

# THE MIGRANT

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL  
DEVOTED TO TENNESSEE BIRDS

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# THE MIGRANT

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## ANNUAL AUTUMN HAWK COUNT 1956

By THOMAS W. FINUCANE

During September, 1956, members of the T.O.S. reported about 950 Broad-winged Hawks. Our total for this species, 981, includes a few August and October records and—not shown on the chart—75 observed in numbers from one to 13 by Fred and Mary Fern Behrend in the Holston Mountain area, Elizabethton, during noon-hour watches when the weather was fair.

The 1955 Broad-wing count was 532 and the total count 700, compared to 981 and 1170 for 1956. The local weather this year was better. There were 626 reported for Sept. 22 and 23, 1956. This number is two-thirds of the total for this species and greater than the total Broad-wings for the fall of 1955, and it represents seven separate localities. The best day at Hawk Mountain, Pa., was Sept. 19, according to Maurice Broun, who reported 3030 Broad-wings for that day.

Among the ten who took part in the T.O.S. hawk count this year but not last year, H. P. Langridge, of Elizabethton submitted four reports, and Paul Pardue, of Fountain City, submitted six reports and participated in several others. Amy Manous made two very fruitful 4-hr. morning expeditions to House Mountain, with five species on Sept. 22 and six on Sept. 29, for a total of nine species of hawks.

The Sept. 30 flight of 20 Broad-winged and one Red-tailed Hawk was seen by a group of Knoxville people eating lunch at the Ijams' residence, where they were making their Fall Field Day count, according to Jim Tanner.

The best count of the survey was made by the Wests, who spent six hours on the Elder-Mountain fire tower, Chattanooga, Sept. 22, while the fire warden, J. E. Lawson, remained below. All other reports listed on the chart for this fire tower (m) were made to Mrs. West by Mr. Lawson via telephone. Since the latter had had little experience in identification, he merely reported numbers to Mrs. West, who then assumed "that any group of five or more would be Broad-wings". His four September reports, a total of 86, are thus listed on the chart as Broad-wings. On the other hand, his three October reports are listed as unspecified, where they do not affect late-date statistics. In addition, he informed the Wests on September 22 that about two weeks before he had seen three large groups of hawks. Interpretation of this information would indicate that at least 300 more hawks could be added to our total, which would then be about 1200.

The effort made by Mr. and Mrs. West to get cooperation from the fire warden must be applauded. Besides adding to our data and thus making the hawk count more interesting to those of us who follow it, the fire warden can become an expert observer and add to his enjoyment of life in a way which needs no explaining to readers of THE MIGRANT.

In reporting 33 Broad-winged Hawks for Sept. 21, Mr. Langridge made the following comment:

"Hampton, in the town, 3:15 to 3:20 p.m. While observing Chimney Swifts, through binoculars, I noticed a stream of hawks soaring toward the SW. These hawks were not visible without binoculars."

It has been suggested that more people would have joined in the hawk count this year if a statement had been made last year that the hawk count was to be continued. Accordingly, be assured that it will be coordinated and published again next year, and, more important, most of our more active observers will be in the field again, to the extent such things are predictable. The project will not stop without advance notice. It has also been intimated that we no longer explain the purpose of the hawk count and interpret the data. We hope that the chart explains itself, and we refer the reader to the December issues of THE MIGRANT, 1949 to 1954, where the subject is presented in full by Mr. Behrend. We exchange information on hawk migration with Chandler S. Robbins, Patuxent Research Refuge, Laurel, Maryland, who incorporates our data (some of which he receives directly from T.O.S. observers) into a large-scale study.

#### KEY TO REPORTERS

W—Mr. and Mrs. E. M. West, Chattanooga; B—Fred Behrend, Elizabethton; P—Paul Pardue, Fountain City; T—James Tanner, Knoxville; O—Holly Overton, Mary Enloe, Paul Pardue, James and Lois Becker, Knoxville; M—Amy Manous, Knoxville; A—J. T. Mengel, Paul Pardue, and Holly Overton, Knoxville; K—Paul Pardue and James Becker; L—H. P. Langridge, Elizabethton.

#### KEY TO LOCALITIES

a—Elizabethton Area .....	about 1700 ft.
b—Chattanooga Area	
c—Loudon — West End	
d—Fountain City — Black Oak Ridge .....	1150 ft.
e—Sevierville — Base of Chilhowie Mt. ....	1300 ft.
f—Hampton — in the town .....	1785 ft.
g—Grandfather Mt., N. C. ....	5280 ft.
h—House Mt. ....	2000 ft.
k—Balsam Camp Ground .....	5550 ft.
m—Chattanooga — Elder Mt. Fire Tower .....	1800 ft.
n—Linville Falls to Green Knob, N. C.	
o—Oak Ridge — Downtown .....	1200 ft.
p—Green Knob Tower, N. C.	
q—Lookout Mt., facing Chattanooga .....	2200 ft.
r—Roan Mt.	
s—Jane Bald	
t—Knoxville, at the Ijams residence	
u—Holston River — near Mascot .....	1900 ft.

