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DEVOTED TO TENNESSEE BIRDS

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TRAILL'S FLYCATCHERS BREEDING IN TENNESSEE

By LEE R. HERNDON

INTRODUCTION

The southern limits of the breeding range of Traill's (Alder) Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*) as given by the American Ornithologist Union Checklist, east of the Mississippi River is southern Illinois (Murphysboro), southern Indiana (Bloomington), southern Ohio (Wilmington), West Virginia (Cranberry Glades) and Maryland. With regard to Kentucky records, Burt L. Monroe, Sr., reports the finding of adults feeding four young which were out of the nest on July 30, 1938 in Jefferson County, near Louisville. And Gordon Wilson states: "My own record here (Bowling Green, Ky.) is a single one in the migration of May 1957." Maurice Brooks states: "Either this bird is extending its range or we have overlooked it due to a misunderstanding of its requirements. In recent years, we have found it in West Virginia just about every place where there are extensive stands of alder. The range has no relationship to altitude, and I imagine we know of a couple of dozen colonies in the State. The one farthest south is at Cranberry Glades, Pocahontas County (nearest Post Office Mill Point, W. Va.) so you may make your measurements there." Chandler S. Robbins provided the following with regard to West Virginia: "Sutton found it nesting in willow at Beech Bottom Swamp along the Ohio River in Brooke County at elevations around 650 feet, and Boggs has found it nesting in Monongalia County at elevations below 1,000 feet." "In Maryland, nesting records are few simply because of lack of effort on the part of observers. The Traill's Flycatcher occurs regularly at many localities in Garrett County. It has also been found in summer during the last half dozen years in Frederick, Carroll, and Baltimore Counties. The lowest elevation of an actual nest in Maryland was 240 feet at Loch Raven in Baltimore County, where three young were raised in July 1954, (C. M. Buchanan)." J. J. Murray states: "We do not have a record of a nest of Traill's Flycatcher in Virginia. . . ." Henry M. Stevenson reports the presence of this species near Abingdon, Va. during the summer of 1946. He states: "The present occurrence, then, is the first for Virginia and apparently the most southern breeding location east of the Mississippi River." The presence of this species, during the breeding season of 1956 near North Wilkesboro, North Carolina and reported by Wendell P. Smith and Henry M. Stevenson: ". . . presents strong circumstantial evidence of the breeding of this species in North Carolina."

TENNESSEE RECORDS

Literature references to the occurrence of Traill's Flycatcher in Tennessee are limited to the few which occur in THE MIGRANT. The first observation of this species in Tennessee, to my knowledge, was a bird observed in song in a willow thicket about one fourth mile up stream from the Main Street bridge across the Watauga River from Elizabethton, by the author, on our spring census on May 7, 1944. This report was received with some skepticism but was later published in a Summary of Carter County Birds by the author. A second record of the species, identified by song only, was also a summer record, August 1, 1945 near the point where Toll Branch empties into Buffalo Creek near Happy Valley School. Both of these streams were bordered with willows and meadows or grazing land. Both of these records were in Carter County and identified by the author. Mrs. E. M. West reported a bird of this species on May 9, 1948.

Albert F. Ganier collected the first state specimen at Memphis on August 27, 1944.

Stevenson and Stupka predicted the occurrence of this species in the Southeastern States as follows: "As this species is just beginning to extend its breeding range from the North into the southeastern States, it will be interesting to note the altitudes at which it is discovered."

B. B. Coffey, Jr. reported one at Coffey Grounds in Memphis May 20, 1950 which was the second record. Another bird of this species was reported by the same observer, also at Memphis on their spring census May 6, 1951.

Weise and Ogden report one at the Ashland City marsh near Nashville on May 31, 1955.

On the night of September 24-25, 1955 three Traill's Flycatchers were casualties at the Stewart Air Force Base at Smyrna, near Nashville as reported by Mrs. A. R. Laskey.

R. Demett Smith, Jr., found a bird of this species on August 5, 1956 south of Rogers Spring.

Two birds of this species were picked up at the Nashville TV Tower during the period from September 23 to mid-November of 1957 as reported by Mrs. A. R. Laskey.

A bird of this species was picked up as a casualty at the Johnson City, WJHL-TV Tower on September 29, 1957 by the author.

On May 24, 1958 the author found two singing male Traill's Flycatchers near the north end of the County Farm about two miles east of Elizabethton. At the time I was not sure there were two birds because I did not hear them sing simultaneously and thought it was a late migrant. I reported the find at our chapter meeting on June 20. The following morning H. P. Langridge and Ed Davidson returned to the area and found the birds in the exact locations I had found them almost a month earlier. Langridge called me that evening and we arranged to search the area for a nest the following morning. We met at the scene about 6:00 a.m. June 22. Two birds could be heard singing their "fitz-bew" songs, one on either side of the road. A thorough search for nests was planned in the Depew Marsh to the west of the road. Within fifteen minutes a nest was located within about twenty-five feet of the perch from which the bird was singing. We then approached the County Farm area to the east of the road and searched the area from which the other bird was singing. Nest number two was

located almost immediately and within twenty feet of the position from which the bird was singing and almost the exact spot from which the bird was singing when first observed on May 24. We then proceeded eastward where we found three other males singing over a considerable area and where we located nest number three, all within two and one-half hours.

DESCRIPTION OF AREA

A small stream traversed the area, flowing in a ditch in a westerly direction. Near the west end of the area, in the vicinity of nest No. 1, was a small pond bordered along the west side by willow trees about twenty-five feet in height. For a short distance to the west of the row of willows the land was marshy and although water was standing and running over most of this area the nest was not directly over water. The land to the east of the road and south of the ditch was fairly level and marshy while to the north of the ditch it was quite level for a short distance then sloped gradually to an elevation, perhaps fifteen feet higher and then leveled off. The elevation of the breeding area was approximately 1550 feet. Rather widely dispersed clumps of willows, up to about fifteen feet in height, comprised most of the woody plants while elders, weeds, blackberry briars, poison ivy and a variety of other plants grew up to a height of about six feet. Immediately to the south of the swampy area the land was under cultivation.

NESTING DATA

Nest No. 1. When the nest was found on June 22 it contained two cream colored eggs with small brownish tinted splotches distributed around the large end. The nest was saddled on a willow branch 5' 3" above ground. It was located near the end of an almost horizontal branch where a few branches grew almost vertically from the main branch. There was a rather dense canopy of willows over the nest and jewel weed grew almost up to the level of the nest. On June 23 and 24 the nest appeared abandoned but on the 27th the female was incubating the two eggs. Colored 35mm pictures of the nest and eggs were taken on the 24th and of the two young which appeared to have just hatched on July 4. The young birds appeared almost ready to leave the nest on July 14, although they were present on the 15th, the nest was empty July 16th and the male was singing in the area.

Nest No. 2. This nest contained 4 eggs when found on June 22. It was located in the crotch of an elder bush under the edge of a clump of willow bushes 3½' above the ground. It was protected from the sun by only a few elder leaves and the area to the south was open except for low weeds. Directly to the north and widely dispersed over the area were other clumps of willows protruding above the other vegetation. Early on the morning of July 4 the nest contained one egg and three newly hatched young. Colored photographs were taken of the nest and young. On July 14 one of the young was perched on the rim of the nest as if ready to leave. On July 15 two birds remained in the nest and were photographed (see cuts) on the edge of the nest by H. P. Langridge. The last one left the nest immediately after photographing. The nest measured 70mm outside diameter, 70mm total depth while the cup measured 48mm in diameter and 27mm in depth. The exterior of the nest appeared to be composed mostly of fibrous material, perhaps milkweed down and lined with coarser material. The nest conforms very closely to the description given in Richard Headstrom's *Birds' Nests* page 74 and to the photograph of the nest and eggs, Fig. 35.

Nest No. 3. This nest contained only one egg when discovered on June 22. It was located 5' 8" above ground in a willow bush and about two hundred yards directly east of nest No. 2. The nest was situated toward the inner edge of a semicircular area of willows about 15' in height with an open area facing southeastward. It was well protected by a canopy of willows. Four eggs were present on the afternoon of June 24 when colored photographs were taken of the nest and eggs. A blind was set up at this location to take close-up pictures of adults feeding young at the nest but unfortunately the pictures did not turn out well. Three newly hatched young were in the nest on July 9. Two young left the nest on July 20 and the nest was empty on July 21 but one bird was still only 8" from the nest.

