

# THE MIGRANT

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL  
DEVOTED TO TENNESSEE BIRDS

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# THE MIGRANT

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## THREE ROOKERIES ON KENTUCKY LAKE

By EUGENE CYPERT

With the construction of Kentucky Dam, largest and lowermost of the T.V.A. dams, the waters of the Tennessee River have been backed up 184 miles, thus forming the 159,000-acre Kentucky Lake. As would be expected from the creation of such a lake, larger numbers and a greater variety of water birds have been attracted to the lower Tennessee Valley.

This year, a Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) rookery was established on Kentucky Lake, within the Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge near what was formerly the mouth of Duck River, near Waverly, Tennessee. The rookery, consisting of about 100 nests, is in a clump of trees which were left standing within the Duck River dewatering area. The trees are oaks and most of them have been killed by flooding. They are not tall and the nests are from ten to thirty feet above the water surface.

During the spring of 1948, cormorants used the site of this rookery as a roosting place. Approximately 1600 would gather there in the late afternoon. They were observed to come from up and down Kentucky Lake and from up Duck River. Probably all the cormorants from the middle part of the lake concentrated at this point to roost. By May nearly all of them had left the locality. Only some seven or eight birds stayed in that vicinity in the late spring and summer. It is not known if any of them nested there. But this year a large part of them stayed and converted their roost into a nesting place.

On April 3, a party composed of Mr. Albert F. Ganier, Mr. John H. Steenis, Mr. Tom Butler, Mr. Billy Paschall, Miss Grace Wyatt, Miss Kathleen Key, Mr. and Mrs. L. D. Thompson, and the writer visited the rookery. At that time the eggs were laid or were being laid. Clutches were from two to four eggs.

There are numerous records of cormorants nesting at Reelfoot Lake, but apparently this is the only record of this bird nesting at any other place in Tennessee.

Only half a mile from the cormorant rookery, also within the Duck River dewatering area, is a heron rookery. This colony was established here after the trees at the site of an earlier rookery in the bottom were cleared prior to flooding of the lake in 1943.

This colony consists of about 500 nests of the Great Blue Heron

(*Ardea herodias*) and the American Egret (*Casmerodius albus*), the former being much more numerous. A Water Turkey (*Anhinga anhinga*) flew from the rookery on May 23, 1948, and another was seen there on May 28, 1949, so it is assumed that this species nests there. The Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) frequents the area, presumably as a scavenger.

The nests of the heron rookery are in tall cypress and tupelo trees which have been flooded continuously since the flooding of Kentucky Lake. Most of these nests are from forty to sixty feet above the water, and apparently are built at any place on the limbs where a nest can be supported.

Visiting ornithologists will find both of these rookeries readily accessible. It is possible to drive down Duck River levee to within 200 yards of the cormorant rookery. From there the remaining distance can be traveled by boat. Prior to May 1, while the water is still high in the dewatering area, one can go from the cormorant rookery to the heron rookery in a shallow-draft boat. In late spring and summer, when the water level is low, it will be necessary to carry the boat from 50 to 200 yards, depending upon how firm the ground is between the levee and the slough area where the rookery is located. Once the water is reached with the boat, one may paddle to all parts of the rookery, which covers an estimated four acres.

A third rookery is located in the West Sandy dewatering area near Elkhorn, Tennessee, about 25 miles northwest of the first. When this rookery was visited, May 28, it was difficult to make an estimate of the number of nests because of the foliage. There are probably about 100 nests there. They appeared to be all nests of the Great Blue Heron. They were built in the American elm, tupelo, and red maple trees and most of them were about sixty feet above the ground.

After the water has been pumped from the dewatering area, about May 1, one may walk into the rookery. Earlier in the year it will be necessary to use a boat to get there.

At the time of the writer's visit to the West Sandy rookery, one could occasionally hear something fall to the ground with a heavy thud. It was wondered if young birds or eggs were falling from the nests. After some listening and looking, it was learned that it was fish that were being dropped. All fish found were carp (*Cyprinus carpio*) and gizzard shad (*Dorosoma cepedianum*). One carp was fourteen inches in length! Most of the fish ranged between six and ten inches.

It is doubted if the larger fish were caught alive by the herons. Many fish are killed by the nearby West Sandy pumps and the larger fish found in the rookery were probably picked up near the pump station. In any case, it is surprising that a heron would be able to pick up a fourteen-inch fish and fly with it for more than two miles, which it must have done.

TENNESSEE WILDLIFE REFUGE  
PARIS, TENN.

## INTERESTING BIRDS SUMMERING IN NORTH ALABAMA

By THOMAS A. IMHOF

The great Appalachian chain which stretches southward from the Gaspé in Canada has its southern terminus in Alabama just south and west of Birmingham. This locality marks roughly the boundary between the Upper and Lower Austral Zones and consequently many species of birds reach their breeding limits near here.

In some cases the records below indicate that the birds themselves are changing range, in others the ranges have never been accurately determined. In many cases the boundary fluctuates from year to year and very likely reflects the internal population pressure and thus the general abundance of the species. The records offered here serve to extend some breeding ranges, fill in some wide gaps or reaffirm some old records of long standing.

