

# THE MIGRANT

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL  
DEVOTED TO TENNESSEE BIRDS

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# THE MIGRANT

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## SOME NESTING RECORDS FROM MURFREESBORO

By HENRY O. TODD

Definite nesting records of Tennessee birds are numerous in the pages of THE MIGRANT but are scattered thru many pages and years. Having specialized for a long time in the nesting phase of bird study, my record books give data on hundreds of nests found and examined, chiefly in this area, and gathered together thus, this data should prove useful for reference.<sup>6</sup> From the records mentioned I have selected those given below as being of special interest, either by reason of rarity, of local occurrence, of earliness of date, or of difficulty of finding. Numerous species of such common birds as Bluebirds, Mockingbirds, Flickers, etc., have been omitted from the list. The dates shown give definite information on the time of nesting and on stage of incubation, whether fresh, advanced, or at point of hatching, thus enabling the reader to apply a correction to the date of finding in order to ascertain the approximate date of beginning incubation. The number of eggs in each nest is next given and finally the locality. Unless specifically stated otherwise, the locality is in the vicinity of Murfreesboro, Tenn. The other localities mentioned have previously been described in these pages; such as Goose Pond near Pelham, 50 miles S.E., and Morrison, 35 miles S.E., (both in MIGRANT, 1935: 22-24), and H. and M. lake near Mt. Pleasant, 50 miles W.S.W., (MIGRANT, 1937: 21-22). Reference to previous nesting data, published by the writer in this journal, is given under the several species referred to and data for 1935 can be found in THE MIGRANT for 1935: 36 and 72.

PIED-BILLED GREBE.—May 1, 1939, eggs freshly broken. Nest floating in small pond near Morrison, Tenn.

GREEN HERON.—May 5, 1936, 5 eggs, incubation begun. May 3, 1936, 5 eggs, incubation begun.

AMER. BITTERN.—May 14, 1939, 4 eggs, inc. 10 days, Goose Pond.

LEAST BITTERN.—July 4, 1937, 4 eggs, inc. fresh, H. and M. Lake.

June 26, 1938, 5 eggs, inc. advanced, H. and M. Lake.

June 1, 1938, 3 eggs, H. and M. Lake.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL.—May 2, 1936, 8 eggs, inc. advanced, H. and M. Lake, nest 10' from water and 6' above in grass and had been found 2 weeks earlier. They also nested here in 1935.

WOOD DUCK.—May 14, 1939, 5 small young together, Goose Pond.

\*NOTE: For a comparison of the nesting data given with that of Athens, Tenn., a point 110 miles a little south of due east, see MIGRANT, 1934: 1-4; and for the Johnson City area in Northeast Tennessee, see MIGRANT, 1934: 49-57.—Editor.

- TURKEY VULTURE.**—April 21, 1937, 2 eggs, fresh, 5 m. S. of town.  
 May 8, 1938, 2 eggs, inc. advanced, 8 mi. N.E. of town.  
 May 8, 1938, 2 eggs inc. advanced, 7 mi. N.E. of town.  
 May 2, 1943, 2 eggs, inc. begun, 6 m. E. of town.
- BLACK VULTURE.**—Feb. 19, 1939, 2 eggs, fresh, earliest date on record.  
 Feb. 27, 1938, 2 eggs, fresh, next earliest.  
 Feb. 28, 1944, 2 eggs, fresh, next earliest.  
 March 1, 1942, 2 eggs, fresh, next earliest.  
 The above are from more than 400 nest records.  
 The "peak" of the season is mid-April. See my article on this species in *THE MIGRANT*, 1938: 23-24.
- SHARP-SHINNED HAWK.**—June 27, 1937, 5 eggs, pipped, Craggie Hope in Cheatham Co. Returned later and banded the young.
- COOPERS HAWK.**—May 4, 1936, 3 eggs, inc. advanced.  
 For data on 7 nests in 1935, see *THE MIGRANT*, 1935: 36.
- RED-TAILED HAWK.**—April 5, 1936, 2 eggs, inc. adv., near Murfreesboro.  
 March 13, 1938, 2 eggs, inc. fresh, near Nashville.
- BROAD-WINGED HAWK.**—April 20, 1943, 2 eggs, inc. begun, 3 m. E. of M'boro.  
 April 28, 1941, 2 eggs, inc. begun M'boro.
- SPARROW HAWK.**—April 19, 1939, 5 eggs, in. adv., near Murfreesboro.  
 May 28, 1939, 5 eggs, fresh, Pelham.
- BOB-WHITE.**—June 8, 1936, 25 eggs, inc. advanced. (abnormal number.)  
 June 3, 1936, 14 eggs, fresh. (numerous other nests.)
- KING RAIL.**—May 1, 1939, 9 eggs, incub. begun, Morrison.  
 May 1, 1939, 7 eggs, inc. fresh, Morrison.  
 May 14, 1939, 12 eggs, inc. adv., Goose Pond.  
 May 30, 1943, 12 eggs, inc. adv., Murfreesboro.
- KILLDEER.**—March 2, 1936, 2 eggs, fresh, earliest of many nests.  
 March 4, 1937, 4 eggs, fresh, next earliest.  
 March 10, 1938, 4 eggs, fresh, next earliest.
- AMER. WOODCOCK.**—April 18, 1936, 4 young a few days old. Adult present.  
 March 31, 1938, 4 eggs, incub. advanced.  
 April 3, 1940, 3 eggs, fresh.
- YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO.**—June 19, 2 eggs, incub. advanced.
- BARN OWL.**—June 24, 1942, 3 young, oldest fully feathered.
- SCREECH OWL.**—March 31, 1936, 5 eggs, inc. adv.—April 1, 4 eggs, inc. adv.—  
 April 25, 1936, 4 eggs, begun.—April 28, 1936, 4 eggs, adv.
- GREAT HORNED OWL.**—April 24, 1936, 2 young, fledging, in squirrel nest.  
 Feb. 21, 1938, 3 young and 1 fresh egg; young 1 to 7 days old.  
 Jan. 1, 1939, 1 egg (there were 2 on 1/8,) hollow oak 35' up.  
 Feb. 5, 1939, 2 eggs, fresh, in hollow of tree.  
 Feb. 4, 1940, 2 eggs, incub. advanced, in hollow tree.  
 Jan. 25, 1942, 2 eggs, nearly fresh, in hollow tree.  
 (For details of some of the above, see *MIGRANT*, 1939: 24-25.)
- BARRED OWL.**—Mar. 7, 1936, 2 eggs, fresh, 40' up, cavity of oak. (These birds laid again and on 5/24, 2 young were found.)  
 June 4, 1936, 4 young, perched on limbs by hole in oak.
- CHUCK-WILLS-WIDOW.**—May 23, 1936, 2 eggs, incub. advanced.  
 May 28, 1936, 2 eggs, incub. advanced.  
 June 8, 1936, 2 eggs, incub. advanced.

