

THE MIGRANT

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL
DEVOTED TO TENNESSEE BIRDS

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THE MIGRANT

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THE MOCKINGBIRD, STATE BIRD-ELECT

By BEN B. COFFEY



The Mockingbird! What a poetic picture is contained in the mention of that single name! Known by all of us, a friend of man near the cabin in the cotton or in the city yard, masterful and brave, graceful and inspired, and one of the most remarkable and versatile song birds of the world, this high-born Southerner is an ideal choice for Tennessee's state bird.

The Mocker is a beautiful bird to one who knows him intimately, as graceful actions and personality make up for sombreness of color. He is about the size of a robin but more slender. The plain light gray of his costume is enlivened by large white wing bars and outer tail feathers which show conspicuously in flight. A familiar sight along roads and around our homes, the Mockingbird may nest along the hedge rows, but generally he builds close about our homes. Dense thickets or bushes, thorn trees, or vines are preferred. The rather bulky nest holds 4 or 5 blue, brown-spotted eggs. Its chief enemy during nesting or any other season is the cat—the stray or the well-fed pet. They will bravely defend their nests against any intruder and are a

match for nearly all birds, large or small. This species is one of our most beneficial birds, economically speaking, but who would wish to evaluate this master musician in terms of bugs and weed seeds? If fruit is occasionally molested, plant enough for yourself and your Mockers as well.

Edward H. Forbush, the famous New England bird authority, wrote: "The Mockingbird stands unrivaled. He is the king of song. . . . He equals and excels the whole feathered choir and improves upon most of the notes that he reproduces." The wonderful originality of the Mocker's own song is also commented upon. The inspired ecstasy and energy the bird puts into the performance in spring, holds the observer spellbound and the beauty of setting and song on warm moonlight nights appeals to the poet that is in each of us. The song is much superior to that of the Nightingale of Europe, according to no less an authority than Audubon.

The Mockingbird is common thruout Tennessee, being chiefly non-migratory. In the southwestern part of the state, where it is one of the most abundant breeding species, the song period extends thruout the year; elsewhere, 9 to 10 months of the year. Already the state bird for Texas, Arkansas, Mississippi, Florida and Louisiana, its selection by Tennessee will accentuate the fact that this famed songster is truly a Southern favorite.

Memphis, Tenn.

NOTE: The above article is one of 15 which appeared during the campaign.—Ed.

THE "STATE BIRD" CAMPAIGN

By WAYLAND HAYES

In the December issue of *The Migrant*, the President of the Tennessee Ornithological Society, Mr. Ben B. Coffey of Memphis, stated that Tennessee was one of the five states which had not selected a state bird, and that it was desirable that such a symbol be chosen. Because he regarded the Tennessee Ornithological Society as the logical and authoritative group to deal with the matter, he outlined the purpose, suggested a program, and appointed a committee for an educational campaign and popular selection of a representative State Bird. He declared the value of the campaign to be, "not so much the having of an official emblem, but in taking this opportunity to awaken an interest in birds and their value on the part of the average person." He proposed that fifteen suitable birds be selected as candidates, and that all avenues of publicity be used to make these candidates known. He appointed a campaign committee, consisting of Dr. George R. Mayfield, Nashville, Chairman, who was assisted by R. A. Wilson, Nashville; John Bamberg, Knoxville; Miss Jacqueline Hall, Memphis; and Bruce P. Tyler, Johnson City.

The results of such a far-reaching educational venture cannot be measured, but it is now time for a brief review of the campaign and a tentative evaluation of its accomplishment. Although members of the Tennessee Ornithological Society in different parts of the State gave devoted support and although many agencies cooperated fully, the thorough-going success of the campaign is primarily due to the fine vision and sustained effort of the chairman. He stimulated the interest and co-ordinated the work of the many agencies participating in the work.

The campaign began when the three chapters of the Society considered many claimants and finally nominated 15 candidates. In general the bases for nomination were state-wide distribution, beauty and distinctiveness of marking and song, economic value, and permanent and nesting residence. The candidates were: Mockingbird, Robin, Cardinal, Bluebird, Wood Thrush, Chickadee, Bewick Wren, Pileated Woodpecker, Flicker, Brown Thrasher, Field Sparrow, Sparrow Hawk, Towhee, Meadowlark, and Bob-white. Excellent drawings of the candidates were made by John Cross of the Nashville Banner and zinc etchings of these were made for use in the various newspapers. These drawings, accompanied by descriptive articles written by members of the Society, were published in seven of the leading daily newspapers located in the cities of the State. These articles and much other information relative to birds appeared also in the weekly papers. Educational comment was frequent and widespread, and the extent of newspaper interest was further indicated by reference to the campaign in feature columns and in cartoons.

