

## WINTER BIRDS IN EASTERN ARKANSAS

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## (Foreword)

(May I make a short preliminary statement to those who may read this paper, and others which, I hope, will follow it?)

I commenced my ornithological work, study, observation, taking notes, writing and, for a short while, collecting, early in 1884.

In October, 1889, I entered medical college and my ornithological activities were restricted. Then, the establishing myself in practice and many other things continued to interfere and it is only in the past year or so I have been able to resume anything like systematic work. During all the time, however, my interest continued unabated and I kept notes with more or less regularity and had opportunity to cover quite a scope of country, much of it little known ornithologically. I am now totally disabled as far as any active work is concerned and I purpose (D. v.) devoting my time to the arrangement and dissemination of the facts I have been able to gather in the past years.

One thing I feel should be made clear, in fairness both to the reader and myself: in addition to the notebooks in which daily entries were made (of course there were lapses and intervals in which none were made), I had other books in which were set down in more condensed form the principal facts in regard to each species or locality, a sort of ledger, so to speak. During my service in the M. C. U. S. A. (World War), my wife accompanying me nearly all of the time, our household goods, temporarily in storage, were destroyed by fire. My desk and a combination desk and bookcase were about the only things saved. In these were my "ledgers," as I have referred to them. The "day books," to continue the comparison, were lost. The consequence, as to my written work, can be readily seen. The basic facts are there and I know them to be accurate and positive, as probabilities, speculations and doubtful identifications were not entered in the books preserved, but the details, minutiae, in many cases the exact dates, etc., are gone, and if this is not known and taken into consideration my articles might appear careless and inaccurate.)

This paper is based upon notes taken during two visits to

Arkansas, Oct. 23rd–Nov. 10th, 1888, and a few days in January, all of February and a short time in March, 1889.

On my first trip I made headquarters at Helena, Phillips County, reaching there by river from Memphis, Tenn., taking walks and drives over the surrounding territory, which is mostly low land except for some hills to the north-west, nearly all the above being well wooded, and quite an extensive area of prairie land beginning thirty miles west and lying between Helena and Pine Bluff.

On the second visit I was the guest of the Superintendent at a sawmill camp several miles from Marked Tree, Poinsett County, in the valley of the St. Francis river and not far from the "Sunk Lands," a depression believed to have been caused by the same earthquake that made Reelfoot Lake in Northwestern Tennessee.

The country is low, swampy, full of little lakes, sloughs and bayous, heavily timbered with cypress, sweet gum and sycamore and subject to overflow by the Mississippi river every year and often twice a year.

On slightly higher grounds, farther back from the river, are found white oak, hickory and thick cane brakes.

Black bear, deer, wild cat, beaver, otter, mink, muskrat, raccoon, opossum, squirrels and rabbits were plentiful, and snakes of several varieties, including the "cotton-mouth" moccasin were seemingly the most abundant form of life.

A list of the birds found and identified during these visits follows. Where Helena is not specified the notation refers to Poinsett County:

1. HOLBOELL'S GREBE—*Colymbus holboellii*.  
Rare.
2. HORNED GREBE—*Colymbus auritus*.  
Fairly common.
3. EARED GREBE—*Colymbus nigricollis californicus*.  
Very rare.
4. PIED-BILLED GREBE—*Podilymbus podiceps*.  
Common.
5. LOON—*Gavia immer*.  
Rare.
6. RED-THROATED LOON—*Gavia stellata*.  
Very rare. Found only in the "Sunk Lands."
7. HERRING GULL—*Larus argentatus*.  
Common on the Mississippi river at and near Helena.
8. RING-BILLED GULL—*Larus delawarensis*.

9. BONAPARTE'S GULL—*Larus philadelphia*.  
Rare. Only seen at Helena.
10. WATER-TURKEY—*Anhinga anhinga*.  
Rare; becoming more common towards the first of March.
11. DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT—*Phalacrocorax auritus auritus*.  
Fairly common.
12. WHITE PELICAN—*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*.  
Rather common.
13. RED-BREASTED MERGANSER—*Mergus serrator*.  
Common.
14. HOODED MERGANSER—*Lophodytes cucullatus*.  
Rare.
15. MALLARD—*Anas platyrhynchos*.  
Abundant. Common at Helena.
16. BLACK DUCK—*Anas rubripes*.  
Fairly common.
17. GADWALL—*Chaulclasmus streperus*.  
Fairly common.
18. GREEN-WINGED TEAL—*Nettion carolinense*.  
Common.
19. BLUE-WINGED TEAL—*Querquedula discors*.  
Common.
20. PINTAIL—*Dafila acuta*.  
Common.
21. WOOD DUCK—*Aix sponsa*.  
Common.
22. LESSER SCAUP DUCK—*Marila affinis*.  
Common. Other ducks than the Mallard were also seen at Helena, but not at a range that made positive identification possible.
23. CANADA GOOSE—*Branta canadensis canadensis*.  
Common. Same at Helena.
24. BRANT—*Branta bernicla glaucogastra*.  
Fairly common. A few at Helena.
25. WHISTLING SWAN—*Olor columbianus*.  
Some twelve or fifteen in the Sunk Lands.
26. TRUMPETER SWAN—*Olor buccinator*.  
Very rare, and only in the Sunk Lands.
27. BITTERN—*Botarus lentiginosus*.  
Rare.
28. LEAST BITTERN—*Ardetta exilis*.  
Rare.
29. GREAT BLUE HERON—*Ardea herodias herodias*.  
Rather common. Several noted near Helena.
30. EGRET—*Herodias egretta*.  
Fairly common.
31. SNOWY EGRET—*Egretta candidissima candidissima*.  
Rare. Two were seen on the Arkansas side of the Mississippi river, about twenty miles below Memphis, Oct. 23rd.
32. LITTLE BLUE HERON—*Florida caerulea*.  
Common.

