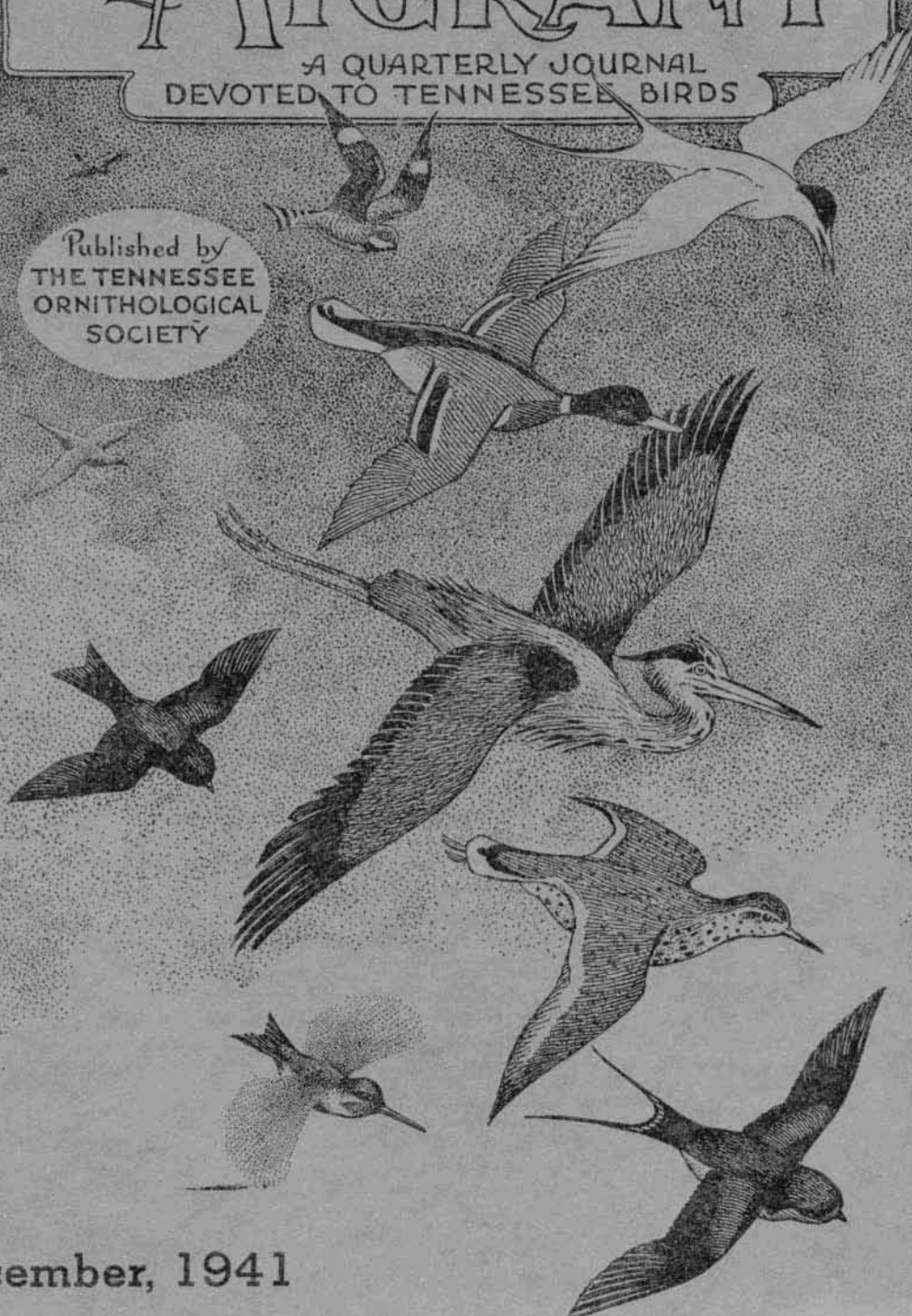


THE MIGRANT

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DEVOTED TO TENNESSEE BIRDS

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AN INSTANCE OF MOCKINGBIRD BIGAMY

By AMELIA R. LASKEY

Since 1932 when I started to individualize all Mockingbirds around my home with colored bands for study purposes, several have lived for lengthy periods in our garden. Thus I have become intimately acquainted with them and their families as I have watched them from day to day. Outstanding among these, is one called "Abe" who arrived in September of 1936 and still occupies the front area of our grounds. His biography will make an interesting story but this narrative concerns one amazing interlude of several weeks during the spring of 1939 when Abe had two mates simultaneously—both incubating eggs in their nests about 80 yards apart.

Although there are instances recorded in the literature of several species, ordinarily monogamous, having two mates, it was surprising to me to find this may occur in a species where the female is inclined to resent the intrusion of another female in her territory. In the file of Mrs. Margaret M. Nice, which she kindly loaned me, there are references to published observations of a number of species, both European and American birds, with more than one mate. Instances of polygyny are recorded for the Oven-bird, English Sparrow, Tree Swallow, Robin, and Song Sparrow. Dr. Harry Hann, in his life history study of the Oven-bird also found an instance of polyandry. In her comprehensive study of the Song Sparrow, extending over several years, Mrs. Nice recorded four instances of bigamy, two of which she knows occurred when a female lost her own mate and was taken as an extra mate by the male occupying the adjoining territory.

My Mockingbird and his mate of 1938 had an unusually fruitful season that year with four successful nests fledging 12 young. All nests were located in a narrow strip of 9 by 36 yards on the front portion of our lot. "Ayr," as she is called from her band color combination, remained with "Abe" throughout the winter of 1938-1939, jointly occupying the same territory used during the summer and spending much time near our windows where raisins were placed for them. He occasionally flew at other birds that encroached on his territory and sometimes was assisted by his mate.

