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BREEDING BIRDS ON MARYLAND'S COASTAL ISLANDS

David Bridge and John S. Weske

Several of the coastal islands of Maryland support large colonies of terns and herons. These island present excellent opportunities for study. The islands were visited in 1960 on June 11-12, 18-19, July 2-3, August 6-7, and 27.

The Least Tern colonies in Ocean City were the northernmost colonies studied. There were two small colonies. One at 28th Street and Philadelphia Avenue contained 4 nests with 2 eggs each, one nest with one young (which we banded) and two nests with broken eggs. The other colony at 33rd Street and Philadelphia Avenue was composed of 4 nests with 2 eggs each and one nest with one egg.

The nesting site was an area that had been filled by a dredge for a housing development. When the colonies were revisited two weeks later only one nest was found. The numerous bulldozer and dog tracks that were found told the reason. The fate of Least Terns in coastal Maryland seems dubious. The feeble colony of 12 pairs was the only one found this year, although a few individuals of this species were seen near sandy portions of Snug Harbor and South Point.

The small sandy island under the north side of U.S. 50 bridge at Ocean City has the largest population of Common Terns and Black Skimmers of any island visited. We banded 404 young Common Terns and 100 young Black Skimmers. If we divide by the normal maximum number of eggs in a clutch (3 for Common Tern and 4 for Black Skimmer) we get an estimate of the minimum of nesting pairs as 135 Common Terns and 25 Black Skimmers. However, we believe an estimate of 175 pairs of Common Terns and 40 pairs of Black Skimmers to be more accurate.

Table 1. 1960 banding returns, island at US 50 bridge, Ocean City

<u>Species</u>	<u>Band No.</u>	<u>Date Banded</u>	<u>Where Banded</u>	<u>Age</u>
Common Tern	50-325824	7/21/51	island off South Point	10 yr.
Common Tern	503-92167	6/27/59	island at US 50 bridge	1 yr.
Black Skimmer	44-423268	7/18/49	island at US 50 bridge	11 yr.
Black Skimmer	44-423434	7/12/51	island off South Point	9 yr.
Black Skimmer	514-97657	6/27/57	island at US 50 bridge	3 yr.

Some mist netting of adult birds was done on this island at night,

resulting in the capture of 45 Common Terns and 22 Black Skimmers. Two (4%) of the Common Terns and three (14%) of the Black Skimmers were previously banded (see Table 1). Also captured were six Sanderlings, a Semipalmated Sandpiper, a Semipalmated Plover, and a Seaside Sparrow.

On June 18, there were two Black Skimmer nests with newly hatched young. This ties the earliest State record for nestlings.

Proceeding south in Sinepuxent Bay we next came to a group of small islands off Snug Harbor. The northern island has no vegetation and no breeding birds, though there were a number of shorebirds there in June. In contrast, the island east of Buoy #11 is very interesting. It is mostly open grass bounded on the south and west by dense brush. Common Terns and Willets nest in the open grass areas. One hundred and sixteen young terns were banded from about 60 nests. Three Willet nests were found on July 3, two with 4 eggs and one with 3 eggs. In the brushy area about 20 pairs of Boat-tailed Grackles were nesting. Thirty-seven young were banded. Also in the brushy area was one Green Heron nest. About ten pairs of Black Skimmers nested between the brush and the high water line.

There are two other islands in this group. One, a low salt marsh island east of Buoy #12, is populated by 20 pairs of Common Terns, eight pairs of Black Skimmers and one Seaside Sparrow. The other island is a quarter of a mile east of Buoy #13. It is a low salt marsh island on which our only young Willet was banded. No other nesting birds were seen.

Two other very unusual islands were those by Buoys #20 and #21. They are both overgrown with dense shrubs about eight to ten feet in height. The northern one is completely overgrown, the other has some marsh. The principal species on these two islands is the Green Heron: 44 young on the northern island and 52 young on the southern island. One of the most interesting phenomena observed was that of the Boat-tailed Grackles on these islands, which are about a third of a mile apart. On June 18, on the northern island, only three young in one nest were banded. All other grackles had eggs. In contrast, 18 young were banded on the south island. Two weeks later, on July 3, 18 young were banded on the north island and none on the south island. Why should two colonies so close together have more than two weeks difference in their breeding cycles? One explanation might be that the southern colony was established first. As more individuals arrived it reached capacity (in about two weeks) and then overflowed to the north island. Other species on the south island were: American Oyster-catcher (two young banded), Redwinged Blackbird (three nests), Clapper Rail, and Song and Sharp-tailed Sparrow.

The most extraordinary islands are the three off South Point. The north island, which nine years ago supported 200 pairs of Common Terns, now has none. Its main inhabitants are Laughing Gulls, at least 80 pairs, although only 23 young were banded. These chicks are so well camouflaged they were very hard to find. We felt there were many more

than we were able to locate. There were also three pairs of Herring Gulls, which raised nine young, all of which we banded. Also nesting here were two pairs of Black Ducks and an Oyster-catcher (one young banded). But this is child's play compared to the middle island. By far the largest of the three, it is more than half covered with brush. The rest is about equally divided between dry grass, cane and marshy areas. Because of the dense cover and the large size of the island, it is difficult to capture many young of species that nest on the ground. They can travel through the brush much better than we can. These species are Herring Gull, two pairs (one young banded), Laughing Gull, 50 pairs (five young banded), Willet, one pair. One Black Duck flushed out of tall grass, but the nest was not found.

The real highlight of this island, and perhaps of all the islands, is the huge (by Maryland standards) heronry. Its main tenants are 40 pairs of Little Blue Herons (105 young banded), 35 pairs of Snowy Egrets (93 young banded) and 25 pairs of Louisiana Herons (72 young banded). Mixed through the colony were nine pairs of Glossy Ibis (23 young banded) and most surprising of all, nine pairs of Cattle Egrets (25 young banded). There was also one Common Egret nest from which two young were banded. In one corner of the colony are five Black-crowned Night Heron nests. Three more were found in another part of the island. A total of 21 young night herons were banded. Green Herons were sprinkled throughout the island - at least 25 pairs (24 young banded). There were also seven nestling Boat-tailed Grackles banded.

