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NOTES ON THE PAINTED BUNTING AT MEMPHIS

By BEN B. COFFEY

The Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*), generally considered the most beautifully plumaged of our native birds, is a common bird in the lower Mississippi valley, ranging northward up the river until it becomes rare at the latitude of Tennessee. This species was inadvertently omitted from the Distributional List of the Birds of Tennessee, published early this year, although several records for this county had entitled it to a place in the list. As if in protest to the exclusion, five males and at least three females appeared on the scene here during the past nesting season.

Bird records for Memphis begin with 1928, being based on field trips by the writer and other observers made since that date. Since our field work has by no means included visits to all likely habitats of this bird, it could have existed in some places of course other than in those noted in the few and scattered records which follow. My first record was made May 26, 1929, when I discovered a male singing from the cross-bar of a telegraph pole along the Illinois Central Railroad, just south of the Memphis city limits at East Junction. It showed a preference for these cross-bars, as I attempted to learn its pretty but not forceful song, a song which bears a slight resemblance to that of the common Indigo Bunting. A short hunt for a possible nest was unsuccessful. The evening of May 29 I may have heard its song again, and on June 1st, with Eric Henrich, I saw the bird for a second time. This species was not observed again in 1929, but a male was seen here twice the next spring, one of the dates being May 2nd. John Bamberg also recorded a male in Riverside Park on May 2, 1930. A lookout was kept for them and East Junction was visited assiduously, but no other one was seen until this year. Very occasionally some one tells me of seeing a male Painted Bunting, and while it is conspicuously colored and should be easy to identify without confusing it with some other species, I have been inclined to disregard all but two instances. Gerald Capers, veteran Scout leader and nature student, saw one in Overton Park, the last part of April, 1927. Mrs. A. L. Heiskell saw one the past spring, as will be noted further on.

After two years' apparent absence, five male and three female Painted Buntings spent the summer of 1933 with us. Previous visitors were only seen once or twice, but Bunting No. 1 could be found from May to the middle of July any time we wanted to show it off to other bird lovers. No. 1 was discovered April 29 along the Illinois Central tracks and southward between North Second Street and the Wolf River. Its song led to its discovery and by learning to recognize the song we were able to locate the bird on most subsequent visits. This bird seemed to have a very large territory, about 400 by 200 yards, with several favorite perches. The next afternoon I returned with Mrs. Coffey and Bert Powell, so they could see their first in-

dividual of this species. A second trip at twilight was necessary, but fortune favored us, for as we turned to leave, the little beauty flew out of some weeds just in front of us. The first trip in May was unsuccessful, but on May 16 we observed it and on the 19th, saw our first female of this species. She is decidedly more yellowish and light greenish than the female Indigo Bunting. On the 21st Mrs. Coffey and I watched the pair over a half hour as they apparently were searching for a nesting site. The male would at times sing from the top of a pile of waste steel shavings or a gasoline storage tank. The Reelfoot expedition crowd listened to it on the 27th, and on June 1st it seemed to be covering as wide a range as ever. On June 18th an unsuccessful search for the nest was made in a few likely and frequented spots. July 9th the adults were found feeding three young, two about 4 to 5 days out of the nest, and one about 2 days out of same. The male did not sing. On the 13th it was found singing, this being the last time No. 1 was seen.

Meanwhile, Bert Powell was so elated over his first sight of this beautiful finch that he began to search for others near his home on the opposite or south side of town. On June 12 one was discovered on some high ground south of the Quaker Oats plant and verified by myself on June 17. On subsequent trips to search for a nest, no bird was seen by Bert, so we went again to the place on July 11 and found the male singing and a female. On the 13th, Bert found no female, but watched two males fight. The original No. 2 pair was seen July 17, the male again July 20, and on the 23rd he saw the female and one immature bird. This was the last record for No. 2. No. 3, his rival, was seen only on the 13th. On April 29, Mrs. A. L. Heiskell, of 1240 Tanglewood, noticed a beautiful varicolored bird in her yard. Her description was a perfect fit for the Bunting. A closely-built-up residential section, only a partial search could be made, and this individual was not found again unless it happened to be the same as No. 5, found two blocks away in a field near Lamar and Castalia by Bert Powell on July 28. We failed to find one at this location on August 6. This section is slightly over a mile from where numbers 2 and 3 were observed in combat.