### HAWK OBSERVATIONS FALL OF 1956

Date	9/28	9/30	10/1	10/2	10/3	10/4	10/5	10/6	10/7	10/8	10/9	10/10	10/11	10/12	10/13	10/14	10/15	10/16	10/17	10/18	10/19	10/20	10/21	10/22	10/23	10/24	10/25	10/26	10/27	10/28	10/29	10/30	10/31	Totals		
Reporter	L	W	A	P	P	L	L	P	M	O	L	N	R	B	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N		
Locality	a	b	h	d	e	f	g	e	h	k	a	m	n	p	b	q	m	m	m	r	h	s	m	t	m	b	a	e	n	o	m	m	u			
Duration - Hr.	1	2			0.1	2		4	9	1	6				3																				45	
Wind Direction	O	SW	SW	SW		V	O	SE	SW		SE																								S	
Miles Per Hr.	0	10	2	8	3	10	0	3	8	0	10				8																				3	
Temperature °F	70	85	68	68	70		78	73	65	H	72				75																				70	
Sky (weather)	F	V	V	V	F	F	F	F	F	F	V				FC																				F	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1																																		3	
Cooper's Hawk																																				9
Red-tailed Hawk										2		1	3																							15
Red-shouldered Hawk										1																										1
Broad-winged Hawk	1	1	13	2	16	33	2		2	108		317	58	125	3	13	5	26	48	37	5	71	7	20	8	18								939		
Bald Eagle																																				2
Marsh Hawk				1					2				2																							6
Osprey													1																							1
Duck Hawk												1																								2
Pigeon Hawk												1																								1
Sparrow Hawk														2																						2
Unidentified Accipiters						1																														4
Unidentified Buteos																																				6
Unidentified Falcons																																				1
Unspecified																																				58

## BALD EAGLES IN ANDERSON COUNTY, TENN.

On several occasions over a period of a month, I had glimpsed large birds soaring over a ridge along the Clinch River below Norris Dam but had not been able to identify them because of extremely low clouds and rain.

But Thursday, February 14, was clear and windy. At 1:15 p.m. I started to Cove Lake State Park; as I approached the section where US-441 begins to parallel the river, travelling north out of Norris, large birds were soaring quite low over the river; crows were in an uproar. I parked the car and got out to see what they were. At that point I could not see any large bird but the crows had moved farther upstream, northward from my location, and were still in an uproar. I returned to the car and travelled on north or upstream. On rounding the curve in the road where it first parallels the river, I discovered an adult Bald Eagle perched on a limb overhanging the roadway. Still sitting in the car and looking through the windshield with my binoculars, I discovered a second adult Bald Eagle. Both birds were within the field of view of my binoculars at the same time. Large trucks and other vehicular traffic directly under the birds failed to disturb them, but when I got out of the car, they flew farther away but still within range of my vision. I drove on to the TVA Tree Crop Nursery where I went in to use the telephone; while telephoning and looking out the window toward the river, I discovered more eagles. I counted two adult Bald Eagles and three immatures that afternoon. About 3:30 p.m. that same afternoon I was able to get Mrs. T. C. Swindell (TOS member) to come out to see the eagles. At one time we saw an immature eagle carrying sticks. Two of the immatures were as large as the adult birds and had some white coloring mixed in with the tan head feathers. The third immature was quite small (could it have been a "first year" bird?) On this day the birds were quite active. They were soaring quite a bit and quite high, but never very far from the river and the top of the ridge.

Friday, February 15, I visited the area below Norris Dam after 4:00 p.m. There was no wind and the eagles were perched low on limbs overhanging the river on the far side from the roadway. Mrs. R. G. Crossno, Mrs. Perry G. Cotter and Mr. J. J. Sowell (none of whom are TOS members) were with me. We saw five adult Bald Eagles and two immatures. The day before I had assumed that I was watching a family group — two adults and three immatures. But on seeing five adults on Friday, I quit assuming.

On Saturday, February 16, Mr. Ernest Wilson (not a TOS member) accompanied me to see the eagles. We saw the five adult birds but did not stay long enough to locate the immatures.

On Sunday morning, February 17, Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Monroe (TOS members) came out to see the eagles. Without getting out of the car we saw five of the birds. That afternoon I went out again with my husband and Mr. and Mrs. Carson Brewer (none of them TOS members). Again we saw the eight birds. We watched an immature bump wings with an adult soaring low over the river and force the adult to drop a fish. On this trip we encountered Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Owen (TOS members) and I left my party to join them. In addition to the eagles, we observed two Red-tailed Hawks soaring and circling; but they were not on the same side of the river with the eagles and quite a distance northward. Mr. Carson Brewer is a reporter with the Knoxville News-Sentinel and plans an article on the eagles for his newspaper.

Each day February 17 thru 21, I checked on the eagles. On Wednesday, February 20, Mrs. Swindell escorted a Cub Scout Den to see the eagles and they counted **eight adult eagles**. On Friday, February 22, Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Dunbar (TOS members) came to see the eagles and we enjoyed their calling; they were perched low in trees overhanging the river and calling back and forth to each other.

On Sunday, February 24, Mrs. Swindell and I went out at 8:30 a.m. and sat close to the river bank upstream from the TVA Tree Crop Nursery until 12:30 p.m. and watched the eagles. We had a ringside seat to watch two adult birds swoop down to the river, catch a fish and return to perch on a limb overhanging the river to eat. We could see the fish bones drop to the water below his perch. We have not been able to get close enough to tell whether or not these eagles wear bands. Binoculars are not powerful enough and we do not have a balscope at our disposal.