I am indebted to the following bird students for the use of their records and for personal assistance in the field: Thomas Z. Atkeson of Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge, Decatur, Alabama; Branch Howe of Decatur, Ga.; Donald Lee of Birmingham, Ala.; Morton H. Perry of Birmingham, Ala.; Millard F. Prather of Birmingham, Ala.; Henry M. Stevenson of Florida State University, Tallahassee, Fla.; Samuel R. Tipton of University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tenn.; and Sam W. Vaughn of Birmingham, Ala. I am further indebted to Dr. Stevenson and Dr. James T. Tanner of University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tenn., for a thorough perusal of this paper and valuable constructive criticism.

**PIED-BILLED GREBE.** There are two breeding records for Alabama to my knowledge. One is of a nest found near Prattville (100 miles south of Birmingham) by L. S. Golsan, exact date unknown. (Stevenson, letter). Mr. Tom Z. Atkeson states (in letter) that his father found a floating nest at Columbia in the extreme southeast corner of the state in late April, 1947. At Wheeler Refuge, Decatur, Ala., there is no record between May 24 and Aug. 29. At Birmingham, Stevenson had no record between May 20 and August 3. The writer had none between May 2 and August 9 until 1948. In that year a juvenal was recorded on July 11 and 31 at Bayview Lake, Birmingham. In 1949 a pair remained throughout the summer at Bayview Lake. I feel certain that if any attempt were made at breeding, the numerous large turtles there would have done away with the young in short order. Besides this pair, on July 12 there were 5 additional birds; on the 17th, 2; 19th, none; 24th, 2; 26th, none; 31st, 5; August 2, 6; 9th, 1; all at Bayview Lake and all full adults.

**VIRGINIA RAIL.** There are several spring and one fall transient records for Alabama (Howell, 1928). The writer recorded one wintering in 1948-1949 in a small, recently-formed cattail marsh at Bayview Lake. Subsequent records were as follows: April 24, 2; May 28, 2; June 5, 1 (?). Frequent visits on intervening and succeeding dates were fruitless. No

indication of breeding was found altho the last date is very suspicious. To my knowledge the nearest breeding station is in Virginia. A very interesting parallel is the recording in Audubon Field Notes (1949 3: p. 212) by Dr. Lowery of Richard F. Miller's observation of a pair at Baton Rouge, La., on April 26 and May 6, 1949.

**KING RAIL.** A record by Perry and the writer of two juvenals at Attalla, Etowah County, June 25, 1949, helps fill in a 150-mile gap in its range between the Tennessee Valley, (Huntsville and Decatur) and Sylacauga and Tuscaloosa on the south (Stevenson).

**EASTERN PHOEBE.** Stevenson's three nesting records at Red Bay, 1947; Jasper, 1931; and Birmingham (Red Mountain), 1932, mark the southwestern breeding limits in Alabama. Perry found an adult building a nest at the mouth of a wagon coal mine at Lindberg, Ala., May 17, 1949. Lindberg is just halfway between Birmingham and Jasper, thus this record further consolidates Stevenson's records.

**BARN SWALLOW.** A record of two birds on July 3, 1946, on the grounds of St. Bernard College, Cullman, Alabama, probably indicates breeding, since Fall transients have not been recorded earlier than August 8 at Birmingham. This is 25 miles south of the Tennessee Valley, where there are records at Tusculumbia (Howell, 1928) and Wheeler Dam (Atkeson).

**CEDAR WAXWING.** Birds bred at Cullman (Imhof), and Lake Purdy near Birmingham (Perry, Tipton, and Imhof) and summered at Lane Park, Birmingham (Perry and Tipton), all in 1946. A flock of five birds seen by the writer July 11, 1949, probably a family group, at Fairfield, Ala., a suburb of Birmingham, would indicate that they probably bred close by this year. There are no breeding or summering records for 1947 or 1948 altho individuals were present here until late May.

**LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE.** Howell (1928) recorded the northern breeding limits of this species in Alabama as just south of Birmingham. Stevenson (in letter) in noting its breeding much farther north sums up its present range as "entire state except in mountains." Perry and the writer recorded four birds June 25, 1949, on Lookout Mountain just east of Fort Payne, Ala., in farming areas, and Stevenson found one on Sand Mountain near Albertville, Ala., July 8, 1949. As an indication of their present abundance north of Birmingham, we recorded 12 birds on the 115-mile trip from Birmingham to Hammondville, June 25, 1949, and four birds were counted on the 90-mile trip from Birmingham to Decatur, May 1, 1948.

**WARBLING VIREO.** There is one record from near Florence previous to 1937, and May and July, 1936, by C. Russell Mason (1936). On July 11, 1949, Stevenson found a singing male in a hackberry very close to the locality of Mason's record.

