

THE MIGRANT

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL
DEVOTED TO TENNESSEE BIRDS

Published by
THE TENNESSEE
ORNITHOLOGICAL
SOCIETY



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THE MIGRANT

Published by the Tennessee Ornithological Society, to Record and Encourage the Study of
Birds in Tennessee. Issued in March, June, September and December

VOL 19

DECEMBER, 1948

No. 4

ADDITIONAL RECORDS OF BIRDS FROM BOLIVAR COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

By MERRITT G. VAIDEN

The records described in this article are of birds observed or collected in Bolivar County, Mississippi, and they contain information not in any of the earlier papers on the birds of this area. No further prefatory remarks on the area are made here because they would be the same as the remarks in previous papers: THE MIGRANT, September 1939, June 1940, September 1940, and September 1947.

I do wish to thank many boys and young men who have now and in the past been constant companions in the field and without whose assistance I would have only the usual two eyes, two legs, and two hands; as it is, I have many. Especially do I wish to mention by name Edward Sosebee, Herman McDonald, Bobby Linnell, Lea Black, Wally Welshans, Jr., Carl Black, Jr., Guy Thompson, Jr., and the greatest of them all, Sam M. Ray.

For assistance in naming species and subspecies, I continue to offer thanks to Dr. John W. Aldrich of Fish and Wildlife Service and to Dr. Alexander Wetmore, Secretary of Smithsonian Institution, both of Washington, D. C.

Harlan's Hawk, *Buteo harlani*. A male taken January 19, 1946, by H. R. Whiteside, six miles north of Rosedale proved to be this species.

Florida Red-shouldered Hawk, *Buteo lineatus alleni*. A bird obtained October 2, 1944, by Guy A. Thompson, Jr., one-half mile west of Rosedale was assigned to *alleni*. It was an immature male.

American Golden Plover, *Pluvialis dominica dominica*. I have two specimens obtained on March 26, 1944, and one found dead along the highway by C. W. Sosebee on April 2, 1946. This bird is erratic in its visits during spring. On March 26, 1944, near Legion Lake along the levee, we found approximately fifty of these birds feeding. They allowed close approach and moved only a short distance when two were collected.

Upland Plover, *Bartramia longicauda*. Regularly each summer these fine birds can be found feeding in alfalfa and grass fields. Earliest date of arrival is July 25 (1948), and latest, September 3 (1934).

Lesser Yellow-legs, *Totanus flavipes*. I wish to report this species wintering here for the winter of 1946-1947. The birds were observed December 14, 21, and 25, 1946, and February 8 and 14, 1947. A male was taken on December 21, 1946.

Least Sandpiper, *Erolia minutilla*. We have found this bird wintering

here occasionally. With low temperatures, a great sleet storm, and two deep snows in December, 1947, and January, 1948, and with the lake frozen over, yet we found three to eleven birds spending the winter at Lake Bolivar. Specimens were taken on December 6, 1947, and January 3 and February 1, 1948. Other late fall or winter records are, of birds collected, March 18, 1938, December 19, 1946, and November 16, 1947.

Eastern Dowitcher, *Limnodromus griseus griseus*. A specimen taken at Welshans Slough on August 25, 1946, a male, was assigned to this race by Dr. Aldrich. I have not, heretofore, observed this bird in thirty years of field work here.

Stilt Sandpiper, *Micropalama himantopus*. This species must be considered a regular migrant here based on numerous summer and early fall collections. A male was taken on August 10 and a female on September 28, 1947, at Legion Lake. I have six additional collection records and numerous sight records.

Western Sandpiper, *Ereunetes mauri*. A most common migrant at Welshans Slough August 24 to 30, 1946. Nine specimens were taken.

Interior Least Tern, *Sterna albifrons athalassos*. A female taken at Welshans Slough on May 22, 1945, was assigned to this race by Dr. Aldrich (1946).

Least Flycatcher, *Empidonax minimus*. Now in my collection are sixteen identified specimens. For spring the collection dates are from April 30 (1946) to May 12 (1940). The summer collection dates are from July 29 (1946) to September 16 (1945).

Louisiana (Carolina) Chickadee, *Parus carolinensis guilloti*. Specimens taken April 25, 1939, and July 25, 1944, were assigned to *guilloti*; awaiting a decision of the A.O.U. Committee as to the validity of this race, we publish for what it is worth.