In 1939 Abe started his spring singing on February 4th and was soon joined in song by the two unmated males occupying the rear section of our lot. As the spring-like March days passed, Abe and his mate were much interested in nest sites, flying into evergreens on our place but also visiting those in the foundation planting at the front of the home of our neighbor across the road. Abe had completed a well made nest in our Norway

spruce, the site of one of their 1938 nests but no eggs were laid in it. As the female had lost interest in that nest in late March, I investigated the shrubs they had been seen frequenting at my neighbors' and found a nest there with two eggs. That nest came to grief and another was built a few yards away in the same group of shrubs. This was a rather poorly constructed nest. The exact date of the laying of the second set of eggs is not known but it contained four eggs on April 26 and as they hatched on May 4, the first egg was probably laid April 19.

But, on April 19, I noticed an unbanded Mockingbird feeding unmolested on our front lawn (she may have been there earlier). That was peculiar as Abe had been very diligent in driving away others. Two days later, he and the new light colored, brown-tinted bird were together near our window. This bird flew at Abe in the manner of females of that species during the early stage of the mating, repulsing the advances of the mate. I could frequently hear little warning notes typical of those of the male guarding his mate. On April 23 I saw Abe gathering tiny rootlets such as Mockingbirds invariably use for nest lining. He flew into a deutzia bush in our shrub border just beyond the east end of our house. I investigated and found a nicely made nest apparently complete, 7 feet up in that shrub. A few minutes later, Ayr, (Abe's old mate) came flying to the west end of the house for raisins and as she returned to her nest across the road, she was accompanied by Abe. From them was heard the usual "conversation" of rasping "cha" notes that occurs between a mated pair.

I was mystified and spent a great deal of time watching the "triangle" for here was a strange situation indeed. Without the identifying colored bands I would never have been quite sure that Ayr had not acquired a new mate at my neighbor's.

The following day, April 24, Abe sang gayly from a rather high perch, gliding downward as he sang with some of the abandon of mate-calling time. This type of song is characteristic also of Mockingbirds during the early incubation periods. Later the males usually have a brood to feed and little time for idle singing.

April 25, the female Ayr was found in a banding trap, baited with raisins, set at the rear part of our lot—a place she ordinarily never frequented! Back there another pair was nesting. The new bird, now called "Blond" because her plumage was cleaner than the others, was seen several times in Abe's company as they both perched in the silver maple at the house. Although apple and raisins were near, she never was seen to eat any. She was never lured to a trap, therefore was not banded. Abe continued to eat generous portions but Ayr, much as she enjoyed raisins, did not come near the feeding shelf at the house. She made circuitous trips to the rear, entrapping herself there several times in her effort to get raisins. On the 28th after removing her from a rear trap and feeding her several raisins by hand, I released her on the front lawn for experimental purposes. As she flew across it toward her nest at my neighbor's, Blond appeared suddenly and pursued her. Abe, from the side lines, watched the procedure with no interference. I have noticed frequently that among Mockingbirds, Cardinals, etc. male drives male from territory and female drives female. Each is much more tolerant of an intruder of the opposite sex.

This same day (April 28) Blond was found on her nest in the deutzia laying her first egg. Abe sang exuberantly, tossing himself into the air from a tree top. On May 1st Mate No. 2 was incubating her set of four eggs and Abe had discontinued the loud singing, spending much of his time watching both nests from a roadside locust tree where he had a good view of both locations. If I visited Ayr's nest, he appeared there to watch, although the female herself fussed at me more than he. Immediately afterwards, as I visited Blond's nest, he followed protesting with scolding notes. He had one big fight with the male using the rear lot when the latter came within ten yards of Blond's shrub.

Ayr's eggs hatched on May 4th. I was unable to determine how much Abe contributed to the feeding of the young but I know he carried some raisins across. On May 7th, he was seen to hurriedly grab a raisin from the shelf and fly directly to the nest.

May 11th all was well with both nests; the four nestlings of Ayr were developing normally and Blond's four eggs were due to hatch on the 13th. May 12th I stayed away purposely from both.

May 13th Ayr was again on the front lawn, joining Abe in trees, shrubs, and on the clipped grass. Abe sang snatches of song. Both came to the house, and contrary to his usual custom, Abe allowed Ayr to feed first at the raisins. Both were rather assertive in flying at other birds.

I visited Blond's nest. Neither she nor her eggs were to be found. Her nest was still intact but had been robbed in the manner of snake predation. A visit to Ayr's nest revealed another catastrophe. The four week-old young had also disappeared.

Abe and Ayr resumed their habit of perching in the silver maple tree at the house as they waited for raisins. A new nest was started midway between the two that had just been robbed, from which three young were fledged on June 16th, and on July 21st, two young from their fourth nest in the cedar on our lawn which had been the site of two of their 1938 nests.

While it is impossible to explain how my male Mockingbird happened to acquire the extra mate, it apparently did not occur through a shortage of males. At the time of her arrival, a male had been singing his loud mate-calling songs 135 yards away. A few days before I had found her on the lawn, settled in Abe's territory, the latter had engaged in a fierce fight with an intruding male who spent two hours there in mate-calling song between fights and pursuits. The fate of this extra female was never learned. Not having captured her for banding, of course there was no way of identifying her if she appeared in the neighborhood later.

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- NASHVILLE, December, 1941.

A CROW'S NEST

By H. P. JAMS

To the best of my knowledge Crows have not nested on this place during the twenty-five years that we have lived here. This suited us very well as we did not believe that they make good neighbors for other birds that are trying to rear young.