33. GREEN HERON—*Butorides virescens virescens*.  
Common.
34. BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON—*Nycticorax nycticorax naevius*.  
Rare.
35. WHOOPING CRANE—*Grus americana*.  
Very rare, and only in the Sunk Lands.
36. SANDHILL CRANE—*Grus mexicana*.  
Rather common latter part of February and first of March.
37. VIRGINIA RAIL—*Rallus virginianus*.  
Fairly common.
38. FLORIDA GALLINULE—*Gallinula galatea*.  
Common.
39. COOT—*Fulica americana*.  
Rare.
40. WOODCOCK—*Philohela minor*.  
Very rare.
41. WILSON'S SNIFE—*Gallinago delicata*.  
Rare in Poinsett County except during a few days about the first of March. Common around Helena. While I was there one hunter brought in a bag of eighteen.
42. PECTORAL SANDPIPER—*Pisobia maculata*.  
Rare.
43. LEAST SANDPIPER—*Pisobia minutilla*.  
Fairly common.
44. SPOTTED SANDPIPER—*Actitis macularia*.  
Common.
45. KILLDEER—*Oxyechus vociferus*.  
Fairly common.
46. BOB-WHITE—*Colinus virginianus virginianus*.  
Rare in Poinsett County. Abundant around Helena.
47. RUFFED GROUSE—*Bonasa umbellus umbellus*.  
Rare in Phillips County. Said to have formerly been common. Not found in Poinsett.
48. PRAIRIE CHICKEN—*Tympanuchus americanus americanus*.  
Common on the prairie lands between Helena and Pine Bluff. Not found elsewhere.
49. WILD TURKEY—*Meleagris gallopavo silvestris*.  
Common. Fairly common in Phillips County.
50. PASSENGER PIGEON—*Ectopistes migratorius*.  
Common.
51. MOURNING DOVE—*Zenaidura macroura carolinensis*.  
Rare in Poinsett County. Fairly common in Phillips.
52. TURKEY VULTURE—*Cathartes aura septentrionalis*.  
Common. Same at Helena.
53. BLACK VULTURE—*Catharista urubu*.  
Common. Same at Helena.
54. MARSH HAWK—*Circus hudsonius*.  
Rare.
55. SHARP-SHINNED HAWK—*Accipiter velox*.  
Rare.

56. RED-TAILED HAWK—*Buteo borealis borealis*.  
Common.
57. RED-SHOULDERED HAWK—*Buteo lineatus*.  
Not quite so common as the preceding.
58. SWAINSON'S HAWK—*Buteo swainsoni*.  
Still less common than the preceding.
59. BROAD-WINGED HAWK—*Buteo platypterus*.  
Fairly common.
60. ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK—*Archibuteo lagopus sancti-johannis*.  
Rare.
61. BALD EAGLE—*Haliaeetus leucocephalus leucocephalus*.  
Not uncommon in either of the counties visited. A magnificent adult male was killed about two miles north of Helena and brought into town while I was there.
62. PIGEON HAWK—*Falco columbarius columbarius*.  
Rare.
63. SPARROW HAWK—*Falco sparverius sparverius*.  
Fairly common. Common in Phillips County.
64. SHORT-EARED OWL—*Asio flammeus*.  
Rare.
65. BARRED OWL—*Strix varia varia*.  
Common.
66. SCREECH OWL—*Otus asio asio*.  
Common in both counties visited.
67. GREAT HORNED OWL—*Bubo virginianus virginianus*.  
Fairly common.
68. BELTED KINGFISHER—*Ceryle alcyon*.  
Rare.
69. IVORY-BILLED WOODPECKER—*Campephilus principalis*.  
A fine male was frequently seen in a low, wet, heavily wooded strip about two miles from the camp. This was presumably the same bird as it was always seen in the same place, a territory approximately one-half by one-quarter mile in area. On one occasion a female was seen in the same section and they were probably mates, although they were not seen together or even on the same day.
70. SOUTHERN HAIRY WOODPECKER—*Dryobates villosus auduboni*.  
Rare.
71. DOWNY (?) WOODPECKER—*Dryobates pubescens* ?.  
Common. Probably the Southern. They were not differentiated at the time these notes were made.
72. YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER—*Sphyrapicus varius varius*.  
Rather common.
73. PILEATED WOODPECKER—*Phloeotomus pileatus pileatus*.  
Common.
74. RED-HEADED WOODPECKER—*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*.  
Common. Same in Phillips County.
75. RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER—*Centurus carolinus*.  
Common. Same in Phillips County.
76. FLICKER—*Colaptes auratus auratus*.  
Common. Same in Phillips County.