- June 27, 1937, 2 eggs, addled, but bird sitting.  
June 22, 1939, 2 eggs, fresh; doubtless a 2nd set.
- NIGHTHAWK.—21 nests in 1936, the earliest being 5/6, 2 eggs, fr.; 5/8, 2 eggs, fr.; 5/12, 2 eggs, fr.; 5/3/1938, 2 eggs, fr.
- RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD.—5/10/36, 2 eggs, fr.; 6/12/36, 2 eggs, fr., only 6' up; 6/12/36, 2 eggs, fr.; 6/10/38, 2 eggs, fr.
- PILEATED WOODPECKER.—April 23, 1936, 3 eggs fresh.  
April 20, 1935, 3 eggs, incub. 7 days.  
April 24, 1937, 1 egg and 2 young, just hatched.  
April 10, 1938, 4 eggs, incub. begun.  
April 12, 1938, 4 eggs, incub. begun.  
April 26, 1938, 3 eggs, incub. advanced.  
April 28, 1940, 5 eggs, fresh.  
April 12, 1940, 5 eggs, fresh.  
April 11, 1943, 5 eggs, fresh.  
April 14, 1943, 3 eggs, fresh.
- RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER.—May 4, 1936, 3 eggs, fresh.  
April 27, 1937, 3 eggs, fresh.
- RED-HEADED WOODPECKER.—June 4, 1936, 5 eggs, incub. adv.
- HAIRY WOODPECKER.—April 7, 1938, 4 eggs, fresh.  
April 19, 1938, 4 eggs, incub. begun.  
April 23, 1939, 3 eggs, incub. fresh.
- CRESTED FLYCATCHER.—June 5, 1936, 2 eggs, fresh. This nest was unusual in that it was built in pile of fence lumber.
- ACADIAN FLYCATCHER.—June 27, 1937, 3 eggs, fresh, near Nashville.
- WOOD PEWEE.—June 3, 1936, 2 eggs, fresh.—June 12, 1936, 1 egg, fresh. A Blue Jay's nest with young was 6 feet away.
- TUFTED TITMOUSE.—May 6, 1936, 6 eggs, fresh.
- MIGRANT SHRIKE.—May 9, 1936, 5 eggs, addled.  
May 13, 1936, 6 young, nearly ready to leave nest.
- WARBLING VIREO.—May 29, 1935, 3 eggs, fresh.
- BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER.—Many nests found and about here they build chiefly in our tall, slender red cedar trees.
- PRAIRIE WARBLER.—May 8, 1936, 4 eggs, incub. advanced.
- COWBIRD.—For notes on its breeding here, see THE MIGRANT, 1936: 72.
- GRASSHOPPER SPARROW.—May 12, 1936, 5 eggs, incub. begun.  
May 14, 1936, 4 eggs, incub. advanced.  
June 19, 1937, 2 nests with 4 eggs, incub. adv.  
May 16, 1938, 5 eggs, incub. begun.
- DICKCISSEL.—May 16, 1937, 2 eggs, fresh. (Only nest found here.)
- LARK SPARROW.—May 8, 1935, 1 egg, fresh; nest later contained 5.  
May 12, 1935, 5 eggs, incubation 3 days.  
June 8, 1935, 4 eggs. (8 pair were located in 1935.)  
May 24, 1936, 4 eggs, incub. adv.  
June 2, 1936, 2 eggs, both freshly broken.  
June 13, 1936, 4 eggs, incub. adv.  
This species breeds only very locally in Tennessee.
- MURFREESBORO, TENNESSEE.

## STARLINGS FEEDING ON THE BACKS OF CATTLE

By CLARENCE COTTAM

S. E. Moreton, Jr.'s interesting note in the September 1943 issue of THE MIGRANT (pp. 54-55) concerning a large flock of Starlings (*sturnus v. vulgaris*) feeding on the backs of some 200 cattle near Brookhaven, Mississippi, deals with a subject that merits further discussion. This aberrance of Starlings has been noted in other sections of the country and in other lands. In Queensland and New South Wales, Australia, where the bird was introduced, it has been praised for preying extensively on sheep-ticks and sheep-maggot flies, which live on the backs of the sheep and cause great damage; the bird has also been condemned there for pulling wool from the backs of sheep. In New Zealand this adaptable and omnivorous exotic is reported to aid effectively in controlling the cattle-tick. In its native England the Starling has been praised for destroying larvae and adult horse-flies, cattle- and sheep-flies, and for feeding on ticks from the backs of sheep. From various parts of its range in the United States (Nebraska to the Atlantic coast), the bird has occasionally been observed feeding on the backs of cattle or other domestic livestock; until the winters of 1937 and 1938 such feeding caused only favorable comment.

The county agricultural agents of Chase and Comanche Counties of Kansas received reports from stockmen who claimed that Starlings were apparently probing for ox-warbles on the backs of cattle.<sup>1</sup> This would seem to be a beneficial habit; often, however, in probing for the grubs the birds develop a taste for raw meat and blood and continue to feed on the flesh of the live animal. Infection and loss of livestock not infrequently occur. In addition, damage is caused by stampedes resulting from the presence of flocks of the birds in the neighborhood of cattle previously attacked: this is a problem of considerable importance in livestock circles. Complaints of this nature have been investigated and verified in Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas.<sup>2</sup> One rather convincing report of Starlings pecking holes in the backs of live animals after branding, has been received.

