

v. 4-3

# THE MIGRANT

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL  
DEVOTED TO TENNESSEE BIRDS

Published by  
THE TENNESSEE  
ORNITHOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY



SEPTEMBER  
1933

The finest equipment, the most skilled craftsmanship, the desire to do perfect work quickly and economically—these are behind continued success of this company. Whatever your printing needs, see Rich first!

## **RICH PRINTING COMPANY**

Printers, Publishers  
Catalogues, Blank Books  
Legal Forms, Business  
Stationery

165-169 Second Avenue, North  
NASHVILLE TENNESSEE

## **CHAS. A. SCHUMACHER**

284 Halladay Street

JERSEY CITY, N. J.

Supplies and Tools for Taxidermists, Entomologists, Oologists, Furriers, Tanners and Trappers. Manufacturers of Glass Eyes for mounting birds and mammals.

Our catalog also covers books on Taxidermy, Tanning, Trapping, Fur Trade, Butterfly and Natural History Collecting, Woodcraft and Home Manufacture of Furs and Skins. Sent free if MIGRANT is mentioned.

## **GROVER N. COOK TAXIDERMIST**

3900 Charlotte Pike  
Nashville, Tennessee



I specialize in the lifelike and artistic mounting of birds.

Fish, Mammals, Heads and  
Horns also mounted.

For my work I refer you to the Tennessee State Museum, where I have mounted most of the specimens shown there.

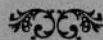
Let me quote you prices when you have mounting to be done.

## **KELLY'S PET SHOP**

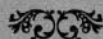
Eighth Avenue and  
Commerce Street

Nashville, Tenn.

Phone 5-2697



Canaries and Other Cage  
Birds. Pets of All  
Kinds.



We carry everything in  
stock for the care and  
comfort of your pets.

# THE MIGRANT

VOL. IV.

SEPTEMBER, 1933

No. 3

Published by the Tennessee Ornithological Society, to Record and Encourage the Study of Birds in Tennessee. Issued in March, June, September and December.

## WINTER BIRDS OF NORTHEASTERN TENNESSEE

By BRUCE P. TYLER and ROBERT B. LYLE.

—○—

*FOREWORD.* Without much doubt less attention has been devoted to birds during the winter than in any other season. One need not seek far for the reasons, since not only are climatic conditions in many localities less attractive to the bird student, but the activities of birds are more restricted, and many of the birds themselves are in garb that makes them more difficult to identify than in the spring. All this results in a greatly decreased return for the field work undertaken.

It is now recognized that the winter residence of a bird is second in importance only to its summer home, since the ability of a species to subsist in good physical condition during the winter is a necessary prerequisite to a successful breeding season.

We know all too little concerning the winter distribution of our birds, and much further investigation is, therefore, needed. Any real contribution to this end possesses scientific value. Particularly is this the case regarding the winter distribution of birds in important areas such as the State of Tennessee.

HARRY C. OBERHOLSER.

—○—

In this article the authors have tried to present a fairly good idea of the winter birds of northeastern Tennessee, embracing those known to be resident or visitors during the months of December, January and February. It is not claimed that the list is complete, but that it is accurate as far as it goes and represents the more common to comparatively rare winter birds.

Our observations have been made within a radius of thirty miles of Johnson City, which has an elevation of 1,700 feet, S. L. datum. This city lies in the valley of the Watauga River, nestling against Buffalo Mountain on the southeast, and about five hundred feet above and, say, five miles southeast of the river. To the north and west stretches the valley, mountains rising again at Clinch Mountain to the mean elevation of three thousand feet at a distance of approximately twenty-five miles from Johnson City as the crow flies. The principal mountains to the southeast are Holston, Iron, Roan and Big Bald. The latter two are on the Tennessee-North Carolina State line, approximately twenty miles distant from Johnson City, and having a maximum elevation of 6,313 on Roan Mountain. More adjacent to Johnson City are Buffalo, Cherokee and Unaka Mountains. The valley is watered by the Watauga and Holston Rivers, and approached on the south by the Nolichucky River. The Watauga and Holston Rivers are separated by a ridge of minor importance. In this setting the data for this paper have been secured.

The greatest weakness of the list is probably in the water birds, as the terrain traversed on our bird walks has, most commonly, been uplands, borders of small streams and forests, with a minimum of time spent along the larger streams. The ducks, for instance, are almost missing from the list.

At best, the ducks are rare in the mountain waters, yet we feel sure that a larger list can be gleaned after more observations have been made along the rivers.

For the benefit of the less experienced bird enthusiasts, it may be stated that the winter plumage of some birds may prove confusing. The Phoebe in winter garb is darker, with more olive on sides and back. The very early migrants of this species which may arrive during February are prone to sojourn in the woods, but the birds that winter here prefer to dwell near their nesting places along the streams where bridges and overhanging cliffs offer protection. The Swamp Sparrow may have so much black in the crown as almost to obliterate the chestnut coloring. The Myrtle Warbler dons a less conspicuous coat. The beautiful Goldfinch's brown winter overcoat bears scant similarity to its lemon yellow plumage of the summer season. The winter birds present problems all their own.

While many of the species are listed as "permanent residents," it may be that our breeding birds of these species really go south in winter and are replaced by others of the same species from the North. However, we are not here concerned with migration, but with the occurrence of species. The list follows below:

**Common Loon** (*Gavia immer immer*)

Rare winter visitor; may be observed on larger ponds and river eddies.

**Pied-billed Grebe** (*Podilymbus podiceps podiceps*)

Occasional winter and early spring visitor.

**Mallard Duck** (*Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos*)

May be observed on the rivers occasionally. Even when the rivers are frozen they appear on open patches where inflowing spring water prevents freezing.

**Bufflehead Duck** (*Charitonetta albeola*)

Winter and early spring visitor. Rare.

**Turkey Vulture** (*Cathartes aura septentrionalis*)

Common; found most often along the high river bluffs. Permanent resident.

**Black Vulture** (*Coragyps atratus atratus*)

Common. Associates with the Turkey Vulture. Permanent resident.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk** (*Accipiter velox velox*)

Rare. Seen mostly over open fields and cut-over lands. Permanent resident.

**Cooper's Hawk** (*Accipiter cooperi*)

Common, though not often seen. Permanent resident..

**Eastern Red-tailed Hawk** (*Buteo borealis borealis*)

Fairly common. The most interesting of the larger hawks. Permanent resident.

**Golden Eagle** (*Aquila chrysaetos canadensis*)

Permanent resident in the remote fastnesses of the mountains. Stockmen along the northwest margin of the Clinch Valley and also in the North Carolina mountains, report that these eagles often kill very young lambs and that on occasions it has become necessary to have armed watchers to keep them away at lambing time. It is not common, but can usually be observed in the higher mountains.

**Duck Hawk** (*Falco peregrinus anatum*)

We have noted these about their eyrie early in February. It is probably a permanent resident. Three pairs are known to nest near Johnson City.

**Eastern Sparrow Hawk** (*Falco sparverius sparverius*)

Most common of the hawks. Partial to open fields. Permanent resident.



































