normal did not last. January had an accumulated excess of 220° over normal mean temperatures at Baltimore and there were very few days when the mean was below normal. Such conditions encouraged birds which had lingered through December to remain for the winter and many species which are usually uncommon in winter were abundant during January this year. With the advent of February there was a gradual reversal in temperature relations and by the end of the period thermometers were close to normal once again. There was a little slushy snow early in January and some rain throughout the period but the fall was light and the net result was a deficiency in precipitation.

The outstanding bird of this winter was the pine siskin. Never in the writer's experience has this species appeared in such numbers. At Loch Raven it was one of the commonest birds throughout the period. However, unlike the unusual visitor of last year (the evening grosbeak) the siskins apparently shun the houses of man and there are no reports of them from feeding stations.

As mentioned above a number of species were unusually common as wintering birds. Examples are the hermit thrush, the myrtle warbler, and the ruby-crowned kinglet, which were all seen frequently at Loch Raven through January dates for them in that region have been very infrequent in other years. On the other hand, tree sparrows were decidedly below their usual abundance. Furthermore, there was a general lack of song sparrows. Although the song sparrow is not a very common wintering species at Loch Raven some are usually to be found but this year they were entirely absent during January. That the condition was not local is shown by similar reports from Halethorpe (Hampe) and Langley Park near Washington (McCormick-Goodhart).

There have been a number of interesting hawk reports. Mr. Hampe has had his old sparrow hawk friends all winter at Halethorpe and he reports also a wintering Cooper's hawk. Sharp-shins have penetrated into the city along the routes of the daily starling flights: they have been observed several times at York Road and 39th Street in Baltimore. Buteonine hawks have not been so frequently reported but the red-shoulder has been reported from Loch Raven (Kents, et al) and from Halethorpe (Bowen).

(Continued on Page 18)



We welcome to our Society the following new members who have joined us during December 1946 and January 1947:

- Dr. J. H. Schlinkmann, 1313 Eutaw Place, (17)
 Miss Isabelle Miller, 23 Edmondson Ridge Road, Catonsville, (28)
 Mr. W. Steele Webster, Blackwater Refuge, Cambridge, Md.
 Mr. C. L. Nitze, 905 Saint Georges Rd., Roland Park, (10)
 Mr. Franklin Purnell, Golden Quarters, Ocean City, Md.
 Miss Vera E. Pennington, Wyman Park Apts., (11)
 Mr. Whiting Anthony, Ocean City, Md.
 Mr. John Whaley, Thoroughfare Farm, Berlin, Md.
 Mrs. T. M. Andrews, 121 S. Allegany St., Cumberland, Md.
 Miss Margaret W. Frank, 1 W. Bishops Rd., Apt. V, (18)
 Mr. Brooke Meanley, 208 Oakdale Rd., (10)
 Mr. Allen C. Spencer, 1739 Eutaw Place, (17)
 Mrs. Marc deLejune Darrin, 4401 Wickford Rd., (10)
 Miss Nan Livingstone, 3 Decatur St., Cumberland, Md.
 Mr. Philip E. Lamb, 2 Burnbrae Rd., Towson, (4)
 Mrs. Philip E. Lamb, 2 Burnbrae Rd., Towson, (4)
 Mr. Rockwell Smith, 1802 Dixon Rd., (9)
 Mr. Wm. R. Smith, 3527 Newland Rd., (18)
 Dr. R. S. Stauffer, 208 W. Irvin Ave., Hagerstown, Md.
 Mrs. Juliet S. Schweiser, 701 Reservoir St., (17)
 Mr. Arnold Elting, Box 27, R.F.D. #3, Wilson Lane, Bethesda, Md.
 Mrs. Calder C. Downie, 6309 Bellona Ave., (12)
 Mr. Wm. E. Green, 2821 N. Howard St., (18)
 Dr. Charles Eric Hall, 1424 Park Ave., (17)
 Mr. Joseph Gentile, 313 Albemarle St., (2)
 Miss Esther M. Elgert, 1516 Park Ave., (17)
 Mr. W. Bryant Tyrrell, 246 Park Ave., Takoma Park, (12)
 Mrs. L. F. Kingsbury, 321 Dixie Drive, Towson (4)
 Mrs. Elmer R. Haile, Record Bldg., Towson, (4)
 Mrs. Beatrice H. Huppman, 1016 St. George's Road, (10)
 Mrs. Louis R. Huppman, 1016 St. George's Road, (10)

Beginning on June 13 and running through August 28, the National Audubon Society will conduct for the ninth season its Nature Camp at Medomak, Maine. The campers will enjoy two-week sessions outdoors by the sea, participating in informal field classes in birds, plants, insects, marine life, and nature activities. For information address the Audubon Society at 1000 Fifth Avenue, New York 28.