This year I had a pretty good idea from a pair's actions that they were nesting in a pine grove about 300 yards from the house. It was not until May 25 that I had time to look for the nest. It was located in the top of a young pine and rather well concealed by the foliage. Since it was a beautiful Sunday afternoon, I decided to stretch out and see if the old birds were around. After a half hour of waiting I walked around the tree, looking up, and there was a Crow that had been perched on the edge of the nest and behind the trunk from me. I clapped my hands and rapped on the tree; as it did not fly I decided that it was an immature bird and possibly the last one to leave.

The following Saturday I had a Boy Scout to coon up the tree, and believe me, it was some job as it was one of our hottest days. The tree was tall but the diameter small, which made the climb possible. It was fully forty feet to the first branch. After getting up he lowered a cord for a bushel basket which subsequently held the nest very nicely. Later this cord was measured and showed the nest to be sixty-five feet from the ground.

To me the construction of this nest was a wonderful piece of workmanship. The foundation and framework were made of about 259 twigs from the thickness of a pencil to that of a match and from ten to sixteen inches in length. These twigs had evidently been snipped to size before being brought to the nest site as there was no trash on the ground. The stick frame was then lined with live moss, and on this moss was placed a layer of clay loam at least one and a half inch thick, which despite an abnormally dry May was still very moist. Over this loam was a mat of cedar bark. On this floor was the nest lining which was composed of finely shredded cedar bark, dry grass, and hog hair. This lining was examined very carefully in order to determine if the shells of any other eggs aside from those of the Crow could be discovered. I am very glad to report that the fourteen small pieces of shell found, judging from color and thickness, were fragments of the Crow's eggs that were too small to be carried away after the young were hatched.

The insulated dirt floor of this nest is my excuse for these notes. My search for the egg shells revealed it. There was so much of this dirt foundation and it was so protected to conserve moisture that it is surely common practice among Crows to build this type of nest. I suppose that most observers see the stick frame and the grass and bark lining and let it go at that. After becoming interested, I read all I could find on Crow nest construction but found nothing about mud or earth being used.

Consider 250 sticks, the moss, the dirt, the bark and all that lining! What a vast amount of labor it must have meant for those two birds—500 round trips at least!

No deductions could be made from the study of this nest to show that they are bad citizens. We had bad luck this year about nests being robbed and broken up, but since they were for the most part right at the house and since we caught a Jay and a cat in the act, we are not blaming the Crows.—KNOXVILLE, November, 1941.

LECONTE'S SPARROW TRAGEDIES

BY BEN B. COFFEY, JR.

One of our first introductions to the Leconte's Sparrow proved tragic to the individual so marked. On the 1939 Moon Lake (Miss.) Christmas Census, December 31, I stopped the car to allow Burdick, Mason, and party to rush across a small but likely field for kicking-up Savannah Sparrows and possibly other species. The field was too grassy for Horned Larks but the grass was relatively short, although frequently matted in clumps. Several Savannah Sparrows took flight but when Austin yelled "Leconte's" my role changed from moral encouragement to active participation. The bird was flushed several times but was hard to see in detail altho the manner of flight became more recognizable with each instance and a quick glimpse of the yellowish buff over the eye and the brown nape was possible once or twice. Finally it deserted its protective habitat for the open cotton rows nearby. As we hurried over to get a good view of it among the old cotton stalks, it again rose. But, unfortunately for the hapless sparrow, a Loggerhead Shrike had appeared on the scene. The killer dropped on it before our startled eyes and then began a fantastic chase. Our waving of arms and yelling as we ran finally caused the Shrike to drop its victim as it left for a roadside wire. As we retraced the muddy rows Burdick found the Leconte's, dead. Subsequently he made a study skin of it.

At least three were found in this particular field and constituted my first personal record of this sparrow. Because of the secretive habits of this species and the type of habitat favored we thought that, normally, it is not often molested by predators. However, W. W. Cooke in his "Report on Bird Migration in the Mississippi Valley" (1888) states that a Leconte's Sparrow which had been impaled by a Shrike, was found February 28, 1885, near Fayetteville, Ark.

On January 7, 1940, about a week later, we found a few Leconte's Sparrows in a small grassy plot north of the Big Ditch Canal and just west of Highway 51, near Millington. On the 14th we returned to this field with Albert F. Ganier and at once kicked-up a Leconte's Sparrow for our visitor. In darted a Shrike and another chase was on. But with two barbed-wire fences to go over, Austin and I were badly outdistanced and couldn't even recover the corpus delicti. Now, when we seek to record Leconte's Sparrow, we search for Shrikes and do our chasing beforehand.
MEMPHIS, December, 1941.

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MEMPHIS:—On Sept. 14 we banded 3,109 Swifts at Linden and Wagner and are now watching for other flocks. About 150 returns were taken. Of interest was 38-85917, banded here Sept. 21, 1938, and also taken Oct. 12, 1939, by Brasher C. Bacon at Madisonville, Ky.—BEN COFFEY.

BROWN THRASHER DEFENSE OF THE NEST

BY AMELIA R. LASKEY

The most vivid impression of the finding of my first Brown Thrasher nest is the memory of how I jumped at the vehemence of a blow on the top of my head when one of the parents discovered me leaning above the nest. Since then I have found other individuals that have shown remarkable fearlessness in defense of eggs or young.

The banding of Thrasher nestlings is usually a problem because the majority of parents start a wild clamor of pitiful squeals and wails of distress as if they were suffering terrible physical agony. If the young have already developed to near the fledging stage when found, I do not attempt to band them for at the racket of the parents, large nestlings will not settle in the nest but scramble away prematurely. Parent birds also keep such close watch that it is almost impossible to find a nest unguarded long enough to get the young banded before a parent returns.

Last summer when banding nestlings in our garden, I did not know the parents were near until, with the swiftness of an arrow, I was struck on the temple so forcibly that the beak of the bird left a bleeding cut.