VISITS

The nests were visited on twelve different days including the date of finding and that on which nest No. 3 was found abandoned. For the first four days after the finding of nest No. 1 it was feared that it had been abandoned as the male was not singing in the area and no bird was seen near the nest, however, on the fifth day the bird was incubating. At nests No. 1 and No. 2 incubation must have been under way when found since the eggs were hatched on the thirteenth day. At least the last three eggs of No. 3 were laid on successive days and the first could have been laid the day before it was found. If incubation started on the date on which the last egg was laid, sixteen days were required for incubation. At all nests the birds left the nest on the eleventh or twelfth day after hatching.

SINGING

The males sang frequently in close proximity to the nests until young were in the nest. Afterwards singing was much less frequent. Saunders gives the average date for cessation of song for this species in Allegany State Park, N. Y. as July 21 and the latest date for four years of observation as July 27, 1938. The birds here sang much more frequently during the early morning hours than they did later in the day during the early visits to the area. The only notes heard while we were in the vicinity of a nest was an occasional alarm note—a sharp peep.

Unfortunately observations ceased with fledging of the young, therefore we have no information on their behavior, nor do we know how long they remained in the area.

SUMMARY

There is no record of the occurrence of Traill's Flycatcher in Tennessee prior to 1944 when one was reported in the spring in Elizabethton and one was collected at Memphis during the late summer. Additional records were sparse until 1955 when three were reported as casualties at celometers and a like number at TV Towers during the fall of 1957. All sight or song records were between May 6 and 20 (5) except two August records, one on the 1st, the other the 5th. All other birds were either collected (1) or were casualties (6) which permitted close examination. All casualties were on September 23 or later, indicating they are present long after cessation of singing. They appear to be late migrants as the earliest date of record is May 6, 1951. Nesting also begins late as none of the eggs in the clutches here was likely laid earlier than June 15. It is quite possible that they have been breeding in this area for some time but have been overlooked because of their habit of late migration, late nesting, inconspicuous song and the possibility of confusion with similar species. Strong circumstantial evidence now exists that this species breeds in Kentucky, Virginia and

North Carolina. The records here constitute positive evidence of the first breeding of this species in Tennessee.



Two of three young Traill's Flycatchers at nest.



One young Traill's Flycatcher ready to leave nest.

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SPRING SHOREBIRD MIGRATIONS AT NASHVILLE, 1954-56

By CHARLES M. WEISE

During each of the three spring seasons that I lived in Nashville, I observed the local bird students and other nature lovers venturing forth to wood and field almost daily and returning with detailed records of the warblers, vireos, thrushes, tanagers and other species that were passing through in migration. The first water-thrush to enter the region and sing in some secluded wooded hollow did not long go unheard. Each great flood of warblers that arrived on the heels of a warm front was studied and analyzed carefully. And the last lingering thrush or flycatcher was sure to find its way into someone's field list and become the subject of a brief discussion at a meeting of the Nashville chapter of T.O.S. (Was it really a Traill's or just an Acadian out of its proper habitat?)

The net result of all this activity was indeed gratifying. There emerged an accurate and detailed picture of the spring migration—of small land birds. But what about water birds, especially the less conspicuous ones? Close examination of the migration picture would have shown that many of these species were represented by only one or a few records. Were they really that scarce and irregular? Or was it simply that the bird watchers had not spent very much time in the places where these birds are found? At the safe distance of several hundred miles, I would like to suggest that the latter is nearer the truth. Certainly I am aware that every bird watcher visits a marsh or pond two or three times each spring and gets a list of water birds. But even the most intensive combining of a number of such lists could hardly add up to as accurate and detailed a picture of water bird migrations as is obtained for the small land bird migrations.

When did the first Sora arrive in the Nashville region? When did the last straggler leave? When was the peak of migration? Are Lesser Yellowlegs more common than Greater Yellowlegs? If so, is this true every year? How many shorebirds, and what species, migrate through the Nashville region? How many stop-over to feed and rest? Do they regularly stop-over or only under special conditions of weather? It is my contention that such questions as these pertaining to water birds could not be answered with the same degree of confidence as similar questions pertaining to small land birds.

One of the groups most seriously neglected, I think, is the shorebirds. There seem to be a number of reasons for this. They are found in uninviting and often not easily accessible habitats. They are rather small and inconspicuous (as compared with ducks or herons, for example). They are often difficult to identify. And last but by no means least, many of them move through mainly late in the spring—when the woods and warblers are at their best. It is the purpose of this paper to place on record some data on shorebirds which may help to make our picture of the spring migration a little more complete.

During the springs of 1954, 1955 and 1956, while on the staff of the Department of Biology, Fisk University, I was able to study in some detail the shorebirds visiting the Buena Vista Bottoms along the Cumberland River at Nashville. The first observations in 1954 were casual, but the variety and number of these birds were so impressive for an inland area that an effort was made to keep close track of the migration during the rest of that spring and in the following springs and to correlate the observations with weather and with changes in land-use.

The Buena Vista Bottoms is a poorly drained area of fields and small swamps about one mile long and half a mile wide, lying in the Cumberland River floodplain on the northern outskirts of Nashville. In the winter and spring the fields become mazes of shallow ponds and puddles, ditches and marshes. Although there are other such areas along the Cumberland near Nashville, none is as extensive nor presents as favorable a combination of drainage (or lack thereof) and land-use; and none is as attractive to shorebirds.

A total of 77 trips were made to this area in the three years: 19 in 1954, 26 in 1955 and 32 in 1956. These visits were evenly distributed over the migration season, from late February to early June, except for a few brief gaps in 1954 and 1955 (indicated in Table 3). On most of the trips the entire area was covered and a reasonably accurate count or estimate was

obtained for all shorebirds and other water birds. On some occasions the trip consisted only of a drive along the road which bisects the Bottoms and only about one-fourth of the suitable habitat was covered. To make the results of these trips comparable with those of the complete censuses, the number of birds observed was multiplied by four. This was done, however, only if the birds in question were well scattered and could be assumed to be present in the unvisited parts of the area. This correction was not made for unusual or rare species, nor even for common species if the birds were seen only in one or a few compact flocks.

There are many sources of error in these counts. The main one is that they were not made daily. I have no idea what changes may have occurred in the populations during the intervals between counts. Also I had no way of estimating turn-over of the populations. Some individuals were counted on only one trip, others were undoubtedly counted several times. Although great care was taken to avoid counting individuals more than once on the same census, this sort of error probably occurred frequently. In spite of these possible errors, I feel that the counts were as accurate as most bird censuses are, and form an adequate basis for an understanding of the spring shorebird migration.

The results of these observations are summarized in Tables 1-3. Details regarding the records of very rare species will be given in a separate paper. In addition to the 18 species listed in the tables, two others were found in or near the area in the period covered by this report. The American Woodcock, *Scolopax minor*, was seen by me on two occasions in an old clay-pit just east of the Bottoms. The Dunlin, *Erolia alpina*, was recorded at the Bottoms on May 12, 1954, by A. F. Ganier *MIGRANT* 25:21-23, 1954).

Table 1 is largely self-explanatory and only a few comments need be made about it. The first line of dates for each species is for 1954, the second, for 1955, the third, for 1956. When there was only one record for the season, it appears in the "First seen" column; when only two records, they appear in "First seen" and "Last seen" columns; if all three columns are occupied it indicates that there were three or more records. These dates pertain only to Buena Vista Bottoms. In a few cases species were recorded at other places near Nashville earlier or later than the dates given in the table. Specifically: Golden Plover (2) and Pectoral Sandpiper (21) on March 24, 1956; Spotted Sandpiper (10) on April 28, 1956; Solitary Sandpiper (5) on April 4, 1955. A flock of 200 Pectoral Sandpipers near Ashland City on April 4, 1955, far exceeded the peak number seen at Buena Vista Bottoms that year.