Depredations upon cattle have been reported each winter since 1937, but such an unusual feeding habit seems to be restricted to those short periods of severe winter weather when snow and ice prevent the birds from obtaining their normal food. As soon as temperatures moderate and snow and ice cease to cover the ground, the birds return to their customary feeding habits.

Most complaints against the Starling are based upon: (1) their objectionable practice of roosting in large flocks on projecting surfaces of public or other buildings and in trees adjacent to sidewalks; (2) their direct attacks upon fruit or other agricultural crops, particularly cherries; and (3) their

<sup>1</sup>Goodrich, A. L. Starling Attacks upon Warble-Infested Cattle in the Great Plains Area. *Journal of the Kansas Entomological Society*, 13 (2): 33-40. 1940.

<sup>2</sup>McCoy, John W. Injuries to Texas Cattle Caused by Starlings. *Veterinary Medicine*, 36 (8): 43-433. 1941.

Astle, N. L. Starlings Injure Cattle. *Veterinary Medicine*, 36 (4): 235. 1940.

Lake, E. W. Starlings Injure Cattle. *News Letter of Bureau of Entomology & Plant Quarantine*, VII, (5): 28. 1940. Processed.

habit of preempting native-bird nesting sites and thereby driving away these more valuable and attractive birds. Some complaints have also been registered against the bird for spreading diseases and parasites of domestic fowl and livestock, but most of these complaints have not been verified.

In its normal food habits, the bird is generally beneficial. Because of its great adaptability, omnivorous feeding habits, and excessive abundance, however, the Starling is decidedly more of a liability than an asset to this country. The bird will need close watching, as there is a bare possibility of its acquiring a carnivorous habit similar to that of Australia's Kea, which originally was not carnivorous. The Starling is a member of an old-world family of birds, several species of which feed on the backs of domestic stock and wild animals and occasionally become carnivorous.

U. S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, CHICAGO 54, ILLINOIS.

## NOTES ON THE BREEDING BIRDS OF THE NATCHEZ TRACE STATE PARK

By BEN B. COFFEY, JR.

Natchez Trace State Park and Forest is located in West Tennessee, about midway between Nashville and Memphis. It embraces 42,000 acres, of which 10,000 acres are reserved as a wildlife refuge. Beginning twelve miles north of Lexington, the area extends from within Henderson County northward into Carroll and Benton Counties, occupying the high ridge forming the watershed between the Big Sandy and Tennessee rivers. Most of the area lies between 500 and 625 feet above sea level.

The writer spent two days there, June 7 and 8, 1944, for the purpose of noting the bird life of a relatively small area, assumed to be typical. Since he was on foot, there was no chance of rapidly scanning or sampling the remainder of the area to check this. We alighted at a small train shed at Wildersville, 3 A.M., June 7, and waited for daylight. We then walked 7 miles to the Park Administration Building and most of the 3 miles to the cabin area at Cub Creek Lake (58 acres). Here we secured a very nice cabin and left our pack with shelter tent and other loads there.

At 9 A.M. we resumed, covering the area southwest and northwest of Cub Creek Lake. One narrow valley heavily wooded (principally red maple, with some gum and oak), was followed until an alder swamp forced us back onto the ridges. Here oak predominated, with some hickory, gum, and, noticeable in the undergrowth, sourwood. There was no pine here as at Chickasaw and Tishomingo State Parks except for groves set out in recent years. We cut over to a road leading north to Maple Lake (93 acres) but turned back that evening, a half mile from the lake without knowing it due to lack of a map such as we had at Tishomingo and to insufficient road signs at forks. For this reason the next morning we called off a hike to the remaining lake, Brown's Creek Lake (151 acres), and worked instead south-east and south of Cub Creek Lake. About 2 P.M., June 8, we left the Administration Building for Lexington, walking the road some 5 miles before getting a lift the remaining 8 miles. Altho hot, on the road, a fair list was made, and from the ridge the rolling woods to and beyond glistening Brown's Creek Lake were a treat to eyes recently accustomed to the western prairie.

A total of 61 species were listed in the park during the two days. The number of individuals listed is given with each and does not include those recorded in the 7 miles from Wildersville to the Administration Building. The most common species was the Red-eyed Vireo (62) which was distributed throughout. Next was the Prairie Warbler (40), followed by the Towhee (27), Field Sparrow (26), and Yellow-breasted Chat (25); these were chiefly recorded along the roads and ridges. The Wood Thrush (29) was found chiefly in the wooded ravines and lower areas. The Cardinal (23), Tufted Titmouse (25), Summer Tanager (24), and White-eyed Vireo (23) were common and well distributed.

Fairly common were the Mourning Dove (16), Chuck-will's-widow (12), Whip-poor-will (9), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (17), Yellow-throated Vireo (17), Black and White Warbler (15), and Kentucky Warbler (14). Less so were the Turkey Vulture (7), Yellow-billed Cuckoo (6, also 5 enroute), Downy Woodpecker (8), Acadian Flycatcher (8), Wood Pewee (6), Blue Jay (9), Crow (7), Carolina Chickadee (6, probably much more common), Carolina Wren (7), Hooded Warbler (10), English Sparrow (10, cabins and lodge only), Goldfinch (6, and 2 enroute), Chipping Sparrow (10).

The remainder can be classed as rare or uncommon, but due to the limited field work we hesitate to say in each case which is the proper designation. GREAT BLUE HERON—On the road to Maple Lake we saw one overhead flying eastward, on June 7.

GREEN HERON—One seen at Cub Creek Lake, on June 7.

RED-TAILED HAWK—At 3 places on the 7th and 1 on the 8th; noisy.

BOB-WHITE—Two on way to Maple Lake; earlier, 6 were recorded enroute from Wildersville.

GREAT HORNED OWL—One heard, June 7, northwest of Picnic Area.

NIGHTHAWK—One flying overhead at 7:30 P.M. on June 7.