The most daring one of all was an individual encountered at one of the landscaped entrances of Percy Warner Park during two successive years. This bird did not make surprise attacks on one's head or shoulders. It concentrated on fighting vigorously the hands, that, according to its instinctive interpretation, were endangering the young. The price of placing bands on its nestlings was scratched and bleeding fingers. This bird darted to the nest rim or onto one's hands to jab continuously, hopping a few inches away, only to return and repeat the attack. In 1940 a friendly park gardener who wished to assist had drops of blood oozing from the back of his hand before he finished replacing the young in the nest for me.

In 1941 this pugnacious bird was again found nesting and recognized by its bold approach. At one nest 11 feet up in a cedar tree it attacked me so consistently as I held a mirror over the nest that I caught it by the foot but released it immediately. That capture had no effect in curbing its recklessness. At a later nest, only 4 feet up in a large arborvitae, it continued to display utter disregard for danger to itself in its attack on my hand. I again caught it; this time with both hands and when released, it wore a shiny aluminum band on its right tarsus. Apparently it had learned a lesson, for at three later visits, it allowed me to peep into the shrub without attacking. It merely scolded from perches several feet away.

NASHVILLE, December, 1941.

LOOSE BANDS

KNOXVILLE:—Sparked by Bill Simpson who carried his Swift banding habits with him to the University of Tennessee, a total of almost 6,000 Chimney Swifts were banded, Aug. 27, Sept. 1, and Sept. 2. About 400 birds from last year were retaken.—W. M. WALKER.

An adult Great Horned Owl was banded and released near Bordeau on March 21, 1941, by Albert J. Marsh of the Department of Conservation. The bird had been caught in a trap near Ashland City several days before.

THE SEASON

MEMPHIS AREA:—Fall migration continued late this year at Memphis and there are a few interesting records. On Sept. 11 the following warblers were seen in Overton Park — Wilson's, 2; Yellow, 2; Chestnut-sided, 3; and Blue-winged, 2. Two Golden-winged Warblers were seen in the park on Sept. 12, by Welch and the writer.—On a visit to Mud Lake, Sept. 14, we recorded an Osprey, 6 Stilt Sandpipers, 100 Least, 85 Semipalmated, and 15 Western Sandpipers, and 4 Greater Yellow-legs. The shorebirds at this time were very tame and allowed us to approach very close. Sept. 20 found us again at Mud Lake and we recorded 29 Double-crested Cormorants, 4 Stilt Sandpipers, 1 Bald Eagle, 15 Cliff Swallows, and 1 Golden-winged Warbler. I recorded 2 Philadelphia Vireos in Overton Park on Sept. 26. Smith and I found them again on Sept. 27 along with 1 Wilson's Warbler, 10 Bay-breasted Warblers, 1 N. Water-thrush, and 1 immature Red-tailed Hawk. A Sharp-shinned Hawk and a House Wren were seen at Payne Ave. and Wolf River on Oct. 4. Our next visit to Mud Lake was made on Oct. 5 when we found the lake dried-up and 51 White Pelicans soaring overhead. Our last visit to the lake was on Oct. 11 when we recorded 38 White Pelicans, 4 American Egrets, 1 Short-billed Marsh Wren, 1 adult and 1 immature Bald Eagle. One Rose-breasted Grosbeak and 1 Wilson's Warbler were seen in Overton Park on Oct. 8 and a Red-breasted Nuthatch was seen there on Oct. 17. Two Orange-crowned Warblers were seen there on Oct. 25 and again on the 28th. The first White-throated Sparrows were seen on Oct. 10. Some late departures are: Chestnut-sided Warbler on Oct. 21 and Bay-breasted, Blackburnian, and Black-throated Green Warblers, Oct. 28. The Fall field trip was held on Nov. 3 at Shelby Forest. Not as many birds were recorded as usual; a few hawks and a flock of 13 Cormorants were the only birds seen passing over. Two Phoebe's and a Pied-billed Grebe were seen at Piersol Lake. Tree Swallows totaled 150. One evening about Oct. 29 Dr. C. E. Moore recorded two Pigeon Hawks on the campus of Memphis State College. They were seen to be continuously molesting the pigeons that reside on the campus. Two Sparrow Hawks regularly stay around the College and Dr. Moore says that even though this was unusual behaviour he assumed that the disturbers were the Sparrow Hawks, until the two species appeared together. The markings of the Pigeon Hawks were carefully noted.—ROBERT TUCKER, Memphis.

NASHVILLE AREA:—The annual Fall Field Day of the Nashville Chapter was held on Oct. 26 at Marrowbone Lake, 12 miles northwest of the city. The attendance included a number of visiting members from Knoxville and other points. Fifty-five species of birds were listed, the small number being attributed to the severe drouth that had prevailed. On the new 86-acre lake were seen: Black Duck, 3; Mallard, 10; Baldpate, 1; Wood Duck, 5; Cormorant, 1; and Coot, 4. During the day a flock of geese flew over, consisting of 28 Snow Geese and 50 Blue Geese. Several flocks of these geese were reported during the week preceding.—Dr. W. R. Spofford, chapter president, has been meeting with members for early Sunday morning observations

