

# THE MIGRANT

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# THE MIGRANT

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## OBSERVATIONS AT BUSH LAKE

This is a continuation of observations at Bush Lake near Nashville as reported in *THE MIGRANT* 29, 52-54, 1958. The period covered was from May 14, 1958 to May 13, 1959.

The lake was visited from 3 to 6 times each week. Records were kept for 111 trips. On some trips little or nothing was seen and no records were kept. A total of 76 species was observed during the year.

All observations were made through 7 x 35 binoculars and usually between 8 and 9 a.m. Birds observed are listed in A.O.U. check-list order.

Common Loon: May 14 (1), Nov. 21, (24) and Mar. 18 (1), Apr. 10 (13). At about 2:30 p.m. on the latter date I saw 2 of these fly in about ten minutes apart. Horned Grebe: Feb. 9 (1), Feb. 13 (2) and Mar. 18 (1); Pied-billed Grebe: Aug. 14 (1), then seen in every month until Nov. 19. Apr. 27 (2) were the only spring records. Green Heron: July 21 (1); Black-crowned Night Heron: Apr. 21 and 25 (1); Canada Goose: Oct. 6 (11 and 60), Feb. 10 (2); Mallard: Oct. 9 (1) then 3 to 7 per trip until Jan. 15 (1); American Widgeon: Mar. 18 (6) then a few each trip until Apr. 20 (20); Green-winged Teal: Oct. 3 (3) and Dec. 5 (1); Blue-winged Teal: Aug. 22 (3), Sept. 22 (46), Oct. 23 (1), Mar. 27 (1) then a few until May 2 (10). Shoveler: Mar. 27 (2), Apr. 13 (5), Apr. 20 (3); Ring-necked Duck: Oct. 29 (3), Feb. 9 (5), Feb. 24 (135), Mar. 16 (269), Mar. 23 (50); Canvasback: Dec. 8 (4), Dec. 28 (47). They spent more time on the river than they did on the lake. A ragged female was the last to leave on Feb. 13 after spending 10 days on the lake alone. Lesser Scaup: May 28 (1), Oct. 29 (3). A few were on the lake during the winter. The peak was Mar. 23 (70), then the flock dwindled to May 13 (12). I saw the flock many times on the river with the sun at my back. I looked carefully for a greenish cast on the heads of the males but they were all purple. Bufflehead: Nov. 19 (1), Jan. 16 (5); Oldsquaw: This rare duck was a brightly marked female on Apr. 10, just one in the center of a large raft of ducks. This seems very late for a duck that is rarely seen here, and only in the coldest weather in previous winters. Ruddy Duck: Nov. 3 (6), Mar. 25 (6), Apr. 12 (29); Hooded Merganser: Dec. 4 (1) and remained several days. Common Merganser: Nov. 2 (3); Red-breasted Merganser: Nov. 2 (1); Red-tailed Hawk: Seen occasionally during the winter (1); Red-shouldered Hawk: Dec. 16 (1) and a pair during the mating season in late Feb. Marsh Hawk: one or two pairs all years. On Mar. 18, the writer saw a male feeding on a male House Sparrow. Again on May 12 a male was feeding on what appeared to be another House Sparrow. American Coot: Oct. 3 (2), Oct. 23 (13) and a few every month until May 3 (3); Semipalmated Plover: Apr. 30 (2), May 1 (2); Killdeer: From one to 12 most trips, except during