In Table 2 the populations for each species are expressed in three different ways. Under column A for each year is the frequency index, i.e., the number of trips on which the species was recorded, expressed as a fraction of the total number of trips. This gives some indication of the temporal extent of the migration as well as reflecting the abundance. Column B shows the average number of birds per observation, that is, the total number of individuals counted during the year divided by the number of trips on which the species was recorded. This gives some idea of the flock size, or the number usually present on the area during the period when the species was passing through. Column C shows the average number of birds per trip, obtained by dividing the total number of individuals counted during the season by the total number of trips. This roughly combines the preceding figures and is the best over-all measurement for com-

parison of one species with another. In this table the figures in parentheses for the two species of Yellowlegs and the Pectoral Sandpiper were calculated after omitting the highest count for the season; in each of these cases there was a single abnormally high count due to storms. In computing the figures for the Killdeer, only the number in excess of twenty was used, since the number recorded on winter trips occasionally was as high as twenty, and the number of breeding pairs was between six and ten.

Using mainly the figures in column C and bearing in mind that only fairly large differences are significant, it can be seen that only a few of the regularly occurring species were equally abundant in all three years: Semipalmated Plover, Solitary Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper. Several species were more abundant in 1956 than in the preceding two years in spite of the fact that 1956 was the poorest year in terms of total number of individuals. This group included migrant Killdeers, Common Snipe, Spotted and Least Sandpipers. Note that these are all species which like or can tolerate a good deal of vegetation in and around the ponds they inhabit. Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs were moderately numerous in 1954, abundant in 1955, and relatively scarce in 1956. The Pectoral Sandpiper was abundant in 1954, when large flocks were seen on several occasions, but much less so in 1955 and 1956. The Golden Plover and Dowitcher declined continuously over the three year period.

Although some of these fluctuations are fairly large, I think that they are mostly accounted for by the vagaries of weather, and, to some extent, by changes in land-use.

In regard to weather influences I will make only a few conservative comments. I feel strongly that many of the published reports on the relationship between weather and migration contain errors of interpretation. I do not want to add to this fund of misinformation if I can help it.

One question that can be answered is whether gross, general weather differences between the different years had any influence on the number of migrants which paused to feed and rest at the Buena Vista Bottoms. The spring of 1954 was generally cool and wet. The longest dry spell occurred in March and was broken by a major storm on March 22-24. Thereafter rains were frequent and water levels in the fields remained high until mid-May. On the other hand, 1955 was relatively warm and dry with the notable exception of the second half of March when a series of heavy rains fell and the Cumberland River flooded the entire Bottoms (March 22-24). While the flood waters were still receding on March 26-27, there was a severe cold wave. Throughout April and May, however, the weather was warm with only a few minor storms. Water levels declined steadily and were very low during the crucial period of early May. The spring of 1956 was again wet but not particularly cool. There were frequent showers but no really heavy storms. The ponds fluctuated considerably. Starting at full flood in mid-February the waters receded to a fairly low level by the end of March, refilled in early April and then again declined until the end of that month. The ponds were replenished in early May, then receded slowly but steadily until early June.

As shown at the bottom of Table 3, the average number of migrants of all species per trip was about 75 in 1954, 70 in 1955, and 56 in 1956. The figures for both 1954 and 1955 are greatly influenced by single aberrant high counts, indicated by asterisks in the table. If these single high counts are omitted from the calculations, the respective figures for the three years

would be 61, 61, and 56. These are remarkably similar and lead to the conclusion that the general differences in weather conditions between the three years did not greatly affect the number of shorebirds which stopped in the area.

However, day-to-day weather changes within a single season undoubtedly played an important part in governing how many birds were present at a particular time. The aberrant counts mentioned above were made during or just after storms. On March 24, 1954, following a two-day storm, the Bottoms were teeming with shorebirds: Killdeer, Common Snipe, Lesser Yellowlegs, Golden Plover, and particularly Pectoral Sandpipers, of which there were at least 100. The high count in 1955 was the most spectacular of the three years, although its connection with weather is not clear. There were severe thunderstorms on the night of April 23, 1955, and the following day was cool, cloudy and windy. A drive along the road through the Bottoms revealed only one migrant, a Greater Yellowlegs. On a similar drive the next day, April 25, with the weather still cloudy and cool, at least 50 Greater and 50 Lesser Yellowlegs were seen near the road and others could be seen flying about in distant parts of the area. My estimate of a total of 200 of each species seems unbelievable, but it was at least partly verified by a complete coverage of the area on April 26. Yellowlegs were noticeably less numerous than the day before, yet careful estimates gave the figures of about 80 Greater and 120 Lesser. By April 28 the shorebird population had returned to a more normal 71.

Extremely low counts, like that just mentioned on April 24, 1955, occurred occasionally without any obvious connection with weather. In 1955, however, there were two occasions when low populations were associated with unusual weather. One was in the week of March 22-28, when the entire Bottoms were covered by flood waters. The other was in the week of May 3-9, when only 82 birds of four species were recorded in two trips. This is normally the peak of the shorebird migration, especially as regards number of species, but in 1955 water levels were very low and little suitable habitat was present. The following week rains and showers refilled the ponds to some extent and the populations returned to a level comparable to those in the same periods in 1954 and 1956.

In spite of the fact that most of my visits were in the early morning or late afternoon, I never saw an unquestionable arrival of birds from a migratory flight and only once did I see a departure. On May 17, 1955, I noticed a flock of about 35 birds, mostly Least Sandpipers, but including a few Semipalmated Sandpipers and Semipalmated Plovers, circling and zig-zagging over the fields and calling excitedly. They landed at a pond, rested quietly a few minutes, then rose again, circled a couple of more times and then straightened out on a due north course across the river and over the hills toward Kentucky. I watched them as long as I could through my binoculars. They remained in a tight flock and flew unswervingly, fast and high. This occurred at 4:50 P.M., about two hours before sunset. The weather was warm, calm and humid. A thundershower was approaching from the northeast, bringing some rain and wind a few minutes after the birds had left.

During the period of this study there were numerous shifts in distribution of the shorebirds from one part of the Bottoms to another as these parts underwent change, either naturally or at the hand of man. I do not

know the full history of this area, but apparently it was not an especially good shorebird area prior to 1954. In the winter and spring of 1954 some important changes in land-use occurred. Some former cornfields were allowed to remain idle and were sparsely covered with grasses and other low plants. Some of the fields on the west edge of the area were converted into a golf course. Those fields which were cultivated were planted in mustard rather than corn or other grain. A wooded swamp at the foot of the bluff was cleared of trees.

All this resulted in excellent shorebird habitat—many large shallow ponds bordered by bare mud or low sparse vegetation. In 1954 birds were found more or less indiscriminately over the entire area, wherever there was standing water, although a large pond near the golf course and the pond in the basin of the former swamp seemed to be especially favored.

By 1955 some natural succession of vegetation had taken place, plus some further man-made changes. The pond near the golf course had become almost marsh-like and was frequented mainly by Snipe, although Yellowlegs and others were still occasionally found there. The basin of the former swamp still attracted many birds but the largest concentrations were around the ponds in the large mustard field near the road. Another area much used was a tract that had been covered by a dense thicket in 1954. The trees had been cut and bulldozed into several rows of brush, leaving bare shallow depressions in between. These held water even in the very dry period of late April and early May, and many shorebirds were found there at that time.

By 1956 these strips no longer held water, the pond near the golf course was represented only by a small marsh of short grasses and sedges, the ponds in the mustard fields were choked with vegetation, and many smaller ponds had disappeared altogether. During the winter a large sewage line had been laid along the foot of the bluff at the south edge of the Bottoms. This had made barren a wide strip of land on the edge of the large pond where the wooded swamp had formerly been. In 1956 this was by far the most heavily used area, although birds were often seen in the mustard field ponds early in the season. Late in the season (as was also true in 1955) birds were sometimes found in numbers at some ponds which lay in the floor of the wide shallow clay-pit forming the eastern boundary of the Bottoms. The obvious reduction in suitable habitat I think partly accounts for the smaller populations of birds observed in 1956.

In summary, the following conclusions may be made. In the springs of 1954-56, the Buena Vista Bottoms was a regular stopping place for about 10 common species of shorebirds; eight or 10 additional species used the area less commonly or irregularly. About the same total number of birds stopped over in 1954 and 1955, in spite of large weather differences. Somewhat fewer birds stopped in 1956, possibly because of a reduction of suitable habitat, together with an absence of severe storms. Suitable habitat in an area such as this is maintained largely by agricultural practices which prevent the processes of ecological succession.