The south island of this group, while smaller in size than the middle one, actually has more pairs of birds. This is because Maryland's only colony of Royal Terns is located here. We estimated 125 pairs of Royal Terns, but only eleven young were reared. This was because of the destruction of the nests and young by the spring tide on the night of June 11. More about this later.

Also nesting on this island were 15 pairs of Laughing Gulls, which suffered the same fate as the Royal Terns and succeeded in raising only two young. There were three pairs of Herring Gulls; seven young were banded. The heronry is completely different in composition from that on the middle island. The dominant species was the Snowy Egret, of which there were about 75 pairs (208 young banded). There were about 15 pairs of Common Egrets (45 young banded). Except for the one pair on the middle island, this was the only colony of Common Egrets. There were also eight pairs of Louisiana Herons (22 young banded) and one pair of Glossy Ibis (4 young banded).

The last island on our itinerary was Robins Marsh in Chincoteague Bay. Nesting here were an estimated 100 pairs of Laughing Gulls (85 chicks banded) and 160 pairs of Forster's Terns. About 120 of the nests were in good condition, but the eggs had not hatched yet. The remaining 40 nests had been destroyed by the high water. Also a Clapper Rail nest was found with one young and 9 eggs on June 18. Several Seaside and Sharp-tailed Sparrows were seen.

Five Osprey nests were inspected. One contained three very large young, another two young that were hatching, and three nests were empty.

The north end of Assateague Island also was visited. No nests were found, although two pairs of Piping Plover were seen. The only Gull-billed Tern that we saw during the summer was seen here. The Black Skimmers that do not have nest-sitting jobs come here to sit in the sand.

The Least Terns, as already stated, are not doing well. The birds on the islands off Snug Harbor are not faring much better. The channel is adjacent to these islands. The motor boats using the channel are continually scaring up the birds. Also numerous pony tracks were found. The island under the Ocean City bridge is the closest one to civilization, but the skimmers and terns have adjusted to its influence. All the other islands are fairly remote and safe, although the Forster's Terns on Robins Marsh appeared to have had their eggs robbed.

The eight nesting pairs of Herring Gulls represent a new high for coastal Maryland. The first evidence of their nesting here was the three nests found in 1958.

None of these islands had any nesting heron species on them except Green Herons prior to the summer of 1958. That year about 20 pairs of Snowy Egrets, two pairs of Louisiana Herons and one pair of Common Egrets nested on the island off South Point. With this start the heronry has grown in three years to approximately 225 pairs of seven species. All herons known to nest in Maryland were found except for the Great Blue Heron, Yellow-crowned Night Heron and the two species of bitterns. The best discovery was that of the second colony of Cattle Egrets in Maryland. The first Cattle Egret nests were found at Mill's Island heronry in 1958. In this new colony nine nests were found, from which 25 young were banded. At this rate the Cattle Egret will soon become a common species here.

The Royal Tern colony raised only 11 young because of the high spring tide which inundated most of the colony. This high tide also washed out a few Common Tern, Black Skimmer and Laughing Gull nests on other islands. It also destroyed about 40 Forster's Tern nests on Robins Marsh. On July 4, we visited Adams Island at the extreme southern tip of Cape Charles, Virginia, where there is a large colony of Royal Terns. We were disappointed to find the entire colony destroyed, apparently from wave action during a high tide. The 400 pairs of terns seemed to be making no attempt to renest on July 4.

These trips were very interesting and, if followed up in years to come, should yield some very profitable information on these coastal species.

8-A Ridge Road, Greenbelt, Md.

812 Dryden Road, Ithaca, N. Y.

FIRST MARYLAND RECORD OF THE BLACK-HEADED GROSBEEK

Rodney S. Jones

Early in January, 1961, a "different" bird was noticed feeding on the ground in an area cleared of snow at my home in Pikesville, Baltimore County.



A bit of research indicated that the stranger was a male Black-headed Grosbeak (Pheucticus melanocephalus) in full adult plumage. Peterson describes this bird as "unmistakable" so I felt safe in announcing my find. This grosbeak has been quite cooperative and about a dozen people have verified my identification. The bird has been coming to my feeding station daily, and since the 15th of March has been arriving as early as 7 a.m. and making frequent visits until 4 in the afternoon.

Photo by Carl Lubbert

The Black-headed Grosbeak is a western bird, breeding as far east as Kansas and Nebraska. Normally it winters in Mexico. Thanks to photographic substantiation by Mr. Carl Lubbert, the Black-headed Grosbeak can be added to the Maryland list on the basis of this first observation for the State. It is interesting that single Black-headed Grosbeaks also appeared this winter in Virginia, Pennsylvania and New Jersey (Raven 32: 3-4; Audubon Field Notes 15 (3).

207 Oak Avenue, Pikesville 8

1960 COUNTY BIRD LISTS

John Seddon Weske

Observers in Maryland reported a total of 297 species of birds in 1960, the highest in the seven years that the County Lists have been compiled. This figure exceeds the previous record of 290 in 1955 and last year's total of 288.

County-by-county coverage was improved over last year, with fifteen counties increasing their species totals and eight decreasing. The counties of the Coastal Plain, generally speaking, showed an advance while those in the central and western portions of the state averaged lower. Worcester County once again recorded the highest number of species (255), while four other counties--one more than a year ago--exceeded (200). These were Talbot and Dorchester (both 224), Prince Georges (212), and Anne Arundel (206). Approaching the "charmed circle" was St. Marys with 195, representing a remarkable rise of 68 species over 1959. On the other hand, there were three counties below the 100-mark, one more than last year.

Three species appear in the lists for the first time. Observers enjoyed close looks at a Razorbill in Worcester County. The other species, a state record, was a hurricane-tossed Bridled Tern in Wicomico Co.

The hybrid Brewater's Warbler was recorded in Frederick and Prince Georges Counties in 1960, but the Lawrence's was not seen.