Each day of the following week, I checked on the eagles. I have not been able to go out at the same time each day, but I have managed to go out some time during each day. On March 4, I saw only four eagles, on March 6, three; March 8 was snowing and I found none; March 9 the snow was gone and I found two. Sunday, March 10, Mrs. E. E. Overton (TOS member), Mrs. Robert J. Dunbar, and Mr. and Mrs. Barclay came to see the eagles, but we found none. It was a bright sunny day and the afternoon sun was directly in our faces. I do not believe there were any eagles there that afternoon. There were too many fishermen in the vicinity. On March 11 I could not find any eagles at 8:30 a.m., but on Tuesday, March 12, two adults were on their usual perches at 9:30 a.m.

So far as I've been able to learn, individual bald eagles have been observed at various points over Norris Lake by fishermen, but no one has ever found such a concentration of them as represented by these eleven birds. I am not sure of the exact number. I have observed five adults and three immatures at one time. Mrs. Swindell counted eight adult birds at one time; so I assume there were eight adults and three immatures. State Conservation officers have told me they suspect eagles nest somewhere on Central Peninsula, but they have never located a nest. I am told that the section of the Peninsula where eagles may nest is so wild and rough the Conservation Officers have never penetrated it. Dr. Joseph Howell tells me there are no records of nesting Bald Eagles in East Tennessee.

Because of recent heavy rains and high waters, I thought that the feeding areas of these eagles had been ruined and they had come here along the river to feed on shad discarded by fishermen. Now I think perhaps they came because TVA has been drawing down the level of Norris Lake by opening sluice gates and some fish have been killed coming through the sluices. TVA ceased sluicing water at Norris Dam on Thursday, February 28, late in the afternoon. Four adult eagles were still present March 4. After that the number has dwindled. During the past week I have only seen two adult birds and one immature, but this pair of adult birds behaved as though they were settling down. Usually they were perched in the same tree and sat quite close together. I am not familiar with the courting antics of eagles but have seen acrobatics in mid-air resembling such activities of other birds so they may be mating.

I would like to know whether or not eagles have gathered along the river below other dams downstream from Norris where TVA has also been sluicing water.

At this writing — it is one month since I first discovered the eagles — one pair is still here. Could I be hopeful that they may stay?

FRANCES B. OLSON, Box 390, Norris, Tenn.

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## THE SEASON

MEMPHIS — The first few White-throated Sparrows noted were seen at three places on Oct. 6 and 2 other places Oct. 7, by members; the first White-crowned Sparrows, Oct. 7, and the first Harris's, Oct. 30, Mrs. Charles Seahorn, Germantown. Other common species arrived Oct. 6-7-8, with a few transient warblers, plus House Wrens—1, Oct. 6, Coffey Grounds, and 1, Oct. 8, Overton Park (Noreen Smith & Ellen Stringer). At President's Island Oliver Irwin reported 2 Myrtle Warblers, Oct. 5, 2 Song Sparrows, Oct. 8, and a Vesper Sparrow, Oct. 19; a build-up of the blackbirds roosting there, Oct. 28-Nov 7, with a huge roost Nov. 18. The blackbirds began using Elmwood Cemetery about Nov. 11, almost entirely by Nov. 30 (OI); as noted on the Christmas Count, about 1,000,000 there (LCK, RW) Dec. 23; others in the area were apparently going to the Marion, Ark. roost, and possibly other roosts. The roost near Fletcher Field had apparently moved closer to Clarksdale, Miss. (Dec. 29, BC et al). Noted at the Penal Farm, Oct. 20 (BC), were American Pipit 1, Sprague's Pipit 1, Western Meadowlark 3; on Oct. 27, Brewer's Blackbird 6. A check Dec. 15, first Saturday after our vacation, showed 1 and 22 Smith's Longspurs, 3 Sprague's, 13 Brewer's and 11 Western Meadowlarks; unfortunately not all remained, accessible at least, for the count a week later. Meanwhile, at Field 21, 4 Sprague's were found Oct. 28, and, on the Count, 2 Sprague's and 2 Smith's Longspurs. Tree Swallows totaled 865 at the Farm, Nov. 4 (none Nov. 11); 8 seen in Rugby (ES) and 5 over Glenview (OI) on Nov. 5. A Blue-headed Vireo was seen



in Overton Park, Oct. 18 (Lula Coffey). We learned again on a Christmas Count, that some species, loosely thought of as common, are often hard to find. Meanwhile the Sprague's Pipit, tho in lesser numbers, was recorded on our four Counts (Memphis, Lonoke, Natchez, Columbus) and again near Clarksdale and Madison, Miss.; the Leconte's Sparrow on all but Memphis (the Field 21 site had been mowed). Mrs. C. E. James contributed the Barn Owl, after a 3-hour watch at her home, giving Memphis 4 owls for the first time. The Rough-legged Hawk, Herring Gull, Short-eared Owl and Fish Crow, were again missed. More northern and more southern species were again absent, with westerners filling the gap, especially the Rock Wren and Green-tailed Towhee at Memphis, and, Dec. 30, a male Black-throated Gray Warbler, spotted at Natchez, Miss., by R. Demett Smith, Jr., and watched repeatedly (BC, LC, Alice Smith).

