

THE MIGRANT

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL
DEVOTED TO TENNESSEE BIRDS

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NOCTURNAL MIGRATION IN STORMY WEATHER

A SYMPOSIUM, BY MEMBERS

It is well known that a vast number of our transient species of birds make their principal southward or northward flights during the night. By what means they are able to maintain their sense of direction we do not know unless there is developed in them a sixth sense—that of direction—with which we humans are not endowed. The ability of small birds to maintain themselves in the air during stormy nights and in the face of driving rain, is something to wonder at. It may be that at such times they rise to an altitude above the rain clouds or, failing in this, that they fly closer to earth so that if forced down they may alight with some hope of self preservation. On such nights as these there are a number of instances where migrating birds have been attracted to bright artificial lights and sometimes these occasions are attended with disaster. An instance of this kind occurred here in late October, 1935, and some of the details will probably be of interest.

(BY JOHN BAMBERG, WHEELER DAM, ALA.) The location of this episode is the new construction village of Wheeler Dam, on the Tennessee River in northern Alabama, about 15 miles south of the Tennessee line. The village sets in an immense open grassy plain which runs on back from the river for some distance, almost completely void of trees; perhaps a hundred and fifty acres. In this field sets the water tower which I judge to be a hundred feet high, strongly lighted, as a combined airport beacon and village light, by four powerful flood lights. All lights are of the fixed, rather than the revolving type. I judged that this light and tower would be a lure for migrating birds, and have been watching it but had not seen much support for my idea until this week.

Tuesday, October 22nd, it rained torrents all day and from 6 P.M. until after midnight it stormed violently. Wednesday it rained lightly a little during the morning, and the sky continued completely overcast with a low ceiling of wet clouds. As I went out at 7:00 P.M. Wednesday I heard bird calls and when I stopped I realized that the air was full of birds, so I walked to the tower. There in the light could be seen hundreds of small birds in the air, most of them circling confusedly in the lighted area, although some were moving straight thru the light. I could not watch them because of an engagement; so I came back at 9:00 o'clock and found the same situation prevailing. It seemed that the birds were going over in periodic waves at about 20 minute intervals. At one time I estimated that there were 500 birds in view over our heads. Guessing again, I would say that at least 100,000 birds passed over the locality during the night. When I finally gave up watching at 11:30, they were as plentiful as at the beginning, and I could still hear them when I went to bed an hour later.

Before retiring, however, Mrs. Bamberg and I began looking for injured birds on the ground. We found two Wood Pewees which were still alive enough to fly off when we lifted them into the air. Another bird flew from the ground before we were able to identify it. Next, we found a Black-billed Cuckoo and a warbler which were sufficiently alive to be able to take off next

morning after being kept indoors overnight. In addition to these, dead birds were found as follows; Red-eyed Vireo 1, White-eyed Vireo 3, Indigo Bunting 3, Kinglets 4, three which were much soiled but believed to be Yellow-throated Warblers and 11 species which were so muddy and bedraggled they could not certainly be identified. Next morning we went out to search for additional birds. We succeeded in finding more, some of which were so muddy and rain-soaked that some of them may have been killed on Tuesday night. These birds were Bay-breasted Warbler 9, Tennessee Warbler 3, Blackburnian Warbler 2, and 8 which were not in condition to certainly identify. In all, we had picked up 50 victims of the light. Stray cats and other creatures may of course have made away with others.

While we were under the light on Wednesday night we heard larger birds also, going overhead, among which were two flocks of ducks and a flock of geese. Thursday, the night was clear and the birds were flying high but we could hear an occasional note. On Friday night I could not detect any evidence of migration.

(BY BENJ. R. WARRINER, CORINTH, MISS.) On the night of October 23, 1935, here at my home in Corinth, four miles south of the Tennessee line, the air seemed literally alive with migrating birds. Many times before, in the spring and fall, I have stood in the open at night and listened to the calls of flying birds. Medlies of soft chirps and low whistles that came down from threatening clouds. Of course I could not see the birds in the darkness, but I could hear them, and feel with them the high spirit of adventure that drove them happily and courageously on to their retreats in far places.

On this October night the flight surpassed anything I have ever witnessed. An autumn storm was on; not severe, but quite a radical change in weather. Clouds were thick; a heavy, rainy mist was falling; brisk wind; temperature around 45. At 7 o'clock a noisy flock of Canada Geese brought me outdoors. The "honkers" soon passed on, and I lingered a moment so that I should not miss even the last indistinct notes that marked their southward course. Then I heard the soft calls of other birds. I strained my eyes to see, but it was too dark. Some of the birds seemed directly overhead; others were high up. On they came, with a steady chorus of musical calls, querulous, plaintive and I thought, pathetic. Yet, despite the darkness and cold and rain and uncharted space through which they flew, I knew the birds were not afraid. Only my concern for them led me to imagine that they were afraid and to detect a trace of alarm in their notes. Frequently the louder call of some waterfowl, larger and stronger than the night flying warblers and other diminutives, came through the medley of the others.

From 7 o'clock until 11 o'clock I listened. There was no cessation of the flight; indeed, it seemed to increase as the night wore on. Two other flocks of geese went over. At midnight I was awakened by a veritable chorus of warbling birds. Actually they were half singing, not just calling or chirping. It was impossible to tell the particular kind, but I am sure there was a large number of them, flying in close formation. As to what effect the lights of the town had on the flight, I cannot say. My place of observation was well lighted with the electric street lights and is situated two blocks from the business section where there are stronger lights and many illuminated signs.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the number of migrants in that autumn flight. A large majority of the birds were small ones, judging from the slight volume of their individual voices. However, many big ones were a part of the feathered host—perhaps gulls, terns, bitterns, herons and others. The weather in Corinth that night was of the same general sort recorded at Memphis, 150 miles eastward. The temperature, rain and wind were practically the same over this long stretch of terrain. If this flight of migrants passed over this 150 mile line, in the same numbers that marked their passage here, then un-

told millions of birds, in one single stormy night, flew across West and Middle Tennessee, from their summer nesting grounds in the North to their winter abodes in far off southern lands.

The next night, October 24, was clear, cool and still. Again I went out to hear the birds, but there was no birds. The great flight had passed on with the autumn storm.