their nesting season. The largest flock was Sept. 12 (39); Common Snipe: Oct. 15 (1), Nov. 16 (1); Spotted Sandpiper: May 15 (3), July 21 (1), Aug. 11 (4) and 1 or 2 each trip in Oct. and Nov. 7 (1), Apr. 20 (10) then 1 to 7 until May 13. Lesser yellowlegs: Oct. 23 (1), Nov. 14 (1); Least Sandpiper: Nov. 26 (1), May 1 (2); Herring Gull: Oct. 27 (1), 1 or more during Nov., Dec. 3 (12), Dec. 16 (30). One to 6 in Jan. and Feb. Mar. 3 (3), May 7 (2); Ring-billed Gull: Nov. 3 (1), then the number built up slowly to Dec. 6 (285), Jan. 4 (1), Feb. 10 (26), May 7 (7); Bonaparte's Gull: Oct. 27 (1), Mar. 25 (1), Apr. 10 (1); Forsters Tern: Sept. 12 (1) (THE MIGRANT 30, 14, 1959). Least Tern: Sept. 12 (1); Caspian Tern: Sept. 12 (7) (THE MIGRANT 30, 14, 1959). Black Tern: May 15 (13), July 21 (1); Mourning Dove: Sept. 12 (250), only a few the rest of the year. Barn Owl: Oct. 23 (1) (Dead—shot by a hunter the evening before). Chimney Swift: Apr. 4 (5); Belted Kingfisher: Two on the lake all year except during their nesting period. Red bellied Woodpecker: One a few times during the winter, always in the trees along the river bank. Eastern Kingbird: Apr. 30 (3), one to 3 each trip until mid May. Horned Lark: Nov. 18 (1), Dec. 16 (10), then 1 or 2 most trips until May 13. Tree Swallow: Sept. 27 (4), Mar. 27 (2), then just a few until Apr. 14. Bank Swallow: Oct. 3 (8), Apr. 3 (1); Rough-winged Swallow: Sept. 23 (3), Mar. 20 (1). About 3 pairs nested along the river. Barn Swallow: Sept. 27 (20), Oct. 3 (6), Mar. 27 (1). Several pairs nested in the big barn. Cliff Swallow: Sept. 27 (25), Oct. 6 (1). This bird stayed until Oct. 24. (THE MIGRANT 30, 14, 1959). Purple Martin: Mar. 20 (7), then 5 to 7 regularly until May 2 (1). On May 18 about a dozen came to nest in a box put up there in March. Blue Jay: Apr. 20 (1); Common Crow: From 20 in the winter to a pair in May. Tufted Titmouse: Dec. 16 (2); Mockingbird: One or 2 several times during the winter. Brown Thrasher: One occasionally during the fall and spring along the river bank. Robin: Seen very few times. Water Pipit: Nov. 16 (3), Dec. 11 (4). Two of these were in a small elm tree at the edge of the lake. Dec. 16 (17) was the largest flock of the winter and also the last seen. Loggerhead Shrike: One stayed along the river bank during the winter. Starling: From 3,000 in Dec. to 2 or 3 pairs in May. Prothonotary Warbler: Apr. 20 (1); Myrtle Warbler: Oct. 3 (4), one to 4 a good many times during the winter. House Sparrow: Always around 40 near the barn. Eastern Meadowlark: Sept. 27 (34). From 4 to 12 during the rest of the year. Redwinged Blackbird: Several hundred were there during the summer. They did considerable damage to table corn. They peel back the ends of the shucks hunting for worms. This makes it unfit for sale. Three automatic carbide cannons were installed during the growing season. They gave a very loud pop every few minutes. This kept the birds in the air a good bit of the time. Some Starlings and Cowbirds also fed on the corn worms. The first seen this spring were on Mar. 18 (5). One or 2 were seen on each trip until mid May. Common Grackle: From 1 to 12 during most of the year. Two or 3 pairs nested along the river. Brown-headed Cowbird: Seen only a few times during the year. Cardinal: One or 2 pairs along the river bank all year. Savannah Sparrow: Oct. 3 (1), Nov. 15 (7), then none until Apr. 10 (2). Vesper Sparrow: Oct. 29 (2), Nov. 5 (6), Mar. 24 (2); Chipping Sparrow: Seen only twice during the year. Field Sparrow: Seen only once or twice. Song Sparrow: Oct. 2 (2) were the only ones for the year. Lack of suitable cover in the fields during the winter kept the sparrow count down.