The season's most intensive field work was by Ben and Lula Coffey on all sides of Memphis (approximately 100 mi.) in cultivated grassy fields, pastures, airfields, brushy roadside thickets, and other open country in general, in order to help complete the record picture of the western invasion of the past several years. Our twenty inches of rain to date prohibiting early plowing of fields possibly accounts for lack in numbers of Golden Plover; 8, Mar. 3, south of Lakeview, Miss., 2 on Mar. 16, and flocks of 13 and 22 on Mar. 23, at Penal Farm, 21 at Field 21, and 52 and 30, 2 miles east of Crawfordsville, Ark., on Mar. 23. As in past years Western Meadowlark continues in fair numbers at Penal Farm; records include 13 on Feb. 3rd and Mar. 2nd, and 4 on Mar. 23. Our second and third locations outside Shelby County in Tenn., are to the north 5, at Fort Pillow, and 2 at Ashport on Feb. 2nd. A fourth location to the east between LaGrange and Somerville, 3 on Mar. 10. Brewer's Blackbird 10, 5 miles south of LaGrange, Mar. 10. Brewer's found throughout season at Penal Farm and Lakeview, Harris's Sparrow, 2 separately, ½ mile apart at Hernando, Miss., Feb. 17, and 1, one mile south of Luckett, Tenn., Feb. 2nd. The first record for Sprague's Pipit at previously covered Dyersburg, Tenn., airfield, 5 on Feb. 2nd and continued records at Penal Farm and Lakeview areas. Smith's Longspur, 9, at Field 21, Feb. 3, and Penal Farm, 2, Mar. 2, and 3, Mar. 16.

Early and first records for the season continued from Jan. 20 when Coffey saw an imm. male Pine Warbler, our first for Overton Park, and one of the very few for Shelby County. Pectoral Sandpiper, extremely early, at Union City airfield Feb. 2, (L. Coffey). Short-eared Owl 1, Halls, Tenn. airfield, and 4, Union City airfield, Feb. 2. Harlan's Hawk in dark phase Mar. 3, on Lakeview levee in Tenn. and Miss. Least Sandpiper 3, Penal Farm and Lesser Yellow-legs 1, south of Howards at Lakeview, Miss., Mar. 16. Long-billed Dowitcher Mar. 3, south of Lakeview at New Hope slough in Miss. Upland Plover 2, Greater Yellow-legs 1, and Barn Swallow (first Mar. record) 2, Mar. 23, at Penal Farm. American Egret at Coro Lake Mar.

13, (Oliver Irwin). Little Blue Heron, 35 adults at Marion, Ark. heronry, Mar. 23. Tree Swallows, two flocks approximately 60 each, Mar. 21, Horse-shoe Lake, Ark. (Dr. W. L. Whitmore). Red-cockaded Woodpecker 2, Mar. 10, Pocahontas, Tenn., our only dependable area in West Tenn. for these pine-woods birds. Memphis arrivals are Purple Martin, pair Feb. 24, at Lancasters. Irwin reports Chimney Swifts Mar. 22, and Gnatcatchers, La. Water-thrush, and Chipping Sparrow at Overton, Mar. 24. Whip-poor-will at Overton on Mar. 27, 28, 29, (Coffey). Unless stated, records are Ben Coffey's.—DEMETT SMITH, Memphis

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NASHVILLE. — The winter season has been an uneventful one, except for a few items: a Robin's egg which was laid in December — nest was later deserted and the egg disappeared (HCM).

Our weather has been unusually mild, as one observer said, "A satisfactory winter for a large winter bird population." Two species which have seemed more abundant than usual are the Hermit Thrush and the Fox Sparrow; also many Robins have used the roost on Woodmont Boulevard through November and December, whereas our heavy population of this species does not usually arrive until early January. Filling of Old Hickory Lake in the fall has added a sizeable number of ducks to our otherwise meager water bird population.

No Purple Finches have been seen the entire winter. This was the first Christmas Count in at least eight years when they have not been found. Short-eared Owls were not found in Buena Vista Marsh Christmas, as they have been for the four previous years. On 12-22, 3 Golden Eagles (1 adult, 2 immatures) were seen near Joelton (OCA). Some early arrival dates are as follows: 3-2, 4 Greater Yellowlegs (JO); 3-2, 4 Least Sandpipers (JO); 3-10, 1 Pectoral Sandpiper (JO). Four Brown Thrashers were reported on the Christmas Count; this species began moving into breeding territories early in March, reported 3-2 and 3-7 by CH, 3-12 by GRM, 3-17 by SMB. Chipping Sparrows apparently arrived after March 10th, as first report was on 3-13 (1), 3-14 (2) and 3-15 (6) (ARL). Flocks of Canada Geese were reported by several observers as having been heard and seen February 8 and 9 — "A record spring flight in my experience." (HCM)

Two nesting records have been reported: a Mourning Dove was seen incubating one egg 3-1, but on 3-8 the egg was gone and the nest abandoned (C. Hunt); 3-16 one Killdeer egg was found in a nest which had been watched since 2-24 (HCM).—MRS. W. F. BELL, 210 Carden Ave., Nashville.

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LEBANON. — Heretofore we have regarded water fowl, marsh birds and, in the main, shore birds as outside our province and have made little effort at reporting the few that we chanced to see. The ground that we patrol contained no area suitable to them. With the filling of Old Hickory Lake during the past twelve months, the situation changes and the reporting of such birds becomes our duty. We are by no means sure of our ability to discharge it. There is among us not a single experienced observer of birds in these categories. Until we can acquire the requisite skill, we ask for charity of judgment.

Even now, we propose to restrict our efforts mainly to the Lock 5 Refuge Area, leaving the lower reaches of the lake to the Nashville Chapter. This refuge contains about 340 acres of land on both sides of Cumberland River in Wilson and Trousdale counties. In this and contiguous areas, however, a great deal more land — up to ten times as much — will be planted to waterfowl food crops under the supervision of the Game and Fish Commission. Next winter, therefore, will be our first for extensive observation.