While we were driving often to the opposite outskirts of the city, hoping to find the first nest of this species in Tennessee, a pair were nesting within two blocks of our apartment, near a bayou, and a stone's throw from the big Scars-Roebuck building. Miss Alice Smith, while playing tennis, thought she heard the bunting's song several times, but failed to find it on the only search she made. Miss Winifred Smith later remarked to her and to Mrs. Coffey, on Sunday, July 16, regarding a beautiful bird seen on her back porch about July 2nd. An immediate search failed to find No. 4, but on the next day, the 17th, Miss Alice Smith found a pair of Painted Buntings and a nest with three young, completely filling it. The nest, a small, cuplike structure of grasses and weeds, was located three feet above the ground in a small elm bush at the side of an old path. Any one using the path would have brushed the nest. Mrs. Coffey and I visited the site and found the singing male, but it took the earlier discoverer to point out the nest to us. She found the young still in the nest at noon on the 19th, but in the evening I found the nest empty. On July 25 I watched the female feeding a young bird which was following the parent around. This was our last record for the season.

During the coming Spring it will be interesting to observe to what extent these birds return to occupy their old territories. Other likely spots will be closely watched for additional pairs.

MEMPHIS, TENN., Nov., 1933.

NOTES ON DUCK HAWK NESTINGS

By F. M. JONES

The Duck Hawk (*Falco peregrinus anatum*), the most interesting of all the hawks, is not as plentiful as in the days of old, when they furnished sport for kings and nobility, and it is a tribute to their hardiness and resourcefulness that they exist at all, for the hand of man, except for a few of the nature lovers, are turned against all hawks alike. The principal reason for this is plain ignorance, for hawks in general are more beneficial than harmful, and something must be lacking in the makeup of a person who selfishly destroys something which they cannot appreciate. That the Duck Hawk feeds principally on birds is too well known to contradict, but if all the facts were known it is doubtful if they do much harm along that line, for Blue Jays and Crows, the enemies of all small birds, form an important part of their bill of fare. Even though they ate only birds rated as beneficial, man would have no right to exterminate them. Only last spring, 1933, a storm sweeping across the upper part of East Tennessee killed more small birds than all the Duck Hawks in the United States could consume in many years. Recently, an article came out in a national publication in which the writer stated that a pair of Duck Hawks coming under his observation in East Tennessee were, "as far as known, the only pair of Duck Hawks nesting in the Southeast portion of the United States." To the uninformed public this might be accepted as a fact, but it lacks quite a lot of being true, and the statement is to be regretted. Other pairs are known in the section he writes of, as well as in other parts of the State. Two of them found by Mr. Robert B. Lyle of Johnson City, Tennessee, have been visited by myself. These are in the upper part of East Tennessee, and due credit is given Mr. Lyle for the opportunity of getting first-hand information about their nesting. The first nest was found by Mr. Lyle several years ago, and after inspecting the situation several times it was found to be inaccessible on account of a tremendous overhang of the steep rock cliffs. The second pair of Duck Hawks were located by Mr. Lyle on April 2nd of this year—1933—and knowing my interest in finding their nest, he very generously turned the proposition over to me. On April 5th we went to the location with a view of finding the nest if possible, but as there was a half a mile or more of the cliffs along the river, making it possible for the exact site to be most anywhere along this front, we had our work cut out for us to start with. We started out at one end of the cliff, taking turns going over and being pulled back or climbing hand over hand if the distance was not too much for us, using a single length of stout rope. Just as it was getting dark we found on a narrow ledge the egg shells of the past season's hatching and not far from them on the same ledge was a hole rounded out in the fine soil which covered the rocks, with a few downy feathers in it. The hawks by this time were making considerable fuss, so we were satisfied we had succeeded in our mission of finding their nest. Mr. Lyle came back the following Sunday to try to locate the nest for me, not thinking I had found it, and after watching the hawks through a pair of binoculars going to a certain ledge numerous times, got the impression that they had young in that particular place and wrote me to that effect. While I was confident that I had located the nesting ledge on my first trip, Mr. Lyle wrote me so convincingly that I decided there was no use waiting for three weeks longer, as I had at first intended, so I went back on April 14th. After prospecting his location and finding nothing, I went over the cliffs to the place I had previously located and there found one egg in the hole which the hawk had rounded out. We waited until the 22nd, and went