Western House Wren, *Troglodytes aedon parkmanii*. This form was taken on April 6, 1947, a female, at Welshans Slough. I do not find this bird recorded from north Mississippi.

Newfoundland Winter Wren, *Troglodytes troglodytes aquilonaris*. A male secured on March 23, 1946, and a male on November 29, 1946, were assigned to this race by Dr. Aldrich in 1948. It is a new race just recently described by Peters and Burleigh (Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington, vol. 61, pp. 116-117) and these are the first reported collections for the State.

Appalachian Bewick's Wren, *Thryomanes bewickii altus*. Examples taken on January 5, and March 23, 1947, were assigned during 1948 to this subspecies by Dr. Aldrich. I find no published record of this form being taken in the northern part of the State heretofore.

Eastern Long-billed Marsh Wren, *Telmatodytes palustris dissaeptus*. Four specimens taken on May 3, and May 6, 1945, were assigned to this form (1948) while males taken on May 3 and 5, 1945, were assigned to *dissaeptus* but intermediate toward *iliacus*.

Prairie Long-billed Marsh Wren, *Telmatodytes palustris iliacus*. A bird collected on May 2, and two specimens on May 3, 1945, were called *iliacus*.

Northern Blue-headed Vireo, *Vireo solitarius solitarius*. One specimen, a male, obtained May 18, 1946, was called this northern form. During late fall and the winter of 1947-1948 these birds remained here in fair numbers. Many were collected but have not been identified to subspecies at this time.

Swainson's Warbler, *Limnithlypis swainsonii*. While this bird can occasionally be found singing in spring, I was not able to collect a specimen in this county until one was taken on September 6, 1947. The bird was found dead by Guy A. Thompson, Jr., at Old River Lake. I had injured a bird there the day previous and then lost it in the dense vegetation.

Worm-eating Warbler, *Helmitheros vermivorus*. This species has evaded me for thirty years at this locality. On August 9, 1947, Lea Black reported seeing two birds. On August 11, I succeeded in taking a female at the locality pointed out to me by Black. On August 13 a juvenile male was secured; on August 24 two females were obtained and seven additional birds located.

Blue-winged Warbler, *Vermivora pinus*. One of the rarest warblers here in migration. A female was taken on August 23, 1947, at Old River Lake. Lea Black first located the bird and called my attention to it as it moved among "switch" willows some fifteen feet above ground. It is the second collected specimen for north Mississippi.

Nashville Warbler, *Vermivora ruficapilla*. Guy A. Thompson, Jr., pointed out to me the first fall observation of this species. It was collected on October 5, 1947, and proved to be a male in good plumage. This bird was feeding with hundreds of late migrating Tennessee Warblers in willows growing along the shoreline at Legion Lake.

Cerulean Warbler, *Dendroica cerulea*. This is one of the rarest warblers in migration as only two have been observed and both were collected. On April 27, 1939, a beautiful male was secured from a small cottonwood at Legion Lake; on August 1, 1944, a female was shot, from a native pecan tree forty feet above ground, in my yard here. The bird was singing at the time of collection.

Thick-billed Red-winged Blackbird, *Agelaius phoeniceus fortis*. A male collected in my yard on February 11, 1945, proved to be this western race. I have no available record of this form having been reported taken in the State prior to this.

Rusty Blackbird, *Euphagus carolinus*. Through an oversight I have not reported this species being taken in Bolivar County many years ago. On December 9, 1939, I found these birds feeding in a cow-lot along with grackles and some Red-wings and there collected a male. On February 18, and on April 7, 1940, a male and female were taken from enormous flocks. The last two collections were made following the severe freeze with unusually low temperatures.

Northern Vesper Sparrow, *Poocetes gramineus polius*. A female secured March 31, 1945, at Black's Cypress Brake was assigned to this subspecies.

Eastern Lincoln Sparrow, *Melospiza lincolni lincolni*. A bird secured on April 28, 1946, a female, was called the eastern form but with a comment "Plains Type". It was found injured by Wally Welshans in his yard.

Appalachian Song Sparrow, *Melospiza melodia euphonia*. I have forty-seven identified specimens in my collection. Thirty-one examples have been assigned to this race.

Mississippi Valley Song Sparrow, *Melospiza melodia beata*. I have fifteen specimens identified as this subspecies.

Dakota Song Sparrow, *Melospiza melodia juddi*. A male collected January 24, 1945, at Welshans Slough was assigned to this race by Dr. Wetmore with notations as "not typical but nearer to *juddi*."