The State Department of Fish and Game, through its able Commissioner, Damon Headden, gave enthusiastic moral support and supplied much material assistance as well. By the aid of this Department, the Department of Education, and the Parent-Teacher Association, nearly all schools in the State were reached. Activities, including field trips, discussion, reading, collecting books and pamphlets, hearing lectures and observing State Bird Day, were outlined and sent to all schools in the State. After such activities it was possible for children to base their choice of State Bird on actual information. It is significant to record the fact that the Governor's proclamation regarding the observation of Bird Day was read in nearly all schools. Garden Clubs throughout the State were intensely interested, and one of their chief publications, the *Southeastern Flower Grower*, made favorable editorial comment relative to the conduct of the campaign. Posters and window displays were used in several cities, so that thousands upon the streets paused and were probably stimulated to learn more about birds and come to appreciate them

more deeply. Radio stations were generous in allowing members of the Society to present interesting material and suggest activities relative to the campaign.

It might not be out of place to state that the campaign had its humorous side, and many a wise crack must have been born out of it. In view of current beer legislation, one man suggested the Swallow. One editor would choose the Stork, and another the Dodo, while still another thought the Cuckoo would be an excellent emblem. The Jay, because of his skill in taking care of himself at the expense of others, was offered for consideration.

Since over a million people were reached by one means or another, it may be said that many thousands came to know much more about their bird neighbors and acquired their first experience in looking for birds and listening to their songs. Undoubtedly, the appreciation of song and beauty has been deepened, interest has been directed, and conservation has been promoted. The Tennessee Ornithological Society will probably wish to continue the education which was so successfully begun. A follow-up program may soon be undertaken.

A final count of the votes cast showed that the Mockingbird received the greatest number with 15,553, followed by the Robin with 15,073, Cardinal 13,969, Bob-white 10,460, Bluebird 9,125, and all others 8,751, a total of 72,931. The counting of the huge ballot was handled by the State Department of Fish and Game. As *The Migrant* goes to press, legislation is being presented to make the choice of the Mockingbird legal and official.

Nashville, Tenn.



TWO MARCH DAYS AT MULLINS COVE

By ALBERT F. GANIER

The Tennessee River in cutting its winding way through Walden's Ridge has formed one of the most picturesque canyons east of the Mississippi. Varicolored sandstone cliffs, which form almost an unbroken escarpment along the plateau's brow, yield an interesting skyline for the heavily wooded slopes which meet the great river below. For thirty-five miles the stream winds its course with no level land on either side, for what formerly did exist has been flooded with the back water from the Hale's Bar power dam. The few inhabitants who formerly lived along the river have nearly all moved away, and the area north of it, many miles deep in rough, wooded and uninhabited country, forms a stage ideally set for the restoration and conservation of wild life in its primitive state. The scenic gem of this canyon is Mullin's Cove, for here great mountain spurs converge, each fringed with high palisades which look down upon a mirroring lake of 400 acres formed by the water having backed up into the mouth of the Cove.

On March 5 it was the writer's pleasure to visit this picturesque spot in company with and as the guest of Dr. W. H. Cheney of Chattanooga, whose vision a few years ago led to the organization of a club of prominent men from that nearby city, to take over the area for conservation purposes, build a club house, purchase 2,000 acres of land and secure rights to 25,000 more for use as a game refuge. As a starter toward restocking the area, twenty-two deer have been acquired, also three elk and 300 Ring-necked Pheasants. When the Nashville Zoo was disbanded, several bear and three llama were purchased and the latter present an odd sight when one comes across them in the open woodlands. Of great interest is the fact that here are to be found many Wild Turkey, for in this favorable locality they have managed to persist and to increase considerably because of the protection that has

been given them during the past few years. Bill McNabb, local game warden and overseer of the preserve, estimates that there are at least 150 turkeys nearby, which doubtless represents by far the largest assemblage of these now rare birds in any Tennessee locality. A two-hour hike before lunch time enabled us to inspect and climb among the great cliffs and view the panorama far below us. Their elevation is about 1,800 feet above sea level, while the river flows 1,100 feet below their crest. McNabb pointed out where he trapped the Golden Eagle, about the middle of February, 1930, and of which Dr. Sanborn wrote in *The Migrant* for December, 1932. This point was about two miles up the Cove from the river and opposite a continuous line of cliffs, at some places more than 100 feet in height. The eagle had been surprised late one afternoon at the carcass of a small pig which it was believed he had killed. Four traps were set early the next morning, and when revisited at noon he was found a captive. One toe was noted at the time to be missing. At that date this eagle would appear to have been "settled" for the breeding season, and since the environment is all that this species could wish for, a pair doubtless nest in this locality. At the mouth of Shoal Creek, five miles east, H. C. Monk and the writer saw a Golden Eagle close at hand on March 29, 1925, and several others have been reported killed near Chattanooga. The Bald Eagle, too, is represented at Mullins Cove. In May, 1932, McNabb wrote me that several were to be seen almost daily there. On my visit of March 5, I had the pleasure of seeing one, in all dark plumage, patrolling the drift which the current was piling up in the willows at the river's edge. McNabb told me that he had observed a pair, engaging in courtship flight, about two weeks previous, one at least, with white head and tail. He later reported that on March 20 he observed the white-headed one again, soaring above the lake. From the motor boat, on the lake and river, we listed a Great Blue Heron, several Double-crested Cormorants, and many hundred ducks.