at Radnor Lake and among the water birds seen have been Horned and Pied-billed Grebes, Lesser Yellow-legs, and Osprey on Oct. 19; on Nov. 16, 2 Wilson's Snipes; on Nov. 23, 2 Hooded Mergansers and on the 27th, 3 immature Common Loons. A small, mixed flock of ducks was also present on each of these dates. The lake is lower than ever known before.—Dr. Spofford has a new Peregrine Falcon (Duck Hawk), a young female captured in the East during migration. He flies the bird to pigeons on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, over the Warner Park Steeplechase grounds and many of our members have been enjoying this interesting exhibition of falconry. While flying the falcon on Nov. 23 a Pigeon Hawk—a rare visitor—circled briefly overhead and was readily identified. Conrad Jamison has an immature Red-tailed Hawk, trapped a month ago, and which has now become quite tame. He hopes to fly this bird later, as one would a falcon.—Mrs. F. C. Laskey reports that during the warm damp weather, the last week in November, Bluebirds were warbling in her yard and investigating nest boxes. She also reports a few Robins regularly although they are usually absent through November and early December. Both she and Dr. Mayfield report them singing through the warm weather around Dec. 1. Dr. Mayfield reported a number of flocks of Robins, seen in Cedars of Lebanon State Park, on Nov. 16. Also that he had seen more than the usual number of Hermit Thrushes. A late Catbird has been staying about the feeding station of Francis Lawrence on Woodlawn Drive. The bird was seen regularly up to Nov. 9 and did not seem injured in any way.—Four Olive-sided Flycatchers were seen by the writer of these notes on August 16 and 17 and one collected. These were the first recorded in several years and as usual they were on the tops of dead trees in woodlands. A Red-breasted Nuthatch, a rare fall visitor, was observed by the writer in his yard on Oct. 8. A flock of 30 Killdeer were found at Radnor Lake on Dec. 1; in view of their recent scarcity this is an unusual number. During the past two winters several hundred Black Vultures have occupied a roost in Warner Park but this season they have moved to an unknown location. There were no Blackbird-Starling roosts in or about the city during November. The writer was confined to the hospital during most of the fall migration so is able to contribute but little to these seasonal notes—ALBERT F. GANTIER, Nashville.

KNOXVILLE AREA:—The fall season was a rather dry one and conditions were not ideal for bird observations. Warblers came thru in small numbers over a period of six weeks to two months but there were no distinct migration waves that came to my attention. Because of the dry weather and the resultant low water in the streams, ponds, and lakes of the region one might have expected to find more than the usual number of shorebirds. However, just the opposite proved to be the true condition.—Trips to Cove Creek State Park (Caryville Lake) on Sept. 7 and Oct. 19, to Lake Andrew Jackson on Oct. 30 and Nov. 11, and to Carleton Lake, Nov. 16,—all yielded poor finds in waterbirds. The combined list follows: Blue-winged Teal, 14 on Sept. 7 and 1 on Nov. 16; Green-winged Teal, 2, Oct. 30. On Oct. 19 we found 2 Double-crested Cormorants, 3 Mallards, 22 Black Ducks and a Ruddy Duck. Coots which are usually present in flocks of 30 or more have not yet appeared except as singles on Oct. 19 and Nov. 16. The Pied-billed Grebe, tho, was readily found thruout the fall. Of shorebirds 4 L. Yellowlegs

remained at Lake Andrew Jackson as late as Oct. 30. No Spotted Sandpipers were seen and the Solitary recorded only twice.—When we were at Caryville Lake on Sept. 7 we had a very delightful experience. Jewelweed was in full bloom along the creek at the upper end of the lake and we estimated there were 25 Hummingbirds along a hundred-yard strip of shore. Once 5 were in sight at the same time. Some of the highlights of the Chapter's Nov. 16 field trip to Carleton Lake included the Red-wing, Rusty Blackbird, Horned Lark, Pipit, and Brown Thrasher.—In either 1940 or 1941 a drainage ditch was dug near Lake Andrew Jackson and the blasting of rock evidently produced a slow leak in the lake-bed. The water level dropped some ten or more feet during the summer of 1940 and now the lake is almost dry. At one of the small ponds in the lake-bed 6 Great Blue Herons were feeding on Oct. 30. Nearby in a dead tree 11 Black and 2 Turkey Vultures were perched. The water in the pond was very muddy altho the lake was clear. Floating on the pond water were 3 dead fish, the largest not over 9 inches in length. Other fish could be seen struggling in the shallow water. Was it a coincidence the Vultures were all in this particular tree? They could have been using it as a sunning perch, or they could have been attracted by the strong fishy odor that was readily noticeable in the immediate vicinity. However, I saw no evidence that would indicate the Vultures had been eating the dead fish. On Nov. 11 I again went there to see if the 6 Great Blues were still there because prior to Oct. 30 I had never seen more than 3 at the lake at one time. Instead of 6 there were 10, one of which was about two-thirds as large as the others. The lake level had fallen about 6 inches since Oct. 30 and 2 more ponds had been formed by the receding waters. The pond that was so very muddy a few days before was now clear and there was no sign of fish or minnows; however, the soft mud forced me to limit my observations to 4 or 5 points where rocks or fallen limbs afforded a means of close approach. At one of the recently formed pools the muddy water indicated the Herons had been feeding there only a few moments before. At the other end of the pool the water was relatively clear and here I saw 2 'schools' of minnows and another group of about 50 fish, some 8 or 10 inches long. The larger fish never came near the surface but the fingerlings were plainly visible as they circled in a compact group or remained lazily feeding some distance away. Even the poorest of heron "fishermen" should have been able to live sumptuously for several days on the doomed fish that I saw in that small pool.—W. M. WALKER, JR., Knoxville.

THE ROUND TABLE

BARN OWL AT CHATTANOOGA:—In view of the few records of this owl from East Tennessee, mention is here made of the following occurrence. *The Chattanooga Free Press* of August 7, 1941, published a picture of one of these birds that was readily identifiable. It stated that the bird had been captured the night before on the Shallowford Road and that it was being added to the Warner Park Zoo in that city.—A. F. GANIER, Nashville.