I would like to close on an optimistic note by expressing the hope that the Buena Vista Bottoms will not be destroyed by the expanding industries of Nashville, that it will remain an attractive stop-over area for shorebirds for years to come, and that some of the Nashville bird watchers will sacrifice some of their warbler-watching time to study them.

TABLE 1

Spring migration dates of shorebirds at Buena Vista Bottoms, 1954-56

Species	First Seen		Peak	Last Seen		
	Date	No.		Date	No.	
Semipalmated Plover	Apr. 29	4	May 9	30	May 15	8
<i>C. semipalmatus</i>	Apr. 26	4	May 6	24	May 19	9
Piping Plover	Apr. 26	4	May 1, 2	25	May 30	2
<i>Charadrius melodus</i>	Apr. 9	1	—	—	—	—
Killdeer	Winters	—	Mar. 24	50	Breeds	—
<i>C. vociferous</i>	Winters	—	Mar. 18	80	Breeds	—
	Winters	—	Feb. 28	200	Breeds	—
American Golden Plover	Mar. 14	1	Mar. 24, Apr. 1	25	Apr. 11	2
<i>Pluvialis dominica</i>	Mar. 18	30	Mar. 18	30	Apr. 9	1
Common Snipe	Apr. 8	2	—	—	May 24	1
<i>Capella gallinago</i>	Feb. 27	2	Mar. 6, 24, Apr. 8	30	May 19	1
Upland Plover	Mar. 5	20	Mar. 18	80	Apr. 28	2
<i>Bartramia longicauda</i>	Mar. 3	6	Mar. 13	80	May 12	1
Spotted Sandpiper	Apr. 2	1	—	—	Apr. 14	4
<i>Actitis macularia</i>	Apr. 8	1	Apr. 12	5	May 3	3
Solitary Sandpiper	Apr. 22	5	Apr. 22	5	May 22*	1
<i>Tringa solitaria</i>	Apr. 14	1	May 14	5	May 23*	1
Willet	May 1	3	May 3	20	May 30	1
<i>Catoptrophorus semipalmatus</i>	Mar. 26	4	Apr. 22	30	May 15	1
Greater Yellowlegs	Apr. 6	2	Apr. 23, May 6	10	May 19	1
<i>Totanus melanoleucus</i>	Mar. 18	1	May 3	30	May 22	1
Lesser Yellowlegs	Apr. 25	1	—	—	—	—
<i>T. flavipes</i>	Mar. 14	1	Apr. 8	50	May 9	1
Pectoral Sandpiper	Feb. 23	1	Apr. 25	200	May 12	4
<i>Erolia melanotos</i>	Mar. 3	1	Apr. 3, 8	16	Apr. 26	1
White-rumped Sandpiper	Mar. 24	20	Mar. 25, Apr. 8, 22	30	May 22*	1
<i>Erolia fuscicollis</i>	Mar. 19	12	Apr. 25	200	May 17	2
Least Sandpiper	Mar. 13	8	May 2	35	May 24	1
<i>minutilla</i>	Mar. 14	40	Apr. 24	100	Apr. 8	30
Dowitcher	Mar. 5	5	Apr. 14	40	Apr. 28	20
<i>Limnodromus sp.</i>	Apr. 3	50	Apr. 3	50	May 9	4
Stilt Sandpiper	May 15	1	—	—	—	—
<i>Micropalama bimantopus</i>	May 9	2	—	—	May 12	2
	Apr. 29	4	May 15	30	May 22*	10
	Apr. 9	6	May 17	74	May 19	7
	Apr. 5	5	May 15	50	May 27	1
	Apr. 29	7	—	—	May 3	1
	May 8	4	—	—	May 12	1
	Apr. 18	1	—	—	—	—
	—	—	—	—	—	—
	—	—	—	—	—	—
	May 1	1	—	—	—	—

TABLE 1, (Continued)

Semipalmated Sandpiper	Apr. 22	10	May 22	15	May 22*	15
<i>Ereunetes pusillus</i>	May 14	15	May 19	17	May 19	17
Wilson's Phalarope	Apr. 26	1	May 22	20	June 3	18
<i>Steganopus tricolor</i>	May 3	1	_____	—	_____	—
	_____	—	_____	—	_____	—
	_____	—	_____	—	_____	—

For each species, upper line of date is 1954, second line is 1955, third line is 1956.

* indicates last trip of season; species recorded on this date may have remained later.

TABLE 2
Populations of migrant shorebirds at Buena Vista Bottoms in springs of 1954-56

	1954 (19 trips)			1955 (26 trips)			1956 (32 trips)			All years (77 trips)		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Semipalmated Plover	.21	13.0	2.7	0.27	7.4	2.0	0.41	11.3	4.6	0.31	10.5	3.3
Piping Plover	.00	—	.0	.04	1.0	.03	.00	—	.0	.01	1.0	.01
Killdeer	.16	23.3	3.7	.08	33.5	2.6	.13	55.0	6.9	.12	39.7	4.6
Amer. Golden Plover	.26	18.6	3.8	.15	11.3	1.3	.06	1.5	.09	.13	11.0	1.4
Common Snipe	.79	10.9	8.6	.35	23.0	9.7	.63	24.8	15.5	.57	20.7	11.9
Upland Plover	.00	—	0.0	.08	2.5	.2	.09	3.0	.3	.07	2.8	.2
Spotted Sandpiper	.32	1.8	.6	.23	2.7	.6	.31	7.0	2.2	.29	4.4	1.3
Solitary Sandpiper	.53	9.2	4.9	.46	4.9	2.2	.50	6.3	3.1	.49	6.7	3.2
Willet	.05	1.0	.05	.00	—	.0	.00	—	.0	.01	1.0	.01
Greater Yellowlegs	.47	14.1	6.7	.62	28.9	17.8	.41	6.7	2.7	.49	17.8	8.8
Lesser Yellowlegs	.68	20.6	14.1	.54	33.1	17.8	.53	13.2	7.0	.57	21.7	12.4
Pectoral Sandpiper	.32	55.0	17.4	.23	15.4	3.5	.25	15.3	3.8	.26	27.2	7.1
	(.28	46.0	12.8)						(.56	17.6	9.8)	27.2
Wh.-rumped Sandpiper	.05	1.0	.05	.00	—	.0	.06	2.0	.1	.04	1.7	.07
Least Sandpiper	.32	15.7	5.0	.35	19.9	6.9	.44	23.7	10.4	.38	20.9	7.9
Dowitcher	.11	4.0	.4	.08	2.5	.2	.03	1.0	.03	.07	2.8	.2
Stilt Sandpiper	.00	—	.0	.00	—	.0	.03	1.0	.03	.01	1.0	.01
Semipal. Sandpiper	.26	6.6	1.7	.15	16.0	1.2	.31	8.6	2.7	.23	8.4	2.1
Wils. Phalarope	.05	1.0	.05	.00	—	.0	.00	—	.0	.01	1.0	.01

TABLE 3

Populations of migrant shorebirds by weeks at Buena Vista Bottoms
in springs of 1954-56

Week	Average number of migrants per trip and number of trips			Total number of species		
	1954	1955	1956	1954	1955	1956
Feb. 22-29	— (0)	1 (1)	15 (2)	—	1	1
Mar. 1-7	16 (2)	17 (2)	27 (1)	1	3	3
Mar. 8-14	72 (1)	— (0)	87 (2)	5	—	4
Mar. 15-21	35 (1)	67 (4)	46 (3)	2	6	3
Mar. 22-28	147*(3)	12*(1)	76 (1)	7	1*	4
Mar. 29-Apr. 4	89 (1)	62 (2)	70 (2)	5	5	4
Apr. 5-11	103 (2)	72 (2)	59 (2)	6	8	8
Apr. 12-18	— (0)	111 (1)	105 (2)	—	8	8
Apr. 19-25	64 (2)	155*(3)	47 (2)	7	7	6
Apr. 26-May 2	56 (1)	105 (3)	75 (3)	8	8	10
May 3-9	87 (2)	41*(2)	98 (2)	10	4*	9
May 10-16	57 (1)	53 (2)	65 (3)	7	8	8
May 17-23	35 (2)	44 (3)	56 (2)	5	6	5
May 24-30	— (0)	— (0)	13 (3)	—	—	6
May 31-June 6	— (0)	— (0)	9 (2)	—	—	1
For the entire season	75.4	69.6	55.8	15	14	15

*—indicates abnormally high or low count attributable to weather.