ROSEDALE, BOLIVAR COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI. August 25, 1948.

A RECORD OF THE SNOW BUNTING IN EAST TENNESSEE

By FRED W. BEHREND

On Big Bald Mountain in Unicoi County, situated about twelve air miles south to southeast of Erwin in East Tennessee and about twenty-five air miles north to northeast of Asheville, North Carolina, I was surprised and thrilled at seeing, on November 21, 1948, a bird not heretofore known to me other than from illustrations in bird books, the Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*).

Inducement to my climbing this 5516 ft. high "bald" of the Southern Appalachians, the greater part of which lies on the Tennessee side and a lesser part on the North Carolina side, was anticipation of "last-of-the-season" observation of hawk migration considered opportune when radio and newspaper accounts of heavy snow storms in northwestern regions indicated a foretaste of winter weather in the South. On my last previous visit to Big Bald Mountain, on November 10, 1946, about ten hawks were observed within a relatively short time. A secondary purpose of the trip was to check on Pipits, two having been observed on this same previous trip.

Walking at noontime over the treeless summit of Big Bald, its cover of rich grass now dry and short and the open slopes dotted with numerous foot-wide, foot-high humps of moss, I flushed at near 5500 ft. altitude a small bird from behind one of these humps. It flew a short distance and then ran on the ground. Noting at first glance, while the bird was in flight, whiteness in the tail feathers, I thought of a Pipit, but scrutiny of the seemingly unperturbed bird resting on the ground revealed considerable white in the body plumage. Carefully raising the binoculars, I was in position to study the bird minutely. In build and size it reminded me somewhat of the Ground Dove seen in Florida. Its plumage made me extremely curious as to the identity of the bird. The white of breast and belly, the solid buffy breast band reaching from from one wing to the other (not shown in the illustration of the Snow Bunting in the Peterson "Field Guide" but in that in the abridged For-

bush-May volume), the buffy spot behind the eye, and the buffy forehead, crown, and nape—all attracted attention; likewise the brown striping of the back and the black and white feathers of the short tail as well as the short but sharply-pointed yellow bill.

Speculating on what the bird might be, the thought of the Snow Bunting occurred to me. A look into the handy Peterson confirmed this to be my find. While I watched the bird, it began to walk about and pick on dried-out cow dung (cattle graze on Big Bald from Spring to Fall) and moss. When the bird momentarily disappeared behind one of the moss humps, I edged closer to it and was not more than thirty feet distant. It re-appeared on top of the moss hump and stayed there for a while, affording additional leisurely observation at close range. To my attempts at still closer approach, it reacted by running away, a few yards at a time. It finally flew a distance of about 150 feet. I did not pursue the bird further, but crisscrossed the immediate surroundings, hoping to locate additional birds of this species. This proved unsuccessful. Approximately fifteen minutes prior to finding the Snow Bunting, while I observed from the very summit of Big Bald a Red-tailed Hawk soaring over the woodland below the eastern rim of the mountain, a flock of about eight small birds passed overhead in straight and rapid flight, disappearing behind the summit. Their song in flight seemed unfamiliar to me. I disassociated it with that of Goldfinch or Pipit, of which former a few individuals had been heard in flight on my approach of the summit and of which latter none at all were found on this trip. The birds passed overhead again a few minutes later in the direction from which they had come. Observation of these birds, because of its briefness and casualness, was too inconclusive as to assume that the Snow Bunting might have been one strayed from a flock.

Reviewing THE MIGRANT of the past few years for earlier records of the Snow Bunting in East Tennessee or other parts of the State, I was unable to find reference to it. Upon inquiry, Mr. Albert F. Ganier, Curator of Tennessee Ornithological Society, informed me that he is quite certain that this find of the Snow Bunting on Big Bald Mountain is a first record for Tennessee. It is interesting to note that, as published in the January 1947 issue of "The Chat", bulletin of the Carolina Bird Club, a flock of an estimated 100 Snow Buntings was listed at Asheville, North Carolina, on the 1946 midwinter bird count. Pearson, Brimley and Brimley, in their book on "Birds of North Carolina", refer to nine records, almost exclusively in coastal regions of North Carolina, over a period of years. I am indebted to Mr. Burt L. Monroe, Curator of the Kentucky Ornithological Society, for information on the occurrence of the Snow Bunting in Kentucky. He states that there is a paucity of records of this bird for Kentucky with only two rather recent records known, although literature referring to years past mentions the Snow Bunting as an occasional winter visitant.