(BY HENRY O. TODD, MURFREESBORO, TENN.) On the night of October 23, I was outside at about seven o'clock and could hear very plainly the calling of migrating birds flying overhead. The weather was cloudy and misty and quite cool, the thermometer being about 51 degrees. There were hundreds of birds, in fact, the air seemed to be literally full of them. While the greater number of calls came from small species, still the occasional call of larger birds could be heard. Being in Murfreesboro at the time, I thought that the lights of the town had probably attracted them close to the ground. However, at about nine-thirty, after arriving at my home three miles out in the country, I noticed that the birds were still flying over and flying low. The next morning, while in a store in town, the proprietor showed me a White-throated Sparrow which had entered the place during the night: it was probably one of the low flying migrants. I heard these birds only on the night of October 23. On the morning of October 30, while in the mountains near Sparta with Mr. Ganier, we saw a flock of geese flying southward at a high altitude at about 10 A.M. A native who was with us, stated that he had seen a flock go over early in the morning and during the week previous, seven flocks of geese and two flocks of ducks. On or about October 30, my father saw two flocks of geese, one of 56 and one of 37, fly over his home near Murfreesboro. Geese, on their migrations, are often heard flying over during the night and seen flying during the day. Since they rarely ever alight at this time, one wonders how many hours they can fly without sleep, or food or rest.

(BY HARRY C. MONK, NASHVILLE, TENN.) October 23 here, was a misty, raw, wintry day, with rain. At 5 P.M., I visited the railway building chimney, at Ninth and Broad, where a few evenings before, thousands of Chimney Swifts had been roosting. The low overhanging clouds made it very dark and only about 25 of the birds were overhead. An adjacent chimney was giving out smoke (and heat) and the Swifts were dipping down into this and then rising again into the murky sky, perhaps to warm themselves before they dropped for the night into the unused chimney. This was the last time I saw Swifts, altho I checked this and other chimneys on succeeding days.

That night, between 9 and 10 P.M. I heard a notable migration of birds passing over my home. It was a raw murky night with a cold north wind blowing. I first heard the loud squawks of herons overhead—sounds which continued for many minutes at a time and evidently came from many individuals. They sounded exactly like the familiar cries of the Green Heron but were probably some other species as the date is far too late for the Green Heron in this region. I also heard two different flocks of Canada Geese, the first of the season. At the same time other call notes were constantly heard, but were so blurred by the wind, or by distance as to baffle identification. However, as I stood on the porch, peering up into the black clouds, the whole sky seemed alive with a hurrying throng of birds of many species, all calling in their various tongues, and punctuated with the explosive squawks of the herons.

On the next day I made a visit to Radnor Lake hoping to find many water birds, but saw only a very few, and concluded the flight heard during the night had passed over without stopping, or else had left very early in the morning, as Mr. Baker, the watchman, says they often do.

AT MEMPHIS: A letter from Franklin McCamey states that he was not "listening out" on the evening of October 23 but that his mother told him that

large low-flying flocks of wild geese waked her several times during the night, seeming to be almost in the yard by the nearness of their calls. Bert Powell reported to him that he heard many geese but did not notice other species. That he was able to distinguish the Blue and Snow Goose notes from those of the Canada Goose. On the next night only a few flocks were heard. The following Associated Press dispatch was sent out from Memphis under date of October 24. "The honking of low flying wild geese gave Memphis notice Wednesday night and early this morning that winter is near. One Memphian reported that a large flock flew overhead Wednesday night as he stood on a street corner and that it took at least five minutes for them to pass. A woman said she was unable to sleep for the noise. Reports from all sections of the city indicated that the geese were in full flight to the South."

The considerable distance between the several locations reported above, make it evident that an almost unbelievable number of birds were passing over Tennessee at the time. It would be of interest to have further reports from any other readers who may have heard the migration.—EDITOR.



BIRD STUDY AT PEABODY COLLEGE

DR. JESSE M. SHAVER

Elementary bird study is given in connection with a year course in Nature Study meeting three times per week (two two-hour periods and one one-hour period), mainly in the winter, spring and summer quarters. These courses are primarily for teachers who plan to teach in the elementary school. It is hoped to stimulate interest in science and especially in outdoor science so that every elementary teacher from Peabody will be anxious to include some outdoor studies in her grades. An average of one evening every two weeks is spent studying stars through a field glass with the object of learning to know the constellations, some of the more important facts about them, and some of the more interesting myths and legends associated with them. Much time in the fall is spent in learning to know trees and in elementary forestry. In the winter much time is spent on home and school gardening, especially in connection with the flower garden and landscape work. The recognition of trees in winter by twig and bud characteristics is stressed. Bird study begins in this quarter. The method used is that of accurate field notes on recognition characters, habits, and behavior, coupled with readings in standard bird books. The outline for the field notes is very similar to that described elsewhere. *Particular attention is paid to nesting habits and the behavior and care of the young. Migration is closely followed. Spring flowers and some study of insects complete the field work in Nature Study. Methods of teaching are briefly considered being based on the Virginia State Course of Study for Elementary Teachers and the publications of the Raleigh, North Carolina schools.

Occasionally an advanced one quarter course in Ornithology is given, meeting four times a week. Methods are very similar to those used in the elementary bird study in Nature Study but of a more advanced grade. The course is planned primarily for prospective high school teachers of biology and general science. It is so designed that high school science teachers from Peabody will be prepared to use their local environment in their teaching.

Sometimes, with the stimulation that such courses give students and the encouragement furnished Tennessee youngsters by the Tennessee Ornithological Society, graduate students with a background sufficient to prepare a master's thesis in Ornithology appear. So far nineteen students have prepared

*Shaver, Jesse M., Some considerations in Teaching a Bird Course. *The Nature-Study Review*, February, 1919, pp. 53-57.

theses of this type. It is thought that a list of these students, their thesis subjects, and their present teaching positions would be of interest to readers of *The Migrant*. Accordingly they are listed below.