77. NIGHTHAWK—*Chordeiles virginianus virginianus*.  
Several seen at Helena the latter part of October. Said to be very common during the spring and fall.
78. BLUE JAY—*Cyanocitta cristata cristata*.  
Rare in Poinsett County except in the immediate vicinity of Marked Tree. Common in and near Helena.
79. CROW—*Corvus brachyrhynchos brachyrhynchos*.  
Almost rare in Poinsett County. Common in Phillips.
80. FISH CROW—*Corvus ossifragus*.  
Rare, and only found along the St. Francis river.
81. RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD—*Agelaius phœniceus phœniceus*.  
Rare in Poinsett. Common in Phillips.
82. MEADOWLARK—*Sturnella magna magna*.  
Same as above.
83. BRONZED GRACKLE—*Quiscalus quiscula aeneus*.  
Abundant in both counties.
84. PURPLE FINCH—*Carpodacus purpureus purpureus*.  
Rare in the vicinity of Helena. Not seen elsewhere.
85. GOLDFINCH—*Astragalinus tristis tristis*.  
Noted only in or near Helena. Common there.
86. VESPER SPARROW—*Poæcetes gramineus gramineus*.  
Rare in Poinsett and only near Marked Tree. Common in Helena.
87. HARRIS SPARROW—*Zonotrichia querula*.  
Same as above but rather more common.
88. WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW—*Zonotrichia leucophrys leucophrys*.  
Only noted at Helena and vicinity, and rare there.
89. WHITE-THROATED SPARROW—*Zonotrichia albicollis*.  
Common in Phillips County. Not found in Poinsett.
90. TREE SPARROW—*Spizella monticola monticola*.  
Rare and only around Helena.
91. CHIPPING SPARROW—*Spizella passerina passerina*.  
Very rare. Phillips County only.
92. FIELD SPARROW—*Spizella pusilla pusilla*.  
Rare in Poinsett County. Fairly common in Phillips.
93. SLATE-COLORED JUNCO—*Junco hyemalis hyemalis*.  
Fairly common at Helena after the 5th of November.
94. SONG SPARROW—*Melospiza melodia melodia*.  
Rare in Poinsett. Common in Phillips.
95. LINCOLN'S SPARROW—*Melospiza lincolni lincolni*.  
Fairly common in Phillips. Not found in Poinsett.
96. SWAMP SPARROW—*Melospiza georgiana*.  
Rare in Poinsett. Common in Phillips.
97. FOX SPARROW—*Passerella iliaca iliaca*.  
Same as the preceding.
98. TOWHEE—*Pipilo erythrophthalmus erythrophthalmus*.  
One seen at Helena Oct. 25th.
99. CARDINAL—*Cardinalis cardinalis cardinalis*.  
Fairly common in Poinsett. Common in Phillips.
100. WHITE-RUMPED SHRIKE—*Lanius ludovicianus excubitorides*.  
Rare.

101. MOCKINGBIRD—*Mimus polyglottos polyglottos*.  
A few seen near Marked Tree. Common in and near Helena.
102. CAROLINA WREN—*Thryothorus ludovicianus ludovicianus*.  
Common, especially in Phillips County.
103. BEWICK'S WREN—*Thryomanes bewicki bewicki*.  
Rare, in both counties.
104. WINTER WREN—*Nannus hiemalis hiemalis*.  
Fairly common in both counties.
105. BROWN CREEPER—*Certhia familiaris americana*.  
Rather common in both counties.
106. WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH—*Sitta carolinensis carolinensis*.  
Common in both counties.
107. RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH—*Sitta canadensis*.  
Very rare, and only in Poinsett County.
108. TUFTED TITMOUSE—*Baeolophus bicolor*.  
Fairly common in Poinsett. Common in Phillips.
109. CAROLINA CHICKADEE—*Penthestes carolinensis carolinensis*.  
Common in both counties.
110. GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET—*Regulus satrapa satrapa*.  
Common in both counties.
111. HERMIT THRUSH—*Hylocichla guttata pallasii*.  
Rare in both counties.
112. ROBIN—*Planesticus migratorius migratorius*.  
Common in both counties.
113. BLUEBIRD—*Sialia sialis sialis*.  
Rare in Poinsett. Common in Phillips.
114. ENGLISH SPARROW—*Passer domesticus*.  
A few at Marked Tree.

Versailles, Ky., Aug. 14, 1923.

Introduction re-written and slightly amended, April 30, 1924.