

THE WILSON BULLETIN

Published at Oberlin, Ohio, by the Wilson Ornithological Club.

Official Organ of the Wilson Ornithological Club and the Nebraska Ornithological Union (in affiliation.)

Price in the United States, Canada and Mexico, \$1.50 a year, 50c a number, post paid. Price in all countries in the International Union, \$2.00 a year, 60c a number. Subscriptions should be sent to Wm. I. Lyon, 124 Washington Street, Waukegan, Ill.

EDITORIAL

The Editor regrets the delay of this issue, and must ask the indulgence of members and readers for the delay, which has been due to illness. He trusts that the June issue will appear on time, if not a little early. The clamor for space in this issue has necessitated the postponement of several things that it was planned to present on this page. The March issue is the one in which the reports of officers naturally appear, thus making necessary the postponement of the membership roll as well as other matters.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB, CINCINNATI, OHIO

December 31, 1923, and January 1, 1924

December 31, 1923, 10:00 a. m.

Joint Meeting of The Wilson Ornithological Club and The Ecological Society of America.

1. Birds and Their Environments—Dr. Lynds Jones, Spear Laboratory, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio.

Dr. Jones has made nine Ecology trips to the Pacific coast from Oberlin, Ohio. He has been particularly interested in comparing his knowledge of birds in the Grasslands gained in his youth with the knowledge gained on these trips. He has found that birds which were originally to be found only in the Deciduous Forest area have gradually adapted themselves to the Grasslands or, in the case particularly of the larger birds, have succumbed to civilization. However, the great irrigation projects have served to increase bird life of two types, water birds and those that nest in the vegetation which has sprung up around the great dams and lakes. In fact, the territory which surrounds these places has become a bird-paradise. Fortunately, the birds which have decreased are not of very great economic importance, while insectivorous birds have greatly increased in number.

2. Food Habits of the American Eagle—Professor Francis H. Herick, Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.

The American Eagle, though very unpopular and considered fair game by every sportsman at all seasons of the year, has continued to survive, even in Alaska, where bounties offered for heads of eagles because of its supposed destruction of valuable fishes and game animals

have so far failed to exterminate it. During the seasons of 1922 and 1923 Professor Herrick and one of his assistants have watched the last three weeks of nest-life in an eyrie at Vermilion, Ohio, just a mile from Lake Erie. This nest, in a shell-bark hickory, 81 feet from the ground, has been occupied continuously since 1890, and, with a few brief intervals, since 1840. Professor Herrick built an observatory 82 feet high, later raised to 100 feet, in a tall elm only 85 feet from the nest, and studied with the eye, high-power binoculars, and a Graflex camera the activities of the nest. In 1923 the adult eagles in the period of three weeks made 109 visits to the nest, 102 of these visits with food. Fish were brought 87 times, usually small fish thrown up on the shores of Lake Erie by storms or else left by fisherman as undesirable for the market. Chickens, always partially plucked, were brought 13 times. In spite of the fact that the tree was in plain view of highways, farmhouses, and cultivated fields, the eagles came and went as if unconscious of the danger. The young were fed by the parents, bill to bill, until the very last day in the nest, a habit rather different from that of other birds of prey, says Professor Herrick. (See *The American Eagle, Later Nest-Phases*, below)

3. *The Ecology of Lake St. Mary's, Ohio*—Charles Dury, Cincinnati Society of Natural History, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Dr. Dury concerned himself largely with the abundance of wild life at Lake St. Mary's fifty years ago, before ruthless slaughter had reduced the numbers of birds nesting or visiting this immense body of water. This lake, completed in 1854, was a reservoir for one of the canals formerly so prominent in Ohio, and occupied a commanding elevation, said to be nearly 1550 feet above sea level. Not only were waterfowl abundant, beyond the dreams of one to-day, but fishes were equally numerous and drew hordes of fishermen. Among the rare breeding birds found there by Dr. Dury was the Hooded Merganser, a female with eight freshly-hatched young. Dr. Dury, now a very old man, put the memories and experiences of a lifetime into the paper, which describes a phase of wild life forever gone.

4. *The Appearance of 22 Evening Grosbeaks in Ohio*—Charles Dury.