**WORM-EATING WARBLER.** Previous to 1949 there is a record of a nest with young at Camp Andrews, 5 miles south of Birmingham in 1941 by Perry, Howe, and Lee. A singing male at Mitchell Dam on the Coosa River, May 7, 1936, by Stevenson probably was not a migrant. Howell

(1928) mentions records for Shelby, May 27 and 31, 1898; and Ardell, June 25, 1913, undoubtedly breeding. In 1949, five singing males were recorded in three localities: one on the Cahaba River halfway between Centreville and Blocton (in Bibb County), May 21, (Perry and Prather); two on the Warrior River near Brookwood (15 miles above Tuscaloosa), May 30 (Perry, Prather, Vaughn, and Imhof); two on Lookout Mountain, June 25 (Perry and Imhof).

**YELLOW WARBLER.** Howell (1928) records the bird as breeding at Guntersville, 1913; Attalla, 1913; Autaugaville, 1903; and at Anniston and Florence. Since 1932 at least, the bird has been an abundant breeder at Birmingham. In 1949, six singing males were recorded in and around Tuscaloosa on May 29 by Perry, Prather, Vaughn, and Imhof.

**BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER.** Apparently this species is a locally common breeder on bluffs where spruce pine (*Pinus virginiana*) is abundant in the rugged coal mining region between Birmingham and the Warrior River. Howell (1928) found it common at Squaw Shoals (now Lock 17) on the Warrior River, June 3-5, 1913. There are several old records for the Blue Ridge (30 to 70 miles southeast of here), Lookout Mountain, and Sand Mountain. On the Warrior River fifteen miles below Lock 17 and fifteen miles above Tuscaloosa, on May 30, 1949, Perry, Prather, Vaughn, and the writer counted no less than eleven singing males in nine hours. There was a singing male on every substantial bluff we examined whose elevation was 400 ft. or better. The same was true on upper Short Creek near Ben Vines Gap on June 7, 1949, when the writer recorded eight birds, seven of them singing males, in two miles and two hours time at midday. This locality is less than seven miles from the city limits of Birmingham and at 450 to 600 ft. elevation.

**OVENBIRD.** The known southern limits of the breeding range are roughly on a line drawn from Florence to Huntsville to Anniston (Howell, 1928). The presence of a singing male in Birmingham, sixty miles southwest of this line on July 5, 1949, probably indicates an extension of breeding range which, it is hoped, will be more fully investigated.

**COWBIRD.** Howell (1928) gives no breeding records for the state, although Stevenson (in letter) has breeding records for Tuscaloosa in 1938 and 1939 and summering records for Decatur, 1943; Red Bay, 1947; and Florence, 1949. At Birmingham the writer observed White-eyed Vireo as host in June, 1947, and Summer Tanager as host in July and August, 1949. On August 3 a flock of five males was noted at the same locality. On May 29, 1949, at Tuscaloosa a flock of five was noted by Perry, Prather, Vaughn, and Imhof.

**SCARLET TANAGER.** Howell (1928) records this bird breeding as far south as Mt. Weogufka in the Blue Ridge, and Squaw Shoals (Lock 17) on the Warrior River. On May 30, 1949, Perry, Prather, Vaughn, and the writer observed two males singing at an elevation of 400 feet on the west bank of the Warrior River above Laurel Branch halfway between Tuscaloosa and Lock 17.

DICKCISSEL. According to Howell, Stevenson, and the Fish and Wildlife Service Personnel at Wheeler Refuge, Decatur, Ala., this bird breeds fairly commonly in the Tennessee Valley and in the Central Prairie Belt 100 miles below Birmingham. In 1937 a pair remained in Birmingham until May 23 when the cutting of hay from their field apparently chased them from the area. In May and June of 1949, Perry and the writer observed two pair, one with young, at Grasselli in Jones Valley, two miles west of Birmingham.

#### REFERENCES

- HOWELL, ARTHUR H. 1928. Birds of Alabama. Dept. of Game and Fisheries of Alabama. Birmingham.
- MASON, C. RUSSELL. 1936. Warbling Vireo nesting in Alabama. *Auk*. 53: 449-450.
- 307 38TH STREET, FAIRFIELD, ALABAMA

#### REVIEWS OF SEVERAL BOOKS ON BIRDS

This summary of books about birds aims to describe several books that are or might be useful to bird students. The number of these books that are available is rather large, and the average student is not aware of all of them or does not know the true value or use of each. These reviews attempt to assess the worth of each book listed. The following people contributed their comments on some or all of the books: Ben B. Coffey, Jr., of Memphis, Albert F. Ganier of Nashville, Dr. L. R. Hernndon of Elizabethton, Dr. J. C. Howell of Knoxville, Mrs. F. C. Laskey of Nashville, and Dr. Walter R. Spofford, formerly of Nashville.

It would take quite a bit of money for a person to buy all of the books listed below. The more important and useful books are indicated in the reviews, but many people would not care to or could not afford to buy even these. It is suggested that local chapters could buy the books in which they are interested and deposit them in a local library where they would be accessible to all.

The books are grouped below according to their purpose or subject matter, beginning with books on the identification of birds.—The Editor.