CHIMNEY SWIFT—Three on June 7, one the next day and 11 enroute.

The Lodge chimney was probably only available nesting site.

REBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD—Three were seen, on June 7.

BELTED KINGFISHER—One at Cub Creek, June 7.

FLICKER—One seen on June 7 and 2 the following day.

PILEATED WOODPECKER—One listed, June 7.

KINGBIRD—One enroute from Wildersville and 2 in the Park.

CRESTED FLYCATCHER—Two on June 7 and 1 the next day.

ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW—Five on June 7; a clay bank, a half mile from road to Maple Lake was the only available nesting site noted.

WHITE-BREADED NUTHATCH—One, on the late afternoon of June 7.

BEWICKS WREN—One at Administration Building and 3 at farm dwelling west of cabin area. Also, 3 enroute.

BROWN THRASHER—Five found on June 7. Also, 3 enroute.

ROBIN—One on road from Maple Lake; perhaps a wandering bird.

BLUEBIRD—Two on the 7th and 3 next day. Also 5 enroute to the Park.

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER—Three at Cub Creek Lake on June 7.

WORM-EATING WARBLER—On June 8, in a ravine near the cabin area, a song like a Chipping Sparrow's, started me to stalking to verify the presence of this species. Only 1 was seen, my first personal June record.

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER—One each day, on June 7 and June 8.

PARULA WARBLER—Two heard singing on June 7 and 3 the next day.

CERULEAN WARBLER—Two were located on June 7.

LOUISIANA WATER-THRUSH—One found at Cub Creek Lake and 2 along the small branch that feeds the lake; June 7.

MARYLAND YELLOWTHROAT—Three on June 7, 1 on June 8, and 2 enroute.

REDWING—One at each end of Cub Creek Lake, also 3 near Wildersville.

ORCHARD ORIOLE—One on the 7th, 2 on the 8th and 2 enroute.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE—Only one recorded, June 7.

SCARLET Tanager—A pair seen June 8, in cabin area, male singing. Probably 1 to 3 of the tanagers heard singing June 7, were of this species.

BACHMANS SPARROW—One each day, June 7 and 8; also heard enroute.

The following species were only recorded while enroute from Wildersville to the Park; Killdeer, 3; Purple Martin, 2; Mockingbird, 4; Meadowlark, 1; Bronzed Grackle, 1; and Cowbird, 3. In Lexington, 2 Catbirds were noted.

Natchez Trace State Park is about thirty-five miles northeast of Chickasaw State Park and seventy-five miles north of Tishomingo State Park (in Mississippi). In general, the lists of birds are similar. Pines at the two other parks attract Pine Warblers (uncommon) and Chipping Sparrows, plus, at Tishomingo, Bachmans Sparrows. The Towhee is apparently absent at both but is one of the most common species at Natchez Trace. This is in agreement with our map (MIGRANT, 1941: 53) but the number of records is more than expected. The Natchez Trace list in many ways approaches a Middle Tennessee list, including as it does a few Scarlet Tanagers, Blue-winged and Worm-eating Warblers, the Towhee common, and one species of the higher areas—the Whip-poor-will—fairly common.

The Whip-poor-will was the most unexpected species. About 8:15 P.M. June 7, we returned to the cabin, having walked 29 miles since leaving Wildersville at daylight. For this reason we decided not to linger along but to return, clean up, and eat, making a check on Chuck-will's-widows from the cabin, a suitable listening post. When the calling began, we soon realized that a Whip-poor-will was also being heard. So, taking a flashlight, we started out again, making a rough five mile circuit of that area from 8:45 to 10:15 P.M., and along the way listed 9 Whip-poor-wills as well as a dozen Chuck-will's-widows and a Great Horned Owl. Eighteen hours earlier, at the Wildersville railroad shelter, we had heard 4 Chuck-wills-widows, 2 Mockingbirds, a Cuckoo and a Chat, but no Whip-poor-wills for the later seemed confined to the high ridge country above.

FORT SILL, OKLAHOMA, June 25, 1944.

## VERNACULAR NAMES OF TENNESSEE BIRDS

By ALBERT F. GANIER

The following list of vernacular or nick-names of birds are those that have been found by the writer to be used locally for the better known Tennessee birds. The list does not include the ducks and geese since these have already been fully publicized by sportsmen. Most of the other birds not listed below are either now generally known by their proper names or else—as in the case of the majority of small species—are not recognized by any name. The name "Pewee" is often applied to any small unknown bird. Needless to say, nick-

names are rapidly giving way to proper ones and some of those listed here are practically obsolete.

Common Loon; Hell-diver	Nighthawk; Bull-bat
Pied-billed Grebe; Di-dapper	Chimney Swift; Chimney Sweep
Cormorant; Nigger Goose	Flicker; Yellowhammer
Great Blue Heron; Blue Crane	"Yallerhammer"
Amer. Egret; White Crane	Pileated Woodpecker; Log Cock
Little Blue Heron-im; White Crane	Red-bellied Woodpecker; Ladder-back
Green Heron; Shite-poke,	Red-headed Woodpecker; Shirt-tail
Fly-up-the-creek,	Sapsucker, Hairy and
Indian Hen	Downy Woodpeckers; Sapsucker
Wood Ibis; Gourd-head	Kingbird; Bee-martin
Turkey Vulture; Turkey Buzzard	Phoebe; Bridge Bird
Black Vulture; Turkey Buzzard	Rough-wing Swallow; Bank Swallow
Cooper's Hawk; Blue Darter	Barn Swallow; Fork-tail Swallow
Red-tailed Hawk; Rabbit Hawk	Purple Martin; Martin
Red-shld Hawk; Squirrel Hawk	Blue Jay; Jaybird
Duck Hawk; Bluff Hawk	Tufted Titmouse; Tom-tit
Osprey; Fish Hawk	Bewick's Wren; House Wren
Ruffed Grouse; Pheasant	Carolina Wren; House Wren
Bob-white; Quail	Mockingbird; Mocker
King Rail; Marsh Hen	Brown Thrasher; Brown Thrush
Purple Gallinule; Blue Rail	Wood Thrush; Brown Thrush
Florida Gallinule; Blue Rail	Cedar Waxwing; Cedar-bird
Amer. Coot; Mud Hen	Shrike; Butcherbird
Killdeer; Killdee	All Vireos; Hangingbird
Wilson's Snipe; Jack-snipe	Yellow Warbler; Wild Canary
Herring Gull; Sea Gull	Prothonotary Warbler; Lettucebird
Least Tern; Striker	Prothonotary Warbler; Wild Canary
Cuckoos (both); Raincrow	Maryland Yellowthroat; Ditch Wren
Barn Owl; Monkey-faced Owl	Meadowlark; Field-lark
Screech Owl; Squinch Owl	Redwing (male); Blackbird
(Negro version of Screech)	Redwing (female); Ricebird
Great-horned Owl; Hoot Owl	Bronzed Grackle; Crow-blackbird
Cat Owl	Cardinal; Redbird
Barred Owl; Hoot Owl	Goldfinch; Wild Canary
Chuck-wills-widow; usually	Towhee; Jorec
confused with Whippoorwill	Junco; Snowbird