A brief account of the appearance of the Grosbeaks and an exhibition of two specimens taken in Ohio, together with a bottle of some unknown seeds upon which they were feeding.

5. *The Present Status of the European Starling in Ohio*—Charles Dury.

Though reported as occurring twenty years ago, the Starling was found breeding in Ohio for the first time this year. A Starling taken in Ohio was exhibited. This brief paper called forth a long discussion of the status of the Starling elsewhere. Mr. A. F. Ganier of Nashville, Tennessee, reported a roost of 60,000 Starlings in one of the large old cemeteries of his city.

6. *Notes on the Fauna of the Lake-Bog Habitat Series*—Professor T. L. Hankinson, State Normal College, Ypsilanti, Michigan.

Professor Hankinson has spent many years in Michigan studying the lakes, bogs, ponds, and marshes of the moraine country. For the

past few years he has spent his summers in working for the State Department of Conservation, which has led him into this attractive field. He classifies the fauna in ten well-marked belts, not all found in every lake but several represented in each, owing to the size of the lake, its depth, and the elevation of the country immediately surrounding: (1) the deep-water area, with little vegetation, with muck bottom and a good many fishes; (2) the intermediate zone, with the water about five feet deep, the greatest fish area and the feeding grounds for the Ducks; (3) the water lily zone, with water three to five feet deep, teeming with invertebrate life and with bullfrogs and bass. (4) the marginal shallows, the greatest area for birds because of the rushes and grasses; (5) the leather-leaf area, moist but not wet; (6) the fern area, where shore birds abound; (7) the thicket, home of hosts of bush birds; (8) the conifer area, grown up in tamarack and spruces; (9) the meadow area, uncultivated, full of Snipe and Killdeer; and (10) the wooded border on higher ground. Many of these areas are practically untouched by man and offer a splendid opportunity for study, even with large classes.

December 31, 2:00 p. m.

1. Some Ornithological Impressions of Fiji and New Zealand—Professor Dayton Stoner, Iowa University, Iowa City, Iowa.

(This paper is published in this issue.)

2. Birds of Naknek Lake, Alaska—James S. Hine, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

Professor Hine, as a member of the National Geographic Society's Mount Katmai Expeditions in 1917 and 1919, studied the birds and their habitats along the Alaska shore, going north by the Island Passage; and, later, along the shores of Naknek Lake, a large fresh-water lake, three or four miles wide at the widest part, and sixty miles long, reaching halfway across the Alaska Peninsula. On account of the abundance of foxes, the water birds have learned to build their nests on inaccessible ledges on the shore or on low-lying islands in the part of the lake named by the members of the expedition the Bay of Islands. Professor Hine's slides included pictures showing the abundance of seabirds and the inaccessible nesting-cliffs of the Cormorants and other birds.

3. Breeding Birds of Reelfoot Lake—Albert F. Ganier, President of the Tennessee Ornithological Society, Nashville, Tennessee.

Reelfoot Lake is a large, irregularly shaped body of water, twenty miles long and varying in width from a few feet to five miles. The lake, formerly the site of a swamp, sank in a terrific earthquake in 1812, the trees of the old forest being still seen, rising from the water or marsh. The shallow areas have grown up in cypresses and water plants. The whole lake country forms one of the greatest of the hunters' paradises in North America. Mr. Ganier has made ten or twelve trips to the lake within the last dozen years, staying from a day to two weeks. He has found very few of the bordering areas suitable for breeding-places and records only those birds which nest in marsh grasses, on stumps in the swamp, or in tall trees around the lake, since there is an absence of beaches. Three of the regular ducks breed in numbers: the Wood Duck, now rapidly becoming extinct elsewhere; the Hooded Merganser; and

the Mallard. Coots are exceptionally plentiful. The lake is at present owned by the state of Tennessee, so far as the water and the immediate shore is concerned. A movement is on foot for the state to purchase, with fees from hunting-licenses, the marsh areas and the surrounding uninhabited country and to establish a great state biological station. One thing Mr. Ganier brought out was that many species found breeding on the Mississippi River, only a few miles away, are never found on the lake. Readers of the National Geographic Magazine will welcome an extended article on Reelfoot Lake by the State Geologist of Tennessee, the natural history part of the article having been contributed by Mr. Ganier.