HENRY E. PARMER, 3800 Richland Ave., Nashville 5.

## SOME NOTEWORTHY NASHVILLE RECORDS

**STILT SANDPIPER** (*Micropalama himantopus*). On the morning of July 24, 1959 I found a flock of early shorebirds at Bush Lake. In the flock was a Stilt Sandpiper. This is our second Nashville record. (THE MIGRANT 29, 51, 1958). After three nights of rain the fields were muddy. In the middle of a bare four acre plot were the following: Stilt Sandpiper, 1; Pectoral Sandpiper, 6; Killdeer, 22; Least Sandpiper, 20; Semipalmated Sandpiper, 10; Semipalmated Plover, 2 and Upland Plover, 2.

**BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER** (*Tryngites subruficollis*). Early in the morning of Sept. 16, 1959 the writer found two Buff-breasted Sandpipers at Bush Lake. In the early morning sun the heads, necks and breasts seemed to be the color of an old khaki shirt. They were feeding with several Killdeers. The Sandpipers walked towards my car as they fed, and were within 20 feet when I left. Even then they did not flush. This is our first Nashville record and the sixth for the state. THE MIGRANT 15, 76, 1944; 23, 47, 1952; 24, 39, 1953; 25, 52, 1954; 26, 11, 1955.

**SANDERLING** (*Crocethia alba*). On the morning of Sept. 16, 1959 the writer found a strange white shaded bird at Bush Lake. It was feeding in about 1 inch of water along the shore line. It stayed through Sept. 19. During that time Mrs. Amelia Laskey, Mrs. Sue Bell, Mr. Albert Ganier and Mr. Alan Munro helped to identify it as a Sanderling in winter plumage. The plumage looked very much as that of the Black-bellied Plover in Peterson's Guide. However, it was a much smaller bird. Several times it was seen within a foot of a Spotted Sandpiper. This gave a good comparison as to size. Once it was found in the middle of a plowed field with Killdeers, a very strange place for a Sanderling. This is the first Nashville record and the fourth state record. (THE MIGRANT 26, 43, 1955). It was very tame and would allow us within 20 feet of it.

**AMERICAN AVOCET** (*Recurvirostra americana*). On the morning of Sept. 29, 1959 at Bush Lake the writer was very much surprised to see across the lake a large whitish bird resting on the water. At first he thought it an early gull. By using 7 x 35 binoculars he saw the long thin upturned bill and the black folded wings with a wide white stripe. He then knew it to be an unusual bird for Tennessee, an Avocet. It was not floating on the water as first thought but wading in water nearly to its belly. It was in fall plumage with the head, neck and breast white. There appeared to be a very light patch of color on the back of the head, either light gray or tan. At 10:30 a.m. Mrs. Amelia Laskey saw it and at 3:00 p.m. John Ogden found it in the same place. During the night it left. A cold front came through with a northerly wind. This is the first Nashville record and the sixth for the state. THE MIGRANT 19, 73, 1948; 21, 6, 1953; 26, 11 and 50, 1955. Audubon Field Notes 8, 24, 1953.

**BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER** (*Squatarola squatarola*). On Sept. 2, 1959 the writer found a Black-bellied Plover at Bush Lake. This is the second Nashville record. The bird was a beautiful specimen in full spring plumage. It was feeding in an almost bare field with Killdeers. It was found again on Sept. 4, this time in a field of short turnip greens. It appeared to stand twice as high as the nearby Killdeers.

HENRY E. PARMER, 3800 Richland Ave., Nashville 5.