On March 26, Dr. Geo. R. Mayfield, my son Albert, Jr., and the writer spent an interesting day in the Cove. Having arrived the day before, we were able to be afield by 7 a. m., and made our way up the slope toward the cliffs above Dry Creek. Heavy stands of pine were encountered frequently and we kept a close lookout for Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, one of the rarer species we had hoped to record, but without success. A backward season found the deciduous trees still entirely bare of leaves, but plants were a-bloom under foot, among which were birds-foot, blue and yellow violets, and trailing arbutus. At several points we came across patches of wild ginger with buds appearing between the broad evergreen leaves and, clinging to the cliffs, the evergreen yellow jessamine vine was showing its yellow blossoms. As we neared the top, a Duck Hawk shot down along the cliffs, giving vent to its noisy cry and we checked off another rare bird we had hoped to see. A short distance around the point we reached what we believed to be his eyrie; a massive red, broken-faced cliff in which there was a cave-like pocket which showed signs of usage. On a projecting rock at the top of the cliff we found bones and feathers of the Flicker, Cardinal and a small woodpecker, all evidences peculiar to the eyrie of this falcon. On bushes nearby we found bits of the breast down of a brooding raptore. Further on, as we rounded another point, a Black Vulture flapped noisily and with hissing protest from a cave in the cliff, and on descending into it we found two fresh eggs. No others were seen, but several pairs of Turkey Vultures hung along the escarpment and threw their shadows in front of us to let us know we were being watched. Another dweller of the cliff was a magnificent Red-tailed Hawk, which soared and wheeled about with but little fear. At this date his mate was probably incubating her eggs. Under and in the cliffs we found large piles of acorns and hickory nuts, from most of which the contents had been removed; this was probably the work of cliff rats. Time prevented a care-

ful search of the escarpments, particularly those which extended for some miles up Mullin's Cove, and in which we had had hopes of finding the eyrie of a Golden Eagle, so we have promised ourselves another visit to the place. A short time spent at the shore of the lake and on our return in the motor boat, resulted in the listing of Double-crested Cormorant 2, Golden-eye Duck 1, Lesser Scaup Duck, a pair; Great Blue Heron 1, and an Osprey. McNabb said the latter had nested nearby for some years and showed us a large chestnut tree in which last year's nest had been built. Our list for the day comprised 41 species.

Nashville, Tenn., March, 1933.



CHRISTMAS CENSUS, 1932

Location.	Nashville, Tenn.		Memphis, Tenn.	Paris, Tenn.	Shiloh Park, Penn.	Johnson City, Tenn.	Corinth, Miss.	Bowling Green, Ky.
	Dec. 26	Dec. 25	Dec. 26	Dec. 26	Jan. 1	Dec. 20	Dec. 26	
Date	Dec. 26	Dec. 25	Dec. 26	Dec. 26	Jan. 1	Dec. 20	Dec. 26	
Number of species	66	54	31	42	35	29	48	
Number of individuals	5244	2204	283	7982	817	176	7687	
Number of observers	15	5	6	9	2	1	4	
Pied-billed Grebe	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	
Canada Goose	--	6	--	--	--	--	43	
Mallard	87	3	--	--	--	--	--	
Black Duck	80	--	--	--	--	--	--	
Gadwall	7	--	--	--	--	--	--	
Lesser Scaup	68	12	--	--	--	--	--	
Ring-necked Duck	140	9	--	--	--	--	--	
Canvasback	3	--	--	2	--	--	--	
Golden-eye	4	--	--	--	--	--	--	
Baldpate	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	
American Merganser	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	
Bufflehead Duck	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	
Turkey Vulture	--	2	3	10	4	--	6	
Black Vulture	6	1	--	3	4	--	22	
Cooper's Hawk	--	--	1	--	1	1	--	
Red-tailed Hawk	4	1	--	2	1	--	1	
Red-shouldered Hawk	2	1	1	--	--	--	--	
Marsh Hawk	--	--	--	1	--	--	4	
Sparrow Hawk	19	5	--	--	2	1	9	
Bobwhite	56	8	--	12	--	--	11	
Coot	86	--	--	--	--	--	--	
Killdeer	47	3	1	1	6	1	--	
Wilson's Snipe	1	2	--	--	--	--	--	
Herring Gull	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	
Ring-billed Gull	1*	--	--	--	--	--	--	
Herring or Ring-billed Gull	--	12	--	--	--	--	--	
Mourning Dove	73	--	35	15	8	1	60	
Screech Owl	2	--	1	--	--	--	--	
Barred Owl	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	
Great Horned Owl	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	
Kingfisher	3	1	--	--	--	--	--	
Flicker	53	40	--	25	2	9	25	
Pileated Woodpecker	10	--	--	1	--	3	2	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	22	30	--	20	1	4	10	
Red-headed Woodpecker	1	24	7	24	--	--	26	