During the past winter, the first since the filling of the lake, not as many birds as had been expected came to the area. John M. Drennon, junior area manager, estimates that not more than 15,000 ducks of all species were present.

At least half as many birds as that, however, were observed in one field of Milo maize, partially submerged. Ducks identified were Mallard, Wood Duck, Black Duck, both Blue and Green-winged Teal, Gadwall, Pintail and Ring-necked. Both Canada and Blue geese were present as were Coots in numbers, some Pied-billed Grebes, and a few Cormorants. Mr. Drennon, who has patrolled the area for a number of years as game warden, says this is the first time Cormorants have been seen along this stretch of the Cumberland. He thinks this was the first appearance, too, of Pintail and Ring-necked ducks. Anhingas are reported but I, personally, do not feel certain of the identification.

We are looking forward to the nesting season for the Lark Sparrow which, as previously reported, we believe is becoming an established nester in this area. I have twice — first on March 9 and again on March 12 — seen half a dozen individuals at points near my house. Each time they were mixed with other kinds of sparrows. They may have been in migration but I am expecting them to remain.

Horned Larks, observed both winter and summer for several years at one point in our area, have increased at that point from about 25 when first observed to not less than 50 this winter.—DIXON MERRITT, RFD 6, Lebanon, Tenn.

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CHATTANOOGA. — Recent heavy rains have flooded the usual resting places of the gulls dispersing them somewhat more than normal. Bald Eagles appear more numerous than in previous seasons. Trips to Chickamauga Lake produce from 1 to 4. The Red-cockaded Woodpecker was seen on 1-12 for the first time in eleven months. This was the first January record. It has been observed on six different occasions and each observation has been in a different month. Carolina Wrens started building a nest in a box on 2-14 and completed it within a few days. However, no egg had been laid as of 3-2. A male Maryland Yellow-throat was seen on 3-3— five weeks early. I am reasonably sure it was a migrant rather than a winter resident. Cedar Waxwings are quite common and Myrtle Warblers have been more common than normal all this season.—ADELE H. WEST.

KNOXVILLE. — The fall and winter season has been unusually open with no pronounced cold waves and practically no snow. The most pronounced feature of the winter was a prolonged (about twenty days) spell of rain in January and February. There have been a number of unusual records of birds during the fall and winter, but they show no connection with the weather.

Two Mallards and one Black Duck were reported on October 14, 1956, the earliest records here for these species. Three Black-crowned Night Herons were reported on October 20, the latest fall record we have had, until four of these herons were found roosting in a pine woods on the property of Kenneth Sanders, near Knoxville, in December. They were last reported on December 29 (JTT), and were not found again after a cold snap in early January. Four Snow Geese were seen by Mrs. Manous on November 10.

Several unusual waterfowl records have come from Alcoa Lake in the town of Alcoa and Laurel Lake near Townsend, by the observations of Ralph Zaenglein and Mary Enloe, who made regular visits thru the winter, and a T. O. S. field trip to these lakes on February 17, 1957. One Canada and one immature Blue Goose have been present at Laurel Lake most of the winter. The following records are for one or the other of these two lakes, except as noted: Pintail Duck, 5 on Jan. 5 and 10 on Feb. 28 (Loudon Lake); Green-winged Teal, 1 on Dec. 15 and 1 on Jan. 12; Shoveller, 1 just before Thanksgiving and 1 on Feb. 17; Redhead and Ruddy Ducks, from 6 to 12 each on Laurel Lake during much of the winter. Several other waterfowl have been present on these two lakes, but are the usual wintering varieties.

On February 17 the members of a T. O. S. field trip at Alcoa Lake were able to compare, in good light, two male Greater Scaup with a single male Lesser Scaup, and to make positive identification of the Greater Scaup. On February 20 a male Greater Scaup was killed in Knox County and brought for identification to Joseph C. Howell. These make the first identifications of the Greater Scaup in this area.

Another rare bird for this area was a Holboell's Grebe reported from Laurel Lake on Dec. 2 by Mary Enloe. No Horned Grebes have been reported this winter.

An unusual sight at Norris Dam has been that of from three to six Bald Eagles along the river just below the dam. These have been observed regularly by Mrs. Olson of Norris. The heavy winter rains resulted in sluicing torrents of water thru the dam, which has killed some fish; this is the probable reason for the eagles remaining there.

One Red-shouldered Hawk was seen on Feb. 10 and another on Feb. 17. There have been many more gulls on Loudon Lake this winter than last; the ratio of Ring-billed to Herring Gulls has been about six to one. A very large flock of Cedar Waxwings, 650 birds, was seen on Feb. 21, and other records indicate that Waxwings have been commoner than usual. Scattered Fox Sparrow records indicate that these are a little more abundant than usual. There have been the ordinary small numbers of wintering Brown Thrashers and Pine Warblers.

Extremely scarce have been Purple Finches, only 9 having been reported all winter. Pine Siskins have been absent, and there have been no reports of northern finches or grosbeaks from any of this region, including the mountains.

Two Great Horned Owls have been heard at different times between January 25 and February 10 by Paul Pardue and Mrs. E. E. Overton. Their hooting indicates that they are nesting on Sharp's Ridge at the very edge of Knoxville.

The earliest Purple Martins were reported by the newspaper on Feb. 27 and 28. The snow and freezing weather of March 8 may have been fatal to them. Bluebirds were seen building a nest on March 1.—JAMES T. TANNER.