During the year, Common Redpolls were reported from ten counties, and there was a minor Snowy Owl invasion. As long as there is no consistent coverage of all counties in the State, it is impossible to draw conclusions about changes in avian distribution by comparing the lists from year to year. Each year Catbirds and Juncos go unreported in some counties. Some changes are of interest for curiosity's sake, however. Species recorded in at least five more counties in 1960 than in 1959 included Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Black Tern, and Savannah Sparrow. Those noted in at least five fewer counties were Green-winged Teal, Oldsquaw, Ruddy Duck, Great Horned Owl, and Connecticut Warbler.

The number of species reported in each county is given below:

Garrett	97	Montgomery	187	Queen Annes	133
Alleghany	128	Prince Georges	212	Caroline	179
Washington	129	Anne Arundel	206	Talbot	224
Frederick	167	Calvert	150	Dorchester	224
Carroll	62	Charles	107	Wicomico	152
Baltimore	181	St. Marys	195	Somerset	121
Harford	110	Cecil	67	Worcester	255
Howard	139	Kent	154		

I would like to thank the more than eighty observers who initialed the checklist or submitted reports, and particularly those who visited less well-covered counties or who compiled reports for their county from a number of observers. Listed following are a few of the most active contributors in each county: Garrett--Pan Minke, William M. Leeson; Alleghany--William M. Leeson; Washington--Alice Mallonee, Sterling W. Edwards; Frederick--Sterling W. Edwards, John W. Richards, Hazel White; Carroll--Jean Worthley; Baltimore--C. Douglas Hackman, Hank Kaestner, Betsy Schaffer; Harford--C. Douglas Hackman, Sue Wilding; Howard--David Bridge, Chandler S. Robbins, Rosamond Munro; Montgomery--Helen Fessenden, Seth H. Low, J. S. Weske; Prince Georges--Jackson M Abbot, David Bridge, Chandler S. Robbins; Anne Arundel--Vera Henderson, Prof. & Mrs. David G. Howard, Hal Wierenga; Calvert--John H. Fales, Helen Fessenden, K. Friel Sanders, Elizabeth Slater; Charles--Edwin T. McKnight, Leonard Teuber; St. Marys--James Banagan, Vernon Kleen; Cecil--C. Douglas Hackman; Kent--Dorothy A Mendinhall, Clark G. Webster; Queen Anne--Terry Moore; Caroline--Jerry & Roberta Fletcher, Carol Scudder; Talbot--Richard Kleen, Erana K. Lubbert; Dorchester--Harry Armistead, Samuel H. Dyke, John W. Terborgh; Wicomico & Somerset--Samuel H. Dyke; Worcester--Gladys H. Cole, Samuel H. Dyke, Chandler S. Robbins. (A list of 124 species received from Vernon Rossman too late for inclusion raised the Cecil total to 142, and the total species reported from all counties to 39.)

Oakwood, Sandy Spring



OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER, 1960

Chandler S. Robbins

After trickling along at a snail's pace during the month of September, the migration responded in spectacular fashion to weather stimuli during the opening days of October. A fascinating parade of winged transients met the eyes of waiting observers at daybreak on Saturday, Oct. 1; and during the next few days most insectivorous species departed and were replaced by grain-eating birds.

The sudden rush of migrants was instigated by an abrupt change in atmospheric circulation. As mentioned in the report for the preceding season (Maryland Birdlife 16: 92), no cold front reached Maryland's coast during the last $3\frac{1}{2}$ weeks of September. So when a good vigorous cold front swept across New England and the Middle Atlantic States during the afternoon and evening of Sept. 30, belated migrants by the hundreds of thousands took wing and headed for their winter homes. Banders manning the Operation Recovery station north of Ocean City on Oct. 1 encountered the greatest concentration of transients in their experience, as northwesterly winds following the frontal passage caused hordes of birds to drift eastward to the coast. On that one day they banded 431 birds of 50 species, or more birds than they had banded during the entire preceding week with the same number of nets in operation. Lowering temperatures and light northerly winds provided the stimulus for continued heavy migration during the following night, and 330 birds of 39 species were banded at the Ocean City station on Oct. 2. A comparison of the Ocean City banding totals for the 15 most common species during the 3-day period Sept. 30 through Oct. 2 shows dramatically the sharp increase in birds on Oct. 1, and the continued rise in White-throated Sparrows on Oct. 2 together with the abrupt drop in thrushes, Red-eyed Vireos and the less hardy warblers on Oct. 2.

Additional cold fronts penetrated the State on Oct. 2-3, 6, 12, 18, 20, and 23-24, but the effects of these are poorly documented because the Ocean City banding station was closed for the season on Oct. 3, and the subsequent frontal passages took place during midweek.

Routine migration was experienced in November; and winter set in with a vengeance on Dec. 12 with the first big snowfall of a memorable winter season.

Table 1. Birds banded at Ocean City, Sept. 30 through Oct. 2, 1960

<u>Species</u>	<u>Sept. 30</u>	<u>Oct. 1</u>	<u>Oct. 2</u>
Yellow-shafted Flicker	1	22	8
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	0	17	14
Brown Creeper	1	12	17
Catbird	2	15	31
Brown Thrasher	2	12	12
Swainson's Thrush	0	31	10
Gray-cheeked Thrush	0	17	5
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	14	1
Red-eyed Vireo	8	42	4
Black-throated Blue Warbler	1	32	9
Myrtle Warbler	0	6	16
Blackpoll Warbler	6	21	12
American Redstart	3	13	8
Slate-colored Junco	0	17	16
White-throated Sparrow	0	50	98
Total species	18	50	39
Total individuals	40	431	330