4. The American Eagle—Later Nest-Phases, Francis H. Herrick, Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.

The American Eagle, in common with many other species of birds, builds its new nest on top of the preceding one. The nest spoken of by the author in his preceding paper, was eight and a half feet in diameter and 12 feet deep. The photographs shown revealed the eaglets in every characteristic attitude: dozing, exercising their wings and talons, watching the arrival or departure of their parents, feeding, and making their first attempts at flight. The observatory was made in an elm tree 85 feet from the nesting tree and was built very strongly, to withstand the Lake Erie gales. After the 1922 season a few obstructing branches were removed by the observers, in order to see better and photograph the nest activities. The observation period was the last three weeks of the nest-life. Next year Professor Herrick intends to study the earlier phases of the life in the same nest, provided no accident occurs to the adult eagles or the eyrie.

5. The Prairie Horned Lark as a Breeding Bird in Kentucky—Ben. J. Blincoe, Dayton, Ohio.

The frequency of the Prairie Horned Lark in summer led Mr. Blincoe to collect all data gathered by Kentucky ornithologists on this species. Dr. L. O. Pindar of Versailles, many of whose records were destroyed by fire, has seen the species nearly every spring month in several central Kentucky counties. Gordon Wilson of Bowling Green reports the bird seen every month except June and expresses the belief that its nesting ground is only a little distance from his territory. Mr. Linebaugh of Guthrie records the bird as nesting, without giving dates, and says he has found the nests. Mr. Embody recorded it at Russellville about twenty years ago as an all-year resident. Mr. Blincoe has on several occasions heard the flight song of the Prairie Horned Lark, usually thought to be given only in the nesting season. Several Kentucky ornithologists have decided to investigate further the probable breeding places of the bird and to establish its status as a Kentucky breeder.

January 1, 1924, 10:00 a. m.

1. Banding the Great Lakes Colony Birds—Dr. Lynds Jones, Spear Laboratory, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio.

The Bird-banding Associations are eager to enlist the coöperation of all people who spend their summer vacations on the Great Lakes

in banding the common water birds. Dr. Jones has collected lists of breeding-places which have been discovered by him and other ornithologists and hopes that many of these places can be visited and the birds banded during the coming nesting season. Many of the islands and reefs used for nesting-places are in Canadian territory but the Canadian officials are favorable to bird-banding. Dr. Jones has been rather discouraged by the fatality discovered among the young birds banded, reporting as high as fifty per cent. as dying in two weeks after the banding was done. Though he does not think that any of the fatalities were due to the banding process, he doubts the wisdom of banding nestlings and favors the trapping and banding of adults.

2. The United States Biological Survey on Bird-banding—E. A. Goldman, Biological Survey, Washington, D. C.

It has been demonstrated that it is rather dangerous to band nestlings on account of their frailty. Besides, hosts of nestlings die within a few days after leaving the nest and, consequently, furnish little information about migration routes. The number of birds taken by collectors in the whole country in 1922,—15,000,—is very small as compared with the natural fatalities. The Biological Survey furnishes bands and permits to those interested in this phase of study. The growth in banding has been very rapid, on account of the good work of the New England Bird-Banding Association and the Inland Bird-Banding Association. The great difficulty has been in trapping birds which do not come to the ground to feed, Warblers, for instance. Traps are being devised to catch all types of birds, even Humming-birds. Up to the present the Biological Survey has especially pushed the banding of waterfowl, Ducks in particular. By this means there are being rapidly accumulated data on migration routes, particularly of the Mallard. There is to be published shortly a preliminary bulletin on the migration routes of the Mallard.

There is before Congress at this time a measure to set aside public shooting-places, designed to conserve wild places and wild life, except for the open hunting season. These reserves are really to be a species of government parks or playgrounds for the people. These places, in the very nature of things, will furnish great opportunities for banding.

3. Developing Districts for Bird-banding—A. F. Ganier, President of The Wilson Ornithological Club, Nashville, Tennessee.