KINGSPORT. — The first Dicksissels in the Kingsport area were observed July 8 (TWF). They were identified at four separate locations within one mile of the city. Various members observed them and they were checked almost daily until July 22, when they were last seen.

Last fall was long and warm with the first freeze occurring on Nov. 23. Chestnut-sided Warblers stayed from Sept. 18 to Oct. 15. The first White-throated Sparrow was recorded on Oct. 10. On Nov. 5 Great Blue Heron, Pied-billed Grebe, Herring and Ring-billed Gulls were seen by the Switzers. On Oct. 17 they watched a Hermit Thrush on their lawn. It had violent tremors in both legs, which did not stop their rapid vibrations during the half-hour period the bird was under observation. In moving along the ground it presented a strange spectacle, but its wings and flight appeared normal. On subsequent days Mrs. Switzer heard the song of the Hermit Thrush, a thrill not hitherto experienced by any TOS member in this county.

Three Albino House Sparrows were reported from different parts of our area. One remained all winter in the neighborhood of the Tennessee Eastman Research Laboratories, where it was seen by numerous people.

At least two Blue Geese were shot by hunters early in November. Just before Christmas several loons were shot from a group of eight on Patrick Henry Lake. At this same time loons were seen on Boone Lake. These are our first winter records.

Ducks seen frequently during the winter were: Mallards, Blacks, Pintails and Lesser Scaups. On Feb. 10, Mrs. Switzer heard Canada Geese flying over her home. All of the woodpeckers, especially Flickers, seemed scarce this winter. The Great Blue Heron was also scarce.

The Shobes recorded Wilson's Snipe, Feb. 27, our first report on this species in nearly two years. During February, Fox Sparrows were seen again this year, after being absent last year.

Golden-crowned Kinglets were abundant in winter on Bays Mountain. Robins appeared first on Jan. 29 — rather late. This species stubbornly refused to reveal itself for the Christmas Census.—THOMAS W. FINUCANE, 1434 Watauga Ave., Kingsport.

BRISTOL. — A long dry fall followed by a long, wet winter with temperatures ranging from fairly cold to severely cold on several occasions, characterize the season. Twenty-one successive days with rain raised South Holston Lake to the highest level ever recorded, runoff being effected by the spillway for the first time in TVA history. This was to allow adequate control in case of spring floods. Snows have been light and infrequent.

Nighthawks became numerous in late August but were few in mid-Sept. No large numbers were noted such as the Aug. 31, 1955 recording of 500 to 600. Chimney Swifts first appeared on Sept. 13 (12). These gradually increased until Oct. 9 when 800 to 1,000 were observed swirling and swarming over the big chimney of Junior High School. The next few days there were only three or four. On Oct. 14 only one was seen, and none thereafter.

The fall warbler flight yielded larger numbers than usual, of species frequenting city lawns and edgings. Bay-breasted Oct. 14 and 15; Cape May (1), Tennessee (2), and Magnolia (2) Sept. 29; Prairie (1), Orange-crowned (2), Blackburnian (1), Myrtle (1) and Tennessee (2) Sept. 17. Wood Pewees (2) and Grackles were seen on Sept. 22.

Mrs. R. T. L. Liston reported the following: Black-throated Blue Warbler (1) Sept. 19; Rose-breasted Grosbeak (1) Sept. 22. Olive-backed Thrushes were observed in large numbers from mid-September through Oct. 8, as were Redstarts and Ovenbirds. Hooded Warbler (1) Oct. 2; Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Gray-cheeked Thrush Oct. 19 and Vesper Sparrow on Oct. 30. White-throated Sparrows first appeared on Oct. 20. Hairy Woodpeckers have appeared in larger numbers than usual. Goldfinches have been on hand all winter as well as large numbers of Myrtle Warblers. Flickers appear scarce. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was seen on Nov. 17. A few Phoebes have been present all winter.

A Blue-headed Vireo was seen at Miss Pflug's cabin in Holston Valley on Nov. 10. A Fox Sparrow and two large concentrations of Cardinals were seen near the South Holston Dam area on Dec. 25.

Two Lesser Scaups were observed for about two weeks on the pond at King Springs, beginning Jan. 26. On Feb. 4 there appeared, besides the two immature scaups, an adult male. On Feb. 8 all had departed. As far as this writer knows this is the only recorded evidence of Scaups within the city limits of Bristol. The pond referred to is the result of damming up the old King Springs in southeast Bristol. The ground has been presented to the city for a local park and recreation area. Since it is also abundant in bird life the local chapter of T.O.S. has gone on record in the city commissioner's office recommending that all possible ecological features of the area be maintained in order to retain all possible bird life.

Cedar Waxwings were seen on Sept. 17 (5) and Mar. 1 (20) increasing to large flocks (75 or more) through March. Red-winged Blackbirds were first seen on Mar. 14—JUDITH ABBOTT, 700 Alabama Street, Bristol, Tenn.

ELIZABETHTON. — Perhaps because of the very mild dry fall, some birds observed in this area migrated very late. For example, the Bobolink was seen 53 days later than ever before—2 on 11-1 (HPL) and 1 on 11-12 (LRH, HPL). Another example, the Rose-breasted Grosbeak appeared 44 days later than ever before—1 on 10-20 (LMH), 10-25 (HPL) and 12-1 (LRH, HPL). Because of belated stragglers, extension of late dates by a week or more became common place this fall.