Migration table. Table 2 gives a summary of fall departure dates for 1960, listed by counties or pairs of counties arranged geographically from northwestern to southeastern Maryland. As in previous migration tables, a zero indicates that the species was not reported during the fall migration season from the county in question; a dash signifies that the species was observed but not on a significant departure date. The following members supplied the majority of the dates for their respective counties: Western Maryland (Allegany and Washington Counties)--Pan Minke and Alice Mallonee; Baltimore City and County--Douglas Hackman, Betsy Schaffer and Hank Kaestner; Northeastern Maryland (Harford and Cecil Counties)--Vernon C. Rossman, Chandler and Eleanor Robbins, Betsy Schaffer; Montgomery--John H. Fales, Seth H. Low, Lucille V. Smith and John S. Weske; Prince Georges--David Bridge, Ronald Feller, John Fales, Melvin and Vernon Kleen; Anne Arundel--Vera Henderson, Elise Tappan, Elizabeth Slater, Friel Sanders, Prof. and Mrs. David Howard; Southern Maryland (Calvert and St. Marys Counties)--Vernon Klein, John Fales, Friel Sanders and Elizabeth Slater; Kent--Dorothy Mendinghall; Caroline--Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Fletcher, Carol Scudder; Worcester--Gladys H. Cole, Samuel H. Dyke, Dorothy Mendinghall and Chandler S. Robbins.

For the convenience of those who wish to keep their copies of Birds of Maryland up-to-date, counts or dates that supersede those published in the book or in subsequent issues of Maryland Birdlife are underscored.

Loons. On Nov. 28 Sam Dyke witnessed a spectacular flight of Red-throated Loons at Ocean City; his estimated total of 1,000 birds was more than ten times the highest previous fall tally, recorded on Nov. 24, 1946. On Nov. 14 at Gibson Island Mrs. Henderson and Mrs. Tappan saw a Common Loon in full breeding plumage--a rare sight for that season of the year.

Table 2. Fall Departure Dates, 1960

	West	Balt	N.E.	Mont	Pr G	Anne	SoMd	Kent	Caro	Worc
Green Heron	9/10	9/26	--	--	9/25	10/ 2	10/ 9	--	9/21	10/ 1
Whistling Swan	0	11/12	0	0	0	11/24	--	--	11/11	11/12
Canada Goose	--	10/21	10/29	10/26	10/16	10/30	10/ 8	--	10/ 1	--
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	10/ 4	--	9/10	9/22	10/ 1	9/14	9/22	9/24	10/17	10/ 1
Black-billed Cuckoo	--	0	0	0	9/23	9/24	0	9/27	0	10/ 1
Common Nighthawk	10/ 1	--	0	10/ 7	9/17	9/13	10/16	--	9/19	--
Chimney Swift	10/ 5	10/16	0	10/ 9	10/24	--	9/24	0	10/ 9	--
Ruby-thr. Hummingbird	9/16	9/27	9/25	--	9/18	--	9/ 6	--	9/13	9/11
Eastern Kingbird	--	9/ 1	9/ 5	--	9/ 8	--	9/27	--	9/ 9	9/19
Gr. Crested Flycatcher	8/22	--	8/28	--	9/10	--	9/10	--	9/24	9/22
Eastern Phoebe	10/ 1	10/29	9/25	10/27	11/12	--	--	11/ 1	--	10/ 1
Eastern Wood Pewee	10/ 1	--	9/11	9/22	9/24	9/27	9/18	--	10/ 6	10/ 2
Tree Swallow	--	10/ 2	9/10	--	--	9/18	11/ 3	9/14	11/ 4	10/ 1
Barn Swallow	9/10	--	9/10	--	8/18	9/14	9/12	--	9/19	9/13
House Wren	10/ 1	10/10	9/10	9/23	10/ 8	9/18	--	10/ 8	--	10/ 2
Catbird	10/19	10/10	10/14	10/16	10/ 9	10/12	10/ 9	10/14	--	10/ 3
Brown Thrasher	10/ 1	10/ 5	9/ 5	9/19	10/ 8	10/15	10/ 5	10/10	--	10/ 3
Wood Thrush	10/ 1	10/ 7	9/10	--	10/ 8	10/10	9/22	10/ 9	9/15	10/ 8
Hermit Thrush	0	10/29	10/29	--	11/17	--	10/27	10/30	10/17	10/ 2
Swainson's Thrush	0	10/23	9/25	10/ 7	10/17	10/10	--	10/29	--	10/ 2
Gray-cheeked Thrush	0	9/29	0	10/16	9/25	10/ 6	0	10/17	10/ 2	10/ 3
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	10/22	11/ 6	10/29	10/29	11/ 9	11/ 5	10/ 7	11/ 7	10/ 8	10/ 2
White-eyed Vireo	0	0	0	0	9/20	10/ 9	--	--	9/15	10/ 1
Red-eyed Vireo	--	10/30	9/18	--	10/ 8	9/14	10/ 5	10/ 5	--	10/ 2
Black-&-white Warbler	9/10	9/19	9/11	--	10/ 1	9/27	9/27	9/27	10/17	10/ 2
Nashville Warbler	0	--	0	0	10/ 8	0	9/15	10/11	0	10/ 2
Magnolia Warbler	0	9/17	0	10/ 2	9/25	10/11	--	9/23	0	10/ 2
Cape May Warbler	0	0	0	9/27	10/17	10/17	0	10/ 9	10/17	10/ 1
Black-thr. Blue Warbler	--	10/ 9	9/25	10/16	10/ 7	10/ 1	--	10/18	0	10/ 3
Myrtle Warbler	--	11/ 6	10/29	10/17	11/ 9	11/19	10/30	11/21	10/22	10/ 2
Black-thrGreen Warbler	--	9/19	0	10/ 2	10/ 7	0	10/ 1	9/22	0	10/ 1
Black-poll Warbler	0	--	10/14	10/ 2	10/ 7	10/17	9/25	10/13	10/16	10/ 3
Ovenbird	9/10	--	9/24	--	9/25	--	--	10/ 5	9/28	10/ 3
Northern Waterthrush	0	0	9/25	0	9/24	0	9/11	9/25	--	10/ 2
Yellowthroat	--	10/ 9	10/ 9	--	10/16	10/12	10/ 1	10/18	9/28	10/ 2
Yellow-breasted Chat	10/ 1	9/ 3	8/14	--	9/ 6	10/15	8/23	10/19	9/11	10/ 3
Canada Warbler	9/ 6	--	--	8/25	9/16	0	0	10/17	0	9/29
American Redstart	--	9/17	--	--	10/ 1	10/ 7	9/ 7	9/25	9/21	10/ 3
Bobolink	0	--	--	--	9/20	9/20	9/24	9/14	10/ 4	10/ 2
Scarlet Tanager	--	10/13	9/11	--	10/ 2	10/ 7	9/29	10/19	10/ 2	10/ 2
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	--	10/ 3	0	10/ 2	9/22	0	10/ 1	0	--	10/ 2
Blue Grosbeak	0	0	0	0	--	0	9/ 8	9/23	10/17	9/29
Indigo Bunting	10/12	10/ 2	--	10/19	10/ 1	--	9/16	9/28	10/16	10/ 3
Rufous-sided Towhee	11/15	10/29	10/29	10/ 7	10/30	11/12	--	--	--	10/ 3
White-crowned Sparrow	11/13	10/22	0	11/ 7	0	10/24	0	--	10/27	0
Chipping Sparrow	--	--	10/27	10/ 7	10/ 7	10/25	11/ 1	11/ 8	--	--
Fox Sparrow	--	11/19	--	--	11/29	12/12	--	11/22	--	--