The main purpose of the Big Bald Mountain trip, hawk observation, was overshadowed by the experience of finding the Snow Bunting. How-

1948 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT—Continued

	Memphis	Reelfoot	Henderson	Clarksville	Nashville	Murfreesboro	Great Smokies	Greeneville	Johnson City	Elizabethton	Kingsport
Black Duck		5			4			75			
Gadwall		40			6						
Baldpate		4									
Pintail		3									
Blue-winged Teal		2									
Shoveller		390									
Wood Duck		3									
Redhead		1									
Ring-necked Duck		265	260	15	1						
Canvasback	11	1	2								
Lesser Scaup	315	10	18		8	2					
American Golden-eye		34			3						
Bufflehead		1									
Hooded Merganser	1	1					2				
American Merganser					2						
Red-breasted Merganser	7										
Turkey Vulture	3		40	1			6	11			
Black Vulture	13	7	100		7	26		2			1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1									1	
Cooper's Hawk	4	1			3	1	2	1			2
Red-tailed Hawk	21	5	1		5	1	3				3
Red-shouldered Hawk	5	5	4	1	1			1		1	
Broad-winged Hawk								1			
Bald Eagle		4									
Marsh Hawk	3	3				1					
Osprey		1									
Duck Hawk		1						1			
Sparrow Hawk	28	2	2	2	25	2	1	3	9	4	1
Ruffed Grouse							8	1			
Bob-white	46			27	10			15		20	20
Coot	3	800			5						
Killdeer	122	3			37	5	30	11	23	24	12
Wilson's Snipe	1				1					2	10
Herring Gull		3			*1						
Ring-billed Gull	108	16									
Mourning Dove	30	1	2	32	231	11	41	71	43	10	53
Screech Owl					2	1	1				1
Great Horned Owl		1			1			1			
Barred Owl	2	8	2	1							
Belted Kingfisher	5	3			2		2	1		2	1
Flicker	165	10	12	3	28	1	3	2	5	14	6
Pileated Woodpecker	2	9	1	2	7	2	10	3			
Red-bellied Woodpecker	64	13	6	5	14	2		5	7	1	5
Red-headed Woodpecker	15	2	1				1	1			
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	36	6	4	1	6	1	3	3	1	3	6
Hairy Woodpecker	10	3	1	2	12		6	6			
Downy Woodpecker	45	9	7	12	44	2	11	8	11	16	25
Phoebe	1				1		2	2	4	1	2
Horned Lark	12				137	10	25	3	124		153
Blue Jay	292	11	38	6	29		20	56	11	10	80

INFORMATION ON THE COUNTS

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (1946 area but bottomland coverage reduced because of partial flooding; wooded bottomlands, 30%; deciduous woodlots including city parks, 25%; airports, pastures, and old cottonfields, 20%; suburban roadsides, 25%.) Dec. 26, 1948; 6:35 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 19 to 33; calm; frozen underfoot. Thirty-one observers in four main parties, four pairs, and a single,—the main parties breaking up variously at localities worked; inaccessibility of some bottomlands caused some bunching and retracing after 2:30 p.m. Total party hours, 90; total party-miles 260 (80 on foot, 180 by car). 73 species, about 92,636 individuals. Mr. and Mrs. Ben B. Coffee, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Howard Barbig, Mrs. Floy Barefield, Robt. Burton, Mary Davant, Robt. Deupree, Lincoln Emery, Jr., Harry Estes, Jr., Harry Geyer, Jr., Newton Hanson, Mrs. Ruth Harrison, Robt. L. Irwin, Jr., Luther F. Keeton, Lawrence C. Kent, Paul Kisling, Charlton Mabry, Franklin McCamey, Jr., Chas. E. McPherson, Jr., Mrs. J. H. McWhorter, Jim McWhorter, Patricia Moore, Mr. and Mrs. Albert L. Powell, Alice Smith, Demett Smith, Jr., Bill Sullivan, Mrs. M. L. Torti, Brother I. Vincent, Alan Ziegler (Memphis Chapter, T. O. S.).

In addition to the birds identified and listed in the table, 660 unidentified small blackbirds and 35,100 unidentified larger blackbirds were seen. 43,790 Starlings were estimated to have been seen.