It is difficult to arouse oneself to enthusiasm in the matter of protecting crows. Indeed the effort is slightly ridiculous, since the crow has demonstrated his perfect ability to take care of himself. But as conservationists we cannot condone such wholesale slaughter as the Carroll County crow shoot of February 15. Mass murder, whether at Lidice or at a crow roost, is likely to bear heavily on the innocent and we read in the March issue of the Rally Sheet of the League of Maryland Sportsmen: "One party which did report its kill included three large hawks and an owl"; an accompanying photograph shows a fine buteo. It is to be hoped that the Izaak Walton League will in the future realize that such spectacles do not enhance its generally fine reputation.

H.K.

BACK NUMBERS OF MARYLAND BIRDLIFE WANTED

Requests are reaching us with greater frequency for back issues of MARYLAND BIRDLIFE for library files and other reference collections. Some of these are from locations where complete collections of our club publication would be useful, and would add to the Society's prestige. We can no longer supply full sets, however, and would be glad to have additional copies of a number of back issues. If you have copies on hand and do not make a practice of maintaining a complete file or using them for any other purpose, we will be grateful if you will forward them to the Society office. The numbers completely out of print at the present time are:

| | | |
|---------|-------|---------------------------------------|
| Vol. I | No. 1 | March-April, 1945 ("M.O.S. Bulletin") |
| Vol. I | No. 4 | November-December, 1945 |
| Vol. II | No. 1 | January-February, 1946 |
| Vol. II | No. 3 | May-June, 1946 |

THE SEASON (Continued from Page 16)

With the winter so mild, it was difficult to detect evidences of spring activity among birds. The first true song from cardinals was heard on January 16 at Govans and despite subsequent colder weather singing continued without interruption from that date. A flock of about 300 cowbirds at Dundalk on February 7 evidently represented the beginning of migratory movement.

Miscellaneous notes: A red crossbill was studied carefully at Beltsville on January 19 by Miss Cooley. Mrs. Kuch reports a single horned lark at the Humane Society in Pikesville on February 9. A new member, Mrs. Hoyler, found small groups of redpolls at Frederick during the period February 10-14.

Haven Kolb

FINANCES AND THE 1947-48 BUDGET

Club policy from the outset was to keep dues so low that the cost of membership would always be a minor consideration. The Budget Committee recently found that the one-dollar dues would finance the full program for the coming year. In response to the often-heard exclamation "How do you do it?", the adopted budget for the fiscal year, June 30, 1947 to 1948, is published herewith:

I N C O M E

| | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Balance from 1946- | |
| 1947 | \$100.00 |
| Membership dues . . | 300.00 |
| 290 Adults | |
| 20 Juniors | |
| <hr/> | |
| Total Income . . | \$400.00 |

D I S B U R S E M E N T S

| | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| Maryland Birdlife | \$120.00 |
| Six issues, 350 copies each | |
| @ \$20 per issue | |
| Notices | 35.00 |
| 10 @ \$3.50 per notice | |
| Lecture Program | (nil) |
| To be financed entirely from | |
| proceeds of annual paid lec- | |
| ture | |
| Office Expenses | 60.00 |
| L'heads & envs | \$20.00 |
| Addresso. plates | 5.00 |
| Postage | 25.00 |
| Miscellaneous | 10.00 |
| Printed Programs | 50.00 |
| 1500 8-page folders | |
| Headquarters, etc. | 35.00 |
| Natl. History Socy. | \$25.00 |
| Natl. Audubon Socy. | 10.00 |
| <hr/> | |
| Total disbursements . . | \$300.00 |
| Surplus to 1948-49 | \$100.00 |

Division of

D U E S D O L L A R

| | |
|------|----------------------|
| 40¢ | Maryland Birdlife |
| 12½¢ | Notices |
| 20¢ | Office Expense |
| 15¢ | Printed Programs |
| 12½¢ | N.H.S. etc. |

Orville W. Crowder