back, expecting to find the set of eggs complete, but only found the single egg. Both hawks had seen me at their nest on my last visit and promptly abandoned it. This meant a further search on our part, but as we had covered the most of the suitable nesting ledges on the first visit, two hours of rope work resulted in locating another fresh hole, scratched out at a place which showed signs of having been used in years past. Three weeks later (May 14) we returned and before going down to the ledge it was evident that the hawk had a full complement of eggs and had begun to incubate them, for we first watched the cliffs through the binoculars and saw the male hawk fly to the nesting ledge with a bird and then leave immediately. The rocks at that particular spot were well whitened with excrement, a sign present at all nesting places, so we went on up to the ledge above and rolled a rock over, which flushed the hawk from the nest. This nest was not difficult to get to, and I lost no time in sliding down the rope to the nesting ledge and viewing the beautiful set of three eggs. This made all of the previous hard work seem well worth while, and gave me a tremendous thrill. During the time I was at the nest, which was on a flat ledge 24 inches broad, the female hawk flew around constantly, making a considerable fuss, and at one time coming in very close to me. The male hawk contented himself by soaring over the river, some distance away, and did not come very close at any time. The cliffs at this nesting site, as well as the one where the one egg was found inclined outward, making it impossible for any loose rocks to fall into the nest. With a southern exposure and no protection at all from the sun, it is difficult to understand how the young could survive, but tales of numerous broods being raised at both places seem to indicate that the situation is to their liking. The eggs which I collected proved to be perfectly fresh, and measured as follows: 2.25x1.74, 2.17x1.80, and 2.12x1.74.

Below the nesting ledges of the hawks were several large caves, around which were congregated about a hundred and fifty Black Vultures, and quite a number of Turkey Vultures. These were mostly non-breeding birds, as only three nests of the black species were found, and one of the Turkey Vulture. The remarkable part of it is where all these birds find enough to eat at that particular place, for I found them present on each of my visits, which extended over a period of three months. Another incident that impressed me was the soaring of the Duck Hawk. Various publications on the subject do not credit them with much soaring, yet I have seen them soar for hours right in the mass of soaring Black Vultures, with which were mixed a few of the Turkey Vultures as well. Occasionally one of the hawks would make a dive at one of the latter species, which would immediately dive earthward, but the hawks did not pay any attention to the Black variety. While the "buzzards" would have to do considerable circling around to regain their former altitude, the hawks would go straight up on set wings without the least effort.

People who have been living in the neighborhood of these cliffs have known of the Duck Hawks being there for the past twenty-five years, and it is very likely that they were using the same nesting sites for many years before they were first observed there.

INDEPENDENCE, VA., June, 1933.



REVIEW: "Birds of the Atlanta Area," by Earle R. Greene, is a treatise of 48 pages, listing 208 species, which have been recorded by the author, and 24 additional species which have been recorded there by others. The notations under each species give data on seasonal and relative abundance, nesting, migration and actual records of the rarer species. The author has done his work well and is to be congratulated upon having gathered so much valuable material and finally making it available in printed form.—A. F. G.

A VISIT TO A ROBIN ROOST

By A. C. WEBB

While rambling among the Charlotte Hills west of Richland Creek last Saturday (Feb. 19, 1916), three members of the T. O. S., Messrs. Ganier, Mayfield and the writer, observed flocks of Robins flying overhead in a westerly direction. The time being a little before sundown, we naturally supposed that these birds were on the way to their roosting place and that it was probably along the bank of the Cumberland River, some two or three miles distant.

It was agreed that at the first opportunity we would endeavor to locate and study this Robin roost. On the afternoon of the following Monday, the writer drove out the Charlotte Pike until he struck the "trail," which he easily followed by watching the numerous birds as they passed overhead. When the river was reached he found that instead of stopping there, as expected, the birds passed on over into Bell's Bend, and there was nothing to do except abandon the efforts to locate the roost for the day or be set across the river at Clee's Ferry, nearby, and follow further westward. By the time the ferry was crossed the sun was nearly set, and for the next few miles fast time was made over the good pike leading across a nearly level and very interesting stretch of country. After sundown, passing Robins became scarcer and finally ceased altogether. He drove on, knowing, however, that it would be impossible for him to return home that night, as the ferry boat had stopped crossing at sundown. He again came within sight of the river and was also pleased to see about a dozen Robins perched in a tree near the roadside. Upon his approach they pitched off toward the river a half mile or more away, which seemed to be bordered with a canebrake. He started to drive across the fields to see if this were true, and met a couple of plowboys returning from their work, who told him that the canebrakes were on both sides of the river, and that for the past two or three weeks thousands of Robins had been roosting in them. He was naturally pleased at having located the Robin roost at the first attempt, and his next thought was where he, himself, should "roost" that night after an inspection of the Robins' quarters.

Good luck was still with him. Inquiring of the boys, who lived in the nearby farmhouse, he was told that Mr. W. A. Jones, his old friend and neighbor of another community, had recently moved into it, and that the farm they were on belonged to him. Needless to state, both his horse and himself were soon comfortably housed and fed. After supper he and Mr. Jones took a lantern and went to the canebrakes. As they passed along their edges they could hear the fluttering of many pairs of wings as the frightened birds left their perches and flew into the interior. Around the edges they could not get close enough to see them clearly, but when they went into the midst of the canebrake themselves they had no more trouble in getting a good view of the Robins than one would have in observing a flock of chickens on the roost. Frequently three or four birds would fly from the cane, which was pressed aside in order to pass through. It was then easily understood why, in years gone by, it had been so easy (and how little like sport) to get a sackful of Robins by knocking them off their perches with a stick.