REELFOOT LAKE, Tenn. (From Tiptonville east around the lake via Spillway and Samburg to Walnut Log, including the timbered bottomlands on the west, and the hills on the east side of the lake; deciduous woodland 55%, open lake 20%, roadside 15%, farmland 10%).—Dec. 27, 1948, 5:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Overcast in the a.m., clear in the p.m.; temp. 25 to 40, wind S, 0-7 m.p.h. Four observers together. Total hours, 12 (8 on foot, 2 in rowboat, 2 in car); total miles, 51 (5 on foot, 3 in rowboat, 43 in car). 77 species, approximately 2,502,565 individuals.—James L. Norman, Robert M. Jenkins, Thomas Walker, Jr., P. W. White, Jr.

The following birds were observed in large numbers: Starling, 50,000 (est.); Red-winged Blackbird, 2,430,000 (estimated as mathematically as possible. Tremendous continuous flocks, streaming to roost, were observed for one-half hour at dusk); Grackle, 15,000 (est.). The Lincoln's Sparrows were studied at close range by all four observers.

HENDERSON, Tenn. (Chester County and both lakes at Chickasaw State Park).—Dec. 21, 1948; 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Temp. 41 to 56; practically no wind, partly cloudy in a.m., overcast in p.m. One party, 3 observers; 43 miles by car, 6 by foot. 51 species, 1337 individuals. Robert L. Witt, compiler.

CLARKSVILLE, Tenn. (838 Gracey Avenue, Paradise Hill Road, Hiatt's Garden, Robin's Swamp, McAdoo Creek, Indian mounds, Marks Slough). Jan. 1, 1949; 7:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Heavy overcast; temp. 28 to 34. Seven miles on foot. 41 species, 534 individuals. Alfred Clebsch, Eddy Clebsch.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (Areas s. and w. of city, including Radnor Lake, Overton Hills Forest, Leawood, Hobbs Road to Tyne Blvd., Richland Creek, Page Road, Bellemeade, Warner Parks, 101 Pasture, Davidson Road, Hillwood, Bosley Spring, and Bell's Bend of the Cumberland River. 30% open fields, 25% wooded pastures, 15% dense woods, 30% thickets, ditch-banks, and roadsides.)—Dec. 26, 1948; 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear all day with visibility fine. Temp. 15 to 28; wind from N-W, average 10 m.p.h.; ground bare. 16 observers in 7 parties; total party-hours, 44; man-hours, 115; party-miles on foot, 115; in car, 30. 64 species, 3152 individuals. B. H. Abernathy, Bill Adams, Tom Butler, Louis Branscomb, Bill Crouch, Albert E. Ganier (compiler), Eleanor Gorham, Mr. and Mrs. Robt. M. Hawkins, Helen M. Howell, G. R. Mayfield, Donald Maynard, James A. Robins, E. D. Schreiber, Walter M. Spofford, James Meade. This was the 35th Christmas count by members of the Nashville chapter, T. O. S.

The Herring Gull reported could possibly have been a Ring-billed Gull. Seen also on December 24 were Canvasback, 16; Old Squaw, 1; Ring-billed Gull, 1; on December 27, Pine Siskin, 8; and Barred Owl, 1. The frequent large bird roosts at Nashville were non-existent this year.

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. (parts of Rutherford and Cannon Counties)—Dec. 26, 1948. Cloudy to sunny with some wind, temp. about 30. One observer. 37 species, 399 individuals. H. O. Todd, Jr.

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK, Tenn. (Essentially same area as in past 11 years; circle with 7½ mile radius centered on Bull Head of Mt. LeConte, including a section of the Tennessee-North Carolina divide from Mt. Collins to Newfound Gap; towns of Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge; open farmland, 30%; deciduous forest, 20%; spruce forest, 20%; abandoned fields, 15%; towns and suburbs, 15%).—Jan. 2, 1949; 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Overcast throughout the day; temp. 26 to 48; wind SW and W, very light at low altitudes and to 15 m.p.h. at high altitudes; ground frozen in a.m., thawing in p.m. Altitude range 1200 to 5600 feet. Twenty-two observers in 10 parties. Total party-hours, 75; total miles, 200 (150 by car, 50 on foot). 55 species, approximately 2938 individuals. William K. Baker, Mrs. Harvey Broome, Carlos C. Campbell, Mary Ruth Chiles, Brockway Crouch, Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Dunbar, Robert Goddard, Joseph C. Howell, William M. Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Leonard, Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Monroe, Mrs. E. E. Overton, Arthur Stupka (compiler), James T. Tanner, Samuel R. Tipton, Dorothy E. Williams, Mary Williams, D. W. Yambert, William Yambert (members and guests, T. O. S. and National Park Service).