**A Field Guide to the Birds of Eastern N. A.** By Roger Tory Peterson. Houghton Mifflin Co. 2nd ed. 1947.—This is recommended as the indispensable book, the one to be acquired first by every bird student. It is a manual for the identification of birds in the field, covering the birds of eastern North America, and as such contains the following excellent features: accurate illustrations either in color or black and white, many birds pictured both at rest and in flight, characteristics important for identification emphasized both in the illustrations and the text, pictures of both sexes and of most variations in plumage for each species, notes on characteristic voice and habits, and with all this, handy and convenient.



**How to Know The Birds; an introduction to bird recognition.** By Roger Tory Peterson. New York, 1949.—This may have been intended as a simplified manual to bird identification, but to most people it is not nearly as satisfactory as the **Field Guide** by the same author. The number of pictures and the number of species treated is considerably less than in the **Guide**. It has, however, some added material: a brief treatment of ecological distribution of birds and several pages of silhouettes of common birds. It is available at two prices, two dollars or thirty-five cents, the cheaper edition lacking the colored plates. Mr. Coffey suggests that the cheaper edition be purchased in numbers for use with Boy Scouts and similar groups.

**Audubon Bird Guide; eastern land birds.** By Richard H. Pough. Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1946.—This book is limited in usefulness as it treats only the "land birds", omitting hawks, shorebirds, waterfowl, and similar groups. The colored plates are rated from fair to excellent by different people, but they are not as easy to use as in Peterson's **Guide**. Perhaps the one advantage of this book over other identification manuals is in its more complete description of each bird and its habits.

**Field Guide of Eastern Birds.** By Leon A. Hausman. G. P. Putnam's Sons, N. Y. 1946.

**Illustrated Encyclopedia of American Birds.** By Leon A. Hausman. Halcyon House, N. Y. 1944.—Neither of these two books by Hausman are to be recommended above those described above. The illustrations in the **Field Guide** are satisfactory but very few are in color, and attention is not drawn to diagnostic characters. The material in the **Encyclopedia** is sketchy because of the large number of species treated.

**The Ducks, Geese, and Swans of N. A.** By Francis H. Kortright. American Wildlife Institute, Washington, 1943.—For students of waterfowl this book is very desirable. There are extensive descriptions, which make interesting reading, of each species. The appearance of juvenile, eclipse, and mature plumage are illustrated in color.

**The Hawks of North America.** By John B. May. Nat. Assoc. of Audubon Societies, N. Y. 1935.—This book is out of print, and so is difficult and expensive to acquire, but it is still the best book on its subject. There are excellent colored plates, black-and-white diagrams of hawks in flight, comments on habitats, identification, and especially useful, detailed data on food habits of these birds of prey.

**A Guide to Bird Songs.** By A. A. Saunders. D. Appleton-Century Co., N. Y. 1935.—Bird songs are graphically presented as well as being described in words. Students of birds in the field are well aware of the value of bird songs as a means of identification. Opinions vary as to the worth of this book in teaching and helping to identify bird songs; apparently some individuals gain considerable from it while others do not.

**Natural History of the Birds of Eastern and Central N. A.** By Edward H. Forbush and John B. May. Houghton Mifflin Co. 1943.—For many years

the three volume "Birds of Massachusetts", by Forbush, has been considered one of the most valuable reference books besides containing the largest and best series of colored plates, by Fuertes and Brooks. This **Natural History of the Birds** is abridged from the larger work, but it still carries the original plates plus some additional ones by later artists and fairly detailed descriptions of the plumages and habits of each species. In many respects it is the second most useful book for bird students.

**Birds in the Garden and How to Attract Them.** By Margaret McKenny. Univ. Minnesota Press. 1939.—This book is not well known to bird students, but it is very useful for its purpose. The value of birds in the garden is described and then various ways of attracting birds: bird houses, plants for food and cover, etc. The book is well illustrated.

**A Guide to Bird Watching.** By Joseph J. Hickey. Oxford Univ. Press, N. Y. 1943.—A very interesting book to read, this directs the bird student away from solely listing and identifying birds and towards more serious and fruitful study of their lives and habits. Studies that have been accomplished are described and suggestions given for studies that need to be made. Every interested bird student should at least read this book. In connection with this topic, another book which provides a guide for life history studies of birds is **A Laboratory and Field Manual of Ornithology**, by Olin Sewall Pettingill (Burgess Publ. Co., Minneapolis).

**Book of Bird Life.** By Arthur A. Allen. D. Van Nostrand, N. Y. 1930.—This is a good book to supplement the identification manuals and other books that describe birds species by species. It treats of the biology of birds, describing their adaptations, life histories, and habits; in short, it helps to understand birds.

**Birds Over America.** By Roger Tory Peterson. Dodd, Mead, and Co., N. Y. 1948.—This is not a reference book, but it still contains a surprising amount of interesting material about birds. It is delightful reading and is beautifully illustrated.