The writer's only regret was that he did not have his fellow members of the T. O. S. with him to share his enjoyment. He felt ashamed that he had not invited at least one to accompany him. The more he thought of it, the more selfish it appeared. Even after several hours of deliberation he at the present time has no better excuse than the time-worn one, that "he didn't

mean to do it." He really did not when he left his office at 4 p. m., have any idea that he would locate the roost before he returned home. He intended to narrow the limit of territory in which it might be found, but circumstances over which he had no control forced him to go on and find it that night. At any rate, he made amends as best he could when two weeks later he had the pleasure of showing the great roost to four other students of bird life, Messrs. Mayfield and Merritt and Misses Hasslock and Petway.

Before daybreak next morning he was at the Robin roost again, not to disturb them, but to learn how Robins get up in the morning when they are not disturbed. As dawn approached, the birds began to chatter here and there among the canes and before he realized what it was, the swamp, the field, the river and the air were filled with one great sound coming from the throats of thousands of unseen songsters. It was not a song—it was ten thousand songs fused into one great shout of joy of life. It reminded him of the roar of some great cataract plunging down the steep sides of a Western mountain, but the deep undertones were not there. The notes of individual birds could not be heard except of those quite near. This sound lasted for fifteen or twenty minutes without change of pitch or volume, when suddenly, as if by signal, there sprang from every part of the canebrake thousands of Robins, each one as it left its perch giving a loud chattering call. As they launched themselves into the air they rose quickly, those from across the river being some two or three hundred feet high as they passed over, while those starting near me almost brushed my face. There was no circling about, no trial flights, no waiting for one another; when time to leave came they went at once.

They did not darken the sky; they brightened it. The sun was just rising above the Eastern hills and as they flew to meet it their red-brown breasts gleamed like burnished copper. Like a child, the writer screamed with delight at the sight. A swarm of bees which extends over a rod or two of space is an interesting sight, but is as nothing when compared with a swarm of Robins a mile or more across. Ten minutes after the first bird had left the canebrake the swamp was silent, except for the harsh calls of a pair of Blue Jays, the tremulous whinny of a Screech Owl, and the tattoo of a Red-headed Woodpecker on the dead limb of a sycamore. On his return home that morning he saw no Robins until he had recrossed the river, several miles to the eastward from the roost, the birds having apparently chosen to go long distances on their initial flight.

NASHVILLE, TENN., March, 1916.

(NOTE: While calling on Professor Webb recently and looking over his early notes, we found this old Mss., which we prevailed upon him to allow us to use.—Editors.)



RAPTORE AND WATER BIRD RECORDS FROM EAST TENN.

By S. A. OGDEN

For a number of years I have been keeping a record of the birds that have been brought to me to be mounted, and at the suggestion of the editors, the raptors and water birds are recorded below. The measurements should be of value for taxonomic purposes, especially where more than one form of a species is suspected of being present in this area. It is probable that a good percentage of the unusual birds that have been taken about Knoxville have passed through my hands. All birds mentioned were taken in East Tennessee, except where otherwise noted.

COMMON LOON, *Gavia immer immer*.

5-8-1924. From near Asheville, N. C., Female. Length 30", Wing 14 1/4", Tail 3 1/2".

11-23-1932. Knox Co., Immature Male, L-30", W-14", T-3 1/2".

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT, *Phalacrocorax auritus auritus*.

11-17-1931. Loudon Co., Female.

EASTERN LEAST BITTERN, *Ixobrychus exilis exilis*.

5-26-1932. Knox Co., Male, L-13", W-4 1/2", T-1 3/4", Bill 1 3/4".

WOOD IBIS, *Mycteria americana*.

6-13-1932. Claiborne Co., near Cumberland Gap, Female, L-37", W-19", Bill-8".

AMERICAN MERGANSER, *Mergus merganser americanus*.

1-1-1925. Blount Co., two Males and one Female.

1-12-1926. Blount Co., Male, L-25 1/2", W-11", T-5 3/4".

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK, *Accipiter velox*.

12-7-1932. Knox Co., Male, L-11", W-6 3/4", T-5 1/2", Spread 21".

COOPER'S HAWK, *Accipiter cooperi*.

12-5-1931. Knox Co., Female.