A DAY AT REELFOOT LAKE:—Arriving at Walnut Log in the late afternoon of May 24, 1941, a quick trip was made into Otter Basin. No signs of a heronry were seen or heard at this location, but the visit lasted only fifteen minutes and no extensive survey was made. One nest of the Prothonotary Warbler was seen, and another nest (warbler sp.) was found in a bush, 5 feet above water level.—Between five and seven o'clock the next morning, casual observations were made from the boardwalk at the Biological Station. A pair of adult Bald Eagles were seen about a mile to the west across Blue Basin. Their attention was focused on a small area of open water surrounded by stumps. Flying low in discrete circles, they made repeated stoops into the water, so hard that the water could be seen splashing high with each stoop. The activity was continuing at the end of a 15-minute period when observation ceased. An hour later both birds were seen perched nearby on tall stumps. I am not prepared to state that the birds were fishing. More probably they were attempting to capture a cormorant or heron wounded by a bait-hunting fisherman. (Near Walnut Log I was astonished to see a fisherman or guide carrying fully a dozen birds by their long thin necks. Since they were carefully skinned and without heads or feet, further identification was impossible. I was told that they were for fish bait.)—From the boardwalk an Osprey was also seen a mile to the south, hovering and diving in characteristic fashion. Four Florida Gallinules, (two of them accompanying seven young), a few Ward's Herons, Black-crowned Night Herons, Cormorants, Anhingas, and many Am. Egrets were seen; also a Least Bittern. A Red-shouldered Hawk was frequently heard close by.—"Big Cranetown" was visited from one to two P.M. after a tedious search with painstaking attention to compass and map. The colony was not nearly so large as I had anticipated. I estimated 200 to 300 nests. Occupied nests were seen of Cormorant, American Egret, Ward's Heron, and Black-crowned Night Heron. Anhingas were seen frequently but no nests were identified. Red-shouldered Hawk (with a small snake), Bronzed Grackle, and Prothonotary Warbler were seen in the tree-top nesting zone. The latter was hopping in and out among the outer fringe of the nests of Egrets and Cormorants. Black Vultures and Anhingas circled overhead. Young birds were seen in many of the nests. There was a great hubbub of incoming and outgoing birds. Incoming Egrets, alighting near Cormorant nests, were chased away. Young Cormorants begged food of Egrets alighting nearby and young Ward's Herons begged of a Cormorant. No response to this mendication was observed.—WALTER R. SPOFFORD, Nashville.

INDIGO BUNTING SINGS AT NIGHT:—On the evening of June 20, 1941, Mr. Dick Smith and the writer were hunting reptile and amphibian specimens along a creek bottom near Bert Adams Scout Camp, Vinings (Cobb County), Georgia. There was a hearty chorus of Southern toads, cricket frogs, and other batrachians, roundabout. When we reached a quieter place along the stream, I was startled to hear not far away one clear song of the Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*) at 11:45 P.M. This species is an abundant breeder in the region and the male's song is very familiar and unmistakable. A response of several notes of the Yellow-breasted Chat, not uncommonly heard at night, followed the Bunting's song. The weather was cloudy

and there was no moonlight.—This note is prompted as a supplement to the article on whisper songs and night-singing by Mrs. F. C. Laskey (*The Migrant*, 6: pp. 1-2, 1935).—ROBERT NORRIS, Tifton, Ga.

NOTES FROM MT. PLEASANT:—The Porter-Walker Hardware Company, in Columbia have a number of mounted birds and animals on display, and add to their collection from time to time. Last summer when in their store, I noticed a very dark colored hawk, about the size of a Red-tailed, which they said had been shot in the winter of 1940-41 on the Pulaski Pike, near Columbia, by a farmer who thought it was after some young lambs, which were in his field at the time. This hawk is evidently a Harlan's Hawk, a melanistic race of the Red-tailed, ranging from Alaska to the lower Mississippi valley.—In the store referred to is also a fine specimen of Golden Eagle, an immature bird, and I think from its size, a male, which was shot at Kettle Mills, about 20 miles from Columbia, in 1939. They also had an adult male Golden Eagle, which was shot near Columbia many years ago, but disposed of this year because of its poor condition.—A pair of Cooper's Hawks nested on my place this year, the nest being placed in a small hackberry tree, in a line of small timber along a spring branch.—For some reason, probably because an earlier nest had been destroyed, they only hatched one young bird. The nesting was very late, as the young one, a female, did not leave the nest until the first week in August, about five or six weeks later than usual. As there was only one nestling, it received much more food than if there had been three or four as usual, and grew to a much larger size than any Cooper's Hawk I ever saw, seeming to be as big as a male goshawk. It certainly had all it could eat, for I saw one of the old birds bring it what seemed to be the plucked carcass of a bird about the size of a Robin, and the young bird, after giving a feeble pull or two at its game, lay down in the nest again. This young hawk remained on my place at least a month after leaving the nest, and I could always tell if it was about by the whistling call which young Cooper's Hawks give. I have kept a few of this species in my time and have never heard one whistle after it was a couple of months old. This young hawk was not very wild, and seemed a very swift flyer. One day I saw it dart out from a line of small timber and chase a Crow that was flying by about a hundred yards away. It caught the Crow easily and hit it hard, making it squawk loudly, but did not hold, and after chasing it to the next line of trees let it go. I regret somewhat that I did not take this hawk to train, but was trying to train a Sharp-shinned at the time, and did not feel equal to the task of training two short-winged hawks at once. This is the only time I have ever seen a Cooper's attack a Crow, though I have noted Crows give them a wide berth several times when they flew past.—While there is an unusually heavy crop of hackberries this year, I have not noted any Robins over a half dozen times since the first of October, and then only one at a time. Last year, their absence was understandable, as there were no hackberries at all, and very little food of any kind. In the winter of 1939-40 there were plenty of hackberries, and in spite of the cold weather, there were many Robins here all winter, and into the early spring. Usually there are thousands of Robins on the east fork of Bigby Creek near here all during the fall, and many remain for the winter, but last year and this, they have been almost entirely absent.—DAN R. GRAY, Mt. Pleasant.