Waterfowl. Observers in all sections of the State noted a heavy influx of Canada Geese on Oct. 1 on the heels of the energetic cold front that drifted across the State during the last evening of September. In addition to a small flock of Canada Geese, Douglas Hackman spotted a flock of 32 Brant migrating over White Marsh on Oct. 1. Brant seldom are seen migrating over the Maryland Piedmont, but they have been recorded in spring over Monkton in northern Baltimore County by Stephen Simon. Observers in Baltimore, Harford and Cecil Counties should keep their eyes peeled for these small geese, which fly in irregular lines rather than in neat V's. Hank Kaestner reported 5 Snow Geese and 2 Blue Geese at Remington Farms near Chestertown on the Oct. 9 Baltimore Chapter trip; thus new fall arrival dates were established for three species of geese within nine days. Mr. Kaestner's sighting of a lone Canvasback in a migrating flock of Canada Geese over Cylburn on Oct. 8 is of special interest to the many bird watchers who frequent this Baltimore City Park. The Gibson Island European Widgeon arrived on Oct. 31, nearly a month ahead of the previous local record (Mesdames Henderson and Tappan); the American Widgeon was the commonest duck at Gibson Island during the fall (except for the semi-tame population of permanent resident Mallards). Two eiders appeared at Ocean City inlet; by good fortune one of these was a King Eider (female?) and the other a Common Eider (immature male). The King was first seen on Dec. 29, the Common on Nov. 28 (Dyke).

Hawks. We rely heavily upon Douglas Hackman for an appraisal of hawk migration along the Fall Line. Mr. Hackman's research is worthy of separate publication, so will not be discussed in detail here. Although his Osprey, Marsh Hawk and Sparrow Hawk counts for the fall of 1960 compare favorably with similar counts in 1952 (Maryland Birdlife 10: 19-26), his 1960 records show a conspicuous decline in Sharp-shinned and Red-shouldered Hawks. He saw only 1 Bald Eagle in 1960 as compared with 21 in the same three months (September, October and November) in 1952. On Oct. 14 John Richards saw a Golden Eagle over his Emmitsburg home; on Dec. 31 Clark Webster saw another on the Kent County Christmas Count.

Shorebirds. The following late reports for an inland location came from Ridgely in Caroline County (Marvin Hewitt): Lesser Yellowlegs, Nov. 1; Pectoral Sandpiper, Nov. 19; Least Sandpiper, Nov. 11; and Dunlin, Nov. 11-19 (first fall record for the county).

Gulls and Terns. An unprecedented concentration of 2,000 Bonaparte's Gulls was estimated on Nov. 13 in the Ocean City area by Samuel H. Dyke; the highest previous count for our State was 332 in the same area on the Dec. 27, 1953 Christmas Count. The third winter record of the Common Tern in Maryland was reported from Ocean City on Dec. 28 by Mr. Dyke.

Owls, Goatsuckers. By operating mist nets at night, Mrs. Edward Mendinhall banded 4 Saw-whet Owls between Oct. 27 and Nov. 22 at her home on the eastern shore of the Chesapeake near Tolchester. Nighthawks normally leave Maryland by Oct. 5, but this year there were three later reports: Oct. 7 near Darnestown (Lucille V. Smith), Oct. 8 in Allegany County (Pan Minke), and Oct. 16 at Plum Point in Calvert County (2 birds by John and David Fales, 2 days past the latest State record).

Flycatchers. The second, and latest, October observation of an Olive-sided Flycatcher in Maryland was reported from M.O.S. headquarters at Cylburn Wildflower Preserve and Garden Center in Baltimore on Oct. 8 by Hank Kaestner. The only other observation of this species this fall was at Ocean City on Sept. 15 (Gladys Cole).

Thrashers, Thrushes. Wintering Brown Thrashers in Piedmont locations were noted as follows: a previously banded bird at Cylburn, Dec. 20-31 (Betsy Schaffer); and another individual at White Marsh, Dec. 30 (Hackman). In 1959, Swainson's and Gray-cheeked Thrushes reached their peak at the Ocean City banding station in mid-September; in 1960, however, the peak was on Oct. 1. Final departures also were exceptionally late. Douglas Hackman saw his last Swainson's at White Marsh on Oct. 23, and Mrs. Mendinhall banded 1 on Oct. 26 and 2 on Oct. 29 at "Damsite" near Tolchester. In addition to a late Gray-cheek on Oct. 17, she banded and photographed another on the extraordinary date of Nov. 18. Eastern Bluebirds continue to be unusually scarce. The highest count reported during the fall migration was 31 at White Marsh on Oct. 26 (Hackman).

Vireos. Normally the peak fall movement of Red-eyed Vireos takes place between Aug. 25 and Sept. 25. In 1960, however, the highest one-day banding total at Ocean City was 42 birds on Oct. 1; this was not only the highest total of the season, but it also exceeded all one-day counts of past years. One late straggler was observed at Cylburn on Oct. 30 by Betsy Schaffer.