1. Barry, Mary V. 1925. The Life History of the Cardinal. Published in part as follows: Jesse M. Shaver and Mrs Mary Barry Roberts, 1930. Some Nesting Habits of the Cardinal. *Jour. Tenn. Acad. Sci.*, 5:157-170. Jesse M. Shaver and Mrs. Mary V. Roberts, 1933. A Brief Study of the Courtship of the Eastern Cardinal (*Richmondia cardinalis cardinalis* (Linnaeus)). *Jour. Tenn. Acad. Sci.*, 8:116-123. Miss Barry taught biology in the Illinois Normal University (Bloomington), resigning to become Mrs. Cecil Roberts, Clinton, Ky.
2. Bell, Glenn W. 1931. The Relation of Song to the Nesting Season of Birds. Unpublished. Mr. Bell is now Superintendent of the Lyerly High School, Lyerly, Ga.
3. Brasfield, Steven A. 1932. The Nesting Habits of the Wood Thrush. Unpublished. Mr. Brasfield is teacher of biology, Sunflower Junior College, Morehead, Miss.
4. Bridges, Harvey A. 1932. Temperature, Relative Humidity, and the Feeding Periods of Brooding Robins. Unpublished. Mr. Bridges is teacher of science, junior high school, Louisville, Ky.
5. Crook, Compton. 1933. The Birds of Peabody Campus. Published in part with additional material from the senior author, thus:
Jesse M. Shaver and Compton Crook, The Birds on the Campus of George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee. *Jour. Tenn. Acad. Sci.*, 9:278-287 (1934); 10:77-82 (1935). Prof. Crook is instructor in Natural Science, College of Education, Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.
6. Elliott, Paul R. 1931. The Relation of Temperature and Relative Humidity to the Ending of the Evening Song of Birds. Published as, Temperature and Relative Humidity in Relation to the Ending of the Evening Song of Birds. *Jour. Tenn. Acad. Sci.*, 7:204-213. Present position, teacher of biology, Kingsport High School, Kingsport, Tenn.
7. Erwin, W. G. 1933. Some Nesting Habits of the Brown Thrasher. Published in *Jour. Tenn. Acad. Sci.*, 10:179-204. Mr. Erwin is Superintendent of the Lake High School, Lake, Miss.
8. Evans, Beatrice. 1934. A Statistical Study of the Relation of Light to the Ending of the Evening Song of Birds. Unpublished. Miss Evans is teacher of Science, high school, Greenville, Ala.
9. Heatt, Martha V. 1931. The Relation of Light to the Last Call of Birds. Unpublished. Miss Heatt teaches at Danville, Ky.
10. Layne, Mabelle. 1931. Some Nesting Habits of the Catbird. Unpublished. Miss Layne is librarian at Paint Rock, Ky.
11. McCorkle, Eloise. 1926. Territory in Bird Life. Unpublished. Miss McCorkle is science critic teacher, Portage High School, Portage, Mich.
12. Oakes, James Clyde. 1933. A study of the Occurrence of Birds on Vanderbilt Campus. Unpublished. Mr. Oakes is in soil erosion work in Virginia.
13. Schultz, Helen H. 1930. Birds of the Cedar Glades of Middle Tennessee. Unpublished. Miss Schultz is teacher of biology, State Teachers College, Fredericksburg, Va.
14. Stawiarski, Victor. 1929. The Influence of Temperature and Relative Humidity on Bird Numbers. Unpublished. Mr. Stawiarski is Teacher of biology in a college in Buenos Aires, Argentina.
15. Tait, Blanche. 1930. The Evening Song of Birds in Relation to Light Intensity. Miss Tait is teacher of biology, Georgia State College for Women, Milledgeville, Ga.
16. Walker, Emily Barry. 1928. The Relation of Light to the Awakening

Song of Birds. Unpublished. Mrs. Walker is instructor in nature study, State Teachers College, Commerce, Texas.

17. Walker, Gladys O. 1929. The Relation of Temperature, Relative Humidity and Wind Velocity to the Evening Song of Birds. Partly treated statistically and published as follows: Jesse M. Shaver and Gladys Walker, 1930. A Preliminary Study of the Effects of Temperature on the Time of Ending of the Evening Song of the Mockingbird. *Auk*, 47:385-396. Miss Walker's present position is teacher of science, Clarksville High School, Clarksville, Tenn.

18. Walker, Ruby J. 1929. The Relation of Light to the Evening Song of Birds. Partly treated statistically and published thus: Jesse M. Shaver and Ruby J. Walker, 1931. A Preliminary Report on the Influence of Light Intensity Upon the Time of Ending of the Evening Song of the Robin and the Mockingbird. *Wilson Bull.*, 43:9-18. Married to Henry A. Taggart, Baton Rouge, La.

19. West, Joe Young. 1932. Light Intensity and the Rhythm of the Robin's Evening Song. Unpublished. Mr. West is teacher of elementary science, State Teachers College, Radford, Va.

The above theses are in the Library of George Peabody College for Teachers. While this library is not open to the public, the members of the Tennessee Ornithological Society can, I feel sure, make arrangements to examine any of these theses with the library.

NASHVILLE, TENN., NOV., 1935.



LATE SUMMER NESTS AND NESTLINGS

BY AMELIA R. LASKEY

Although no thorough or systematic search and no regular field trips were made for July and August nests in 1935, my day book and banding records include considerable data on nests and nestlings during that period. Most of the 49 records came from areas about my home banding station and the Love Hill and Green Hills substations because those section were more thoroughly searched. Nearly all of the nests were built close to dwellings in this suburban section of southwest Nashville, roadside shrub plantings, numerous trees, and the natural thickets on vacant property furnishing splendid nesting sites. About 40% of them were discovered from the road, with the cooperation of Jack Calhoun. Three trips of two hours each were made by automobile, driving very slowly as we watched both sides of the road, stopping to investigate nests and following all adult birds seen with food in their beaks. A household stepladder was carried in the car to look into those not otherwise accessible. A number of the records were obtained in the gardens of neighbors. Doubtless two hours a week spent systematically covering this section, would have yielded at least twice as many late summer records and several additional species.

On August 8th, three tiny Quail chicks entered a sparrow trap. When the trap was approached to release them, as they were much too small to carry the proper size band, the banded male appeared. He gave pitiful distress calls and feigning injury, dragged himself a hundred feet across the lawn, disappearing in a clump of shrubbery. The chicks did not follow but scurried off in the grass in another direction. On the 23rd of August, a larger size chick struck a window of our home, pecked at the glass a few times, squatted on the outer sill some minutes while the parent gave coaxing calls from the front lawn and finally the youngster took wing and speedily reached cover.

Doves this year were very scarce compared with the 1934 nesting season. On July 10th, two fledglings left a nest and on July 12th, one nest contained 2 very small nestlings.

A Flicker fed a youngster on the lawn July 13th. On July 10th, two Red-headed Woodpecker nests were located.

On the 12th, a Rough-winged Swallow nest contained 5 young, very heavily infested with ecto parasites.

July 4th and July 12th, two broods of Bewick Wren's were banded, of 4 and 3 birds respectively. Two Carolina Wrens, found in a nest built among ivy vines on a dwelling, were examined on July 8th; one apparently about a week old was then banded. Its nest-mate was very small, almost naked, appearing to be only two or three days old. The banded bird was trapped August 23rd, about 200 yards from the nest. A brood of 4 seven-day old Carolina Wrens were banded August 8th in their beautiful spherical nest built in a window box and composed almost exclusively of green mosses.

Twenty Mockingbird nests were found during July and August. Two were in process of construction but most of them contained young of various ages. Of the sixteen occupied nests examined, broods of three or clutches of three eggs predominated. Nine contained 3 each, four had 4 each, three had 2 each. Although several nests have contained sets of 5 eggs, my records show none of that number for late nests. The latest dates this year were on August 3rd, three nestlings almost ready to fly, and on August 6th, three about a week old. The latter nest was built in the top of a tall syringa bush, and was beautifully decorated on the outside with moss and interwoven with a spray of silvery artemesia. It was exposed to the sun and on those hot, dry days, when the official temperature reached 102 degrees, the faithful parent perched over the nest with wings extended to shield the nestlings from the terrific heat of mid-day. Of the 37 juvenile Mockingbirds banded from these nests, 6 individuals, representing 3 families, were caught later in my banding traps. The most interesting of these was a nestling banded July 13th at Love Hill substation and captured October 9th at the Green Hills substation two and a half miles south (air-line). Several of the broods examined were badly infested with ecto parasites but the only soiled nest and young among them apparently harbored none.