Both Black-capped and Carolina Chickadees were observed, a total of 143 individuals of these two species. The Juncos represented two subspecies, the typical Slate-colored and the Carolina.

GREENEVILLE, Tenn. (Reed Farm along Roaring Fork Creek, Lick Creek, Bay's Mountain, Tusculum College, Davy Crockett Lake, open farm-

land, 50%; woodlands, 30%; streambanks, 15%; city suburbs, 5%).—Dec. 21, 1948; dawn to dusk. Clear in a.m., overcast in p.m.; temp. 30 to 45, no wind. Six observers in 3 parties. Total hours afield, 21; total miles, 25 (20 on foot, 5 by car). 50 species, 2192 individuals. Mr. and Mrs. Richard Nevius, Mr. and Mrs. J. B. White (Greeneville Chapter T. O. S. members) Eddie Dunham, Johnnie Shanks (members of Boy Scout Troop 72).

JOHNSON CITY, Tenn. (Llewellyn Wood, Cox's Lake, Pickens Bridge, Sinking Creek near Erwin highway). Jan. 2, 1949; 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., three observers; 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., one observer. Partly cloudy to fair, temperature near freezing, wind calm. 36 species, 895 individuals. Fred W. Behrend, Robert B. Lyle, Bruce P. Tyler (compiler).

ELIZABETHTON, Tenn. (Same area as in past five years with center at Valley Forge; part of forming Watauga Lake, Watauga and Doe Rivers, Buffalo and Gap Creeks; lake border, 5%; stream borders, 60%; woodlands, 25%; and open fields, 10%).—Dec. 26, 1948; 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Clear; temp. 8 to 30; ground bare to 1 in. snow. 12 observers in 5 parties. Total hours, 28; total miles 82 (16 on foot, 66 by car). 45 species, 1269 individuals. Fred W. Behrend, J. C. Browning, Robert Burrow, Katherine and Mrs. Hugo Doob, Jr., Thomas W. Finucane, Lee R. Herndon, Cecil Hilton, Mr. and Mrs. George K. Leonard, Lawrence Ramsey, Howard S. Young (Elizabethton Chapter, T. O. S.).

The Grasshopper Sparrow was observed at 25 feet for five minutes with 8x glasses by Fred W. Behrend. Seen in the area on the day before the count were Bonaparte's Gull, 2; American Pipit, 75 (est.), by Lee R. Herndon.

KINGSPORT, Tenn. (Area was a circle of 15 miles diameter, with center at Pactolus school, four miles S.E. of Kingsport. Area includes Bay's Mountain, and confluence of North and South forks of Holston River; open fields, 35%; woodlands, 25%; river, 30%; city, 10%).—Jan. 2, 1949; 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Cloudy in a.m., partly cloudy in p.m.; no wind; temp. 25 to 34, no snow. Nineteen observers in twelve parties. Total hours 84; total miles 86 (23 on foot, 63 by car). 49 species, approximately 2557 individuals. Miss Ruth Dunn, Thomas W. Finucane, Lee R. Herndon, William and Hal and Mr. and Mrs. L. W. A. Meyer, Miss Ethel Peerson, Elinor Lee and Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Pugh, Robert Scoggin, Robert and Mrs. Robert Switzer, Albert Wilkes, Mr. and Mrs. Howard S. Young. (Kingsport Chapter, T. O. S.).

THE ROUND TABLE

LOUISIANA HERON RECORDED IN TENNESSEE AND NORTH MISSISSIPPI.—On July 18, 1948, while on a circuit of Mud Lake, following up herons and shorebirds, the writer saw a Louisiana Heron (*Hydranassa tricolor ruficollis*) fly up from near a point which would establish it as

a record, the first published, insofar as I can determine, for both Tennessee and North Mississippi. At one time it was only forty feet distant, and our entire party of Mrs. Coffey, Brother I. Vincent, Donnett Smith, Jr., and Robt. Deupree observed it leisurely and followed it into the shallower western end. That portion is entirely in Tennessee, this Mud Lake being located on the state line in the southwest corner of Shelby County and the one mentioned almost continually in our seasonal notes.