Warblers. Twenty-two species of warblers were identified in Maryland in October, but 7 of these were not reported after the first weekend of the month. The Black-throated Blue was the commonest warbler at Ocean City on Oct. 1, with 32 individuals banded that day by Mrs. Cole, Mrs. Mendinhall and Robbins; next in abundance that day were the Blackpoll (21), American Redstart (13), Magnolia (9), and Cape May and Yellow-breasted Chat (7 each). The only Orange-crown of the season was banded at Damsite near Tolchester on Oct. 5. Late departure dates of note were Black-and-white Warbler at Denton, Oct. 17 (Roberta Fletcher); Yellow-breasted Chat banded at Damsite on Oct. 19 (Mrs. Mendinhall); Hooded Warbler banded at Ocean City on Oct. 1; Wilson's Warbler banded at Unity on Oct. 2 (Seth H. Low); and Canada Warbler banded at Damsite on Oct. 17 (Mrs. Mendinhall).

Tanagers. A sick female Scarlet Tanager was caught by hand on the late date of Oct. 18 at White Marsh by Douglas Hackman, who believes it may be the same bird he had seen one-eighth of a mile away during the period Oct. 2-12.

Finches and Sparrows. Late Indigo Buntings were identified on Oct. 16 at Concord (Carol Scudder) and Oct. 19 at Darnestown (Lucille V. Smith). Observations subsequent to the publication of Birds of Maryland indicate that the normal period of occurrence for the Blue Grosbeak should be changed to read April 25--May 5 to October 5-15. For the third consecutive year this species was seen after the 20th of October; the two latest reports, both from Caroline County, were at Denton on Oct. 17 (Mrs. Fletcher) and Concord on Oct. 21 (Carol Scudder). Northern finches were

few in number and late in arriving. There were no reports of crossbills, redpolls or Pine Grosbeaks, and only one of Pine Siskins. No Evening Grosbeaks were seen until Nov. 8. (Mrs. Alma Goldberg, Baltimore). Sparrow reports were quite routine except for a record-breaking Vesper Sparrow banded at Damsite on the late date of Nov. 21 (Mrs. Mendinball), and a Lincoln's Sparrow banded at Denton on Oct. 17--first Caroline County record (Mrs. Fletcher). Two early Snow Buntings at Gibson Island on Oct. 31 (Mrs. Henderson and Mrs. Tappan) were harbingers of an unusually good visitation by this species. A flock of 36 at Kennedyville on Nov. 9 is believed to be the first on record for Kent County (Ellsworth Knudson).

Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel

SOME EXPERIENCES IN HAND FEEDING

Virginia Marvel

When my husband makes the statement that taming wild birds to feed from the hand takes hours, and hours and hours, he speaks with authority. He is remembering the times that he left for work in the early morning seeing me stand at the living room window with outstretched hand, holding a piece of suet or sunflower seeds. Returning late in the evening he frequently finds me in the same spot. The haphazard cleaning and short-order cooking normal to our home at such times only confirm his opinion that bird watching is a time-consuming hobby.

Such patience, however, has its rewards. For me it all came about as a result of the mid-December storm of 1960, which blanketed our area with eight or nine inches of snow. The soft white flakes began to fall on Sunday morning, December 11. Birds that only a day before had scorned my offerings of food now came to the feeding area in large numbers. Cardinals, Redwinged Blackbirds, Brown-headed Cowbirds, Blue Jays, Tufted Titmice, Carolina Chickadees, a Purple Finch, a Rufous-sided Towhee, an Eastern Meadow Lark, Slate-colored Juncos, Yellow-shafted Flickers and sparrows all ate together with that anxious tolerance so common to birds in a storm. Starlings did not find the feeder until Monday and by that time the other birds were too self assured to be discouraged by their noisy clamoring.

On Sunday I contented myself with watching and feeding. A thirteen foot expanse of windows, overlooking a narrow strip of woodland, makes an ideal place for bird watching. And the rough stone ledge outside the windows provides a convenient supplementary feeding shelf to the regular feeder just a few feet away. Even in that partially sheltered part of the yard, birds found aerial navigation difficult. A down draft of wind from off the roof seemed to catch them as they came in for a landing. A White-throated Sparrow without tail feathers and another with the end of its tail solidly encased in a chunk of ice seemed to have special difficulty. A female Cardinal with a broken bill stood on the window ledge a foot or so from me and worked valiantly to crack open the sunflower seed she had so laboriously picked up.

On Monday I felt that the birds were sufficiently accustomed to my presence at the window, that I might attempt hand feeding. I fitted a piece of cardboard under the storm window, leaving an opening just large enough for my hand. A slice of soft bread, spread with peanut butter and sprinkled with mixed grain, made up my first offering. Within a matter of seconds a Tufted Titmouse helped itself to a sunflower seed and flew off with it. My first thought was that it just didn't realize what it was doing. But in no time at all the titmouse was back, again and again, until finally I found out that not one but three of them were feeding from my hand. A White-throated Sparrow came for a quick bite as did a blackbird. A chickadee came, but lost its courage when the seed it had chosen seemed too deeply embedded in the peanut butter. A Blue Jay was not so easily discouraged. Grasping the tough crust he tugged in a most determined manner until the morsel came loose.

Mindful lest my presence at the window scare some of the more timid birds, I decided to make my appearances brief. But when I extended my hand again, from time to time during the day, the titmice came freely without hesitation. It seemed that as far as they were concerned I had it made.

On Tuesday morning I was back at my post. As on the previous day the titmice came promptly and repeatedly. A flicker fed up and down the length of the sill but made no attempt to jump up on my hand. A Rusty Blackbird came and ate contentedly of the bread which I was holding. When he had completely satisfied himself from the food in my hand, he hopped off, sat on the window ledge, wiped his bill thoroughly, then dropped down to the ground below.