Of Catbirds, 3 nests were found as follows: July 7th, two or more fledged; July 18, 2 nestlings banded; July 23rd, 3 nestlings banded which remained in the nest a few days longer. Two of this latter brood were trapped at their nesting place August 30th and the third on September 19th. The nest of this brood contained a snake skin woven on the outside and was probably built by the same bird that was banded in 1934 which returned this spring. Last year two Catbird nests in our garden had snake skins woven into the outer basket.

Two July Brown Thrasher nests were found; one brooding 3 eggs July 10th, the other on July 16th with 3 young about a week old. These were banded and two of them were trapped nearby in late August. In mid-July, 5 young Robins were banded from three nests and on August 9th, a Robin was still carrying food to nestlings near the banding station. One Robin nest was artistically decorated on the rim and sides with bits of moss.

July 8th, two Bluebirds were banded from our garden nest box a few days before they were ready to leave. They were trapped in the same territory on October 25 and October 27. Their banded parents fluttered about with little cries and one parent dashed at me with considerable pugnacity when the band number was being read. The young were both males and had acquired adult plumage.

There were three Orchard Oriole nests located in July. On July 3rd, one brood fledged; on the 10th, one contained 4 about a day old; on the 12th, 3 were banded from the third of these widely separated nests. A unique empty double nest of an Orchard Oriole was seen a few yards from one of the foregoing nests. The twin baskets were both complete and built close to the trunk of a young tree on a low branch.

One Grackle nest was found July 1st at the top of a large maple tree and on the 24th, the banded female bird brought at least two young to the station.

On July 8th, a Cardinal was found brooding an undetermined number of eggs; on July 12th, a nest contained 3 fresh eggs, and on July 30th, 2 young were fledged elsewhere. July 11th, there were 4 five-day old Chipping Sparrows banded at a neighbors, one of which was trapped several times in late August at the banding station.

Field Sparrow broods were found on July 5th and July 8th. On July 16th a banding station resident was laying eggs, for before 6:30 A.M. that day she had entrapped herself and dropped her egg in the trap. This Field Sparrow had been banded as an immature in August, 1934, returning in the spring of 1935. The egg was smaller than the average size.

NASHVILLE, TENN., NOV. 15, 1935.



A SKETCH OF BUFORD A. MATHES, 1878-1935

By BRUCE P. TYLER

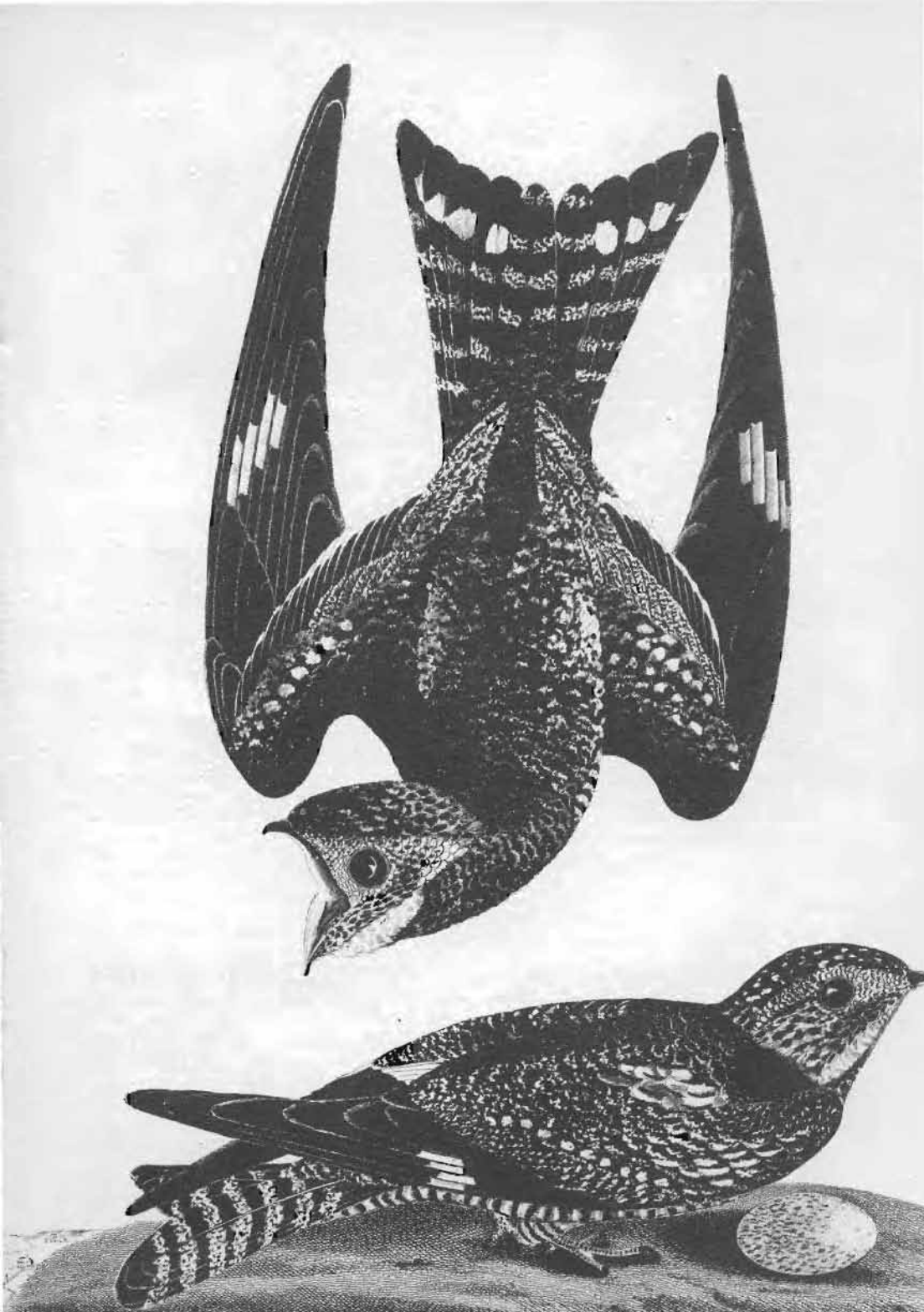
The cold March winds of 1878 brought to the dwellers in the hills and verdant valleys of Northeastern Tennessee a wee stranger boy—possibly he should not be called a stranger because his forbears, for several generations, had lived among these very hills and valleys, but for him all was new. With eager and able mind he struggled with the mysteries of life, as all babies do, and came in his youthful days to attend the Lusk School at Johnson City.