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SOME NOTEWORTHY NASHVILLE RECORDS

During the course of many field trips in the Nashville vicinity in the period from September, 1953 to June, 1956, a number of observations were made which perhaps are worthy of note. Some of these have been previously published by Ganier (MIGRANT 25:21-23, 1954), others have appeared in "The Season" reports, while others have not yet been put on record. The purpose of this note is to furnish some of the details for records of rare or unusual birds.

Little Blue Heron (*Florida caerula*). Although this species is not uncommon, it is usually not found in large numbers. On July 28, 1954, a flock of 35-40 were seen going to roost in some low trees along the bank of the Cumberland River below Ashland City, Tenn. Most of them were white immatures, but there were a few adults present.

Snowy Egret (*Leucophoyx thula*). Two young birds were seen on August 27, 1955, at a marsh near Ashland City. They were compared with near-by Little Blue Herons and the differences in size, bill color and leg color were easily noted.

Oldsquaw (*Clangula hyemalis*). One male at Radnor Lake, December 10, 1955.

Pigeon Hawk (*Falco columbarius*). One bird near Bush's Lake on December 10, 1955. Following are excerpts from notes taken in the field while looking at the bird: ". . . pointed wings, falcon-type bill . . . tail dark with light bands and white tip . . . underparts grayish with dark streaks on breast and a few dark bars on flanks."

Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*). In the morning of April 9, 1955, I made a complete census of shorebirds at the Buena Vista Bottoms at Nashville, recording the usual Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpipers, and so on. In the evening of the same day, a brief trip along the road through the Bottoms revealed one Piping Plover. I watched it from my car as it approached to within 20 feet of me. All of the field marks—very light color, absence of black markings behind eye, etc. were easily seen.

Golden Plover (*Pluvialis dominica*). A very late record on May 24, 1956, was of a single crippled bird. The right leg was broken and dangled freely. The bird walked and fed very awkwardly, although it could fly well. Its molt into breeding plumage was not yet complete. There were still white spots on belly and breast and the under tail coverts were still white.

Baird's Sandpiper (*Erolia bairdii*). On September 25, 1955, while examining a group of shorebirds at a farm pond near Ashland City, I observed one bird with two Pectoral Sandpipers that appeared to be a Baird's Sandpiper. The three birds flew into a nearby pasture where I found about 20 Pectorals and 10 Killdeers feeding. The questionable bird was easily distinguished from the Pectorals and after careful stalking I was able to get close enough (30 feet) to verify the identification. The bird was somewhat smaller and grayer than the Pectoral Sandpipers. The back appeared definitely "scaly," and the neck and throat were conspicuously buffy. The legs were dark, and in flight a faint wing stripe was clearly seen.

Dowitcher (*Limnodromus sp.*). Dowitchers were found in very small numbers at Buena Vista Bottoms in each of the springs of 1954, 1955, and 1956. Ganier (MIGRANT 25, 23, 1954) reported the 1954 observations as *L. griseus*. This is the species to be expected in this region, but I should point out that none of the Dowitchers were identified to species.

Stilt Sandpiper (*Micropalama himantopus*). A single bird of this species was seen at Buena Vista Bottoms on May 1, 1956. I returned the next day to try to collect the bird but was unable to find it again. Quoting from my field notes for May 1: "Bill longer than head, black, with slight droop at tip. Legs long, yellowish-olive, much duller than legs of yellowlegs. Body somewhat smaller than Lesser Yellowlegs but bird stands nearly as tall. Light line above eye, chestnut line through eye and behind eye. Upper parts strongly marked, more 'coarsely' marked than yellowlegs. Under parts strongly barred, except throat, which was streaked. Tail coverts white." To the best of my knowledge this is the first record for the Nashville area.

Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus caudacuta*). A single bird was flushed from a small marsh of short grasses and sedges at Buena Vista Bottoms on May 12, 1956, and tentatively identified as this species. John Ogden and I returned to the area on May 13, and after a hot two hour chase managed to secure the bird. It was prepared as a museum specimen by Mr. A. F. Ganier and is now in his collection. It is identified by him as *A. c. nelsoni*. This is the second specimen for Tennessee, and the first spring record for Nashville. Also it is the first indication that the species occasionally stops to rest in the Nashville area. Mrs. Amelia Laskey has described the circumstances of the first Tennessee specimen and the history of Tennessee sight records (MIGRANT 27, 13, 1956.)

—CHARLES M. WEISE,

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BIRDS AT BUSH'S FARM—WINTER AND SPRING

After an interesting fall Migration at Nashville, I looked around for something to occupy my out-door interest. I decided to try to learn more about our water birds, since I knew less about them than land birds. A suitable place for such a study was Bush's farm and lake. The farm is located just a mile and a quarter from my office and less than two miles from the State Capitol. Being close by, I could make frequent trips there.

The farm is owned and operated by two friendly and courteous brothers, Joe and Hugh Bush. Being interested in conservation, they gave me permission to visit the area as often as I wished. This led to a most enjoyable winter study. The farm consists of about 170 acres of land and a 55 acre lake. The farm is bounded on the north and east by the Cumberland River, bordered by large trees and considerable underbrush. To the south is a large brick yard and cement manufacturing plant and to the west an adjoining farm, consisting of several hundred acres of marshy area containing clay pits.

The lake is roughly a long triangular shape. As the entire shore line is accessible, a good view can be had of any birds that may be on the water. The banks are about four feet high and are grass covered. There are no mud flats suitable for shore birds. The only place for them is an occasional mud puddle in one of the plowed fields after a rain.

There is about a mile of road on the farm, traversing the river bank and encircling the lake. About one-half of the roads are passable in wet weather.

Fifty-six trips were made during the winter and spring, averaging an hour each. Usually I remained in the car, however a few times I walked along the river bank or around the lake. A total of 87 species were recorded for the 225 acre tract during the period, Nov. 4, 1957 to May 14, 1958.

The weather certainly has a great influence on migration. The lake was frozen from Feb. 10 through 24. Month by month the temperature and precipitation were as follows:

Month	Temp.	Precipitation	Month	Temp.	Precipitation
Nov.	Normal	2.9"	Feb.	-11.3°F.	2.55" (5" snow)
Dec.	+3.2°F.	1.78"	March	-5.2°F.	1.36"
Jan.	-4.5°F.	2.33" rain & snow	April	-1.3°F.	1.36"

This shows that from Christmas on, the weather was considerably colder than normal. Rainfall was about normal, except that it occurred on more days than usual and in smaller amounts than normal.

From March 15 on, fishing was permitted on the lake and I feel sure that the numbers of water birds were greatly reduced after that date, by the use of boats.

All observations were made through 7X35 binoculars and usually between the hours of 8 and 9 in the mornings. The birds observed are listed in A.O.U. Check-list order: Common Loon: Nov. 11 (1), Nov. 15 (1) and May 14 (1); Horned Grebe: Nov. 25 (5), Dec. 3 (2), Mar. 10 (1) and Mar. 31 (1); Pied-billed Grebe: Nov. 4, (1) to Nov. 24 (4) and Mar. 1 (1) to May 2 (1); Great Blue Heron: Mar. 27 (1); Snow Goose: a single immature bird of this species was first observed on Dec. 13 and again on Dec. 17. When first seen it was on the road at the edge of the lake. Upon approaching, it flew across the lake to the far bank. This performance was repeated several times but never did it settle on the water. I heard that it ended as a roost a few days later.

Mallard: Nov. 22 (3) to Dec. 26 and Jan. 27 to Mar. 8; Black Duck: Feb. 14 (10) when lake was 95% frozen over; Pintail: Mar. 12 (2); Blue-winged Teal: Oct. 1 (10) to Nov. 22 and Mar. 8 (peak Apr. 7, 26) to Apr. 25; American Wigeon: Nov. 22 (2), Mar. 1 (peak Mar. 27, 22) to Mar. 29 (14); Shoveler: Mar. 8 (1) (peak Apr. 1, 2) to Apr. 9 (1); Redhead: Mar. 12 to 25 (2); Ring-necked Duck: Nov. 7 (1), Mar. 1 (2) (peak Mar. 31, 18) to May 9 (4); Canvasback: Dec. 3 (4) (peak Dec. 13, 21) to Apr. 3 (2); Lesser Scaup: Nov. 22 (1) to Dec. 24 (8), Mar. 31, (peak 266) to Apr. 28; Buffle-head: Nov. 22 (5), Dec. 9 (1) and Apr. 9 (2); Oldsquaw: Mar. 31 (6) near the center of a raft of 280 birds on the lake. They were in all three plumages shown by Peterson in his guide. They are quite rare here.