Thinking that I could not rightly hope for more excitement in one day I was just about to leave the window when it happened! Suddenly and without warning I had a Mourning Dove in my hand. Whether he hopped up from the sill or down from the roof I do not know. It happened so quickly. Although the bread, peanut butter and assorted grain were still there he made no attempt to eat. Instead he slept. He simply sat there, his feet clutching my gloved hand and slept. His eyes opened and closed at intervals but if he was aware of me standing there he gave no notice. Terribly anxious to have him find the food I rotated my hand ever so slightly. He took a few inquisitive pecks at the snap fastener on my glove and went back to his dozing. Although it was bitterly cold a bright sun beamed down on the whole area and perhaps he was getting some reflected warmth from the window panes. Perhaps he was just too tired to care. I do not know. After a while he hopped unhurriedly off my hand and on down to the ground below where he did find food and ate with the other birds.

My clock would have me believe that the whole experience lasted about four minutes. I know better. For me, at least, time stood still while that little exhausted wanderer accepted the rest and shelter which I so gladly gave.

SIX-YEAR-OLD SLATE-COLORED JUNCO RETRAPPED AT MONKTON

Stephen W. Simon

On Nov. 25, 1960, my Mother, Mrs. Andrew Simon, retrapped a Slate-colored Junco (*Junco hyemalis*) that I had banded at Bluemount Nurseries near Monkton on Oct. 27, 1954. This bird, number 24-03024, had previously returned to my traps on Oct. 24, 1955, Nov. 23, 1956, and Mar. 6, 1957. My Monkton banding summary (Maryland Birdlife 16:2-10) shows that 5.8% of my wintering juncos returned the first winter after banding, and 3.1% the second winter after banding. None were recaptured the third winter after banding, but only 64 wintering juncos had an opportunity to be captured after this interval because I stopped banding at Monkton when I moved to Ohio in 1958. The return of junco number 24-03024 after an interval of a little more than six years is the oldest record of any of the 4,961 birds of 87 species that I banded at Monkton from the spring of 1954 through the summer of 1958.

R. D. 2, Box 264, Ashland, Ohio

TRIP RECORD, MARCH 4, 1961

Susanne Michel

On Saturday March 4, some members of the Junior Audubon Club went on a duck walk led by Doug Hackman.

First, we went to a point on the Gunpowder just where it reaches the bay. We saw a few domestic Canada Geese. Also we spotted a Red-bellied Woodpecker.

The first ducks we saw were a few stray pairs of Mallards. Then in the distance some huge flocks of Ruddy Ducks flew down. We surveyed them and among them was a pair of Canvasbacks, Black Ducks, and one American Widgeon. Here and there away from other ducks were Horned and Pied-billed Grebes. Along the opposite shore we could hear swans, but because of the heavy fog we couldn't see them. Just as we were heading toward the cars, we spotted two Savannah Sparrows.

Our second stop was a hike around the woods behind Doug Hackman's house. We saw a Barred Owl nest and many owl pellets containing bones of small animals.

Our last stop was at a reservoir farther north. The first ducks we saw very clearly were Ring-necked; then some Mallards and Wood Ducks flew over. One lone duck swimming around we identified as a female goldeneye. High in the sky a Sparrow Hawk flew over. All in all, we had a very learned day seeing many birds that we hadn't known before.

6 Lombardy Place, Towson 4.

TELEPHONE WIRES FATAL TO A SNIPE

Marvin W. Hewitt

In September 1960 I took this picture of a Common Snipe (Capella gallinago) that had flown into a bundle of telephone wires at Burrsville, Maryland. Evidently the bird hit the wires with such force that its bill became firmly embedded, preventing escape. The impact of the bird hitting the wires carried it over to the opposite side, causing the bill to break.



Greensboro

BOOK REVIEW

Terres, John K. THE WONDERS I SEE. J.B.Lippincott Co., Phila. & N.Y. \$5

Nature comes to life in your backyard. You realize that under the surface of apparently drab, or at least ordinary happenings, a real drama is occurring. Instead of just a mass of ants wandering over the cement walk there is really a unique organization of a group of insects all intent on a specific task in their really complex lives.

Naturalist John Terres inspires a growing awareness, in The Wonders I See, of the animal, bird, insect and reptile kingdoms. In daily accounts of observations of "nature in action" Mr. Terres transforms the ordinary activities of these animals into informative stories revealing the answers to millions of the tiny mysteries in nature that puzzle many people. In one instance there is offered a solution to the strange disappearance of thousands of song birds during migration. Then the tree toad is presented in a close-up into his usual habits of living. The skunks and squirrels are given a spot-light on their private family lives. And even the microscopic mites and insects have revealing oddities to interest an average scientific mind.

The information accorded by Mr. Terres in The Wonders I See is fact recorded from actual visual study of these many facets of nature in their natural environments. - - Pan Minke.

BILLIE TAYLOR AWARDED HELEN B. MILLER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Mrs. Gordon Taylor of Frostburg, Md. has been awarded the Helen B. Miller Audubon Nature Camp Scholarship for 1961. She has been on the staff of the Junior Nature Camp at Pleasant Valley for thirteen years. Mrs. Taylor has always been a very active member of the Allegany Chapter. The Scholarship Committee feels she is thoroughly qualified and is confident that she will be a fine representative of M.O.S. at the Audubon Camp of her choice.

NEW MEMBERS

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 Wilson, Charles M., 801 Bond Mill Road, Laurel, Md.
 Wright, Miss E. E., R. D. 3, Box 69, Aberdeen, Md.

* * * * *

On April 6, 1961, our Society lost one of its most esteemed members, Dr. George R. Fessenden of 1703 Northern Parkway, Baltimore. Dr. Fessenden was one of the most influential persons in helping our Society acquire an office and the bird trail at Cylburn Park. He will be long remembered by our club for his untiring work and devotion to Cylburn.

CONSERVATION NEWS

Space does not permit a full report. The items mentioned in the December issue are virtually unchanged. Good measures still beg for popular support. For further information on current legislation contact Mrs. J. E. M. Wood, 101 Old Crossing Lane, Annapolis.