5-18-1925. Knox Co., Male, L-14 1/2", W-10 1/2", T-6 1/4".

EASTERN RED-TAILED HAWK, *Buteo borealis borealis*.

2-20-1925. Knox Co., Male L-19", W-14 1/4".

1-7-1925. Knox Co., L-20", W-15", T-9 1/4", Tarsus 4".

5-4-1932. Knox Co., Female L-22", W-16", T-9 1/2", Spread 51".

11-22-1927. Anderson Co., Female, L-21", W-15", T-10".

12-7-1925. Knox Co., Female, L-21", W-15 1/2", T-9".

NORTHERN RED-SHOULDERED HAWK, *Buteo lineatus lineatus*.

9-13-1924. Knox Co., L-21", W-15 3/4", T-10", Tarsus 4".

12-29-1931. Knox Co., L-20 1/2", W-13 1/2", T-9", Spread 40".

BROAD-WINGED HAWK, *Buteo platypterus platypterus*.

9-2-1932. White Co., L-15 1/2", W-10 3/4", T-7".

GOLDEN EAGLE, *Aquila chrysaetos canadensis*.

10-23-1925. Morgan Co., near Wartburg, L-36 1/2", W-24 1/2", T-15", Tarsus 4 1/2", Spread 84".

MARSH HAWK, *Circus hudsonius*.

10-14-1932. Knox Co., Female, L-20 1/2", W-14 3/4", T-10", Spread 46 1/2".

10-24-1932. Knox Co., Female, L-21", W-14 3/4", T-10 1/4", Spread 46 1/2".

10-26-1925. Knox Co., Female, L-21", W-15 1/2", T-10 1/4".

OSPREY, *Pandion haliaetus carolinensis*.

4-12-1932. Loudon Co., L-23 1/2", W-20", T-10", Spread 70".

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER, *Squatarola squatarola*.

10-6-1932. Knox Co., L-11 3/4", W-7 3/4", T-2 3/4", Bill 1 1/4", Head 1 3/4".

LAUGHING GULL, *Larus atricilla*.

9-18-1932. Knox Co., Female (immature), L-15 1/2", W-11 1/2", Bill 1 1/4", Tarsus 2".

BARN OWL, *Tyto alba pratincola*.

4-23-1932. Sevier Co.

6-30-1932. Jefferson Co., Female (immature), L-15 1/2", W-13", T-5 3/4".

11-19-1925. Union Co., Female, L-14", W-13", T-5 3/4".

5-1-1924. Morgan Co., Female (immature), L-14 3/4", W-13 1/4", T-7 1/2".

12-1-1932. Loudon Co., L-15 3/4", W-13", T-5 1/2", Spread 44".

EASTERN SCREECH OWL, *Otus asio naevius*.

3-20-1925. Knox Co., (Red Phase), L-9", W-6 1/4", T-2 3/4".

10-29-1925. Knox Co., Female, L-8 3/4", W-6 1/2", T-3 3/4".

1-18-1926. Knox Co., Female (Red phase).

GREAT HORNED OWL, *Bubo virginianus virginianus*.

9-23-32. Knox Co., Female, L-20 1/2", W-15", T-9 1/4", Spread 52".

10-3-1932. Knox Co., L-22", W-15", T-9 1/4".

5-16-1924. Knox Co., Female, L-19 1/2", W-14 1/2", T-8".

12-29-1931. Jefferson Co., Female, L-22", W-15", T-9 1/2", Spread 53".

- 6-18-1932. Grainger Co., Male (immature), L-20", W-14", T-9".
 8-25-1932. Knox Co., L-21", W-14½".
 NORTHERN BARRED OWL, *Strix varia varia*.
 9-19-1932. Campbell Co., L-20", W-14", T-10".
 1-3-1933. Sevier Co., L-18", W-13", T-9¼", Spread 44".
 3-21-1932. Knox Co., L-20", W-13¾".
 11-21-1925. Knox Co., L-18", W-13", T-9".
 11-28-1925. Knox Co., Female, L-17½", W-14", T-9½", Spread 42".
 KNOXVILLE, TENN., July, 1933.