THE MIGRANT

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	4	2	9	3	---	---	1
Hairy Woodpecker	6	2	4	---	---	2	2
Downy Woodpecker	36	15	5	8	20	---	24
Prairie Horned Lark	25	---	---	---	25	---	466
Blue Jay	46	125	13	42	20	5	74
Crow	105	11	15	12	14	---	1250
Carolina Chickadee	117	40	12	24	10	6	131
Tufted Titmouse	61	26	5	16	15	---	89
White-breasted Nuthatch	4	---	3	3	1	---	8
Brown Creeper	4	8	1	1	---	1	6
Winter Wren	4	3	1	1	1	3	3
Bewick Wren	5	---	---	---	---	---	7
Carolina Wren	59	70	2	15	25	3	45
Mockingbird	135	40	14	8	20	1	28
Brown Thrasher	---	2	---	---	---	1	---
Robin	478	75	1	30	40	20	119
Hermit Thrush	9	1	3	2	---	3	6
Bluebird	116	20	15	40	10	15	69
Golden-crowned Kinglet	11	25	---	12	---	3	7
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	---	1	---	---	---	1	---
Cedar Waxwing	43	4	---	---	---	35	---
Migrant Shrike	2	---	---	---	1	---	---
Loggerhead Shrike	---	5	---	---	---	---	---
Starling	1620	8**	---	---	400	---	3800
Myrtle Warbler	26	31	---	5	28	---	4
Meadow Lark	89	90	1	105	10	4	86
Red-wing Blackbird	---	15	---	6	---	---	1
Rusty Blackbird	---	20	---	2000†	---	---	6
Bronzed Grackle	240	340	3	5000	---	---	27
Cowbird	20	1	---	---	---	---	---
Cardinal	239	75	21	24	28	5	140
Purple Finch	3	---	---	---	---	---	58
Goldfinch	37	50	2	20	20	---	132
Towhee	58	18	5	18	6	5	62
Savannah Sparrow	9	---	---	---	---	---	1
Fox Sparrow	9	4	1	1	---	1	---
Slate-colored Junco	278	100	65	250	40	20	890
Field Sparrow	75	21	---	36	4	6	8
Tree Sparrow	---	---	---	---	---	---	167
Chipping Sparrow	1*	1	---	3	---	---	---
White-crowned Sparrow	42	---	---	---	15	---	48
White-throated Sparrow	294	730	16	130	8	12	41
Swamp Sparrow	9	1	---	1	---	2	31
Song Sparrow	103	70	17	50	20	3	131
House Sparrow	35	---	---	---	10	---	---

*On Dec. 25. **On Dec. 21. †One flock. — Present, but not counted.

NASHVILLE: Semicircular area southeast of Nashville from the Gallatin Road to the Harding Pike, including Cumberland River bottom above Shelby Park; Knapp Farm, Radnor (84-acre) Lake, Granny White and Hillsboro Pike area, Warner Park, Belle Meade, Mest Meade and city suburbs, including Mrs. Laskey's and Mrs. Cochran's banding stations. Observers: G. R. Mayfield, H. R. Caldwell, Ernest Spain and Harry Monk; A. F. Ganier, Wayland and Jack Hayes; George Woodring, McTyiere Yarbrough, Vernon Sharp, Jr.; J. M. Shaver, H. S. Vaughn, Mrs. Arch Cochran, Mrs. F. C. Laskey, Mrs. Sanford Duncan.

MEMPHIS: December 25, 10 hours, fair, temperature 53-65; Raleigh, Wolf

River Bottoms, National Cemetery, points in city, Mississippi River front, Riverside Park, Piney Woods, Airport, Overton Park. Dr. LeRoy up river in motor boat. Ben B. Coffey, Jr., and Mrs. Coffey, Dr. Louis LeRoy, Henry Turner and Jack Embury.

SHILOH NATIONAL MILITARY PARK, TENN.: Dec. 26, 8 hours, overcast; temperature, 38-44, southeast of Pines Rest Hotel, ravine south of Pittsburgh Landing at Tennessee River, through park to Snake Creek. Mr. and Mrs. B. B. Coffey, Jr., R. Reinert, J. Embury and H. Turner (Memphis), Benjamin Warriner, Elgin Wright, C. Wigginton and J. Galyean, Jr. (Corinth).