SWIFTS ROOSTING IN HOLLOW TREE:—The present almost invariable habit of Chimney Swifts of roosting in large chimneys has often caused us to wonder where these birds spent the night in early days before such chimneys became available. Recently, while gleaning through an old file of the Clarksville, Tenn., *Leaf-Chronicle*, I came across the following item in that paper, dated June 12, 1875. "Chimney Swallows: A large hollow sycamore tree was cut down last month near the Rogers and Norris Mill on Yellow Creek, out of which Tom Rogers said they killed 506 of these birds and Tom Ellis, who was present, said 'about a million got away.'" Aside from the interesting record of these birds still roosting in trees at that date, is the tone of the account which indicates that little or no thought was being given at that time to the conservation and protection of bird life.—S. A. WEAKLEY, Nashville, Tenn.

NOTE: The above location is about 20 miles southwest of Clarksville. Presumably the tree was felled on a chilly morning in early May and the birds were therefore loathe to leave while felling was in progress. The "million" estimate was of course an exaggeration; several thousand, however, would have been quite possible. Audubon, in his "Birds of America," records a large hollow sycamore tree which grew near Louisville, Ky., which was regularly used each year by Swifts as a roosting refuge. He stated, however, that at that time—1808—most Swifts had already adopted chimneys in preference to hollow trees—A. F. GANIER.

BLUEBIRD HOUSING CAMPAIGN:—A group of Memphis Boy Scouts and the writer built and placed some 130 bird boxes in DeSoto County, Miss., placing 100 on March 8th, 1941 and 30 on March 19, 1941. The placing was done with the aid of an Army Quadrangle Map. The 130 boxes were divided into 21 groups or stations, with a student of Eudora School as an observer for each station of from four to twelve boxes. Each box was numbered and registered with a Post Card and return address. First station reported occupancy March 16, 17, 18 and 28. Nine more stations reported by April 30; the remaining seven by May 28. 78 boxes had one setting, 17 boxes two settings, and two boxes had three for a total of 103 sets of birds. Seven boxes were destroyed by domestic animals and two used by Carolina Wrens. With these results in mind and with the aid of Boy Scouts and school children, I hope to multiply this score in 1942.—RALPH B. HUMPHRIES, Memphis.

RECORDS OF THE WILSON'S WARBLER AT MEMPHIS:—Wilson's Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla pusilla*) is a rare spring and fall transient here.

Joe Mason, Jr. observed this warbler on his farm east of Memphis on May 12, 1939. The first bird of this species I saw was a male which was shot and shown to me on Aug. 29, 1939. The following day I went as directed to the spot where the first bird was shot and nearby found three more—two males and a female. An immature male bird was seen by Wallace and Burdick at Mud Lake on Sept. 3, 1939. Three days later they recorded 6 Wilson's at the same place; only two were adult birds.—The following May 6 (1940) a male bird was seen in Overton Park by the writer. In the fall of the same year two were seen at Galloway Park by Burdick on Aug. 19. In Overton Park I saw two male Wilson's on Sept. 14 and 15 while on Sept. 17 a female was seen.—On May 6 of this year (1941) I saw a male Wilson's Warbler in Overton Park. In Nonconnah bottoms, east of Memphis, four birds were

seen by Burdick, et al, on May 10. At Lakeview on the Memphis spring field day, May 11, a male bird was seen in the Tennessee area by Burdick, Mason, Smith, Welch and the writer. On May 17 in Overton Park I recorded six of these warblers—four males and two females. The males were heard often singing. On May 24, a very late date, a male Wilson's was heard and seen in Overton Park.—The Wilson's Warbler prefers low bushes and trees at the edge of woods but many times is found in the very center of deep woods.—ROBERT TUCKER, Memphis.

BREWSTER'S WARBLER AT MEMPHIS

On Aug. 30, 1941, in Overton Park, Demett Smith and I were busily observing the individuals in a large flock of warblers, which included many Blue-winged Warblers, when a small warbler flew out of a tree and perched on a vine not 20 feet away. In good light we made out the markings of a Brewster's Warbler (*Vermivora leucobronchialis*), and studied them for a while at ease. This hybrid between the Blue-winged Warbler and the Golden-winged Warbler had the golden crown patch and yellow wing bars of the Golden-winged and the narrow black eye-stripe of the Blue-winged. It was very tame and allowed us to approach it closely and at all times stayed with the Blue-wingeds. This is first record for this area.—ROBERT TUCKER, Memphis.

WESTERN SWAMP SPARROW AND WESTERN OLIVE-BACKED THRUSH ADDED TO THE TENN. LIST:—In the writer's review of Dr. Wetmore's paper, "Notes on the birds of Tennessee" (*Migrant*, 1940:29) a list of subspecies added by him to our State list, is given. Further examination of his Tennessee specimens later resulted in finding among them the following two recently described subspecies.

Western Olive-backed Thrush (*Hylocichla ustulata almae*); Dr. Wetmore states (*Auk*, 1939:477) that 4 of his 7 Tennessee specimens are referable to this western race. These comprise 3 taken near Reelfoot Lake on April 27, 28 and May 1, and one near Waynesboro on May 11, 1937. The remaining three, taken on top of Roan Mountain Sept. 20 and 22, I am advised by him, have been verified as the eastern race (*H. u. swainsoni*), thus retaining this form on our State list.

Western Swamp Sparrow (*Melospiza georgiana ericrypta*); In his "Notes on the birds of Kentucky" (*Proc. U.S.N.M.*, 88:573), Dr. Wetmore refers 7 of his 13 Tenn. specimens to this form. They were collected as follows: two, 30 miles east of Memphis on April 10 and 16; vicinity of Reelfoot Lake Oct. 16 and 23; Dover, Oct. 26; 10 miles east of Pulaski, Nov. 4, 1937, and an old specimen from Rockwood taken March 19, 1885. The other 6 specimens were referred to the eastern race (*M. g. georgiana*) and these were collected; 30 miles east of Memphis on April 10; Reelfoot Lake, Oct. 12; near Pulaski, Nov. 4, 1937; and 3 from Rockwood, March 19, 20, and 23, 1885.