SANCTUARY NEWS

Rock Run Sanctuary now has a back porch that the Landlord, Mr. Paul, had built for us. We have finished clearing and marking two bird trails, planted three hundred white pine seedlings, and erected a Purple Martin house. The Sanctuary is being widely used by local chapters, junior groups, and college students.

PLEASE REPORT ALL MARYLAND NESTS

The M. O. S. maintains a file of nesting records of Maryland birds. We wish to have a card for every nest you find and for every record of young birds just out of the nest. Information on subsequent visits to nests is desirable, but not essential; so please submit cards for nests visited once as well as for those studied more intensively.

Dates for submission of material for publication

"Do it now" is the best policy. The earlier your articles, notes, observations, reports, photos and other material are received, the easier it is for the editorial staff to make the best use of them. If convenient, type all material double spaced, 72 strokes to the line.

<u>Material</u>	<u>Send to</u>	<u>Date due</u>
Feature articles	Editor	15th Jan., Apr., July, Oct.
Short articles	Editor	1st Feb., May, Aug., Nov.
Notes for Season report	Editor	1st Feb., May, Aug., Nov.
Coming Events	Membership Sec'y	10th Feb., May, Aug., Nov.
New Members	Membership Sec'y	10th Feb., May, Aug., Nov.
County lists	Compiler	10th of January
Christmas Bird Counts	Editor	10th of January
State-wide Bird Count	Compiler	Annual Convention
Annual Chapter reports	Editor	Annual Convention
Nest records	Compiler	10th of October

M A R Y L A N D B I R D L I F E

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to Record and Encourage the Study of Birds in Maryland

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COMING EVENTS

- May 12 - 14 ANNUAL STATEWIDE CONVENTION at Ocean City, Md.
- May 17 BALTIMORE trip to Woodstock, Md. Meet Woodstock Bridge 8 a.m. Leader: Mrs. Carl B. Lubbert.
- May 20 KENT trip to Rock Run Sanctuary. Meet foot of High St. 9 a.m. Bring lunch.
- May 20 BALTIMORE walk at Cylburn. Meet 7 a.m. Bird banding demonstration. Leaders: Misses Ann Taylor and Betsy Schaffer.
- May 25 PATUXENT monthly meeting. Laurel City Hall, 7:45 p.m. "Bird Song" by Chandler S. Robbins.
- May 27 SOLDIERS DELIGHT trip to Soldiers Delight. Meet Sight #1 on Dolfield Road 9 a.m.
- May 27 BALTIMORE walk at Cylburn. Meet 8 a.m. Leader: Mrs. Elmer Worthley.
- May 27 PATUXENT trip to Patuxent Research Center, 5:30-8:30 a.m. Meet 9th and Montgomery Sts., Laurel. Leader: Melvin Kleen.
- June 1 FREDERICK monthly meeting, C. Burr Artz Library, 8 p.m. Dr. Bertram Haines will speak on "Florida Wildlife and Flora"
- June 1 PATUXENT evening trip to Patuxent Research Center. Meet 9th and Montgomery Sts., Laurel, 6:30 p.m. Leader: Brooke Meanley.
- June 2 BALTIMORE monthly meeting. Social get-together at Cylburn. Meet 8 p.m. Cylburn Mansion.
- June 3 KENT evening bird walk and covered dish supper followed by business meeting. Slides of past birdwalks and Ocean City meetings. Meet Damsite, home of Mr. & Mrs. Edward Mendin hall.
- June 3 PATUXENT Junior Audubon Club at "Robbins Nest", Laurel, 8:45 to 11:45 a.m. First of five summer meetings.
- June 3 SOLDIERS DELIGHT trip to Carroll County. Meet 8:30 a.m. Forest Inn parking lot on Westminster Road. Bring lunch.
- June 3 BALTIMORE walk at Cylburn. Meet 7 a.m. Leader: Chas. Buchanan.
- June 9 - 12 STATEWIDE ADULT WEEKEND at Pleasant Valley, Garrett County, Western Maryland, 4-H Center, Route 495. Mail reservations to Mrs. Richard Douglass, 511 Talbot St., Cumberland. Telephone: PA.2-7748. Registration after 6 p.m. Friday.
- June 13- 17 ALLEGANY JUNIOR NATURE AND CONSERVATION CAMP, Pleasant Valley. Clubs wishing to send representatives contact Miss Nan Livingston, 513 Memorial Ave., Cumberland, telephone: PA.4-4905.
- June 16 FREDERICK picnic and walk along tow path at Seneca.
- June 16- 18 BALTIMORE JUNIOR NATURE CAMP at Camp Woodbine, Woodbine, Md. Campers should have completed the 5th grade and should not have entered the 10th grade. Fee: \$11. The three days will be devoted entirely to nature study. Applicants should apply with Mrs. N. K. Schaffer, 8 Beechdale Road, Baltimore 10. Telephone: TU.9-0065.
- June 22 PATUXENT picnic, Scott's Cove, Rocky Gorge Reservoir, 6 p.m.
- July 8 SOLDIERS DELIGHT trip to Angel Bog, Gibson Island. Meet 9 a.m. Painters Mill Road off Reisterstown Road. Bring lunch and swim suit.
- July 23 SOLDIERS DELIGHT trip to Patapsco State Park. Meet 2 p.m. on Merriottsville Road.
- Aug. 5 PATUXENT trip to Sandy Point, 6 a.m. to 1 p.m. Meet 9th and Montgomery Sts., Laurel. Leader: B. C. Getchell.

MARYLAND BIRDLIFE

Bulletin of the Maryland Ornithological Society, Inc.

Cylburn Mansion, 4915 Greenspring Ave., Baltimore 9, Md.



Volume 17

JUNE 1961

Number 2

THE MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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Active membership (adults)	\$ 2.00 plus local chapter dues
Junior " (under 18 years)	.50 plus local chapter dues
Sustaining membership	5.00 plus local chapter dues
Life membership	100.00 (payable in 4 annual installments)
Out-of-state membership	2.00 (MARYLAND BIRDLIFE only)

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