The three Rs were not his only troubles at prep school, for music was on the curriculum, perhaps the curriculum of the home rather than the school. At any rate, the prescribed practicing was not to his liking, but father Mathes had other ideas and the practicing continued under parental guidance until the youthful mind rebelled and Buford was missing from home to be discovered later as a cook on a canal boat on the Erie Canal—perhaps the tinkle of the bells on the tow mules reminded him of his truancy. Returning home, we find him installing a telephone from his study to the home of a boy friend some half mile distant. And it really worked.

From elementary school he went to the University of Tennessee for study in the technical division, majoring in Electrical Engineering. His first work of moment after graduation, and following some years in the Westinghouse shop at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was the installation of the electrical equipment at the National Soldiers' Home at Johnson City. Following its completion he continued in the service of the government, maintaining and operating the machinery for some dozen years.

Though disobedient to parental wishes that he might travel in the footsteps of Euterpe, he was not disobedient to the promptings of Venus, and at the age of twenty-three married the comely Bessie Jones, of Abingdon, Virginia. To bless this union came three daughters. Thus with education and with abounding personality with family ties, with technical skill, and with love of nature, we find him turning to the study of birds. In this pursuit he camped in the mountains, canoed down the Watauga and the Holston Rivers to Kingsport, tramped the by-ways, the fields, and the woodlands with binoculars and camera, finding the real joy of the ornithologist in God's great out-of-doors. He was one of the earliest members of the Tennessee Ornithological Society, having joined in March, 1916, shortly after he had learned of its founding. His work with the camera was outstanding and some examples of his photographic studies of bird life are reproduced in the pages which follow, for the pleasure of the readers of this journal.

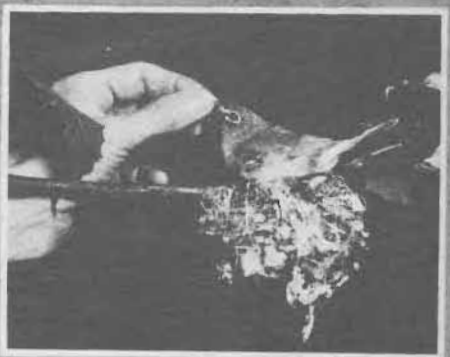
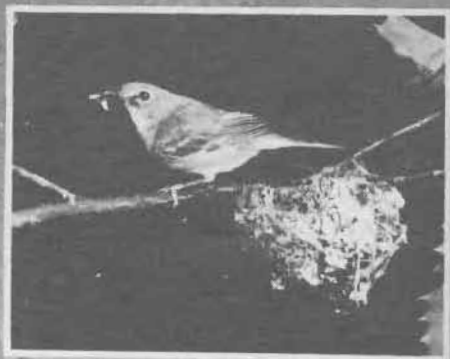
Later in his years, perhaps because of lack of strength for strenuous hikes afield, and perhaps because of his greater love for electrical work, he



From a drawing by J. G. Audubon

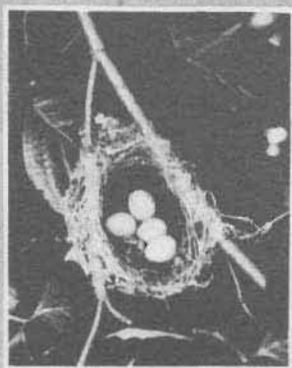
1. Night Hawk 2. Female

Engraved by J. G.



Ruby-throated Hummingbird showing nest, very small young and young nearly ready to leave.

The Mountain Vireo is doubtless the most fearless of our native wild birds.



Black-throated Bluebird
on nest in pine.

Yellow-breasted Chat
feeding it's young

White-eyed Vireo
with one of herbird

Red Thrush
nest and young

Young Wood Thrushes
about 10 days old

White-eyed Vireo
incubating it's eggs

Carolina Chickadee
in nesting hole

A Wood Thrush
on nest in oak

White-eyed Vireo
young leaving nest



laid aside his ornithology (perhaps only temporarily) for the mysteries of the radio. On May 9, 1935, he was summoned to the great beyond, after a short life filled with active labors, well studded with the esthetic joys of communion with nature, with a well ordered home and everything to live for. Yet none may query God's goodness or wisdom, so his own and his friends bow in silent submission, knowing full well that the memories of congenial companionship and the inspiration of his life and work are our heritage.

JOHNSON CITY, TENN., Nov., 1935.

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS

The first of the foregoing plates is a reproduction of a copper engraving of one of Alexander Wilson's paintings, prepared by "The Father of American Ornithology," to illustrate his splendid work published about 125 years ago. It represents a Nighthawk "booming" above his sitting mate.

On the two inside plates, are shown nine photos of bird life, taken by Mr. Buford Maths. These were mounted and furnished for reproduction by Mr. B. P. Tyler, to accompany his article above. The name of each picture is given at the bottom of the plates. It is a privilege to be able to present such a splendid group of pictures.

The last page of illustrations show 73 of those who attended the T. O. S. 20th Anniversary Fall Field Day, held on October 13, 1935, at Idlewild Wood near Nashville. The occasion was voted a splendid success, in fact the best meeting in the history of the Society. Perfect weather, a large attendance (about 100), carefully made arrangements, picturesque location and a generous attendance of members from a distance, made the meeting one to be long remembered. Those pictured are: 1, John Hay, Knoxville; 2, 3, G. R. Mayfield and son; 4, Miss Emilie Yunker, Louisville, Ky.; 5, 6, 7, 8, Dixon Merritt and sons and Miss Holloway, of Lebanon; 9, Miss Coffey, Nashville; 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, Miss Alice Smith, Frank McCamey, Ben B. Coffey, Mrs. Coffey, John Pond and Bert Powell, all of Memphis; 16, James Cortner; 17, Miss Georgie Reed; 18, W. P. Morrison, Dickson; 19, Mrs. Wm. P. Morgan, Columbia; 20, 21, E. D. and Mrs. Schreiber; 22, Miss Sallie Bateman; 23, Mrs. Sam H. Rogers, Pulaski; 24, 25, 26, 27, Prof. Geo. Davis, Dr. J. B. Black, R. J. Murphy, and H. O. Todd, all of Murfreesboro; 29, 30, 31, Misses Ogden, Knoxville; 32, Miss Mabel Slack, Louisville, Ky.; 33, Mrs. Hobson, Louisville, Ky.; 34, Harry Tracy; 35, 36, Wayland Hayes and daughter; 37, Miss Dessa Dreyer; 38, Miss Alma Hollinger; 39, Miss Margaret McIntyre; 40, B. F. Fields; 41, A. W. Ingersoll; 42, Mrs. Dixon Merritt, Lebanon; 43, Mrs. C. B. Tippens; 44, Miss Florence Harris; 45, Miss Jessie French; 46, J. A. Robins; 47, 48, Mr. and Mrs. John Caldwell; 49, Mrs. Wayland Hayes; 50, E. Williams; 51, S. A. Ogden, Knoxville; 52, 62, 63, 56, Mr. and Mrs. Masoncup and Mr. and Mrs. B. C. Bacon, of Madisonville, Ky.; 54, 55, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Burch, Knoxville; 57, Mrs. F. C. Laskey; 58, 59, Prof. J. M. Shaver and Son; 60, James Trent, Jr., Knoxville; 61, Miss Frances Church; 53, Mrs. Ingersoll; 64, 65, Mr. and Mrs. G. B. Woodring; 66, Lewis Lyne; 67, Leo Rippey, Jr.; 68, Spiller Campbell; 69, H. S. Vaughn; 70, 71, Mr. and Mrs. H. P. Ijams, Knoxville; 72, C. B. Tippens; 73, Mrs. G. R. Mayfield. Photo by A. F. Ganier. (Those not otherwise designated are from Nashville.)