The Louisiana Heron seemed to remain apart from the many Little Blue Herons and American and Snowy Egrets, and it fed in an entirely different manner. This might be compared with that of the Green Heron except that, because of its height, this bird seemed to have a greater or practically horizontal crouch as it stalked prey. This also would account for it being overlooked among the other herons until it took flight. The American Egrets seem to feed from an almost erect position, while a small group of Little Blue Herons will, at times, seem to be leaning, all in the same direction.

This species is found on the Gulf and South Atlantic coasts and southward, and it rarely wanders northward like other southern herons. A. C. Bent in U. S. National Museum Bulletin 135 gives accidental records for Texarkana, Texas; Clark County, Mo. (April 13, 1890); Franklin County, Ky. (about July 15, 1917); Manitoba; Cape May, N. J.; Long Island, and two for Indiana (1876 and 1894). State lists reveal it, away from the coast, at Rocky Mount and Raleigh, N. C., and casual at Athens, Ga. A recent issue of "The Auk" gave a record for as far north as Connecticut. Baerg (1931) does not list it for Arkansas but William H. Deaderick records it at Hot Springs as follows: one, Aug. 1; two singles, Aug. 8, and one, Aug. 19, 1937 ("Wilson Bulletin", 1949: 261).—BEN B. COFFEY, JR., 672 N. Belvedere Blvd., Memphis, Tenn.

SNOW GOOSE IN GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK—The first record of a Snow Goose (*Chen hyperborea*) for Great Smoky Mountains National Park was established on November 14, 1948, when the body of a freshly-killed juvenile male bird was picked up beside the Gatlinburg-to-Maryville highway by Mr. Homer Smith of Elk-mont, Tennessee. The bird was discovered approximately four miles south of Gatlinburg and about half-way between Park Headquarters Building and Fighting Creek Gap. Since an examination of the specimen revealed a severe bruise on its neck and a broken right wing, the bird apparently was killed when it flew into telephone wires which parallel the road. More than two dozen external parasites were removed from its plumage before the specimen was deposited in the park's faunal collection. In general appearance the bird is a light ashy-gray above, with faint indications of a brownish wash in places. The back and wings are mottled with white, while the rump, tail and underparts are white. The primaries are black. The bill is dark, almost black, and grades to purplish-red towards the forehead. Measurements: length, 27 inches; wing, 15½ inches; wingspread, 54 inches; bill, 2¼ inches; tail, 4½ inches; tarsus, 3 3/8 inches.

Whether the relatively small but intense hurricane which moved up from the West Indies area to just south of Cape Hatteras a short time prior to November 14 was a factor in the occurrence of this species here will never be known; it is, nevertheless, an interesting conjecture.

Records of the Snow Goose are scarce for East Tennessee. In *THE MIGRANT* for March, 1937, George Foster reported observing this species on Norris Lake on March 21, 1937. Mr. Joe Manley of Gatlinburg, Tennessee, informs me that one Snow Goose, along with approximately forty Canada Geese, was observed by him on Douglas Lake on four or five occasions between November 15, 1947, and late January, 1948. On October 13, 1948, Mr. Manley saw six adult Snow Geese and approximately twenty Canada Geese in a flock on Douglas Lake, at a point about two miles southwest of Dandridge, Tennessee; the latter were observed on the water as well as on the wing, at one time passing over Mr. Manley's boat.—ARTHUR STUPKA, National Park Service, Gatlinburg, Tenn.

AVOCET SEEN IN KNOX COUNTY, TENN.—On November 7, 1948, we observed an Avocet on a small gravel bar in the Clinch River in the western part of Knox Co., Tenn. The bird was standing in shallow water, frequently bobbing its head, and occasionally putting its bill in the water for a brief period. Our observations were made from the Gallaher Ferry Road at a distance of 250 feet from the bird. Since the lighting was ideal, it was possible to distinguish the upturned tip of the bill and the blue color of the legs. We walked along the road, past this gravel bar at 10:30 A.M., and the Avocet was not there, but when we returned along the road at 11:30 A.M., the long-legged white bird was very prominent. At 1:30 P.M., it was still in the same place. We have been unable to find a published record of the occurrence of the Avocet in Tennessee.—JOSEPH C. HOWELL and ANDREW J. MEYERRIECKS, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee.