THE ROUND TABLE

THE SEASON AT MEMPHIS: Trips to Horn Lake, Miss., and nearby Mud Lake, which lies partly in Tennessee, continued to yield interesting results, chiefly at Mud Lake. White Pelican, 19 on Sept. 24 and 13 on Oct. 1; Wood Ibis, 1 on the 24th and about 40 on Oct. 1; American Egret, from 35 to 125 each Sunday and 52 on Oct. 15 when last seen. No trip was made on Oct. 22. Little Blue Herons, 12 (Sept. 24), 70 (Oct. 1), and 12 (Oct. 8); Great Blue Heron (sp. ?), a few each trip, with 15 on Oct. 1; Double-crested Cormorant, 109 on Oct. 1, and 4, 7 and 1 the following weeks; Blue-winged Teal, 100 on Sept. 24, 300 on Oct. 1 and over 10 on the 8th. Wood Duck, 5 on Oct. 1, 120 on Oct. 8, 7 on the 14th, and more on Oct. 29, when over 6 males were seen, and many females and immature could not be distinguished among a group on the far shore, which included 12 to 60 Lesser Scaup, over 12 Pintail and more than 15 male Mallards (females not counted). The Scaup were also noticed on the 8th. While studying the ducks (Oct. 29), a flock of geese were heard and when overhead were seen to number about 60 Blue Geese, with 4 to 5 (Lesser) Snow Geese. Dr. Louis Leroy reported seeing Canada Geese up the river on Oct. 29. Several hunters have also seen them and Mallards and Scaup are fairly common since Nov. 16. Ducks are reported more common in the rice field section of Arkansas than near here, with warm weather holding other flocks up north. Other Mud Lake waterbird records include: Pectoral Sandpiper, 2, 1 and 2 on Sept. 24, Oct. 8 and 15, respectively; a few Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers on the same dates and 25 Greater (?) Yellowlegs leisurely feeding in 3 to 5 inches of water on Oct. 29. Over 49 Coots were seen Oct. 15. Birds of prey include Bald Eagle, 1 adult and 1 immature on Sept. 24, 1 adult on Oct. 8 and 2 adults and 1 immature on Sept. 24, 1 adult on Oct. 8 and 2 adults and 1 immature on Oct. 15. (Our only previous record was made here last fall.) Duck Hawk, 1 on Sept. 24, Oct. 8, and 2 on Oct. 15. A pair of Marsh Hawks were seen every trip, likewise on trips to other places and a Sharp-shin was seen Sept. 24 and Oct. 1st. An Osprey was seen Sept. 24 (Horn Lake), and 2 on Oct. 15.—A trip was made, Nov. 12, south between the Mississippi and White Rivers, in Arkansas. At Onida we saw a White-crowned Sparrow (rare here), and two House Wrens. At Lakeview (Ark.), about 120 Mallards, small numbers of L. Scaup and an adult Bald Eagle were seen. At Snow Lake 120 Coots were seen. Turkey Vultures were observed in large numbers by Coffey and Turner on long drives in late November. Occurring singly, 90 were counted on one 60-mile trip. An American Goldeneye, recently killed, was found Nov. 18, by Earl Henry on a Mississippi River bar above town. On this trip he also noted 2 Greater Yellowlegs and a flock of 15 American Pipits. (Henry made our first local Pipit record when he collected two at the same place on December 10, 1932.) Our party saw our first Pipits at the Covington (Tenn.) airport Nov. 26, when about 60 flew up from almost under our feet. Re-

peated approaches finally gave us close-up views of two or three. Usually the flock took flight before we could find them, directly in front of us, at 5 to 15 feet. Shortly after leaving the airport, just north of the Hatchie River, we saw 7 Pipits alight in an old cotton field and checked our identification. About 20 others flew over as we started to leave. On Dec. 3 a flock of 80 of these birds and 4 Prairie Horned Larks were noted just east of Memphis. On Open Lake (west of Ripley), nothing of particular interest was noted except perhaps the large flocks of blackbirds. These consisted of a few Cowbirds and Rusty Blackbirds, over 350 Redwings, more than 400 Bronzed Grackles, more than 600 Starlings in one flock, and several smaller mixed flocks of Starlings and Grackles were also seen. A flock of several hundred Crows were noted moving in an irregular line from Ripley westward, apparently to a roost along the Mississippi. On Oct. 1, McCamey and Powell noted about 3,000 Tree Swallows along the shore of North Lake, Tennessee, south of Memphis; they had alighted in willows which were bending under their weight. On Oct. 10 a group of us trapped approximately 2,000 Chimney Swifts from a flue on top of the Masonic Temple. We banded 517 of them and half of the balance were examined for foreign bands. Of these we found 3 that we learned later had been applied September, 1931, at Quincy, Ill., and 1 at Clayton, Ill. (date not given). An Anhinga was wounded Sept. 20 near Forest City, Ark., and is now in the Memphis zoo. The Barn Owl, which is quite rare here, is well known to be erratic about its time of nesting. On Nov. 22, a tree was felled in the northeastern outskirts of town and an adult Barn Owl flew from its nest in a cavity. Four hissing young ones, which I judged to be about 10 days old, were found in the hollow, and two are now in the local zoo.—BEN B. COFFEE, Memphis.