PARIS, TENN.: December 26, 8 hours, clear; temperature, 42-46. North from Paris to Hill Top, west to Country Club, southwest to Fishing Club Lake, south to Jernigan Farm, etc. Buster Thompson, Paul R. Crosswy, Scouts R. Reynolds, F. Morris, E. Willoughby and W. Richardson.

JOHNSON CITY, TENN., AND VICINITY: Jan. 1, 1933; all day. Bruce P. Tyler and Robert B. Lyle.

CORINTH, MISS. (about 4 miles south of Tennessee line): December 20, 5 hours, cloudy; about 6 miles on foot, in area about Lake Waukomis. Benjamin R. Warriner.

BOWLING GREEN, KY. (about 22 miles north of Tenn. line): December 26, 6 a. m. to 5 p. m. Messrs. Gordon Wilson, Lancaster, Taylor and Jones.



REVIEW:—The appearance of a new state list is always a noteworthy event to bird students. In the last few years a number of these lists have been published by other states, some of them on quite an elaborate scale. Now we have an up-to-date summary of our own bird life from the pen of Mr. Ganier. This 64-page pamphlet, entitled, "A Distributional List of the Birds of Tennessee,"* gives data on 302 kinds of birds. This number includes twenty species that have not yet been found within the state but are considered by the author to belong to our fauna. Also included are three species now extinct, but of historical interest; four forms that have wandered to Tennessee from distant regions, and two kinds of game birds, introduced by sportsmen. Under each species are brief notes on its status, arranged in three columns, one for each grand division of the state. This method of presenting data is very compact, and greatly facilitates reference.

Following the list proper there are 17 pages devoted to discussion of various topics of interest, as the headings will show: Geographic Regions, Economic Importance, Regarding Hawks and Owls, A Word about Buzzards, Pests among Birds, Enemies of Birds, Are Birds Becoming Scarcer?, How to Attract Birds, Bird Houses, The Study of Birds, Government Publications, Other Literature, Migration, Enlisting the Interest of Young People, More Game Birds, State Parks and Sanctuaries. An index completes the work.

This list is "Tennessee Avifauna No. 1," and a second number of this series, from the same author, has also appeared, entitled "Water Birds of Reelfoot Lake, Tennessee."† There are 59 species treated in this paper, which is illustrated with a map of the region and 5 photographic plates showing views in the colonies of water birds. Tennesseans, especially those who live in the upland and mountainous parts of the state, should find this list of considerable interest, as it treats of a type of bird life all too rare in our state. It is interesting to know that Tennessee possesses what is probably the largest colony of Egrets in the interior of the continent.—H. C. Monk.

*Tennessee Avifauna, No. 1. "A Distributional List of the Birds of Tennessee," by Albert F. Ganier, Jan., 1933, pp. 1-64. Price, 50c.

†Tennessee Avifauna, No. 2. "Water Birds of Reelfoot Lake," by Albert F. Ganier, Feb., 1933, pp. 1-24 illust. price 35c. Both published by the Tennessee Ornithological Society, at Nashville.

THE ROUND TABLE

THE SEASON AT MEMPHIS: The sleet and ice which did such severe damage to the trees within about 90 miles of Memphis, Dec. 14-17, brought Starlings here in small numbers. Earl Henry had reported two small flocks in early December and on the 21st I noticed 6 of them with a few Meadowlarks. On our Christmas census trips we failed to find any, despite a special search. Our second and last cold spell, which occurred about the first week of February, brought larger flocks, and I had several inquiries about the "strange bird." A flock of about a thousand tried to roost in the vines and under the eaves of a house and in nearby bushes. Mrs. Coffey saw a flock temporarily alighting on the Columbian Mutual tower downtown, and Mr. B. L. Mallory reported large flocks in and among dwelling rows in South Memphis.

For the first year, as far as I know, a few Chipping Sparrows have spent the winter with us. The sight of four Lesser Yellowlegs at the Lakeview (Miss.) barrow pit moved up my earliest date for this spring migrant from March 17 to March 5. My records on shore-birds are incomplete at present. Other arrivals are: March 18, Purple Martin (1931-2-3); 19th, Rough Winged Swallow, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (in numbers), Black-throated Green and Sycamore Warblers, Louisiana Water Thrush and American Egret; 23rd, Chimney Swift; 25th, Pectoral Sandpiper (50 at Somerville, Tenn., airport); 26th, Black-and-White Warbler (at Savannah, Tenn.); 28th, Yellow-throated Vireo; April 2, Tree Swallow (12), Green Heron (1), and Parula Warbler. 3rd, Hooded Warbler; 4th, White-eyed Vireo and Wood Thrush. I expect migrants to arrive earlier than usual this season.

The Lakeview barrow pit, which dried up last summer, is about two-thirds full, but most of the old weed stalks were burned off. However, three Pied-billed Grebes were seen there on April 2nd, and perhaps they may nest there again. No Rails were seen, very little cover being afforded them at present.

