



EDITOR'S PAGE

OUR MOST IMPORTANT NOTICE!

About 200 birders receiving this issue have already resubscribed for 1974. But our mailing this month is to over 350 subscribers in 1973. To meet our costs during the coming year, we need all of you! As David Ives might say -- here is music to write checks by -- the song of a Hooded Warbler at Mt. Auburn.

TWO UPCOMING MEETINGS

March 2. Statewide Meeting of Birders and Bird Clubs. Sponsored by the Massachusetts Audubon Society, with the Hoffmann Bird Club as host, this year's meeting will be held in the Western Massachusetts Electric Auditorium, West St., Pittsfield. If you would like to get on the program or need more information, contact Mrs. Deborah V. Howard at MAS, Lincoln, Mass. 01773. Telephone 259-9500.

April 19-21. North American Hawk Migration Conference. The location will be the Holiday Inn north of Syracuse, New York, and the host will be the Onandaga Audubon Society. Here is an opportunity for serious hawkwatchers "to exchange observations on hawk migration, to set standards for record-keeping, and to agree on ways of sharing and collating information on a continuing basis." Contact: Dorothy W. Crumb, 3983 Gates Road North, Jamesville, N.Y. 13078.

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE STAFF NOTES

The new manager of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge is George W. Gavutis, Jr., replacing Edward S. Moses, who was assigned to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Boston Regional Office. One of Mr. Gavutis' objectives is to introduce imprinted Wood Ducks from his former station at Great Swamp NWR in New Jersey, in hopes of introducing a new nesting species.

The assistant refuge manager, Linda D. Kipp, has been at Parker River since early 1972. Wildlife Biologist William R. Forward, is familiar to readers of BIRD OBSERVER for his timely article on last year's paralytic shellfish poisoning (red tide) in our premiere issue.

Another new manager, of Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, Concord, is Grady E. Hocutt. He also, among others, will direct activities at Monomoy N.W.R. and Nantucket N.W.R., which are under the administration of the Great Meadows office. Holding two master's degrees, in Zoology and Wildlife Management, and in Health and Physical Education, Mr. Hocutt has been in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service since 1970.

A Note from the Backyard

Today, while I was dictating a long letter, a flock of about 40 Starlings flew onto the lawn outside my office window. As I watched the troupe comb the newly flourishing March grass, the seemingly random motions of the individual birds melted into a group behavioral pattern that I had never noticed before.

A Starling would be probing the turf; then another bird would fly or run over to usurp the feeding grounds, virtually always with success. The displaced Starling would then either begin his foraging anew or would take over someone else's station.

In this manner, the entire flock progressed across the lawn in what was actually an orderly march. During the five minutes that I watched, no pecking order was obvious, though isolated squabbles did occur. Rather, it seemed as if any Starling felt that another's good fortune was his own.

Has anyone else observed similar bird behavior?

L.J.R.