## OUR ORNITHOLOGICAL LIBRARY

By ALBERT F. GANIER

The late William M. Walker, a sketch of whom appeared in *THE MIGRANT* for March, 1947, willed his ornithological books and periodicals to the Tennessee Ornithological Society, and they were duly accepted by the Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting of May 10, 1947. At this time it was decided to use the books to form the nucleus of a library, to be known as the William M. Walker Memorial Library of the T. O. S., to house them at the Nashville Children's Museum and to make them available to members for reference there or for loan. Until such time as a librarian could be chosen, the Curator was requested to look after the gift, and this he attends to, as well as providing a case with glass doors for their reception. Thru the courtesy of Mrs. Walker, now an assistant librarian at the University of Florida, suitable book plates were

prepared and installed by her in the 30 volumes. The list of books is given below and in the parenthesis following each description is given figures denoting the cost of one mailing, at book rates, plus insurance at replacement value. Members may borrow the books for a period of 21 days, paying for the postage and insurance both ways, returning them in the same substantial wrappings, prepaid and insured.

Allen, Arthur A.—American bird biographies. Includes 10 color pls by Sutton and 190 halftones. Ithaca, N. Y., Comstock, 1934. (16 plus 10)

Allen—The Golden Plover and other birds. Includes 7 color pls by Sutton and 240 halftones. Ithaca, N. Y., Comstock, 1939. (16 plus 10)

Audubon, James J.—The birds of America. Introduction and descriptive text by Wm. Vogt, N. Y., Macmillan, 1937. (32 plus 10)

Bent, Arthur Cleveland—Life histories of North Amer. diving birds. Reprint of U. S. Nat. Museum Bul. 107. Dodd, 1946. (12 plus 10)

Bent—Life histories of North Amer. birds of prey, part 2. USNM Bul. 170. Wash., 1938. (16 plus 10)

Bent—Life histories of North Amer. woodpeckers. USNM Bul. 174. Wash., D. C., 1939. (12 plus 10)

Bent—Life histories of North Amer. cuckoos, goatsuckers, hummingbirds and their allies. USNM Bul. 176, Wash., 1940. (16 plus 10)

Bent—Life histories of North Amer. flycatchers, larks, swallows, and their allies. USNM Bul. 179, Wash., 1942b. (16 plus 10)

Chapman, Frank M.—The warblers of North America. 3rd edition, N. Y., D. Appleton Co., 1907. (16 plus 10)

Compte, M. Achille—The book of birds: edited and abridged from the text of Buffon. Hand painted illust., Victor Allen. Translated by Benj. Clark. London, R. Tyas, 1841. Rebound. (20 plus 10)

Dawson, Wm. L.—The birds of California. Deluxe edition, few plates missing. San Diego, 1923. 4 vols, unbound. (each vol. 44 plus 25)

Forbush, Edward H.—Birds of Massachusetts and other New England states. 3 vols.; vol. 1, water birds; vol. II, game birds, birds of prey to grackles; vol. III, all other passerines. Boston, 1925, '27, '29. (each vol. 24 plus 25)

Forbush—Natural history of the birds of eastern and central North Amer. Rev. and abridged to 1 vol. Houghton, Boston, 1939. (20 plus 10)

Green, Charlotte H.—Birds of the South. Univ. of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1933. (12 plus 10)

Grosvenor, Wetmore, and Alexander, editors—The book of birds. 2 vols. Reprinted from National Geographic Magazine, Wash., 1937. (both v. 32 plus 10)

Kortright, Francis H.—The ducks, geese and swans of North America. Col. pls by T. M. Shortt, Amer. Wildlife Inst., Wash., 1943. (16 plus 10)

May, John B.—The hawks of North America. Color pls of each. Nat. Assoc. of Audubon Societies, New York, 1915. (12 plus 10)

National Park Service.—Checklist of the birds of the National Parks. Mimeographed annotated lists, Wash., 1937. (16 plus 10)

Oberholser, Harry C.—The birdlife of Louisiana. La. Dept. of Conservation, Bul No. 28, 1938. Paper covers. (20 plus 10)

Palmer, B. Lawrence—Aids to knowing natural science; the birds. Outline illust. by Fuertes. Ithaca, Comstock, 1944. (8 plus 10)

Pearson, T. Gilbert—Birds of America. Col. pls by Fuertes. Garden City Publishing Co., N. Y., 1936. (24 plus 10)

Peattie, Donald Culross—Audubon's America. Includes some Audubon color plates. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1940. (24 plus 10)

Reed, Chester A.—Birds of Eastern North America. Has small color illust. of each species. Doubleday, N. Y., 1912. (16 plus 10)

Roberts, Thomas Sadler—Bird portraits in color. Plates same as in his Birds of Minn., Univ. of Minn. Press, 1934. (16 plus 10)

Roberts—The birds of Minnesota. Vol. I shows water birds and raptors, thru woodpeckers; vol II shows all other passerines and includes descriptive keys. Univ. of Minn. Press, 1936. (each vol 32 plus 25)

Saunders, Aretas A.—Guide to bird songs. N. Y., Appleton, 1935. (12 plus 10)

Schwartz, Charles W.—The Prairie Chicken in Missouri. Pub. by the Conservation Commission of the State of Missouri, 1944. (24 plus 10)

Taverner, P. A.—Birds of Canada. Ottawa, Patenaude, 1934. (20 plus 10)

Todd, W. E. Clyde—Birds of western Pennsylvania. Color plates by Sutton. Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 1940. (28 plus 25)

Webb, A. C.—Some birds and their ways; for home and school. Richmond, Va., Johnson Co., 1898. (12 plus 10)

In addition to the books listed above, there are unbound runs of three ornithological journals as follows: **The Auk**, vols 55-63 (1938 to 1946 incl.); **The Wilson Bulletin**, vols 37-53 and 57-58 (1925 to 1941 and 1945 to 1946, inclusive); **Bird Lore**, vols 20-42, incomplete (1918-1940), 46 copies in all, including 9 supplements; **Audubon Magazine**, vol 43 (1941) complete.