Local members meeting April 10th and 24th (every second and fourth Monday) will soon plan a field trip for Lakeview in early May. Several will attend the Reelfoot Lake meeting of the Tennessee Academy of Science and a trip to Horseshoe Lake, Ark., is planned for April 9th. An all-day search for the Brown-headed Nuthatch in the pines southeast and south of Savannah, Tenn., failed of its objective. Mr. B. R. Warriner found five March 20th, and two March 24th, at Waukomis Lake, near Corinth, Miss., which is about four miles south of the Tennessee line.—Ben B. Coffey, Jr., Memphis.

STARLINGS AT DYERSBURG: I had never seen a Starling before, but one morning about the 17th of December, one appeared at my feeding shelf outside the window, and immediately after I had identified it, others came by the dozens. Then my friends began to phone to see if I knew what the "strange bird" was. Evidently it was an unusual occurrence, for nobody here had seen them before. One man said that there were at least 300 on his lawn that day, and another said that they were in droves at his place. They came in numbers to my sister's lawn and fed on her bird table for three days. Then they disappeared as suddenly as they had come, and not even a straggler remained.—Mrs. J. S. Scott, Dyersburg.

LAUGHING GULL AND OTHERS AT KNOXVILLE: On Sept. 18, last, a group of our local observers made a census for the day and had the good luck to list 72 species of birds. Part of the time was spent upon gravel bars at Baker's Shoals on the Tennessee River, which were much exposed

on account of the very low stage of the water. Here we had the pleasure of watching a flock of 6 Laughing Gulls, *Larus atricilla*, and on account of their unexpected presence here we collected a specimen which was later mounted by S. A. Ogden for our collection. It was sent to the U. S. Biological Survey, where Mr. A. H. Howell verified the identification. They were feeding on mud flats at the edge of the gravel bars below the mouth of a sewer, and were rather unsuspecting. They had been in the vicinity since September 11 and remained until September 25. All were in winter plumage. This is a bird of the South Atlantic coast, and the present record is the first one for the State. Associated with the gulls were Lesser Yellowlegs (10), Solitary Sandpiper (15), Semipalmated Plover (1), Semipalmated Sandpiper (4), Spotted Sandpiper (6), and a number of Killdeer. A Sharp-shinned Hawk tried to flush the shorebirds, but they would not leave the ground. On December 23 a new bird was brought in and added to our collection; it was a White-winged Scoter, *Melanitta deglandi*, a female, which had been shot on the French Broad River, near here, by Robert Bolton. Miss Lucy Templeton reported a Brown Thrasher at a feeding station on February 6 and was told it had been there all winter.—Harry P. Ijams, Knoxville.

JUNCOS WITH WHITE WING-BARS IN TENNESSEE: During January and February of 1933, fifty-eight Juncos were banded at "Blossomdell Station." Among them were two birds with unusual markings and possibly the first noted in Tennessee with white wing-bars. One Junco, banded H32746, had the greater and lesser wing coverts partially tipped white, giving the appearance of two narrow, broken wing-bars. The tail had the two outer pairs of feathers entirely white; the third pair white with a long streak of dark along the shaft; and the fourth pair, dark with a very small spot of white at the tip. The other Junco mentioned, banded H32709, also had the greater and middle wing coverts edged white, but the wing-bars thus formed were clear, distinct and conspicuously white. Notes for the day describe the tail; two outer pairs of feathers white; third pair mostly white. Unfortunately, the writer failed to have the identification verified or measurements taken, but the latter bird, at least, seems to fit the description of the White-winged Junco (*Junco aikenii*). This race of Junco, according to Ridgway, breeds in Wyoming and western North Dakota; winters in Colorado, western Kansas, casually to Indiana and Wisconsin. There are also nesting records of this subspecies in the Black Hills of South Dakota (Wilson Bulletin, Vol. 42, p. 28). It is hoped future banding operations will definitely decide the status of this race of Junco in Tennessee by either recapturing these banded birds or trapping others with similar markings.—Mrs. F. C. Laskey, Nashville.

A WHITE-EYED TOWHEE AT NASHVILLE: The range of the White-eyed Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus alleni*), is only known to be Florida and northward to South Carolina, yet on Sept. 13, 1932, in the outskirts of the southwest part of Nashville it was the writer's good fortune to trap a Towhee of this description. For several days previous to the capture, in the dense undergrowth there had been heard a Towhee call of shorter duration and lighter in timbre than the usual adult call. No special significance was attributed to it until after capturing, and while adjusting band No. C-143474, the bird was found to have pale straw-colored iris and the eye itself was circled with a thin line of white feathers much like our robins. The bird, a female, repeated on Sept. 21, and was neither seen nor heard after that day. Several of our common Red-eyed Towhees were trapped at this station during the interval. Certain water birds, such as the Wood Ibis and Little Blue Heron are known to indulge regularly in a northward movement after their breeding season and a similar urge may have brought this Towhee north of its regular range.—Mrs. Ana Cochran, Nashville.