INFORMATION WANTED: (1) The food habits of the Barn Owl are being studied by Mr. Arthur Stupka (Park Naturalist, Gatlinburg, Tenn.), who would be glad to receive pellets from nesting sites, particularly from East Tennessee. He also wishes to learn the location of nesting pairs.

BIRD BANDING BREVITIES, NO. 7

BY AMELIA R. LASKEY

The fall banding season has been very interesting; trapping has been unusually successful during October when 324 birds were banded and numerous return records were obtained. The drouth in this section during late summer and through October doubtless was an influencing factor, for as soon as the rains started in November, the watering places at the station were deserted and trapping dropped to a low point in numbers. The season was comparable to the autumn of 1933, when similar conditions and corresponding station results were recorded. Both years Robins and Mockingbirds were banded in numbers and a creditable showing was made in the trapping of **Warblers**, although only seven species of the latter were banded in 1935 as compared with thirteen species in 1933. However, the total number of individuals in 1933 was only 74 while in 1935 it was 133 with 49 Maryland Yellowthroats heading the list (for the entire season); **Tennessee Warblers** were second with 43, this latter group all having been banded between September 8th and October 21, 1935. At times there were six or seven of them caught simultaneously in two or three cells of a Brenckle water-drip trap. A **Maryland Yellowthroat**, H17839, yielded a valuable return 3 record. Banded as an immature September 9, 1932, he was retaken August 12, 1933, June 16, 1934, and September 13, 1935. A good sight record, of a rare visitor here was obtained on September 19th, when a **Redbreasted Nuthatch** spent some time at the station, working down the tree trunks and coming within four feet of me. A **Catbird** banded in October remained nearby, repeating frequently, until November 8th. Among the winter residents, the first arrivals of each species were as follows: **White-throated Sparrow**, trapped September 29; **Lincoln's Sparrow**, October 8; **White-crowned Sparrow**, October 14; **Song Sparrow** and **Slate-colored Junco**, October 22. A number of these migrants from the North have already returned this fall for their second or third seasons. A **Gambel's Sparrow** in immature plumage was banded October 29th, being the fourth individual of this race captured at my station. Banding, return, and repeat dates, occur in October, November, January, February, and March. This, we may reasonably conclude, establishes the status of the Gambel's Sparrow as a regular winter resident in the Nashville area, although the first Tennessee record was my station capture in February, 1932. Possibly if field workers searched flocks of White-crowned Sparrows for individuals with yellowish instead of the usual reddish bills, it might result in sight records also of *Zonotrichia leucophrys Gambeli*. The only autumn returns of **White-throated Sparrows** at my stations occurred on October 30, and November 5, 1935. Both birds had been banded December 6, 1934; the proximity of their return dates suggests they are still traveling together.

Since the departure of Jack Calhoun in September for University of Virginia, he has obtained his banding permit from the Biological Survey and has established a station at his home there. Leo Rippey, a young bird student is now doing careful work at my West End substation on Love Hill which Jack established and where he did some outstanding work. Leo has already made a good start in trapping Cardinals, Towhees, and White-throated Sparrows.

Mr. Ben B. Coffey, of Memphis, has been actively banding this year, having placed many bands on young herons, etc., and later on Chimney Swifts. His report on the latter will appear in the next issue.

NASHVILLE, TENN., Nov., 1935.

THE ROUND TABLE

THE SEASON AT MEMPHIS: In addition to the two Least Bittern nests mentioned in the June Migrant we found three others. Subsequently eggs were found punctured or nest destroyed in all but one case. Banded four young Bitterns on July 14, 1935, having found this nest with five eggs on June 13, revisiting it June 22. This fall the writer failed to see either White Pelican or Wood Ibis. On Sept. 29, McCamey saw 12 large white birds at a distance swimming back and forth on a shallow lake; he believes these were Pelicans. The Little Blue Herons and American Egrets were common as usual and were roosting in a particular patch of low willows on the north shore of Mud Lake. Towards dusk they would come in from the immediate vicinity. On September 14 we saw 250 Egrets and 150 Little Blue Herons, and on the 22nd, 500 Egrets. On the 29th McCamey and party listed 30 Great Blue Herons, 2 adult Little Blue Herons, and 250 Egrets there and 140 Egrets near North Lake; Mrs. Coffey and Miss Alice Smith saw 75 other Egrets. On October 6, 250 Egrets remained, but when I visited the lake again on October 12 with Mr. Tyler, we found only three Egrets, the last of the season. On Sept. 22 I noted 300 Wood Ducks, strung out along the far (north) shore of Mud Lake; McCamey listed 130 a week later, and Mr. Tyler and I saw a few on October 12. Eight Blue-winged Teal were seen Sept 14, 30 on the 29th (McCamey) and 5 on November 28, along with 10 Green-winged Teal (McCamey and Pond). On the latter date 70 Mallards, 2 Black Duck, 6 Pintail, and 1 L. Scaup were noted and the next day Pond found 2 L. Scaup, 2 Wood Duck, and 1 Hooded Merganser. McCamey's list for Horn Lake Creek bottoms, North Lake, Mud Lake and the "barrow pits" on September 29 include, besides species mentioned above: Pied-billed Grebe, 2; Killdeer, 60; Spotted Sandpiper, 1; Least Sandpiper, 6; Semipalmated Sandpiper, 12; L. Yellowlegs, 1; G. Yellowlegs, 1; Pectoral Sandpiper, 14; Wilson's Snipe, 3; Canada Goose, 40; Double-crested Cormorant, 4 (on the 22nd I saw a flock of about 50 flying southward); Anhinga, 1; Yellow-crowned Night Heron, 2 immatures; Green Heron, 1, and Osprey, 1. Among flocks of swallows were detected: Bank, 2; Barn, 1; Tree, 10; and Rough-winged, 100. On October 20 Mrs. Coffey, Miss Smith and I saw 200 to 300 Tree Swallows and a few Rough-wings. Just as we were leaving we drove directly under a flock of geese which passed silently over us at a height of about 50 feet; we counted 21 Blue Geese and 3 (L.) Snow Geese. On October 12 it was my pleasure to spend the afternoon at Horn Lake, the barrow pits and Mud Lake with Mr. Bruce P. Tyler, our interesting co-worker from Johnson City. Unfortunately, as noted above, where I had seen 250 Egrets the week before we found only 3 remaining. Wilson's Snipe were common and we listed 25. Various species of Blackbirds were coming in as usual to roost in the willows of both the big barrow pits formerly used and at the end of Mud Lake. We noted several late Warbler migrants. The morning of September 12, in a bush at our back porch I saw a male Wilson's Warbler, the second record for this area.—BEN B. COFFEY, Memphis.