The following warbler dates exceeded our latest records: Magnolia, 10-31; Black-throated Green, 10-24; Maryland Yellow-throat, 10-28; Wilson's, 10-13 (LRH, HPL), and Parula, 10-23.

October 27 and 28 proved to be good birding days on the County Farm because several observers (Roby D. May, Mrs. Ruth D. Hughes, LRH and HPL) found 3 Short-billed Marsh Wrens (only previous record—see THE MIGRANT 21, 63, 1950)—also 1 (RDH, HPL) on 11-1 and 1 (HPL) on 11-10, 3 Long-billed Marsh Wrens, 3 Orange Crowned Warblers, the Sharp-tailed Sparrow and the Lincoln's Sparrow (see THE MIGRANT 27, 74, 1956).

On the morning of Dec. 22, Watauga Lake was mirror smooth as viewed from the overlook. Swimming birds were easily located by their conspicuous wakes in the smooth water. At a considerable distance off shore was a loon which preferred to be alone rather than join a group of four Common Loons which appeared larger, and darker, although farther away, and were diving as they proceeded up the lake. The smaller loon had a rather thin upturned bill, with uniformly gray head somewhat darker on the nape, light gray back, white throat, breast and sides at the water line. The bird was studied at some length through 35X telescope in good light and identified as a Red-throated Loon (LRH, HPL).

Some of the less common ducks seen in this locality were Shovellers (6) on 11-17 (HPL), Ruddy (1) on 12-8 (LRH et al.) Redheads on 1-6, and Greater Scaups on 1-19 (LRH et al.). The latter birds stayed on Wilbur Lake for several weeks.

On 11-10 a wounded mature Bald Eagle was reported on the upper Cherokee Lake area by a group of Elizabethton duck hunters. The Grasshopper Sparrow appeared on 11-3 (28 days late) and Northern Horned Lark, (1) on 11-25 (LRH).

The scarcity of some birds that usually winter here, the presence of some birds that rarely if ever winter here, and the late dates of many species indicate that some factors, perhaps weather, determined this unusual situation. In regard to weather, our rainfall, totaling 15 inches during January and February, was extremely heavy; but on the whole, the winter seemed fairly mild.

Some birds usually common in the wintertime were scarce or absent: no Purple Finches after October, no Waxwings (one flock on Census—Frank Ward) until 2-23, no Pine Siskins, one record of a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker on 2-25 (Ed Davidson) and fewer numbers of Goldfinches.

Along with this idea of a mild winter possibly influencing bird populations, the Rusty Blackbird (2) on 1-13 (LRH), the Red-winged Blackbird (1) on 1-6 (HPL, ED) and (18) on 2-10 (LRH, HPL), and the Bewick's Wren on 2-2 (ED, HPL) surprisingly turned up. Single Brown Thrashers on 1-2 (RM), 1-19 (HPL), and 2-16 (ED) proved to be our first records of wintering thrashers. The Pine and Palm Warblers seemed more abundant this winter. Two White-breasted Nuthatches, uncommon here, were seen regularly from Feb. 22.

On February 9 and 10 there was a great influx of dabbling ducks. On the 9th of Feb. LRH recorded Mallards (200), Blacks (54), Gadwalls (25), Pintails (24), Baldpates (11) and on 2-10, Wood Ducks (2). Through February to March 20 on the County Farm in a small pond, Mallards, Gadwalls, and a few Pintails were present in flocks totaling from 20 to 100. Three Green-winged Teal swam on this pond March 16 (HPL, ED); two, on 3-19.

An American Merganser—our only record this winter—appeared on Watauga Lake on 2-23 (LRH et al.). For about four minutes on 1-21 at the Bee Cliff three observers (RDH, ED, HPL) watched a Duck Hawk in flight. A Pigeon Hawk on 1-12 caused considerable discussion before it was identified after a half hour's chase (LRH et al.).

Ten to twenty Ring-billed Gulls and occasionally a few Herring Gulls were observed during the winter by members at Roan Creek. A Bald Eagle secured and ate its breakfast at Watauga Lake on March 16 (HPL, ED).

Making an excellent find on 3-13, Farthing and Eller saw a catbird 33 days earlier than ever before. A Pectoral Sandpiper appeared 28 days earlier than ever reported—one on 3-3 (HPL, ED), five on 3-13 (RDH, HPL), two on 3-16, 17, and 19.

To summarize the winter season, I think the main points are the unusual wintering and lingering of some species, the duck influx in early February, and the absence of some birds that normally winter here.—H. P. LANGRIDGE, Rt. 7, Elizabethton.

## SAMUEL ARTHUR OGDEN — 1876-1957

Samuel Arthur Ogden, "Arthur", to his fellow bird enthusiasts, was born August 22, 1876, and died January 4, 1957. He was a faithful employee of Fidelity Bankers Trust Company for the last 37 years of his life. Arthur was always a lover of nature in all its forms but most especially of birds and he had always been a student of ornithology. With his lifelong friend, the late Harry Ijams, he did much hiking in the Smokies long before the Park was visualized as well as canoeing on the Tennessee, Holston and French Broad Rivers.

He was a lifetime member of the Audubon Society and a charter member of the Smoky Mountain Hiking Club and the East Tennessee Ornithological Society. For many years he indulged in his hobby of taxidermy at which he was particularly good at producing lifelike poses with his specimens. His experience as a painter, both in oil and water color, of scenery, flowers and birds was another expression of his appreciation of the beauty of nature. Mr. Ogden contributed much toward interesting younger generations in nature in general and ornithology in particular.—BROCKWAY CROUCH, 2233 W. Cumberland Ave., S. W., Knoxville.