NASHVILLE, TENN., 2112 WOODLAWN DRIVE.

## THE ROUND TABLE

NOTES FROM CORINTH, MISS.—In the middle of the Tennessee River, a quarter mile below Pickwick Dam, is anchored a buoy. About as big around as an ordinary barrel, it stands some two feet above the water level. On May 22nd, while fishing from the bank, I discovered on the buoy a Blue Heron. The river current was swift and strong and the buoy swayed in precarious angles as it tugged constantly at its anchor. For half an hour the heron rode the buoy, and was never once dislodged. At times when the buoy tilted and pitched almost beneath the water, I expected to see the tall and graceful bird thrown off; but each time it hung on with apparent ease. So it seems that herons, like monkeys and squirrels, and both the young and old ones of the human kind, love to ride dizzy-dipping devices where more or less danger lurks.

For years almost without number I have been looking for a Cape May Warbler. My efforts were rewarded on May 6th, when I found the bird at Waukomis Lake, near Corinth. Identification was easy as the little fellow, a male, took lots of time out from his foraging, and preened himself while perched on a limb plainly visible, though the surrounding foliage was dark and thick, and located in a small creek bottom. All of my bird books indicate that the Cape May is a real find for almost any searcher after the bird kind.

On the same trip to Waukomis, very late in the afternoon, I found my second Loon of the season. Twice he gave his weird cry before I realized whence the sound came. At first I thought it was the shrill cry of a domestic Peacock, for the similarity is indeed striking. The other Loon was found at Liddon Lake in April, a body of water that seems attractive for these big black divers. I find one or more there each season.

On June 11, a friend called and wanted to know if I had ever seen a white blackbird; he had just seen one in a woods lot near town. I went out immediately and found it—an albino Bronzed Grackle—apparently fully mature and ranging in the woods with others of its kind, including fledged young of the year. Its plumage was of buffy-white all over, the legs were medium grey and its bill yellow. I could not get close enough to see its eyes.

On June 8, I found a Prairie Horned Lark in Hardin Co., Tenn., just over the State line and where I have found them for two summers past. The dates indicate that they nest there.—BENJ. R. WARRINER, *Corinth*, Miss.

EASTERN LAKE SPARROW AND UPLAND PLOVER IN WESTERN TENNESSEE:—On June 30, 1943, I noted two Eastern Lark Sparrows in the area that the Tennessee Valley Authority was clearing near the mouth of the Big Sandy River in preparation for the impoundment. Because of the lateness of the season it is probable that the birds were spending the summer in this section of the State. I observed these birds on a number of occasions during one afternoon.

On the evening of April 14, 1944, about 4 miles north of Perryville, I noted a single specimen of Upland Plover in a pasture near the west bank of the Tennessee River. When I approached within about 15 feet of it, the bird flew perhaps 50 yards and again proceeded to feed. I watched the bird for about 15 minutes.—CLARENCE COTTAM, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Chicago, 54, Illinois.

THE SEASON AT OXFORD, MISS.—During the period March 15 to May 15 temperatures averaged above normal, cloudy and rainy weather was the rule, and strong southerly winds predominated. Only during the last week of the period was there a let-up in the wind and rain. Partly due to weather conditions, time spent afield was again restricted, so that representative migration dates are lacking for many species. Following are the more significant spring arrival dates:

March 13, Chimney Swift (students); March 18, Rough-winged Swallow, Sycamore Warbler; March 25, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Black and White Warbler, Louisiana Water-thrush; March 29, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Sora, Lesser Yellowlegs, White-eyed Vireo, Grasshopper Sparrow; April 1, Yellow-throated Vireo; April 5, Wood Thrush, Hooded Warbler, Yellow-throat; April 8, Chuck-will's-widow (Dr. Nichols); April 9, Red-eyed Vireo, Cerulean Warbler; April 11, Kingbird, House Wren, Catbird, Yellow-breasted Chat, Orchard Oriole, Summer Tanager; April 12, Baltimore Oriole; April 13, Crested Flycatcher; April 14, Blackburnian Warbler; April 15, Yellow Warbler; April 18, Tennessee Warbler; April 19, Wood Pewee, Olive-backed Thrush, Worm-eating Warbler, Indigo Bunting; April 21, Warbling Vireo; April 22, Nighthawk; April 23, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Blackpoll Warbler; April 29, Short-billed Marsh Wren (also wintered), Rose-breasted Grosbeak; May 6, American Egret, Forster's and Black Terns, Least Flycatcher (in song and seen again on following day); May 10, Mourning Warbler and Least Sandpiper.

Representative departure dates are: March 29, Mallard, Fox Sparrow; April 1, Phoebe; April 9, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Slate-colored Junco; April 11, Song Sparrow; April 23, Marsh Hawk, Purple Finch; May 6, Pipit (second local record), Nashville Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Palm Warbler; May 8, Myrtle Warbler; May 10, Blue-winged Teal, Barn Swallow, Scarlet Tanager, Savannah Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow; May 13, Rose-breasted Grosbeak; May 15, Tennessee Warbler; May 16, Magnolia Warbler; May 17, Yellow Warbler, Lincoln's Sparrow; May 18, Redstart (in town).