NOTES FROM MT. PLEASANT: Not nearly so many Doves were shot in this section this fall as usual, hardly anyone getting the limit. I think this was due partly to the fact that there are not as many as usual and also because when the season opened they had largely left the grain fields and were eating weed seeds in pastures and on glady hillsides, where they were harder to get at. Still, I am in favor of the later season because it should result in an increase of Doves, and without plenty of them there

cannot be good shooting. On September 19, while in a wooded hollow hunting squirrels with a rifle, a Great Horned Owl lit on a stump about 20 yards from me and, with its head turned away, it remained there for some time, until at length it turned and saw me. Another one was near by and they were calling to each other, *hoo, hoo, hoo-hoo, hoo, hoo*, and flying about considerably, evidently hunting squirrels themselves, although it was only 4 P.M. On Sept. 24, I saw a pair of Black-crowned Night Herons near here. On Arrow Lake, October 21, the first day of the hunting season found a number of hunters and some ducks on hand. There were a good many Lesser Scaups and Ring-necks, a few Greenwinged Teals and a Cormorant. A Duck Hawk was noted flying over Ashwood. During the week of November 18-23, a good many Pipets were noted on land that was being planted in wheat.—DAN R. GRAY, Mt. Pleasant.

CHRISTMAS WITH THE BIRDS: The Christmas of 1934 was a happy one for the birds at 'Oaklee.' On Christmas Eve, I put out large chunks of suet at all the feeding stations, also crushed walnuts, mixed grain, bits of fruit and—what many birds love best—cornbread crumbs. Our "spend-the-day" bird guests, for they not only feed but remain until nightfall, were the native Sparrows, Mockingbirds, Cardinals, Jays, Downy Woodpeckers, Flickers, etc. For several years we have also had a charming pair of Tufted Titmice and for two years an adorable pair of Carolina Chickadees. While coming to and from their feast they remind one of children at play and are most interesting to watch. We have a number of evergreens about the place and one, a large Norway spruce, seems to be a favorite dwelling place for birds the year round. It is most interesting to record the arrival of winter birds from the North and I usually hear them before I see them. A number of these species arrive at nearly the same date each year. The White-crowned Sparrows usually arrive early and stay late. I think our grounds would be a Paradise for birds were it not for stray cats. For a long time I have suspected our place is being made a dumping ground for unwanted cats and kittens from the nearby town. One day the children called excitedly to me to "come and look." What did I see but an old cat, followed by four kittens, walking leisurely toward the house from the front gate. I then did some calling myself—to George the yard man—to get a sack and hustle the happy family into it and then back to Columbia to a grocery store where they might be of some use hunting mice.—NANCY LEE MORGAN, Columbia.

RADNOR LAKE NOTES: Frequent visits to the Lake show the following dates of arrival for water birds there: October 13, Coot, Herring Gull and Pied-billed Grebe; October 20, Mallard, Black Duck and Ruddy Duck; October 27, Cormorant, Lesser Scaup and Ring-necked Ducks; November 3, Pintail Duck; November 11, Canvasback and Gadwall; November 17, Shoveler Duck, and November 20, 6 Common Loons. A Lesser Yellowlegs was recorded on October 27, November 3 and November 17. A Palm Warbler noted on October 27 represents a late date for this species. The owners of Radnor Lake have leased the hunting privileges to a group of local sportsmen, and it is regrettable that they have elected to shoot the ducks on what has formerly been a sanctuary. A few days before the hunting season opened on November 20, there were 315 waterfowl on the lake, and by December 1, these had dwindled to 90. In former years, there has been an increase rather than a decrease.—G. B. WOODRING, Nashville.

A DUCK HAWK NEAR KNOXVILLE: On October 13, at Lake Andrew Jackson near here, we had the pleasure of studying a Duck Hawk for more than an hour. The bird was in immature plumage and at times we were as close as 50 yards. A Robin, either bold or ignorant, attacked the falcon as it sat upon a dead limb but escaped with its life. It made three excursions out over the lake but was not successful in securing prey.—W. M. WALKER and GEORGE FOSTER, Knoxville.

EARED GREBE AT NASHVILLE: One of these birds was collected on the Cumberland River, a few miles below Nashville, on January 14, 1923, by Mr. Grover Cook. It was mounted and properly labeled by him and he gave the writer the data at the time. A few years later he sold his collection of birds, including this one, to the State Museum at Nashville. An attache, making new labels about five years ago, changed the label to "American Grebe" and its true identity was temporarily lost sight of. In December, 1934, Dr. H. C. Oberholser, while looking over the specimens with the writer, called his attention to the error. Since this species (*colymbus nigricollis californicus*) has not heretofore been included in the Tennessee list, it is now being placed on record. The Eared Grebe, which closely resembles our Horned Grebe, is a far-western species and there are very few records east of the Mississippi.—A. F. GANIER, Nashville.

THE ROCK DOVE or Common Blue Pigeon (*Columba livia livia*) is a native of Europe; it was domesticated long ago and was brought to America as a domesticated bird. In some sections it has gone back to its wild state and for that reason, the 1931 edition of the A. O. U. checklist has accorded it a place in the list of North American birds. When the writer prepared his list of the birds of the State in 1933 he did not include the Rock Dove because he knew of no places where it had naturalized in the State. Last summer, however, while inspecting the vast old rock quarry a few miles southwest of Franklin, he found that a number of these birds had taken up permanent residence there. They were nesting within cavernous recesses in the quarry face which is more than 100 feet high and several hundred feet long. Under the circumstances it is now proper to include this species in the Tennessee list.—A. F. GANIER, Nashville.