Ruddy Duck: Nov. 25 (5) (peak Dec. 3, 11) to Jan. 6 (2) and Mar. 12 (1) (peak Mar. 31, 21) to Apr. 25 (1). They were present on a total of 21 trips. Hooded Merganser: Nov. 22 (6) to Dec. 13 (2); Red-breasted Merganser: Nov. 25 (3) and Apr. 7 to May 9 (1); Red-tailed Hawk: occasionally; Red-shouldered Hawk: most trips; Marsh Hawk: several times; Sparrow Hawk: one pair present; American Coot: Nov. 4 (2), Nov. 22 (1) and Nov. 25 (1), Mar. 24 (18) (peak Mar. 31, 32) to Apr. 25 (2); Semipalmated Plover: May 12 (3); Killdeer: seen most trips except they were absent for about six weeks during the coldest weather (fall peak Nov. 26, 90 and spring peak Mar. 20, 22); American Golden Plover: Mar. 20 (1). It was feeding with Killdeer and having a badly crippled leg, had difficulty getting about. When I approached close, it flattened against the ground, and gave an excellent example of Nature's wonderful camouflage. Mar. 24 (3) and Apr. 3 (3) (see *THE MIGRANT*, 25, 22, 1954); Common Snipe: one record; Upland Plover: Apr. 1 (1) to Apr. 14 (4); Spotted Sandpiper: Nov. 4 (2) late date, Apr. 25 (6) (peak Apr. 30, 12) to May 14 (2); Solitary Sandpiper: one record; Willet: Apr. 28 (1), third record for Nashville.

Pectoral Sandpiper: Mar. 24 (1); White-rumped Sandpiper: May 5 (5), this is a rare bird here. They were feeding in a small puddle on a bare field. Approaching to within 20 feet, I watched them for some time. They constantly pecked at the ground. Suddenly, one would force its bill into the soil as far as it would go, then withdraw an earth worm. Immediately the other four would run over and try to take it away.

Least Sandpiper: Nov. 22 (2); Semipalmated Sandpiper: two spring records; Herring Gull: Nov. 11 (1) (peak Dec. 13, 60) to Jan. 14 (20) and Feb. 24 (7) to May 9 (24 immatures); Ring-billed Gull: Nov. 4 (3) (peak Dec. 13, 113) to Jan. 19 (1) and Mar. 24 (1) to Apr. 30 (3); Franklin's Gull: Nov. 19 (2), Nov. 25 (4) and Nov. 27 (1). (For first Nashville record see *THE MIGRANT*, 28, 68, 1957). Bonaparte's Gull: Apr. 1 (1) to Apr. 14 (4); Common Tern: Apr. 25 (1); Black Tern: Apr. 30 (1), May 7 (10) and May 15 (13); Mourning Dove: absent from Dec. 21 (55) to Feb. 26 (6); Chimney Swift: Apr. 5 (200); Belted Kingfisher: one pair present all winter; Yellow-shafted Flicker: two records; Red-bellied Woodpecker: one or two records; Downy Woodpecker: occasionally; Eastern Kingbird: Apr. 25 (3) and thereafter; Eastern Phoebe: one occasionally; Horned Lark: present all winter Dec. 13 (56) and Feb. 19 (61); Tree Swallow: Mar. 27 (5) (peak Apr. 25, 60) to May 9 (30); Bank Swallow: Apr. 19 (1) (peak Apr. 30, 80) to May 9 (1); Rough-winged Swallow: Mar. 27 (2) to Apr. 30 (60). On Apr. 3, I watched one carrying nesting material into an old Kingfisher hole. At least three pairs nested along the river bank. Barn Swallow: Apr. 5 (3) (peak Apr. 7, 40),

three pairs remained to nest. Cliff Swallow: Apr. 25 (6) (peak Apr. 30, 20) to May 7 (4), rare; Purple Martin: Mar. 24 (6) (peak Apr. 9, 40), a few remained into summer; Blue Jay: only two or three times; Common Crow: an occasional flock of up to 49, during the cold weather, then one to three during spring. Often I saw them feeding from the river's surface, no doubt getting sewage and waste from the meat packing plant just up river. Gulls, terns, starlings, grackles and red-wings fed the same way. Carolina Wren: a few times; Mockingbird: only three times; Brown Thrasher: a pair nested on the river bank; Robin: occasionally a few fed in the bare fields; Water Pipit: seen on seven trips, Nov. 25 (19) (peak Jan. 10, 40) and Mar. 20 (6); Loggerhead Shrike: one, about three times during the six months period; White-eyed Vireo: one during spring migration; Myrtle Warbler: up to 10 each time I walked along the river bank; Palm Warbler: one, during spring migration; House Sparrow: usually around 30 at the farm office and barns; Eastern Meadowlark: from 2 to 30 every trip; Red-winged Blackbirds: first and largest flock Mar. 25 (93), a few remained into summer; Common Grackle: a few during spring and fall, absent during coldest weather; Brown-headed Cowbird: twice; Cardinal: usually one pair; American Goldfinch: three times, in flocks of up to 20; Rufus-sided Towhee: occasionally in the river bank thickets; Savannah Sparrow: Mar. 20 to Apr. 27, a few; Vesper Sparrow: Nov. 11 (1) and a few in the spring; Slate-colored Junco: seen very few times; Chipping Sparrow: a few during spring migration; Field Sparrow: only two or three times; White-throated Sparrow: usually 6 to 10 along the river; Fox Sparrow: 1 to 3 most trips to the river bank; Swamp Sparrow: seen on most trips; Song Sparrow: seen on most trips.—HENRY E. PARMER, 3800 Richland Ave., Nashville 5.

THE SEASON

NASHVILLE.—The Nashville Area has enjoyed an unusually cool summer with plenty of rain. We have had no periods of drought until the last few weeks. This fact is proved by the lush gardens and absence of dust which is usually seen on weeds and other roadside vegetation in late summer. Whether this fact has affected our garden bird population cannot be said; however, at least one observer reports fewer Catbirds, Wood Thrushes, Brown Thrashers and Hummingbirds on her own premises (ARL).

Mrs. Laskey reports that Bluebird breeding was decreased about fifty per cent below that of the 1957 season, due to the loss of Bluebirds during the severe February freeze. The number of broods banded from her Warner Park boxes was approximately the same as in 1951, following the February freeze of that year.

H. C. Monk reports Mourning Doves feeding young September 10th.

A few early records are as follows: 7-21, 1 Spotted Sandpiper, 1 Black Tern (HEP); 8-12, 1 Black-throated Green Warbler (JO); 8-14, 1 Pied-billed Grebe; 8-22, 1 Blue-winged Teal (HEP); 8-28, 1 Canada Warbler (CEG); 9-7, 1 Swainson's Thrush and 2 Magnolia Warblers (HEP); 9-8, 1 Tennessee Warbler (GRM); 9-11, 1 Blackburnian Warbler (JO); 9-12, 7 Caspian Terns, 1 Forster's Tern (HEP); 9-13, 1 Common Snipe and 2 Virginia Rails (AFG). Sizable Nighthawk migrations were reported in the Harpeth Valley from 8-24 through 9-1 (HEP).

Actually few migrants have been seen as of this date, September 15th. It is established, however, that they are passing over, by the dead and injured birds which have been found below the WSIX Television Tower. 9-11 there were 3 Veeries, 1 Virginia Rail, 1 Bobolink, 3 Northern Water Thrushes, all dead except the Virginia Rail which was injured; 9-12 there were 1 Bobolink, 1 Mourning Warbler, 1 Wilson's Warbler, all dead. None of the above listed from the tower has been found in the field.

Our Big Day yielded a total of 93 species, eighteen of these being warblers, but in small numbers.—SUE M. BELL, 210 Carden Ave., Nashville 5.