AN ALBINO JUNCO: On January 15, 1933, Mr. and Mrs. James Stokes requested us to call at their place, 18 miles southwest of Nashville, to identify a small white bird. We were told that it had arrived during the very cold spell of mid-December, and that it had been seen regularly since then, feeding in their yard, and in nearby brush patches with a number of other Juncos, Song and White-throated Sparrows. We found it shortly and noted that its actions, size and contour checked with that of the Juncos. Presently we were enabled to see its whitish bill quite distinctly, and this clinched its identity, for albinism does not affect the normal color of a bird's bill. It was truly a "Snowbird," for its plumage was entirely white except for a small slaty patch on each shoulder. The bird remained through the winter and left during the last week in March. Mr. Stokes reported that toward the last its plumage took on a light brownish cast.—G. R. Mayfield and A. F. Ganier, Nashville.

NESTING OF BLUE-WINGED AND BLACK AND WHITE WARBLERS: These records are presented, not because of the rarity of either bird, but because the nests of both species are habitually so well hidden that there are very few records of either for the Nashville region. On May 11, 1930, a nest of the Blue-winged Warbler, *Vermivora pinus*, was found near Pinhook Creek, about eleven miles northwest of Nashville. The locale was typical for the bird, a rolling hillslope covered with patches of scrubby brush, blackberry briars, and sedge. The nest was compactly built into a niche between a small clump of sedge and a clump of violets, in bloom. It contained five eggs, incubated about three days. The male bird sang constantly within a hundred feet of the brooding female, and seemed to prefer a high perch, thirty feet or more above the ground, while so engaged. An occasional singing male may be heard, usually in the Highland Rim country west of Nashville, until well into June, indicating local nesting throughout this area. A nest of the Black and White Warbler, *Mniotilta varia*, was found on May 1, 1932, near the Hyde's Ferry Road, some nineteen miles west of Nashville. The birds had chosen the crest of a lightly wooded, south-facing escarpment, looming two hundred feet above the Cumberland River, as a nesting place. The nest was half domed, placed in a crevice in a tiny rock ledge at the base of a small sprig of huckleberry. The female flushed only when the nest was almost stepped on. Then she gave as complete an exhibition of shamming and feigned lameness as the writer has ever seen. No shore bird ever put on a better performance. The male bird was feeding and singing at the foot of the cliff, some hundred and seventy-five feet below the nest site, and, though H. C. Monk and the writer had spent possibly an hour in the vicinity, he did not approach the nest until the alarm notes of the female brought him. The five eggs were found to be incubated almost to hatching, indicating an earlier extreme nest date than has heretofore been assigned this Warbler. The Black and White Warbler is a fairly common summer resident, chiefly in the upland woodlands of the Nashville region.—Compton Crook, Nashville.

A NEST OF THE GREAT HORNED OWL: In Middle Tennessee, this large owl nests in the deep woods, using old hawk nests, hollow trees, and in cliffs which border the rivers. The cliffs are also the homes of the cliff rat and it is believed that the owls catch and eat many of these rodents. On January 25, 1933, one of these birds was observed sitting on an old hawk's nest, and, not having personally collected a set of their eggs, I decided, by the aid of Vernon Sharp, to attempt the collecting of this set. The location was the Overton Hills, near Radnor Lake, five miles south of Nashville. The nest was 89 feet up in a poplar of considerable size, with no limbs up to thirty-five feet. This chanced to be the tree and nest from which Vernon took a set of Red-tailed Hawk eggs several years ago. The effort made at that time was still vivid in his memory. Although the climb was a difficult one,

Vernon was not to be bluffed after all the preparation we had made for the occasion, so he donned the belts and spurs and went to the task. After two and a half hours he returned to earth with the two round white eggs as compensation. They were incubated 5 days. Fearing lest he or someone else might be tempted to undertake the climb again, he decided to dump the old nest from its perch, which he did.—H. S. Vaughn, Nashville.

NOTES ON STARLING ROOSTS: A rough estimate of ten thousand Starlings found a roosting site around Spence Lane near the Lebanon Pike, a few miles east of Nashville, in early January. When visited on the 9th, 10th and 11th, they were found using deciduous trees, such as the oak, elm, hackberry, and a few poplars. They even roosted on the cross-bars of the nearby telephone poles. About ten of the farmers of that section made a lark of stationing themselves for two successive nights under the trees, one man to a tree, and at a given signal they fired at one time into the roosting birds. As many as forty were killed by one man. The third night of my visit the birds moved about a mile east, but on the next night they settled in Mt. Olivet and Calvary cemeteries, where they remained for over a week in more or less dense bands. While in the cemeteries they selected the evergreens as roosting sites first, then the overflow took to the bare trees. The Starling has been more abundant than usual, all during the past winter.—Mrs. Ana Cochran, Nashville.