Mr. Walker's complete and bound file of THE MIGRANT was retained by Mrs. Walker since it contained so much of her husband's writings. The Society is desirous of having some member or members donate a set of this publication to its library. Gifts of other bird books and publications are solicited and it is hoped that the library will grow by reason of such gifts. Immediate past-editor Ganier and present editor Tanner have expressed a willingness to donate the many state bird journals that have been sent to them in exchange thru the years.

Communications in regard to the books and library should be addressed to Albert F. Ganier, Curator, 2112 Woodlawn Dr., Nashville 5, Tenn. NASHVILLE, TENN.

## THE ROUND TABLE

WHITE IBIS OBSERVED IN KNOX CO., TENNESSEE.—On the afternoon of July 29, 1949, we observed four immature White Ibis (*Guara alba*) standing on the edge of a small artificial pond in a pasture. The pond

was on the Broad Acres Dairy Farm about one mile southwest of Powell Station. The pond was less than an acre in area and about one hundred feet from an occupied house. The pond was shallow and heavily grown up with narrow-leaved emergent vegetation.

Our attention was first attracted to the birds as they flew in unison almost straight up to a height of about five feet and then settled back again on the edge of the pond. We watched them for about five minutes, following which they flew up from the edge of the pond and passed over the hard-surfaced road only one hundred yards from us to be lost from sight in the trees beside Beaver Creek.

The family occupying the nearby house told us that the four ibis had first come to the pond "before the fourth of July". Later they informed us that three of the birds left before the fourth one, which had been injured.

We have been unable to find any other records of the occurrence of this species in Tennessee.—ISABEL H. TIPTON and JOSEPH C. HOWELL, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tenn.

**YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO PREYS ON GREEN SNAKE.** — Around 4:45 P. M., on June 11, 1949, my father called my attention to a Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) that was struggling with a Green Snake (*Ophedrys aestivus*). The Cuckoo was in a thick growth of Privet hedge a few feet from a bedroom window, and in its bill was a small Green Snake about eight inches long. The bird had grasped the snake by its middle and was having a hard time holding the writhing creature. Just as I arrived at the window the Cuckoo flew off, and immediately I rushed out to ascertain whether the bird had carried off the snake. I was unable to find either the Cuckoo or the snake, and presumably the former had succeeded in carrying away its victim. Five or ten minutes later a Cuckoo, no doubt the same individual, came back to a similar hedge several yards from the first. The bird, about five feet from the ground, was moving about in the shrub, and from all appearances was looking for another snake. The Green Snake is abundant in the hedges around my home, and the smaller specimens would fall easy prey to the larger Cuckoo, which is almost serpentine itself.—RALPH M. SINCLAIR, Nashville, Tennessee.

**A RINGSIDE SEAT WITH A PAIR OF WARBLING VIREOS.**—In early May I had the good fortune to watch a pair of Warbling Vireos build a nest. The nest in a maple was by actual measurement six feet from my bedroom window and fifteen feet from the ground. I noticed the nest when it was about half finished and for several mornings, while lying in bed, I watched its completion. Their firm, rich, continuous warble as they worked was very pleasant. As soon as the nest was completed, I nailed a plank from my window out to an upright ladder from the ground. I could then step thru the window onto this plank and walk within two feet of the nest at eye level.

In a week's time the nest contained four white eggs, and two weeks later these hatched. When both parents were busy feeding the young, I got busy with my cameras. First I made Kodachrome movies with a six-inch lens from within my room, then I made both Kodachrome and black and white pictures with still cameras. After each shot by remote control, it was necessary to walk out on my plank and reset the cameras. I soon saw that the birds were paying no attention to what I was doing, so I finished my photography at a distance of two feet, with my movie camera buzzing and my flash flashing. None of this seemed to frighten the birds in the least.

Two different times I returned two of the young birds to their nest. One was found dead on the ground, but I am sure that three survived, joined their parents, and learned to warble.—CHARLES F. PICKERING, Clarksville, Tenn.

THE LATE SUMMER DICKCISSEL DEPARTURE.—Throughout West Tennessee, especially in the area which lies along the Mississippi River, one of the most abundant breeding birds is the Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*). Returning from its winter home during late April, the males become highly vocal at once and announce their presence throughout the day with unrivaled persistence. Along the levee below Memphis, with the broad meadows comprising its inner slopes and barrow-pits, a day in May finds a dozen in sight at nearly any point one may choose. Motoring northward from there to the Kentucky line at Reelfoot Lake, they seem present in every weed field, wasteland, or patch of vetch or clover.