COOKEVILLE—Although the Highland Rim hereabout has had excessive amounts of rain during two months, gardening time in May especially, the year's record is one of moderate deficiency. On three days, only, has the thermometer registered in the high 90's—so a moderately dry, cool summer.

Since bird-count days, this neophyte club has had two out-door sessions, more for keeping in contact than for intensive "birding." The June meeting was at Quinlan Lake, three miles from town. This was an eye-opening experience for the writer. Even though several common species were seen or heard in nearby woods, the birds along the lake did the eye-opening. Most of us had never seen the Chimney Swifts power dive to the water and then zoom up and away. A dozen of these kept the show going for an hour. The to-us-peculiar behavior of the Louisiana Waterthrush was a "first" for all of us except the Duncels. (Prof. Ralph Duncel, our efficient president and Mrs. D. his charming wife.)

The second outing, at Standing Stone State Park, was less satisfying than the one in June. The club, as guests at the cottage of Prof. and Mrs. Milo Williams and daughter Anna, did some "birding" late in the afternoon of Aug. 30, 1958. Nothing especially noteworthy was seen or heard. The most surprising thing was the fact that no water birds of any kind were found. The lake at this Park is similar to that under observation during the June meeting (See above) and portions well-removed from the swimmers were under observation. None could explain the marked difference in bird life around the two lakes. (Is this a typical seasonal effect?)

During the spring and summer, members of our chapter have remarked about the dearth of Bluebirds. Apparently Indigo Buntings have come to fill the gap. One morning four were in the writer's back yard—another first both as to species and as to number. Others have commented on the relatively large number of buntings in or near Cookeville.—P. L. HOLLISTER, Dept. of Biology, Tenn. Tech.

CHATTANOOGA—For the past 6 months field work has been on a very incomplete and irregular basis. Consequently, there is very little of interest to report with the exception of a few additions to the area list and an oddity in the form of an albino Horned Lark. These items will be dealt with elsewhere.

A trip to Long Savannah Creek on July 20 produced 1 adult and 3 immature Little Blue Herons. The total quantity has increased since then. August shorebirds have not been up to even minimum expectations, only 4 species having been seen up to 9-6. 3 Black Terns were found at Long Savannah on 9-6 which is about normal.—MRS. E. M. WEST, 2914 Haywood Ave., Apt. 1-D, Chattanooga 5, Tenn.

KNOXVILLE—A wet July and dry August and early September have had little effect on the presence of birds, with the possible exception of herons. No egrets nor Little Blue Herons were reported from Knox County this summer, although some were seen in neighboring areas. Two Yellow-crowned Night Herons, one on May 3 and one later, were unusual. Most of the unusual records we have made do not seem to have any correlation with the weather.

Pied-billed Grebes nested in this area for the first known time. A pair have stayed on a small lake in the western part of the county all summer and were observed with three young during the latter half of May. A Red-shouldered Hawk stayed around a woods near Powell until June 1, but no observations of nesting were made. House Wrens nested at the home of Louis Smith and stayed there through June, when they disappeared after something apparently broke up the nest they had at the time.

Uncommon summer visitors were two single Ospreys, observed on July 1 and August 23, six Common Terns and one Black Tern observed on July 26; the terns were seen by Highbaugh, Mengel, and Pardue.

Some early fall migrants of water birds were found by Robert B. Hamilton, who has been making frequent trips to the Powell area in western Knox County. His records include: Green-winged Teal, one on August 24 which is more than a month earlier than the previous earliest for this species; Blue-winged Teal, one on August 10 and ten on August 24; Pectoral Sandpiper, one on August 3 and scattered records after that; Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Semipalmated and Least Sandpiper, Common Snipe—one or two of each all on August 24. Most of these shorebird records are the earliest we have had.

A large flock of Nighthawks, estimated at 1300, was observed on September 9, and fair numbers of these birds were seen on days before and after them. Several species of Warblers have shown up at about their usual time for fall migration. Two early ones were a Worm-eating Warbler seen on August 3 by Mrs. R. A. Monroe and a Black-throated Blue Warbler on August 23 by Mrs. K. Sanders. At the time of this writing no flights of hawks have been seen except for occasional singles which appear to be migrating because of their manner and direction of flight. Purple Martins disappeared at about their usual time, but no large roosts were found this summer. A flock of 1200 Grackles on September 6 was the first, and an early, sign of the forming of fall roosts.—JAMES T. TANNER.

GREENEVILLE—In spite of the prolonged rainy weather during the spring months bird migrations and nesting seemed to progress about on schedule. The Kingbirds arrived three days earlier than in 1957, Apr. 17. (E.D.) Chipping Sparrows were late. (E.D.) The noticeable scarcity of Bluebirds, believed due to the extremely severe winter weather during Feb., has continued through the summer.

Some unusuals for this area were several Evening Grosbeaks feeding in the yard of Dr. and Mrs. Spees home on Robin Hood Rd. the middle of Apr. On May 6 Mrs. White observed a Rose-breasted Grosbeak in her yard.

Several times a Raven has been seen and heard on Camp Creek Bald in a rocky cliff area. Occasionally two are seen. One was observed May 4 briefly and again on Aug. 31 for a longer period of time by a group of Chapter members.

In June an albino English Sparrow was observed around buildings on a farm near Greeneville. The farmer stated it had been there for several months. (Darnells) On July 4 an albino Red-winged Blackbird in a large mixed flock of Red-wings, Starlings and Grackles was seen by Richard and Ruth Nevius. It was chased persistently by the Starlings.

Two Am. Egrets heard flying overhead July 7. (RN) Both Sora and Virginia Rails—adult and immature—were flushed during hay mowing Sept. 4 (RN). Two immature Little Blue Herons were observed Aug. 9 at the Noel pond. (E.D.)

Late nestings observed—nest of young Chipping Sparrows exercising and apparently ready to leave the nest was discovered Aug. 16 (ED). Two days later they were flying short distances around in the yard and in the shrubs. Two Mourning Dove nests in Sept., one with young about ready to fly—the other contained eggs (RN).

Baltimore, Orioles arrived Sept. 1 to enjoy the Concord grapes at the Darnell home, but were seen only one day. Last year they were first noticed Aug. 15 and remained until after Sept. 2 doing much damage to the grapes.

On Sept. 9, 4 hawks, thought to be Broad-wings, were seen circling high overhead in unfavorable air current conditions. (E.D.)—MRS. ELVA DARNELL, Route No. 4, Greeneville, Tenn.

KINGSPORT—After March 15, noteworthy observations immediately become more numerous. Gadwall, Blue-winged Teal, American Widgeon, Shovelers, Redheads, Ring-necks, Lesser Scaup, Rufflehead, Hooded Mergansers, and Common Mergansers all appeared on the lakes within the next two weeks. On April 10, George Rodgers sighted five pairs of Wood Ducks on a pond near Miller-Perry School. They were seen by most of our club within the next few days. On April 12 Thomas Finucane and Merritt Shobe saw a Double-crested Cormorant on Bay's Reservoir, a first record for the area, and on the following day Howard Young and I saw one on Boone Lake. On April 13 (HY, AHS) recorded the first Ruddy Duck for this area, which was on one of the two small ponds remaining at the old fish hatchery. Another interesting record on waterfowl is the late date for Lesser Scaup seen on Bays' Reservoir until May 30 (TF). The Olive-sided Flycatcher appeared for the first time on our Spring Census.

In the August '58 issue of Audubon Field Notes mention is made of the scarcity of Phoebes, Bluebirds, and Carolina Wrens in the Appalachian area. Our records indicate fewer Phoebes this year but Bluebirds and Carolina Wrens have not seemed noticeably scarce. We have noted fewer Green Herons and House Wrens this spring and summer. Also the records seem to indicate continuing decline in the numbers of Black Vultures, Ruffed Grouse, Bewick's Wrens, Vesper Sparrows and Bachman's Sparrows. Arthur Smith recorded an arrival date of April 25 for Bachman's Sparrow. More Rose-breasted Grosbeaks than usual were seen during migration and more Hummingbirds during the summer.

The dwindling population of Purple Martins needs special comment. Mr. Homer deGroot reported that Martins arrived late at his boxes, coming in May instead of late March or April. They were fewer in numbers, raised fewer young, and left earlier than usual, on July 21 and 22.