Pine Siskins reappeared on April 28 and were last recorded on May 6. Breeding records will be dealt with in the next report.

The ornithology class held its spring field day on May 6—at the height of migration—and listed 104 species of birds.—HENRY M. STEVENSON, Dept. of Biology, U. of M., University, Miss.

BALD EAGLES IN HUMPHREYS COUNTY:—The *Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle* of April 8, contained an account of an eagle having been brought to town by Mr. Russell Gray of that city, the latter having found it dead in the road just north of Waverly. The bird was said to measure 7 feet 1 inch from tip to tip and to have dark brown plumage. The finder reported that what he believed to be another eagle was observed flying about overhead.

The writer communicated with Mr. Gray, giving a description of both the immature Bald and the Golden Eagle. As was expected, he received a reply that the bird had an unfeathered tarsus and was therefore an immature Bald Eagle. This bird (or birds) was probably a wandering young one that had not as yet established a nesting territory.—ALBERT F. GANIER, Nashville, Tenn.

**HAWK ENSNARED BY A WIRE FENCE:**—The first snow of the season was falling in light flurries when on a bleak November morning my companion and I hiked the Appalachian Trail along the Tennessee-North Carolina state line west of Sam's Gap, located about half way between Johnson City and Asheville. We stopped abruptly when coming upon a large bird apparently sitting among the meshes of a wire stock fence. Approaching with caution we were astonished that the bird—a Red-tailed Hawk—did not leave its perch. However we were soon able to see that it had gotten hopelessly entangled in the meshes and was quite unable to extricate itself. We pictured that it had been flying swiftly near the ground in pursuit of quarry—perhaps a rabbit—and thus intent upon the chase, had flown into the fence meshes with outstretched wings. The bird's head, breast and one leg went thru but the wings could not follow and remained on the other side, as will be seen by the accompanying photo. Had we not come along it would doubtless have starved to death or been killed by some other predator.



We extricated the wild, hostile creature with some difficulty and by way of reciprocity, it grabbed the front of my companion's boots with such strength and tenacity that the camera tripod had to be brought into play to pry the strong talons aloose. We continued on our hike and passing the

**CONNECTICUT WARBLER RETURNS:**—In *THE MIGRANT* for June, 1943, the writer described the finding for four years past, of Connecticut Warblers near his home during their spring migration northward. The records for 1943, were on May 12, May 16 (four), and May 19 (two). This warbler has so rarely been recorded in Tennessee that this year I kept on the lookout to see if they would again tarry in this particular habitat. On the morning of our T. O. S. Field Day, May 14, I found at least two singing males at the previously described localities. Much similar territory was covered by our members on that day, five miles away, but no Connecticut Warblers were found. On May 19, Dr. Spofford came out in the early morning in order to learn their song, found one, and heard it sing repeatedly close at hand. The following afternoon, Mr. Ganier came out and together we found one, a female, near the wet-weather brook. That morning a male had sung near my house and presumably the same individual was heard to sing on the mornings of May 21 and May 22. Although several of our members have tried to find them in similar habitats near Nashville, so far they have been unsuccessful.—  
B. H. ABERNATHY, Hobb Road, Nashville 5, Tenn.

DICKCISSELS IN EAST TENNESSEE:—The Dickcissel is listed (Ganier, *Distributional List of Birds of Tenn.*, 1933) as a very rare summer resident in East Tennessee. It seems interesting therefore to note the presence of a pair in Greene County, from May 15 to June 20, 1943. They frequented a field divided between oats and clover; the male sang from the roadside electric line wire. No nest was found but between the dates mentioned they must surely have been nesting. On June 20, the last date on which they were seen, both seemed disturbed as the oat field was cut. Perhaps their nest was destroyed by the operation.

I am indebted to other T. O. S. members for additional East Tenn. records of this species as follows: Mr. Walker writes that he found one of these birds near Maryville in June and Messrs. A. F. Ganier and Alfred Clebsch, while driving eastward from Sweetwater, found one near there on June 18, 1944.—RUTH REED NEVIUS, Route 1, Greeneville, Tenn.

SPRING MIGRATION AT NASHVILLE:—The following records are taken from my notes to cover a number of species that arrived a little earlier or at about their average time for Nashville. March 20, Vesper Sparrow, flock of 25; March 25, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and La. Water Thrush; April 8, White-eyed Vireo; April 10, Yellow-throated Vireo, Yellow Warbler and Catbird (unusually early); April 12, Red-eyed Vireo; April 13, Crested Flycatcher, Orchard Oriole, Summer Tanager, Hooded and Magnolia Warblers, and Upland Plover (4, with 2 Killdeers in Bellemeade); April 17, Solitary Sandpiper; April 20, Nighthawk; April 21, Kentucky Warbler and Chat; April 23, Blackpoll Warbler, Olive-backed Thrush and Yellow-billed Cuckoo.—Dr. W. S. Spofford reported the following: April 2, Pine Siskins, a flock of about 60 with Goldfinches; April 15, Whip-poor-will; April 22, Blackburnian, Cape May and Golden-winged Warblers, and April 23, Scarlet Tanager.—Mr. Ganier reports that the North Nashville marsh held water until the last of May and that among the birds found there were Blue-wing Teal, April 15 (4) and April 29 (2); Coot, April 29 (4); Lesser Yellowlegs, April 15 (2); Solitary Sandpiper, April 15 (6); Wilson's Snipe, April 29 (2), and May 6 (3); King Rail, April 29 (1 at nest), and May 6 (1); Sora, April 29 (6), May 6 (7), May 13, all gone; Amer. Bittern, May 6 (1) and May 13 (2); Prairie Marsh Wren, April 22 (1), April 29 (3), and Least Flycatcher, April 29 (1 collected).—Early nests found by me, with first egg of the season, were Dove on March 28; Cardinal, April 6; Cowbird, April 23 (quite early); and Bluebird, 2 nests with eggs hatching on April 4.—AMELIA R. LASKEY, Nashville, Tenn.