Mr. Ganier is in charge of the Southern Bird-Banding District, which includes Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Few returns have come in as yet from this district. Frequently New England birds are known to migrate diagonally across to the South. Already there are four trapping-places in Tennessee and one or more in each of the other states in this district. Mr. Ganier is trying to enlist bird-banders in all parts of the South. At his own traps he has taken a large number of ground birds. He has discovered that the House Sparrow has learned to get out of the traps but the native birds have not.

4. Ten Years of Bird-Banding—William I. Lyon, Secretary of The Inland Bird-Banding Association, Waukegan, Illinois.

Mr. Lyon was a pioneer in banding, beginning twelve years ago, using bands devised for baby chicks. He was unable to receive a supply of official bands until 1915. At first the Biological Survey insisted on the banding being only of the young, but later it relented and allowed and encouraged the banding of the adult. Dr. E. W. Nelson, chief of the Biological Survey, has greatly encouraged Mr. Lyon and has furnished him with an abundance of bands. On account of the inability of Mr. Lyon to secure traps suited to his needs, he has devised several traps: the ground trap, the tilting trap for perching birds, and traps to catch Creepers, Woodpeckers, and similar birds. In one season he caught and banded 100 Brown Creepers, 22 in one day. He has also devised a trap-door to close Woodpecker, Bluebird, and Chickadee holes. Many valuable bits of information have been discovered by Mr. Lyon, particularly about bird diseases and albinistic variations. He made some experiments by removing the tail feathers of an albinistic Bronzed Grackle several times, until it came in perfectly black. During the past five years Mr. Lyon has made a set of nearly a hundred valuable slides, many of them colored, illustrating every phase of banding: traps, birds caught in the traps, bait, bands, position of birds in banding, diseased birds caught, etc. His contribution to the study of ornithology has been one of the most unique of the last seventy-five years.

5. Banding in Alabama—J. M. Robinson, Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Auburn, Alabama.

Professor Robinson has had a wide experience in getting people interested in banding and other phases of bird-study. Though his work is yet in its infancy, 18 species of birds have been banded and nearly 700 individuals. The goal for next year in the state is 1000. Many of the birds taken were trapped on the campus of his school, where he is creating a very unusual interest among all the school people in the joys of bird study.

ATTENDANCE AT THE MEETINGS

The following are some of the names of people who attended one or more of the meetings (quite a few left before the Secretary could get their names and addresses): Professor C. C. Adams, State College of Forestry, Syracuse, New York; Professor G. A. Bowden, University School, Cincinnati, Ohio; Ben J. Blincoe, Dayton, Ohio; Dr. Blen R. Bales, Circleville, Ohio; Susan H. Ballou, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania; Paul W. Bowden, Cincinnati, Ohio; William G. Cramer, President of The Ohio Audubon Society, Cincinnati, Ohio; Charles Dury, President of The Cincinnati Society of Natural History, Cincinnati, Ohio; Professor W. D. Funkhouser, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky; Albert F. Ganier, President of The Tennessee Ornithological Society, Nashville, Tennessee; Eloise Gerry, U. S. Forest Products Laboratory, Madison, Wisconsin; E. A. Goldman, Biological Survey, Washington, D. C.; Professor James S. Hine, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio; Professor Francis H. Herrick, Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio; Professor T. L. Hankinson, State Normal College, Ypsilanti, Michigan; Lena B. Henderson, Randolph-Macon College, Roanoke, Virginia; Constance E. Hart, Passaic, New Jersey;

Dr. Lynds Jones, Spear Laboratory, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio; I. H. Johnston, State Ornithologist, Charleston, West Virginia; Mary Belle Johnston, Bird Haven, Charleston, West Virginia; William I. Lyon, Secretary of The Inland Bird-Banding Association, Waukegan, Illinois; A. F. Miller, member of The Mt. Katmai Expeditions, Wooster, Ohio; Julia G. Parker, Cincinnati, Ohio; W. C. Purdy, Cincinnati, Ohio; Professor Leigh H. Pennington, State College of Forestry, Syracuse, New York; Professor J. M. Robinson, Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Auburn, Alabama; Mrs. A. F. Satterthwait, Webster Groves, Missouri; Mary M. Steagall, Carbondale, Illinois; Mrs. Frank H. Shaffer, Cincinnati, Ohio; Professor Dayton Stoner, Iowa University, Iowa City, Iowa; E. S. Smith, T. J. Smith, S. E. Smith, Cincinnati, Ohio; A. J. Wildman, Jr., Cincinnati, Ohio; Professor A. O. Weese, James Millikan University, Decatur, Illinois; Gordon Wilson, Teachers' College, Bowling Green, Kentucky.