GREEN-TAILED TOWHEE IN ELIZABETHTON, TENN. — About 9:00 a.m. March 24 while observing several White-throated Sparrows, from the kitchen window, in the vicinity of my bird traps, a bird of entirely different characteristics, attracted by attention. It was sleek looking, olive-greenish; somewhat larger than the sparrows and feeding in the door of the trap. Immediately, I called Mrs. Herndon to check my observation. The bird was about ten feet from our eyes as we looked down on the solid reddish-brown crown, gray face, neck and sides and olive-greenish back, wings and tail. No streaks were visible on the breast or sides and we could not see the white throat from our observation point. It continued to feed in and in front of the trap door, scratching among the leaves with both feet simultaneously, as is characteristic of towhees, for a few minutes before it flew away. By this time we were positive it was a Green-tailed Towhee (*Oberholseria chlorura*).

About five hours later it returned to the vicinity of the trap and was observed in a rhododendron shrub, about a foot above the trap. Almost immediately it hopped down on the ground and began to feed in the door of the trap. It was frightened into the trap and captured. It was transferred to a gathering trap for further observation and study by members of the Elizabethton Chapter of TOS. It was a life record for all of our members. It was not in bright spring plumage as the colors tended toward the drab or dirty side. The throat patch was not conspicuous nor was it pure white, although easily discernible when in the hand. Two small white patches were on either side of the larger white throat patch and separated from it by a fine gray line. The breast was ashy gray and the belly a dirty white with under tail coverts a pale light buff. The inner veins of wing and tail feathers were yellowish olive-green. The edge of the folded wing showed a thin line of golden yellow. The irises were a rich cinnamon brown, not very different from the color of the crown. It gave two different and distinct notes — the distress calls were a series of high pitched squeaks and the other similar to the "meow" of a kitten, usually only once but sometimes twice.

After thorough inspection the bird was banded and released. It was next observed on April 1 and almost daily until April 26 when it was last seen. It fed on cracked corn and scratch feed placed on the ground and was observed most frequently, early in the morning although it appeared at various times during the day, even in the late afternoon.

This appears to be the third Tennessee record. The first was reported by R. Demett Smith, Jr. on the Christmas Count for Dec. 21, 1952, also on 12-23 and 12-25 (see THE MIGRANT, 23, 68, 70, 71 and 76, 1952). The second was on the occasion of the 1956 Christmas Count at Memphis, by Mrs. Burford. (see Notes on Christmas Count, this issue). Other records of its occurrence east of the Mississippi River are: one at Northampton, Mass. from late Dec. 1946 to mid-March 1947 (AUDUBON FIELD NOTES, May 1947:125); one taken in Charleston County, S. Car., Jan. 18, 1921 and recorded in the **AUK**, 38:1921, 278 and another secured in Virginia in 1903. These latter references were taken from "South Carolina Bird Life" by Alexander Sprunt, Jr., and E. Burnham Chamberlain, page 522, 1949.—LEE R. HERNDON, 1533 Burgie Place, Elizabethton, Tenn.

# THE MIGRANT

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## EDITORIAL

### TENNESSEE NESTING RECORDS

The status of breeding birds for an area as large and varied as the state of Tennessee appears to be undergoing change continuously. Our attention is called to specific species extending their breeding range from time to time. Sometimes the extension of range is attributed to the fact that the winters are growing milder. If this is true, it might account for some of the more southern species moving into more northern latitudes but perhaps just as often one notes the breeding range of other species extending their range in a southerly or southwesterly direction. Altitudinal extensions of breeding ranges may be undergoing change. The Cumberland Plateau and the mountains of east Tennessee would provide fertile territory for a study of this kind. Adequate data are not available although some material has been accumulated along this line. Much material is scattered all through THE MIGRANT. Some areas have been studied rather intensively for short periods during the breeding season while others cover small areas over relatively long periods of time giving specific data regarding nesting, with dates, eggs or young and other pertinent data.

The report by Henry M. Stevenson and Arthur Stupka (see THE MIGRANT 19, 33-60, 1948) gives brief sketches of all the species which were known to winter or summer in the east Tennessee mountains. This list would provide an excellent beginning for the selection of species for an altitudinal study. James T. Tanner lists only the species (see THE MIGRANT 26, 37-40, 1955) and the altitudinal ranges which they were known to occupy during the breeding season on the northwest slope of Mt. LeConte. More detailed reviews of individual species have been summarized and published in recent issues of THE MIGRANT. There is need for more work of this kind to establish the status of species which are thought to be extending their breeding range. Also species which are listed as probable breeding species for the state should be included.

The fiftieth anniversary of the founding of TOS will be coming up in October 1965. It would be a worth while accomplishment, if by that time, we could establish rather definitely all of the species which have been known to breed in Tennessee. Specific data should be presented for the rarer species or species listed as "probably breeding". Each member of TOS could contribute something to such a project as this. The Elizabethton chapter of TOS has on hand a printed Nesting Record card which could be used for this purpose. Anyone interested in reporting such nesting records as would be suitable for such a list will be supplied with card samples on request.—L.R.H.

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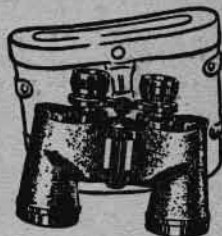
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