

wings somewhat. The eagle alighted about twenty feet away, and the gull resumed a normal sitting position. This performance was shortly repeated. The eagle rose a third time, and this time alighted on the gull, then almost at once released it. The gull must have been incapacitated before we arrived on the scene, and it was now very badly injured. It flopped along on the ice for a few yards, when the eagle again rose and came down on it, after which the gull did not move. The young eagle stood on the gull looking disinterestedly about for fully half a minute, then slowly and half-heartedly began to pluck and eat the bird. At this point we heard the muffled crack of a small firearm and the eagle with one flap of his wings jumped vertically into the air about four feet, carrying his prey with him, and making his upward leap with apparent ease, as if unencumbered. Several more shots were fired, but the eagle paid them no attention.—HUSTACE H. POOR, *Cambridge, Mass.*

Effects of the Severe Winter of 1935-36 on Bird Life in the Fort Wayne, Indiana, Area.—In common with the rest of the Middle West, the Fort Wayne area has just passed through its most severe winter in many years. For more than two months the ground was blanketed with snow. Ice froze from two to three feet deep on every quiet body of water. Frost pierced the ground everywhere to a depth of four feet or more. The belated break finally came on February 23, and when it came, it came with a suddenness and a completeness that is most unusual in this area.

In our immediate vicinity, bird life came through the siege of arctic weather surprisingly well. The chief reason for this was that at no time was the food supply of the wintering birds sealed away from them by ice. Weed seeds, berries, and fruits were available in normal abundance at all times. Crusted snow made access to the ground difficult, and in large areas almost impossible, but species that feed normally on the ground suffered not so much from lack of food as from the difficulty of finding gravel suitable for use in grinding their food.

All of the normal winter residents here were present in their usual abundance. In addition, such species as Mourning Doves, Robins, Red-winged Blackbirds, and Grackles stayed over in their usual small numbers, and a normal percentage of these individuals survived. Meadowlarks and Bob-whites were present as usual in all favorable areas, and these species did as well as usual. Meadowlarks were present constantly in an area around my feeding station on the edge of town, yet at no time did they find conditions bad enough to make them other than irregular visitors there. Even a few Carolina Wrens stayed out the winter in our area, which is very near the northern limit of their range.

Had it not been for the presence of some of our rarer winter visitors in unusual numbers, this last winter would have been little different from many others, so far as bird life is concerned. The influx of birds from less fortunate areas was the most interesting feature of the period. The most conspicuously unusual occurrence was the influx of water birds. The sewage-laden Maumee River was open for several miles below the city. Ordinarily it has little to attract the various species of winter ducks, but this winter large numbers of American Golden-eyes and American Mergansers found a haven in its carp-infested waters. Red-breasted Mergansers, Old-squaw, and Herring Gulls also were present in small numbers. In the city all of the rivers were frozen solid, except for a small patch of water in the St. Joseph River kept open by the discharge from a power plant. Here a

single Horned Grebe found its haven and stayed for weeks. Golden-eyes, Mergansers, an Old-squaw, and an occasional Belted Kingfisher paid it frequent visits, but it became characteristic of that patch of water. Some of these water birds lingered on our rivers long after the break in the winter, but most of them went with the snow and ice. Other unusual winter visitors in our area included Snow Buntings and Lapland Longspurs. Both species came with large flocks of Horned Larks, and I fed both of them more or less regularly in the yard, along with the larks. One Longspur that was present only on February 9 was an adult male in an almost typical nuptial plumage. All of the others were in normal winter plumage. Among the Horned Larks, individuals that were typically *alpestris* could be picked out, as also could typical representatives of the subspecies *pratricula*. The great majority of individuals, however, were in an intermediate plumage which left me somewhat confused as to their proper subspecific rank.

The effect of the severe winter on the spring migration dates in the Fort Wayne area has been negligible. True, all of the extremely early February dates were eliminated, but when the break in the weather did come, it came so completely that March dates for all species averaged about normal.—PERRY FRANK JOHNSON, *Fort Wayne, Ind.*

The 1935 Fall Migration at the Washington Monument.—The Washington Monument, a white stone shaft rising 555 feet in height, is situated near the busiest part of the city of Washington, D. C., and affords an opportunity for quite an unusual method of bird study. For several years after the monument was erected, birds in migration struck it by the score, thousands probably being killed by coming into forcible contact with it. Reports state that it was not an unknown occurrence to pick up a bushel of dead birds at its base that had been killed during a single night.

Later, as the city grew, either the birds changed their course of flight or the survivors became educated concerning the dangers of the Washington Monument. At least in recent years very few birds were striking the monument each season until 1932, when it was decided to flash giant beacons on the shaft from dusk until 11:45 each night. That year, 1932, Miss Phoebe Knappen of the United States Biological Survey, who is keenly interested in all bird data taken at the Washington Monument, picked up 324 birds at the monument, and the next year she gathered a total of 331 birds, mostly warblers and vireos.

Last fall (1935) I visited the monument each night (with a few exceptions) from August 30 to November 7. Before listing a few statistics on the results of my nightly observations, I shall describe briefly a typical "good bird night", that of September 6, 1935. The weather was clear, but there was no moon. There was not much wind. Early in the evening the first birds struck the monument, and others came tumbling down its sides until the beacon lights were turned out at 11:45. At times birds were raining down so fast that the three of us who were watching that night could not keep track of them all. We could hear the birds chirping as they neared the monument, and then could see them, as they came into the path of the lights, three, four, or five hundred feet above us, fly directly toward the monument. Many birds would immediately strike head-on with an audible blow, and would drop like plummets to the concrete at the base with quite a loud thud. Others, though they seemed to strike as hard,