BUSINESS MEETING

At the Business Meeting, December 31, 1923, the following members were appointed as the Nominating Committee: Professor Dayton Stoner, Professor T. L. Hankinson, and Mr. E. Lawrence Palmer. They recommended the following for the officers for the year 1924:

President, Albert F. Ganier, Nashville, Tennessee
 Vice-President, William I. Lyon, Waukegan, Illinois.
 Secretary, Gordon Wilson, Bowling Green, Kentucky
 Treasurer, Ben. J. Blincoe, Dayton, Ohio

Additional Members of the Council:

H. L. Stoddard, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
 T. L. Hankinson, Ypsilanti, Michigan
 W. M. Rosen, Ogden, Iowa

The Council met and named Dr. Lynds Jones, Oberlin, Ohio, as Editor.

The Treasurer's report was made, approved by an auditing committee composed of Ben J. Blincoe, Gordon Wilson, and Lynds Jones, and adopted by the Club. It follows.

Treasurer's Report for 1923

Waukegan, Illinois, January 1, 1924

Receipts

Dec. 31, 1922 Cash received from former Treas.	\$ 88.04
Associate Members	316.50
Active Members	414.00
Sustaining Members	130.00
Subscribers	34.53
Back Numbers	20.50
Nebraska O. U.	64.00

\$1067.57

Money deposited but not accounted
 for

12.85

\$1080.42

Disbursements

Mar. 31, 1923 News Printing Co.	\$ 23.50
Apr. 11, 1923 Gulbenk Photo Eng. Co.	7.78
May 14, 1923 News Printing Co.	700.00
Sept. 10, 1923 News Printing Co.	200.00
Dec. 19, 1923 W. I. Lyon, Treas., Expenses	18.05
May 28, 1923 Check returned unpaid	1.50

	\$ 950.83
Jan. 1, 1924 Cash on hand	129.59

	\$1080.42

WILLIAM I. LYON, Treasurer.

Approved, January 1, 1924.

Gordon Wilson, Ben. J. Blincoe, Lynds Jones, Aud. Committee.

It was moved by A. F. Ganier that the list of new applicants' names be acted on each month by the Council, subject to the approval of the entire Club in annual session. This motion, duly seconded, was carried.

On the motion of Gordon Wilson the Iowa Ornithologists' Union and the Kentucky Ornithological Society were admitted to affiliation on the same terms as those used by the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union. On the motion of A. F. Ganier the Tennessee Ornithological Society was admitted on the same basis.

I. H. Johnston and James S. Hine were appointed to serve with the Secretary as a Program Committee.

66 new members were elected, one being a sustaining member, 15 active members, the remainder being associates.

It was decided by the members to refer the place of the 1924 meeting to the Council.

The Resolutions Committee reported as follows:

Whereas, The Wilson Ornithological Club has completed one of the most successful years in its history, and, at Cincinnati, Ohio, one of the best meetings it has yet had; therefore, be it resolved:

First: That we extend our thanks to the University of Cincinnati and to the local committee of the American Association for the Advancement of Science for their assistance and hospitality in providing quarters and otherwise helping to make our meeting a success.

Second: That we hereby express our appreciation for the work done during the past year by President T. L. Hankinson, Vice-President Dayton Stoner, Treasurer William I. Lyon, and Secretary Gordon Wilson and make recognition of the personal sacrifice they have made in devoting so much of their time and energies to forwarding the work of the Club.

Third: That we recognize with thanks the work of our veteran Editor, Lynds Jones, in piloting our official organ, The Wilson Bulletin, through another successful year.

A. F. GANIER,
B. R. BALES,
Committee.