A few unusual species were recorded during the summer. On June 10, Arthur Smith observed closely a Woodcock. Our last record was Nov. '54. On August 17 both Mr. and Mrs. Smith saw a pair of Blue-Grosbeaks with a fledgling at the old fish hatchery. On Sept. 4, at the same weed-grown place my son and I saw a female Blue Grosbeak.

Some species seem to have nested later than usual. Arthur and Elizabeth Smith saw a nest of Indigo Buntings with very young birds on August 23, and Carolina Wrens feeding young on Aug. 29. The question arises of the possibility that the excessive, heavy rains of the summer destroyed nests, thereby prolonging the nesting season. I observed two Cardinal nests with eggs dislodged by heavy rains from trellised roses in our yard and abandoned. In other years I have observed nests of Field Sparrows as late as Sept. 1 but we have no other records of such late nesting of a migratory bird like the Indigo Bunting.

A few species not usually noticed here on fall migration have been recorded this year. I saw and heard a Black-billed Cuckoo August 10 and 12. On Sept. 10 near Jay's Dock on Boone Lake I, my husband, and my son saw about ten Common Terns and six Black Terns. We observed these birds for almost an hour, running the boat with them as they moved a mile or so toward the dam and sitting quietly while the birds wheeled around us and plummeted into the water for small fish. They were in fall plumage, with face patterns, bills, and legs clearly visible to the naked eye. Our only record of Common Terns is August '53. Black Terns were last spotted on May 12, '55 (TF) and first in this area by Adele West in July '48 (THE MIGRANT, 19, 17, 1949).

Other interesting early fall records are Magnolia Warblers, (AHS) Aug. 13, Blackburnian Warblers on Aug. 24, and Canada Warblers (AS, ES) on Aug. 26, Philadelphia Vireo on Sept. 7. On Aug. 31, I heard a Chuck-will's-widow, the latest date in our records. On Sept. 6 Thomas, Charlotte, Raymond, and James Finucane at the Mendota fire tower on Clinch Mountain saw: 3 Osprey, 2 Sharp-shins, and 1 Bald Eagle; on Sept. 13, Charlotte Finucane and six sons saw 25 Broad-wings and 4 Osprey; and on Sept. 14, Charlotte and James Finucane and Kate Hincke counted 23 Broad-wings, 2 Sharp-shins, and 1 Ruffed Grouse. Our only other fall records of Osprey is Sept. '57 and our previous record of Bald Eagles was May 7, '49.—ANN HARNEY SWITZER, 1620 Fairidge Place, Kingsport, Tennessee.

ELIZABETH TON—Summer temperatures were about normal with no excessively high temperatures. June was slightly deficient in rainfall but rain fell on nineteen days in July and totaled for July and August more than 11".

On June 28 my son Bill and I saw three Common Loons at Watauga Lake overlook. At one time all three were in the field of the telescope. A Great Blue Heron was observed at Roan Creek Aug. 9 by Ed Davidson and H. P. Langridge. A flock of Common Egrets (6) was observed flying westward late in the afternoon of July 24 (HPL) at Hunter, along the Watauga River. A Black-crowned Night Heron was reported (ED) near the Morrell Hole on the Watauga River adjacent to the County Farm on Sept. 9. This is the first summer record for this area. Two Mallards in immature or eclipse plumage were flushed from a marsh near the Watauga River near Hunter (ED, HPL) on Aug. 9. The wing pattern was carefully noted and since the speculum was bordered with white they could not have been

Blue-winged Teal, the only species except the Wood Duck which might have been expected at this time of the year.

Spotted (4) and Least Sandpiper (1) had returned to Roan Creek by Aug. 9 (ED, HPL). A Barn Owl was observed in my (LRH) back yard, in a spruce tree on April 26 and another in a deserted shack near the County Farm on June 24 (HPL). About 50 pellets were found in the building, indicating that it had been present for some time. An American Woodcock on Aug. 28 (RDM) was observed along the Doe River, within the city limits of Elizabethton.

Several Bank Swallows were observed in Johnson County July 18 (ED, HPL) on wires along the highway in company with Rough-winged and Cliff Swallows. Bank Swallows are rare in this area at any season.

A flock of about 35 Bobolinks were seen at the County Farm (RDM, LRH) on the morning of Sept. 6.

The outstanding find of the season was that of the breeding of Traill's Flycatchers at the County Farm, which is a first record for the state.—LEE R. HERNDON, 1533 Burgie Place.

ADDITIONS TO THE CHATTANOOGA AREA LIST

On April 27, 1958, 2 Red-throated Loons were seen on Chickamauga Lake. Though distance necessitated the use of a 20x telescope, identification was simplified by their being with 7 Common Loons.

Three White-rumped Sandpipers were found on May 18, 1958 at the small pond on Bonny Oaks drive that produced so many shorebirds last fall. We struggled over these birds for half an hour. Light conditions were very good and the 20x telescope was helpful, but I did not feel sure about the species until we intentionally flushed them. They flew out of sight but returned in a few minutes. On May 24, 4 of the same species were seen at the same location.—ADELE H. WEST, 2914 Haywood Ave., Apt. 1-D, Chattanooga 5, Tenn.

ROUND TABLE

LONG-EARED OWL AT MEMPHIS. — Each year, as I look for migrating birds in Overton Park, I try my hand at flushing Whip-poor-wills and Chuck-will's-widows in daylight. One of my favorite spots is a grape vine and honeysuckle thicket at the picnic ground near the car line. April 9 seemed to be a favorable day with a front approaching from the southwest and much activity in the heavy extensive woodland. As I walked along a leafy path bordering the thicket, quite suddenly, from a canopy of vines beside the path, I flushed what appeared to be a "king-sized" Chuck-will's-widow that sailed off moth-like through the undergrowth. The Jays at once set up a loud clamor and I easily located a Long-eared Owl in beautiful breeding plumage perched barely fifteen feet away, near the ground on a looping grape vine. The very long ears, dark, bordered with white were strikingly rabbit-like. Also noted was the rusty face, vertical breast stripes and grayish coloration. I observed this bird for some time at leisure but wishing no harm to come to it I let it retreat into better cover.

OLIVER F. IRWIN, 1789 Glenview Ave., Memphis 14.

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LEE R. HERNDON, Editor, 1533 Burgie Place ELIZABETHTON, TENN.

ALBINO HORNED LARK AT CHATTANOOGA — On April 27, 1958, while visiting the airport (Lovell Field) to check for nesting Horned Larks, we saw a fledgling lark a few feet beyond the fenced parking lot. The bird looked so large and fat that I was not certain of its species for a few minutes. The behavior, feeding actions, manner of walking, and flights of a few feet were carefully watched for several minutes. Finally an adult arrived and fed it. I believe its apparent size was an optical illusion caused by the puffy condition of its feathers and the fact that its plumage was entirely creamy white with the exception of some slightly darker feather edgings.

The following day it was not seen but the parents were feeding a normal fledgling with popcorn, crackerjack, and other foods dropped by visitors to the parking lot. On May 4 the albino was seen again a few yards distant on a grassy slope. The grass was of such height that it could be seen only when it made a short flight. I had the impression that it was hiding as the other members of the family stayed in the open. The albino never followed the parents about as did the normal fledgling.

On May 18 the adult female was seen to go to a nest with 3 eggs. My husband climbed over the fence for the first time and made movies of the incubating female and of the singing male. A few days later we returned to see if the eggs had hatched and spent at least half an hour trying to locate the nest. The depression was finally seen to be empty of any signs of a nest, and we realized it had been washed out by heavy rains a couple days before.

ADELE H. WEST, 2914 Haywood Ave., Apt. 1-D, Chattanooga 5.

IN MEMORIAM

MRS. HUGH L. TAYLOR

Mrs. Hugh L. Taylor died Thursday morning July 31, 1958. Every remembrance of Aunt Molly fills our hearts with gratitude. God gave her a spirit attuned to loveliness in nature, gay with humor and sharp of wit.

She was a charter member of the Elizabethton Chapter of T. O. S. organized in February 1944. She served as secretary and historian and attended our meetings faithfully as long as her health permitted.

RUTH D. HUGHES, R.F.D. 7, Elizabethton.

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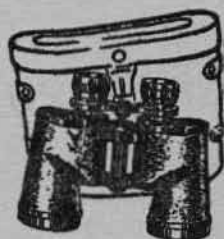
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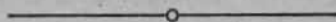
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