NOTES ON RUFFED GROUSE:—In THE MIGRANT of March, 1941 p. 12, John Caldwell tells of some of the habits of the Ruffed Grouse on the Cumberland Plateau of Tennessee. In a conversation with him later he described the natives method of hunting them which he also had used with success. This method was to find likely places for them in the woods, such as laurel thickets along little streams, and listen to hear the grouse walking on the leaves. In dry weather, the sound was readily audible to keen ears. A pair presented to me for specimens, were shot by him on Dec. 30, 1939, near Monteagle. Their crops were stuffed full of fresh dogwood berries. The two skins were identified by Dr. John W. Aldrich as the Appalachian Ruffed Grouse (*Bonasa umbellus monticola*), a new race first described by W. E. C. Todd in THE AUK for 1940, p. 392.—ALBERT F. GANIER, Nashville, Tenn.

## NOTES AND NEWS

**MEMPHIS SPRING FIELD DAY:**—The Memphis Chapter of the T. O. S. held its Spring field trip on May 7th. Many regular attendants were absent, most of them in the armed forces. For the first time in the history of the chapter we had no representative of the Coffey family; Lt. and Mrs. Ben Coffey, Jr., being at Fort Sill, Okla. Mr. A. F. Ganier of Nashville and Mrs. C. A. Barfield of Norfolk, Va., were out of town guests. Though we have lost some of our most ardent ornithologists to the services, the fortunes of war have brought us several outstanding members. Among them are Sgt. and Mrs. J. Southgate Hoyt, formerly of Cornell University, and Pfc. Mac Evans of Texas.

A new territory was covered this year beginning at the end of the Lauderdale bus line on Bodley and extending along Nonconnah levee and thence across the fields to Riverside Park. Because of high water, shore birds were almost entirely missing. The count for the day was low, due perhaps to the absence of an early party that usually searched the remote edges of the route before meeting the party at the starting point. Ninety-two species were listed. Among the rarer birds were four Painted Buntings, two Canada Warblers, two Swainsons Warblers, twenty-two Fish Crows, a Red-breasted Nuthatch and a Pine Siskin, the last two being regarded as late dates. The party witnessed a beautiful flight exhibition by a pair of Mississippi Kites over the cotton fields and of another pair over the park. Dickcissels and Grasshopper Sparrows were common in the fields and migrating Savannah Sparrows were abundant. During the late afternoon, one group saw a flock of thirty Nighthawks going north and another group, going north of Memphis, found hundreds of Bob-o-links. The Wilsons Warbler was not recorded on the seventh but was found the following day on the M. C. S. campus by Miss Pauline James.—MARY DAVANT, Memphis, Tenn.

**THE NASHVILLE SPRING FIELD DAY** was held on May 14, 1944, on Mr. Gus Morrow's "Harpeth Valley Farm," 12 miles southwest of Nashville. Here the Little Harpeth River winds about the base of the classic Harpeth Hills that form the scenic landscape one views from Edwin Warner Park, a mile away. Immediately upon branching off from the Hillsboro Road, the listing began with numerous birds on every hand and within the half hour it took the late comers to arrive and to make ready for the hike, nearly fifty species of birds had been entered on the listing cards. Dividing into groups, large and small, the fifty-five participants meandered down the stream, then up thru the wooded pastures, over old stone walls, past an ancient homestead and finally to the bluegrass-clad summits among the flowering locust trees. Here a Red-bellied Woodpecker flew to its nest cavity, a Red-tailed Hawk reconnoitered overhead, and a Pileated sounded his resonant call from the beech woods further on. Down on the slope, a Hairy Woodpecker entered his nest, drilled in the dead stub of a big locust. On a cedar-clad hillside, a Black Vulture sitting on top of a dead tree, caused one nestwise group to investigate further and they were rewarded by finding a downy "chick" within the hollow stump of an old oak. Rough-winged and Barn Swallows were observed skimming the fields in the valley and nests of the latter were found in the big barn. At one o'clock, the group reassembled for lunch and

to conduct a business meeting, including the election of State officers for the T. O. S. This and other business being concluded, the composite list was made up, subject to such further additions as would be made during the afternoon's foray. Transient warblers were notably scarce, although at this date they are well past the peak of their abundance. Perfect weather, a congenial crowd and a picturesque hunting ground, made the day a pleasant one for all who attended.—ANON.

**KNOXVILLE SPRING FIELD DAY:**—On April 30, the Knoxville chapter held its spring field day as usual at the Island Home Bird Sanctuary, to list the birds present at this riverside location. Visitors from Kingsport, Johnson City, Elizabethton, Gatlinburg, Oak Ridge, Crab Orchard and Nashville, represented 8 of the total attendance of 49 who were present. The weatherman provided excellent weather—fair and warm—and the observers took advantage of it by remaining afield from sun-up until after dusk. Foliage and vegetation were generally a week ahead of their average condition at this date but despite this fact, the warbler migration was very weak, as evidenced by their scarcity in species and especially in numbers. The day was also marked by the lack of water-birds and birds of prey. The only hawk seen was too high for positive identification and was not included in the listed total of 94 species. Our average for recent years is approximately 101 species and the all time high found on any spring field day is 112. Perhaps the most interesting record of the day was a Black-crowned Night Heron which was found in the early morning at the head of the island. The bird had been seen a few times prior to this date by H. P. Ijams but was observed on the census by Paul and William Yambert.—W. M. WALKER, 201 E. Peachtree St., Knoxville, Tenn.