In a series of 10 skins, sent to Dr. Wetmore and collected by the writer within 20 miles of Nashville, the following 6 were referred by him to the western race: Jan. 1, 1938, Mar. 31, 1940, April 17, 1937, April 26, 1941, and April 29, 1916. The remaining 4 were identified as the eastern form and were collected Feb. 2, 1941, Feb. 4, 1917, April 17, 1937, and Oct. 10, 1917.

The distinguishing features of the two forms mentioned are discussed in the Kentucky publication above referred to. Briefly stated, the western form of the Swamp Sparrow is slightly darker in color.—ALBERT F. GANIER,

SANCTUARY SUGGESTIONS

In planting to attract birds I would advocate native trees and shrubs chiefly because they are more hardy. Hackberry I think is the most useful tree one can have for birds because nearly all species like it and because the fruit hang on all winter. Red cedar is excellent for cover as well as for fruit; the big objection is that fruits cannot be counted on. Black gum and wild cherry are consistent fruit producers, greatly relished by many species of birds. In this class too come dogwood, elderberry, and service berry. Persimmon, particularly the type on which the fruits are not ready until mid-winter, is valuable for food at that scant season; also chinaberry, where it will grow along our southern borders, the fruit being used by Robins in late winter.

Of vines, the wild grapes are useful in the fall. Poison ivy should be encouraged in woodlands if Myrtle Warblers are desired for winter guests. Hercules Club (*aralia*) bears heavily in small berries and consumes but little ground space. Among the shrubs the staghorn sumac is ornamental and carries its plentiful fruit thru the winter. Russian olive (*eleagnus*) is much favored by fruit-eating birds. Privet (*Amoor River*) is a heavy fruiting shrub holding its berries thru the winter but is not much favored by birds until late winter when other foods have become scarce.

Grohoma, a sorghum-like plant, and cow peas are good field plants to sustain Bob-whites and Doves in winter. Sunflowers are also relished by finches and native sparrows in fall and winter. Ragweed grows in river bottoms and along ditches, carry seeds that are much relished by Rose-breasted Grosbeaks in the fall and later on by Cardinals. A valuable mid-summer fruiting plant that will return year after year from established roots, is the pokeberry, its fruits being especially favored by Mockingbirds, Catbirds, and Bluebirds during the summer months.—A. F. GANIER, Nashville.

NECROLOGY

Thomas H. Malone, died at his home in Bellemeade, Nashville, Tenn., on March 21, 1941, aged 69 years. Judge Malone was a Special Justice of the Supreme Court of Tennessee, in 1917 and again in 1923. He had been a member since 1935 and rendered signal service to the Society in assisting with its incorporation a few years ago.

William P. Morrison, died at his home in Dickson, Tenn., August 16, 1941, aged 72 years. Mr. Morrison, for many years a teacher, was engaged in the insurance business and was the leading spirit in the organization of our Dickson Chapter.

Emilie Yunker, December 11, 1940. Life-long resident of Louisville, Ky. with 56 years of service in Louisville public schools. Her interest in gardens and the out-of-doors created for her the post of Supervisor of School Gardens and led to World War service in developing community gardens thruout Kentucky. She was an active member of many organizations including the K.O.S., the T.O.S., and Wilson Club, contributing inspiration and leadership. Her love of trees, iris, and roses was expressed by giving and encouraging their planting. (Abstracted from a two-page tribute in *The Kentucky Warbler*, Winter, 1941).

THE MIGRANT

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The Migrant copy basket and the T.O.S. treasury are almost exhausted (and so's your editor). Seriously, it is our policy to give you all we can but, naturally no more. Thus the end of one year finds us ready to plan a fresh start for a new volume. Your secretary-treasurer volunteers to receive your collective dollars for printing and mailing costs and your editor volunteers to receive your notes of field trips, experiences, and special studies and present them for sharing with all our membership. Please accept this as a request for 1942 dues now, for census lists by January 15 and other copy by February 25. Your prompt cooperation will be appreciated and will save both of us time and expense. Don't overlook the suitability of a membership as a Christmas gift.—Copy has been edited and marked and as we take it to the printers, very serious events have occurred. No nation will find a more loyal group than those with an inherent love of their country's natural scene. We cannot foresee what effect 'all-out' conditions will have on our little journal but it is safe to say that it will carry on, perhaps in an abbreviated form or combined numbers. Printing costs have increased the last fifteen months. Your prompt cooperation with above requests *now* will help your officers to chart a course.

We are glad to report that Albert F. Ganier recovered sufficiently to attend the Wilson Club meeting, Thanksgiving. Within another month or two we hope he will be fully able to undertake any desired field activity.

The present address of Alfred Clebsch, Jr., is 922 14th Street, Golden, Colorado.

NASHVILLE CHAPTER:—Meeting dates, 8 P.M., Social-Religious Building, Peabody College: Jan. 12 and 26, Feb. 9 and 23, Mar. 9 and 23, April 13 and 27, May 11 and 25, June 9 and 23. Christmas Census is scheduled for Dec. 21.

MEMPHIS CHAPTER:—Newly elected and re-elected officers are: Lawrence Kent, pres.; Mrs. M. L. Torti, vice-pres. and program chmn.; Mrs. John H. Embury, Jr., treas.; and Robt. Tucker, sec. Roosevelt and LaGuardia have nothing on some of our faithful leaders. The Christmas Census is set for Dec. 21 and the Moon Lake Census for Dec. 28. Meetings are held every other Monday at the Memphis Museum (Pink Palace).

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