Between June 2 and 5, 1949, I was afield daily in the Dyersburg-Reelfoot area and found Dickcissels everywhere present and nesting. The week of August 26-Sept. 2 found me again afield in this area and persistent search revealed not a single individual. The possibility that they were molting and "hiding out" in the weed fields caused me to search there but without success. Evidently they had raised their broods and departed. In previous years, my visits to the Memphis areas above mentioned, in late August with members of the Memphis chapter, finds the place deserted of Dickcissels as well as of Grasshopper Sparrows and Meadowlarks. There, too, they have reared their broods and moved away. Some Meadowlarks can be found in the vicinity but no Dickcissels.

Where these birds have gone and why they should leave, when summer foliage is still at its height and weed seed as well as insect food is abundant, is difficult to understand. During the present summer there has been ample rainfall, hence no drought conditions that could have affected them.

The winter home of the Dickcissel, according to the A. O. U. Checklist of 1931, is from Guatemala to Venezuela, Colombia, and Trinidad, migrating through Mexico and Central America. It may be that they begin their southward migration there as soon as their broods are ready to fly. This same procedure is followed by many of our shorebirds which

nest near the Artic Circle. If Dickcissels do not at once move to their winter home, then they must move southward to certain areas where they tarry for a time to subsist upon some favored type of food not available in their breeding area. There is a possibility that they go to the Louisiana rice fields and feed upon that grain, as do the Bobolinks upon the rice fields of South Carolina. The literature upon the birds of Louisiana, by Beyer, Kopman, Arthur, and Oberholser, however, is silent upon such a possible migratory influx. Any information upon their post-breeding-season movements would be received with interest.

What has been said above about the late summer scarcity is true in a less pronounced way about many of our other birds. Writers in the North have called attention to it there and think their birds have moved a bit southward. Here we think they have moved even further southward. At this season, the adult population, augmented by the season's young, should bring avian populations to their highest point.

The apparent scarcity is due to several factors, among which are: hiding out during process of molting, sluggishness at this time, disinclination to singing or calling, density of foliage, and frequent drouth periods at this season which cut down on the supply of food and drinking water. I have spent a great deal of time afield at this season trying to see if these factors alone were responsible, but have come to the conclusion that they were not. There is evidently a post-breeding-season movement which points to an earlier southward migration than is generally realized. The 300 birds killed at the ceilometer light-shaft at Nashville airport, during the night of Sept. 9, 1948 (see MIGRANT, 20:9-12) also points to this conclusion. In short, there is much yet to be learned about this interesting problem.—ALBERT F. GANIER, Nashville, Tenn.

SOME UNUSUAL NOTES FROM MEMPHIS.—On June 20, 1949, near Galloway Municipal Golf Course, in the eastern part of this city, a male Eastern Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*) was heard singing and seen feeding on the ground. Later, it disappeared into a hedge and mixed tree thicket. On subsequent searches that day, and a few days later, neither the bird nor a nest could be found. I believe that this species is nesting in that vicinity. This is the first published summer record of Towhees for this area since Southgate Hoyt's write-up in the September, 1945, MIGRANT and Ben Coffey's report in the September, 1946, issue. A casual check of King's Woods where Hoyt found nesting Towhees failed to turn up any of the birds. King's Woods is now a thickly-populated housing subdivision. Towhees also have been observed at least twice during the summer at the Scout Camp Currier, approximately thirty miles south of here near Eudora, Mississippi, in 1944 by the writer, and again, I believe, fairly recently by others. I think that nesting Towhees are commoner or are becoming commoner than heretofore believed.

On July 4 an albino Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) was seen at this address. This general area was described in Albert Powell's article in the March 1946 MIGRANT. The bird was in good plumage except that it was snow-white

and did not have a single dark feather on it. Its legs and bill were both pale yellow in color instead of the yellow bill and black legs in the normal Robin. The eye color could not be ascertained. It was feeding alone on the ground and when approached, flew off giving the usual Robin notes. The next day it was seen twice, but not since.

July 6, a White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) was heard singing, also at this address. Later that same day I managed to get a good look at the bird. It was in perfect plumage and appeared to be in good health. I was out of the city last year, but my mother tells me she heard a White-throat singing off and on all summer here. I do not know if the bird is actually nesting or just a non-breeding summer resident. I have not yet been able to find a nest, although the sparrow has been heard singing fairly regularly, usually very early in the morning. I have been unable to find any printed reference on the summer occurrence of this bird this far south.—HERBERT CLARKE, 1466 Somerset Place, Memphis (5) Tennessee.