STATUS OF THE HOUSE WREN IN NORTHEASTERN TENNESSEE—In the year 1910, the predominate wrens in this area were the Carolina Wren and the Bewick's Wren, the former a permanent resident and the latter a summer resident. The House Wren was unknown in this territory save as a rare spring migrant. During the last four years a very few singing House Wrens have been noted during the breeding season, but have not returned to their locations a second year. This year, 1948, however, the pair that was reported in *THE MIGRANT* last year has returned to its original nesting box and raised two sets of nestlings, one in the original and one in a neighboring box. The inference might well be that this pair of wrens has definitely settled in Johnson City.

During the last twenty years, about, the Bewick's Wren has decreased in numbers until at this time it is one of the rarest of our birds. The reason is that the House Wren and the Bewick's Wren refuse to dwell in peace in the same general habitat. Wherever they meet they fight. The House Wren has driven out the Bewick's Wren and is very slowly taking

possession. Now we have records for two successive years of the House Wren breeding in Johnson City and also in Shady Valley. — BRUCE P. TYLER, 215 West Unaka Ave., Johnson City, Tenn.

HOUSE WREN NESTING AT GREENEVILLE, TENN.—In March of 1947 one of my neighboring Boy Scouts built a wren house in connection with his bird merit badge study. He put it up about the first of April on a post near my back yard. Early in April he informed me that a wren had taken over. I supposed that it was the Carolina Wren, as one had built its nest in our neighborhood for years. But soon it was identified as a House Wren by its lighter grayish color, lack of eye stripes, and also its song; the low-pitched gurgling song, that he is very persistent in using and that gets rather monotonous at times, makes this wren easy to identify.

In 1947 this pair of House Wrens apparently hatched two broods and stayed until about the first of September. Their feeding range seemed rather limited, being mainly a vacant lot that I had used for a garden. In April of 1948 they returned to the same box, and another pair built close by in a hole in an aspen tree. This year both pairs left around the middle of August.

I had read that House Wrens drove other wrens away, so thought that I would observe to see if I could find any evidence of this. There appears to be some evidence that this happened. Carolina Wrens had built for years in our block, near an old barn. They came back in 1947 but were gone by early summer, then were back by September to spend the winter with us. In the spring of 1948 I was not able to locate any Carolina Wrens in our neighborhood, but they have been with us since the middle of August.

After learning the song of the House Wren, we were able to locate some at two other points in the city and also another on a field trip. My Scouts, some of whom are very well trained in bird study, claim to have identified House Wrens at different places, so it appears that they are not at all uncommon in Greene County.—J. B. WHITE, 303 Main Street, Greeneville, Tenn.

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THE MIGRANT

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Knoxville, Tennessee

The Tennessee Ornithological Society was founded, October 1915.

Publication of THE MIGRANT was begun, March 1930.

*The simple truth about birds is interesting enough;
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KEEPING THE MINUTES

Between forty and sixty years ago the Passenger Pigeon slid to extinction. No person today is able to say assuredly what caused the final disappearance of this bird. There seem to be no records of how or where the last few pigeons nested, if they did, nor any description of the nesting success of the last colonies observed. Because of this lack of information, the question of exactly what caused the final extinction of the Passenger Pigeon will probably never be answered.

There are some species of birds and mammals whose numbers vary from year to year, frequently in an almost regular cycle. The question arises: Did these cycles occur before civilization so greatly changed the face of the earth? For some of these species the answer is "yes"; there is enough information available to show that the abundance of some kinds of animals varied greatly while these animals were still living in their primitive habitat.

The above two examples point out the need for making observations and keeping records of what is happening today.

Another way in which valuable information may be kept for the future is by preserving areas still in their original and primitive condition. East Tennessee is fortunate in having within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park a great virgin forest where it should survive for all time. Scattered over the State, or in neighboring States, are a few other tracts still almost untouched by man, and we hope that at least some of these can be saved to serve as examples of this country in its natural condition. The ideal would be to have preserved an example of each type of habitat—mountain forest, swamp, marsh, and so on for all the various types, but it is already too late to do this for some types disappeared long ago. Preservation of these tracts remaining would be the best way we now have of keeping this part of the record.

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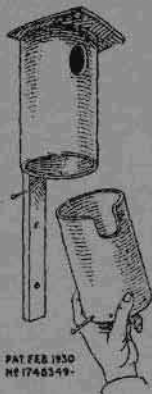
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