FALL NOTES FROM NASHVILLE: On October 28, the writer trapped at his banding station a male Cardinal on which he found a band he had placed Feb. 12, 1924, making this bird at least ten and one-half years old. More complete data on this bird is being published in the current *Wilson Bulletin*. Chimney Swifts this year, selected as their big October roost a chimney in the downtown retail district, using the relatively small chimney at 213 Third Avenue, North, where I estimated that 10,000 entered on the evening of October 11. A few days later they had abandoned this chimney and were reported by Miss Hollinger as using an air shaft at Ward-Belmont College, leaving there after the night of October 16. No more were seen. In 1930 their latest date was October 18. On November 26, Mayfield and the writer spent the day afield in Robertson County, north of Springfield, and the trip was duplicated on November 30 with Monk. The 26th was a cold, blustery day and the 30th was balmy. Our list for the first date was 37 species and to those were added 10 more on the 30th. Raptors noted (the highest number for one day) were Turkey Vultures, 20; Marsh Hawk, 6; Sparrow Hawk, 8; Red Tailed Hawk, 1; Cooper's Hawk, 2; Great Horned Owl, 1, and Screech Owl, 1. Two Migrant Shrikes were noted, only one flock of Robins, Starlings were everywhere, White-crowned Sparrows were particularly common near the Kentucky line, but no Tree Sparrows could be found. A Barn Owl was shot on November 30, near Lebanon, by a hunter, and shown to me. Marsh Hawks have been more plentiful than usual this fall. Transient Mockingbirds were also unusually abundant in late August, and through September. Flocks of wild geese were reported over Nashville by members on October 26, 27 and 30. On the night of the 29th, in Macon County, a flock were circling over the town lights of Red Boiling Springs, when some one shot into them and a number came to the ground, including 7 uninjured. There were 1 im. Blue Goose, 3 Lesser Snow and 3 immature of apparently the latter form. The birds were confiscated by

State Game Warden Headden. The writer assisted him later in releasing them in Radnor Lake, where it is hoped they will remain all winter and return in future years.—A. F. GANIER, Nashville,

A CARDINAL EPISODE: It's going to take me five minutes to write the following, but it took two hours for it to happen. Within six feet of my veranda chair there is a feeding station always filled with sunflower seeds. A mother Cardinal and her youngest son stood on the edge of the station. Twice the mother cracked seeds and fed them to the youngster, who in response fluttered and quivered and begged for more. From outward appearances the mother was indifferent to its cries, for she paid him no attention when for ten minutes she tossed seeds and husks around or stretched a wing or leg to its full length. Soon the little one stopped crying for food and stood quietly in a cleared place on the floor of the station. At this time the mother was industriously cracking seeds and swallowing the kernels; she had swallowed ten when out of one eye she saw her son pick up a seed by himself, but he didn't know what to do with it. He held it a second, then dropped it like a hot potato. In a few seconds he ventured to pick up another, but dropped that one too, then another and another, but always they were dropped without being cracked. This continued for about eight minutes, then the mother picked out a seed, cracked it and put the kernel in the strong little bill. That started another session of quivering and begging. This time the mother answered by cracking a seed, but instead of putting the kernel in the bird's mouth she let it fall to the cleared place on the floor. Whether that was accident or design, only the mother herself knows. That kernel proved tempting enough to make the son eye it for a second, stretch its slim neck toward it, pick it up, drop it, pick it up again and swallow it.

The mother seemed so well pleased with the progress of her pupil that she flew to a twig two feet away, where she started preening her wing feathers. For the next thirty minutes she took short flights of five or six feet around the station. Left alone with the seeds a half-inch deep around him, the young bird settled down to a nap, but a sharp note from the mother brought him to his feet. She returned and picked out a seed and put it unopened in the youngster's mouth and followed it by two sharp scolding notes—at least, they sounded like scolding to me. All the son did was to shake his head as if trying to dislodge something distasteful, at the same time throwing the seed out of the station. Again the mother left him alone. In five minutes she came back and again started her lesson from the very beginning. But this time she was careful to turn the seed over in her own bill, to get it in position for cracking before she put it in the little one's mouth. The first and second seeds failed to crack, but the fourth brought success, though the kernel was dropped twice before it was in the proper swallowing position. Evidently Cardinals like their kernels as well as their worms to go down head first. The patience this mother showed in teaching her young to eat was justified when he became expert enough to crack and swallow every seed he picked up and after a bit, when apparently satiated, he in turn cracked and fed a kernel to his mother, who ate it with apparent relish, though she had already had twenty-two seeds in the two-hour lesson.—MRS. ANA COCHRAN, Nashville,

WOOD IBIS AT CUMBERLAND GAP: On June 13th, 1932, a flock of five Wood Ibis (*Mycteria Americana*) visited Cumberland Gap in Claiborne Co., forty miles north of here. They were fired upon and one of them was shot. It was sent to me to be mounted, and is now in the possession of Mr. Brockway Crouch at his florist shop in Knoxville. This is our first East Tennessee record for this Gulf Coast species, and is of particular interest, since north-

ward wanderings of this Ibis have usually been confined to late summer.—S. A. OGDEN, Knoxville.