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER'S NEST WITH SIX EGGS.—On May 5, 1949, when descending through woods and brush to the mouth of a small hollow, I was startled by the sudden appearance of an excited and defensive pair of Blue-winged Warblers (*Vermivora pinus*). They stayed fairly low in bushes and shrubs, flitting with tails and wings spread in a defending and belligerent attitude toward intruders. Every indication was that I had disturbed a pair of Blue-wings in the immediate vicinity of their nest. I could not look for the nest at that time but returned on May 7. I approached the area without flushing the birds, but after a short wait they appeared, fussing and disturbed. They circled a small area, staying three to four feet from the ground, but did not approach a nest. I withdrew to return a couple of hours later. This time I approached very quietly and cautiously, looking well before each step. Suddenly, from immediately at my feet flew the Blue-wing from her nest and I found it on the ground in a clump of buck brush or coral berry (*Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*). She did not defend the nest but flew away with a chirp or two. The nest was fairly deep. It was built on a thick mat of naturally occurring grass with no open space between the nest and the ground. It contained six small white eggs very finely specked with reddish-brown at the larger end. It was well protected by the surrounding clump of buck bush and concealed by tall grass. It was located in an area of low bush and brambles back of the edge of a meadow at the mouth of a hollow between two wooded hills. Blackberry briars, wild plum, and buck bush made up most of the surrounding shrubs.

On May 14, the bird was again flushed from the nest. On May 15, the nest contained five tiny newly-hatched birds and one unhatched egg. The adult birds were not at the nest. On May 21, the nest was empty. The birds were not in immediate evidence.

Most authors give five as the upper limit of the number of eggs laid in a single set of Blue-winged Warblers. Chapman's "Handbook" and



Job in "Birds of America" give the range as four to six without specific references to sets of six.

Nests reported from Nashville area that have come to my attention have not contained more than five eggs, although only one clutch of five was an incubated set (see Crook, MIGRANT, 1933, 4 (1); p. 10).

This observation may be of interest because it reports a Blue-wing's nest with six eggs which were incubated to hatching. The locale of the nest is perfectly typical of classical descriptions by Wilson, by Forbush, and others. The occurrence of a nesting pair of Blue-wings in the South Harpeth River drainage basin is not remarkable. A census of nesting birds in suitable territory in this area would likely make them surprisingly numerous. I observed several other singing males in the surrounding territories, and it is interesting to note that the first Blue-wing of 1949 was observed singing in the immediate vicinity of this nest on April 13.—KATHERINE A. GOODPASTURE, 408 Fairfax Ave., Nashville, 5, Tenn.

A SYCAMORE WARBLER'S NEST IN A PINE TREE.—On April 23, 1949, I watched a gray warbler with a light, streaked breast and a bright yellow throat (*Dendroica dominica*) building a nest on top of a horizontal limb of a pine (*Pinus virginiana*). The nest was thirty to forty feet from the ground and ten to twelve feet from the trunk of the tree. It was perhaps one-third finished and appeared very light. The bird was building intently. It did not perch on approaching or leaving the nest, but flew straight in and out, working chiefly from within the nest. Its flight away from the nest was direct and fast. The time away and the bird's attitude in flight and building indicated it was going some distance for material, I could not determine that both birds were building.

On April 24 the bird was still building. It was late on this afternoon that I first observed the bird to rest from its building. It sat in a big elm and a beech nearby and sang the Indigo-bunting-like song of the Sycamore Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*).

On April 30 and May 1 the nest was watched for only short intervals with no sign of the birds. Building had apparently been completed. The bird was observed on the nest May 7; it appeared to be incubating on May 14. On May 15 both birds were at the nest; one approached to incubate.

The next observations, on May 21 and May 22, record no activity at the nest, and the birds were not seen at the nest subsequently.

An observation such as this is a very simple one, but it is reported because of the rarity of a Sycamore Warbler building in pine in the Nashville area. This was a large pine at the edge of an old grove of native Virginia pine. It is fifty to seventy-five feet from a spring branch and two fairly large sycamore trees (*Platanus occidentalis*). The pine was chosen over a number of sycamores along a creek close by. The whole area is in the South Harpeth Valley 20 miles from Nashville.

Reports of Sycamore Warbler nests from the Nashville area describes

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*The simple truth about birds is interesting enough;  
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them only in sycamore trees. It may be that most of us look for this warbler in the Sycamore tree, whereas if we looked for it more objectively, we would find it building in a limited variety of other trees—  
KATHERINE A. GOODPASTURE, 408 Fairfax Ave., Nashville (5) Tenn.

## NOTES HERE AND THERE

FALL FIELD DAYS—The Knoxville Chapter held their Fall Field Day on September 18, and on that day covered the same area as during the Spring Field Day, a circle of seven and a half miles radius centered near the northwest corner of Knoxville. About a dozen observers participated and a total of 86 species of birds were observed. The Kingsport Chapter held their Day on September 25, when they covered the city of Kingsport and its immediate vicinity. Five observers took part and the list of species totalled 57. The Elizabethton Chapter, on October 2, compiled the impressive total of 105 species.

ERRATUM—In the report of the Spring Field Days in the June 1949 issue of THE MIGRANT the headings of two sets of columns of the table were interchanged. The columns headed "Roan Mountain" should be "Elizabethton", and vice versa.

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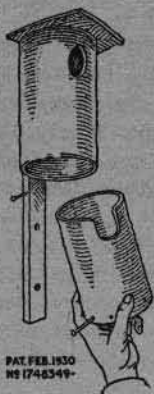
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