**ELIZABETHTON SPRING FIELD DAY:**—The highlight of activities during the past quarter was the spring bird census conducted on May 7. Inclement weather, with an early morning temperature of 38 degrees and swiftly moving low clouds after an all night steady downpour (higher altitudes on Roan Mountain and in adjacent North Carolina registered snow), did to some extent affect observations during early morning hours but apparently had no effect on the final results. The participants were 8 in number, including guests Messrs. W. F. Pearson and Thomas W. Finucane of Kingsport and J. A. Worth of Johnson City, whose valuable assistance was greatly appreciated. Divided into three groups, those participating covered a fairly comprehensive territory, which included the Doe River vicinity upstream from the covered bridge, Lynn Mountain base and slopes, the swampy woodland on the northern bank of the Watauga River east of town, and the scenic stretch of Watauga River from South Watauga to the stone quarry at the river bend near Rio Vista.

At mid-day the group repaired to the home of the president, Dr. Herndon, where lady members of the club served a substantial lunch. Following this, the listing afield was resumed and was continued until dusk and the resulting list then compiled showed 92 species for the day. Nineteen members of the warbler family were recorded, as follows: Black-and-white, Blue-winged, Blackpoll, Black-throated Green, Canada Cerulean, Chestnut-sided, Cape May, Hooded, Kentucky, Maryland Yellowthroat, Myrtle, Parula, Palm, Pine, Yellow, Amer. Redstart and Louisiana Water-thrush.

On earlier trips along the Doe and the Watauga, our members have found Shoveller and Baldpate Ducks, Black-crowned Night Heron, Woodcock and Osprey. The last mentioned has been seen on several occasions, including May 7, and there is a possibility that it may be nesting along the Watauga.—FRED W. BEHREND, 406 Broad St., Elizabethton, Tenn.

#### ELECTION OF OFFICERS, TENNESSEE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

At the annual meeting of The Tennessee Ornithological Society, held at Nashville, on May 14, 1944, the following officers were nominated and elected to serve for the year beginning July 1, 1944: President, Prof. George Davis, State Teachers College, Murfreesboro; Vice-President, East Tennessee, Wm. Johnson, Route 4, River Road, Knoxville; Vice-President, Middle Tennessee, Walter R. Spofford, Vanderbilt Medical School, Nashville; Vice-President, West Tennessee, Miss Mary Davant, Cossitt Library, Memphis; Editor-Curator, Albert F. Ganier, 2112 Woodlawn Drive, Nashville; Treasurer, Alfred Clebsch, P. O. Box 164, Clarksville; Secretary, James A. Robins, Vanderbilt University, Nashville.

Mr. Clebsch, who has so ably served us up to now in the dual role of Secretary-Treasurer, requested that the duties of Secretary be passed to other hands due to added responsibilities he has had to take over. He has kindly agreed to continue as Treasurer.

Professor Robins, who has been a T. O. S. member for many years, will take over his duties at once. He will endeavor to increase our membership as well as to bring about a closer coordination of the work of our several chapters.

All officers of the year just closed were voted the Society's thanks for their appreciated services.

For the Committee on Nominations  
By G. R. MAYFIELD, Chairman.

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Many have remarked on the apparent decrease of Red-headed Woodpeckers during recent years. We would like to hear from our members what their observations have been regarding this and also, what might have caused a decrease.

Our Memphis members usually record the first Purple Martins each season. Bert Powell of that city writes to say he recorded his first one on March 4. Scott Hutchison writes that he saw his first Martin there on March 6 and that three were first seen to visit his martin box on March 13. They returned the following day and roosted in his box that night. A few days later he counted 10 at the 30 room box. On March 30, he saw 12 at the large box, 7 at a 10 room box and 1 at a one room box that a Flicker had roosted in.

We are now unable to supply complete sets of volumes 2 to 5 of THE MIGRANT until we can get in some out-of-stock copies issued 1931 to 1934. For several issues we will pay a dollar apiece or will apply that amount on future dues if preferred. We particularly need the March 1934 issue. Members having odd copies of any of these early issues which they may not want, will please drop a card to the Editor.

# THE MIGRANT

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PUBLISHED BY THE TENNESSEE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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

PLEASE NOTIFY THE SECRETARY OF A CHANGE IN ADDRESS

A NEW T. O. S. CHAPTER AT ELIZABETHTON:—We are happy to welcome a new chapter in extreme northeast Tennessee, the group having completed its affiliation during May of this year. To Dr. Lee Roy Herndon, for a number of years a member of the Buffalo, N. Y. Ornithological Society, we understand goes credit for having taken the initiative earlier this year by organizing the group as the Elizabethton Bird-life Study Club. At this writing, membership consists of 16 active and associate members, predominantly beginners. The officers are: President, Dr. Lee Roy Herndon; Vice-President, Mrs. Fred W. Behrend; Secretary, J. C. Browning; Treasurer, Mrs. Henry W. Scott; Statistician, Dr. Hugo Doob, Jr., and Historian, Fred W. Behrend. Regular indoor meetings, at the residence of members, are held the first and third Friday of each month. Field trips are scheduled for the first and third week-end of each month. Since the inception of the organization, field trips in the Lynn Mountains, Watauga River and Doe River areas, we learn have revealed some interesting results. Roan Mountain is close at hand and will no doubt receive future attention. Our new chapter has a most interesting field for its activities and we wish its members many years of increasing activity.

SUMMER BIRDS OF MONTGOMERY BELL STATE PARK:—On May 27 and 28, 1944, a list of the breeding birds of this 4,000 acre upland area, 33 miles west of Nashville, was made by A. F. Ganier, G. R. Mayfield and H. S. Vaughn. A twenty-four hour period, beginning at 4 P. M. on the 27th, was devoted to the listing which consisted of sampling all types of areas. These areas were woods, old fields and the shores of two artificial lakes. Separate card lists were made out for each area covered, for future comparison. A total of 65 species were listed and the total number of individuals were estimated at 1,000, for the portions covered. Ten members of the warbler family were found, as follows: Black-and-white, Blue-winged, Cerulean, Hooded, Kentucky, Parula, Prairie, Sycamore, Maryland Yellowthroat, and Louisiana Water-thrush. It is planned to repeat the census next summer, after which the composite list will be prepared for publication.—EDITOR.

A lack of suitable manuscripts have delayed this issue. If copy for next number comes in promptly, the September issue will be out on time. Both long and short articles on Tennessee birds are solicited from all T. O. S. members.

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