WILSON'S SNIPE IN NORTHEAST TENNESSEE: One of the very happy observations of the spring season of 1933, in this region, was the appearance of the Wilson's Snipe in greatly increased numbers. The first observation was on March 12. They could be seen any day in their favorite haunt, which was an artificial lake of about two acres in extent, backed by an equal area of swamp, mud flats and heavy growth of rushes and swamp grasses. The average number flushed on a trip through this terrain was usually about twenty. Evidently one flock was living constantly in this swampy feeding ground.

As the weeks of the period of the spring migration rolled along they continued to stay until, as we were looking with critical eyes for the nesting birds, we began to hope against hope that they might nest here. On May 21st they were still apparently contented with their surroundings. On that date we found nesting: Bluebird, Catbird, Mockingbird, Ovenbird, Phoebe, Robin, Field Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Barn Swallow, Roughwing Swallow, Brown Thrasher, Kentucky Warbler and Starling. With so many birds nesting, is it any wonder that we suspected the possibility of finding a nest of this Snipe? The following week we prepared to search for the nests, but the birds were gone and appeared no more. They had departed for their northern nesting grounds.

We have noted the tendency among bird observers to suspect breeding where migrants linger long in their winter or transitory homes. Such cases should be most carefully and critically observed, and no conclusions drawn unless nests are actually found.—BRUCE P. TYLER and ROBERT B. LYLE, Johnson City.

A SWALLOW-TAILED KITE (*Elanoides forficatus*) was killed a few miles south of Nashville, near the Harpeth River on Sept. 25, 1933. It was brought to the State Museum and compared with the mounted specimen there, by Miss Walker, who is in charge, and found to be identical. The party who brought it in took it away, saying he would have a taxidermist mount it, but the specimen has not been located. The bird now in the museum was taken on Aug. 15, 1929, near Linton, on South Harpeth River, about 18 miles southwest of Nashville, and has been previously recorded in Vol. 1 of *The Migrant*. These two specimens constitute the only records for Tennessee over a long period of years. Since there is no known breeding grounds of this now very rare bird north of Tennessee, it is quite possible that they had wandered northward from Florida, where quite a number of them are still to be found in summer. It is regrettable that these beautiful kites seem destined to early extinction for no other reason than man's readiness to kill any unusual creature.—A. F. GANIER, Nashville.

NOTES FROM RADNOR LAKE: The usual population of wintering ducks are here and has remained about the same throughout November, with Mallards, Lesser Scaup, Ringneck, Black Ducks and Coots composing the bulk, two or three hundred present. The following have been noted also: November 4, 15 Horned Grebes; November 5, 3 Common Loons, 5 Hooded Mergansers and 2 Green-winged Teals; November 11, 1 Golden-eye, 1 Gadwall, 3 Redheads, 1 Bufflehead and 1 Baldpate; November 26, 2 Pintails, 5 Baldpates and 3 Canvasbacks.—GEORGE B. WOODRING, Nashville.

The Migrant is sent to all members not in arrears for dues. Active membership is one dollar per year; associate membership is sixty cents. Subscription to non-members, sixty cents. All articles, correspondence and dues should be sent to the Editor-Treasurer, G. B. Woodring, 1414 Stratton Ave., Nashville.

NASHVILLE MEETINGS: The annual Fall Field Day was held at South Harpeth School on October 22, and was attended with the usual interest. From Knoxville we were honored by the presence of Mr. and Mrs. Ijams, Mr. and Mrs. Bamberg and Mr. William Johnson. On Sunday afternoon, November 5, our group was entertained by our fellow member, Mr. Leslie Cheek, at his beautiful country estate, "Cheekwood." The meeting of November 13 was notable in having as our speaker Dr. Gordon Wilson of Bowling Green, Ky., past-president of the Kentucky Ornithological Society. The annual Christmas census will be taken on Sunday, December 24. Meetings for the balance of the winter will be held bi-weekly, as usual, on January 8, 22, February 4, 18, March 4, 18, etc.



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