FALL NOTES, NASHVILLE: An Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Nuttallornis mesoleucus*) was added to the writer's collection on August 17, 1935, this being the first specimen and fourth record for the State. The bird, resembling a Kingbird and nearly as large, was perched on top of a dead tree in a wooded pasture. A previous record was made by the writer on August 29, 1915, in the same locality. The other two are summer records in the East Tennessee Mountains On August 18, at Indian Lake near the Cumberland River and 12 miles northeast of Nashville, two Bald Eagles were observed. One was mature, having tail and head entirely white. Not far away, a Marsh Hawk was seen and a Barn Owl's nest was visited On August 25, the Barn Swallow colony near Bellevue was inspected; only one Swallow was seen, but 109 nests were examined, all now being empty Chimney Swifts roosted in abundance as usual this fall, in a number of chimneys, the last being seen on October 23, by H. C. Monk Shorebirds were very scarce this fall; a few Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary and Spotted Sandpipers were seen and several Pectorals on Donelson Pond, October 6 and 13 On October 13, the T. O. S. Field Day parties recorded 67 species of birds, the most interesting being a Short-billed Marsh Wren A Golden Eagle was shot about 12 miles south of Nashville on October 20; it died a few days later. Another was reported as having been trapped near Glenciff at about this time; its fate was not learned The last week in October, in company with H. O. Todd, the writer explored the "Gulf" of Caney Fork in White County in search of Eagles, Duck Hawks and Ravens. Natives told us some of the latter were still seen each winter. Some likely eyries were found and will be revisited The 12 year old Cardinal at my home is still hale and hearty; rarely now does he leave the premises. . . . Robins and Grackles were apparently absent during November and Starlings have been quite scarce.—A. F. GANIER, Nashville.

THE KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY held its annual Fall Field Day at Mammoth Cave National Park, October 18-20. With excellent facilities, fine weather and plenty of enthusiasm, the meeting was voted the best in their history. Papers were read at the evening meetings of Friday and Saturday. Saturday and the morning of Sunday were spent afield in the Park area and 52 species of birds were listed. Messrs. Merritt, Mayfield and Ganier, of the T. O. S., were in attendance. Plans looking toward a joint Fall meeting with the T. O. S., in 1936, were discussed and placed in the hands of a committee.

THE KENTUCKY WARBLER, the quarterly publication of the Kentucky Ornithological Society, Dr. Gordon Wilson, Editor, has been enlarged to eight pages per issue. The July issue contains the first installment of an annotated list of the birds of Kentucky, by Messrs. B. C. Bacon and Burt Monroe. This publication of our neighboring state should be of interest to readers of *The Migrant* and those who would receive it should write to Miss Mabel Slack, Secretary, K. O. S., 1004 Everett Avenue, Louisville, Kentucky.

MURFREESBORO CHAPTER ORGANIZED: On Friday, November 8, a group of five of our local bird students met and decided to organize a local chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society. The meeting was held at State Teachers College at eight P.M. Messrs. A. F. Ganier, G. R. Mayfield, H. S. Vaughn and J. A. Robins of Nashville, were our guests and gave us the benefit of their experience. In the discussion which followed, a number of bird problems were suggested which could be studied with interest. Professor George Davis of the College was elected president and the writer was elected secretary. Others present were Dr. James B. Black, Robert Murphy and George Cash. Dr. J. C. Waller, another local member, was unable to be present at this meeting.—HENRY O. TODD, Murfreesboro.

MEMPHIS CHAPTER: On November 9th, new officers were elected for the Memphis Chapter of the T. O. S. Clarence Eugene Moore, of West Tennessee Teachers' College, was elected president, Dabney Crump, vice-president, and Franklin McCamey, secretary-treasurer. On October 27, we had our annual fall field day, listing 41 species of birds, including two flocks of Canada Geese numbering 55 and 35 respectively. After lunch a few of us drove back through town to Lakeview, but rain prevented us from adding materially to the day's list. Regular meetings are being held at the Museum of Natural History and Art—B. B. C.

The Nashville Chapter will hold its first 1936 meeting on January 6 and every two weeks thereafter—January 6, 20, February 3, 17, March 3, 17, etc. The local Christmas Census will be taken on Sunday, December 22.

NECROLOGY: During 1935, the T. O. S. lost 4 of its members by death:

Mr. Leslie Cheek, of Nashville, died on October 10, aged 63. Mr. Cheek had been a valued member of the T. O. S. for some years and was a frequent attendant at meetings. Reelfoot Lake was his favorite recreation place, where fishing and the water birds held his chief interest. In the beautiful grounds of his estate many provisions were made for attracting native birds.

Miss Frances Sinclair died at her home at Nashville on November 9. She had been a member of the Society since 1931 and regularly attended Field Days and meetings. She will be missed particularly on these occasions.

Mr. Grover Cook, of Nashville, died on September 21, aged 38 years. Mr. Cook was a talented taxidermist, specializing in water birds, of which he secured a number of rare specimens. His collection has been acquired by the State Museum at the Capitol.

A biographic sketch of **Mr. Buford Mathes** will be found on another page.

THE MIGRANT

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*"The simple truth about birds is interesting enough,
it is not necessary to go beyond it."*

EDITORIAL CHAT

The Editor sincerely wishes to make the pages of *The Migrant* interesting to all of its readers. The trend of the times is to write with accuracy yet without the technical "dryness" of a generation ago. Most of our members are interested in birds because they afford interesting study in an outdoor environment. Ornithology therefore, as we pursue it, is not a tedious science but takes the role of pleasant recreation and our pages shall try to reflect this viewpoint. Our contributions will endeavor to serve two major purposes; first to afford pleasant reading for all who are interested in birds, and, second, to place on permanent record, occurrences and facts about birds which may be referred to by the students of bird life in the years to come. We are actually writing and publishing a history of the birds of Tennessee, and when in time we have published enough of it in this serial form, a comprehensive volume on the birds of our State will be in order.

Members are urged to keep their files of *The Migrant* complete. An index is printed in the December issue each year for convenient reference, and we have in mind the publication of a complete index to date of all subjects and species of birds referred to. Finally, the Editor requests all of our members to send in articles and notes for publication. With your cooperation he will endeavor to make our little magazine even better during the coming year.

ILLUSTRATIONS: With the last issue of *The Migrant*, we began a feature which we hope to continue; the introduction of photographic illustrations. Among our members we have a number of expert photographers of bird life and the Editor hopes to present some of the best of their work during the coming year. The new litho-offset process is being used for the purpose and yields a soft, pleasing effect on non-gloss paper. This process also enables us to cover the entire 6x9-inch page with the illustration, thus producing a much enlarged picture. Our members are invited to send in prints of their best photos so that there may be many to select from.

"Know a workman by his tools," runs a famous old adage. How are your tools, fellow bird student? Are you acquiring a new book occasionally, and what about your field glasses, photographic equipment, notebooks, listing cards, etc., etc.? Birds will probably be your hobby always, so you had as well get "lifetime equipment" while you are about it.

The annual Christmas Census may be taken on any day between December 20 and January 1. Members all over the State are invited to cooperate by sending in their lists. The results will be published in our March issue.

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