BOB-WHITE IMPORTATIONS: During 1932, the State Department of Fish and Game imported and liberated in Tennessee about 5,700 Texas Bob-whites, more often called "Mexican Quail," because they are trapped south of the Rio Grande. In lots of from 12 to 50 they were liberated on suitable tracts, which were closed to hunting for three years. The minimum size of such tracts was 250 acres, and a total of many thousand acres, in counties throughout the State, has thus been tendered. The project was carried out at a cost of approximately \$10,000. The United States Biological Survey Report for 1927 mentions 1,058 having been released during that year, but the State Game Warden has no records prior to 1932. An additional 6,000 were imported and distributed in March, 1933, by our new State Game Warden, Mr. Damon Headden. The "Mexican Quail" is slightly smaller and has a greyish cast of plumage, as compared with our more richly-colored native stock. According to H. L. Stoddard, eminent authority on the Bob-white, they stand transplanting well and readily cross with the native birds. From the hunter's standpoint, it is claimed that they are not as satisfactory as the local species, for the reason that they are more apt to run than to "stand" before the dogs.

DICKCISSEL IN EAST TENNESSEE: In an old ornithological journal we find what appears to be the only record of the nesting of this species in that section of the State. In "The Oologist," of Utica, N. Y., for March, 1870, G. S. Smith writes as follows: "Although the Dickcissel is considered very impartial to water, I found my first nest of this species within two feet of the current of a small stream emanating from the lofty peaks of the Unaka range in Eastern Tennessee. I was following the banks, trout fishing, when my attention was attracted by a wisp of straw caught, it seems, by some previous inundation, in a species of large fern. On closer examination I found it to be a nest composed entirely of straw and woven with great labor into a homogeneous mass. In this nest, which was about six inches above the ground, lay one fresh egg, which I collected. I took another set of this species at Morristown, Tennessee, on August 1st. Its structure did not differ essentially from the first, but it was built in a bush some four feet from the ground in the center of a high pasture. It contained four eggs of an azure blue color."

OUR NEW PUBLICATIONS: Reviewed on another page one will find an outline of the contents and character of the first two numbers of Tennessee Avifauna. This series is being launched to take care of papers on the ornithology of Tennessee, too lengthy to be published in *The Migrant*. It is fitting and proper that number one in the series should be a list of the birds of the State. One or two additional numbers are already in prospect, and it is to be hoped that our members will use this medium for conveying to their co-workers suitable papers on the results of their studies and investigations. Even if we produce but one or two numbers each year, the series will be worth while. Literature on Tennessee bird life is as yet quite meager, and each of our members should order a copy of numbers one and two in order that this feature of their library may be complete. Only a very limited edition of each has been published.

CATS, ETC.: As the nesting season approaches, such birds as choose to dwell about our homes are anxiously searching for some relatively safe place in which to build their nests. Cavity nesting birds must live in dread of snakes, while those which nest in trees are confronted with the fear that greedy grackles or saucy jays will make off with their eggs. The greater portion of our home birds, however, nest in vines and shrubbery, and here their greatest enemy is the pampered house cat, which dozes by day, but becomes the cruel midnight marauder when put out the kitchen door for the night. One of our members reports three nests of a pair of Cardinals at his home broken up in succession by cats, which finally captured the female as she hovered her young. Cats may be trapped most easily using raw fish as bait, in box traps such as are used for catching rabbits. Grackles can easily be trapped on one's lawn, with pull-string or other traps.

The results of our Christmas census, printed on another page, were most gratifying. Each year this midwinter listing is looked forward to by our members with keen interest, and it serves to illustrate as nothing else can, how many birds are to be found in midwinter. The Nashville list of 64 species for one day broke the previous record of 62, made in 1927. We have included in the report two lists from just beyond our State borders.

Members who live west of the Cumberland Plateau are requested to be on the lookout for nesting pairs of Starlings and to report them to the editors.

The Annual Spring Field Day of the T. O. S. will be held at some attractive spot near Nashville, on Sunday, May 14. A state-wide attendance is hoped for. Our Knoxville Chapter will have a Field Day on April 30.

The editorial staff of *The Migrant*, for 1933, is as follows: George B. Woodring, Editor; Albert F. Ganier, Associate Editor; Vernon Sharpe, Jr., Business Manager. Regional Assistants: Ben B. Coffey, Memphis; George R. Mayfield, Nashville; H. P. Ijams, Knoxville; and Bruce P. Tyler, Johnson City.

The Migrant is sent to all members not in arrears for dues. Active membership is one dollar a year; Associate membership is fifty cents. Subscription to non-members, sixty cents. All articles, correspondence and dues should be sent to the Editor-Treasurer, G. B. Woodring, 1414 Stratton Ave., Nashville.

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