## THE SEASON

MEMPHIS.—Spring migration was, on the whole, late and poor, and possibly a record as such, among those seasons worked here more than the average, since 1928. The writer visited Overton Park, before work, five mornings a week; visits to open country on week-ends were often far afield, so that local data in that habitat was sketchy. The Swainson's Thrush, normally common, was more common than usual and the Orange-crowned Warbler, normally uncommon, could have been termed fairly common. Not a Worm-eating Warbler was recorded. Regular dusk-time visits gave, for the park only, good results for the Whip-poor-will, poor for the Chuck-will's-widow. Open country species were apparently below average, especially swallows, Bobolink, and Orchard Oriole. A late male Bobolink was seen May 24 along the Mississippi River levee, on the Tennessee-Kentucky line. A few Golden-winged Warblers were noted in the park as usual, plus, in Hardeman County, May 2, one near Lake LaJoie, and two in the Highway 100 black alder swamp at Chickasaw Forest. A Woodcock flushed at this spot, may have been a summer resident and a transient Connecticut Warbler was there at the same time. Another Connecticut was listed May 10, on the Benjestown Road, Memphis field day.

The few trips made for Golden Plover did not locate many. From none to 20 at the Penal Farm; largest flock below the state line, 95 along the levee, Tunica County; while across the river a total of 306 at 16 spots on a Turrell-Earle-Crawfordsville circuit. Small numbers of other shorebirds included our first spring record of the Red-backed Sandpiper in areas worked by Memphis members; I saw one, May 16, at the Tupelo Fish Hatchery.

May 24, where Reelfoot Creek crosses Tenn. Hwy. 22 a Mississippi Kite was seen. This is about the same spot where Dr. and Mrs. H. H. Axtell of Buffalo, N. Y. saw one July 18, 1957 (Aud. Fld. Notes 1958:38). Later, at the levee and the Hickman ferry, two Fish Crows were seen and heard. These are apparently the first Kentucky record for the latter. Later that day I tried to find this species in Kentucky Bend, as I had done also in April and at both sites and in between last year, all without success. The Red-headed Woodpecker was common along the levee at the Kentucky-Tennessee line as it also was along the Arkansas levee across from Memphis. The Orchard Oriole continued uncommon in the near Memphis area but normal in Obion County and Itawamba County.

Some Blue Grosbeak records: near Rara Avis, Dorsey, and Pine Mountain, Miss., and north of Shiloh N. M. P., Tenn., all in general area of War-riner's records of some years ago in these pages (1945:24-26). In Obion County, May 24, three spots east of Hornbeak. On July 12, four records northwest of Gadsden (all in Crockett County) and one at Gibson Wells. We have missed, in recent years, seeing one at the highway 18 overpass, Grand Junction, but one towards LaGrange, June 28, shows that the species is still along Tenn. Hwy. 57. Lark Sparrows: two singles near Rara Avis, Miss., May 17, and one NW of Gadsden, Crockett County, July 12. One at Shelby County Penal Farm, Aug. 8, was at the identical spot as the only other Farm record, April 17, 1953.

BEN B. COFFEY, JR., 672 North Belvedere, Memphis 7.

NASHVILLE.—Late spring and summer in the Nashville area have been delightful, except for about three weeks in August when the weather was hot and humid. There have been good intermittent rains with no pe-

riods of real drought. This condition possibly contributes to the fact that several observers have seen fewer birds generally than in normal summers when there has been more heat and less rain, making daily sprinkling necessary and causing a more general movement of the birds looking for water.

It is interesting to note that the shore birds seen around Nashville for several years in March and April were absent from the usual places (which were as wet as ever). Only a few scattered shore birds were reported until May 8 when Louis Farrell, Jr. found eleven species on the River Road. This is late for a concentration in this area.

Some last spring dates were: May 26, Spotted Sandpipers (2) and Lesser Scaup (8); June 2, Black Tern (1) (HEP); June 16 and 17 Woodcock (1) (JO); June 23, Osprey (1) (HEP) (very late).

It was established that the Cerulean and Worm-eating Warblers nested at Two Jays Sanctuary, when John Ogden saw adults of both species feeding young on June 16 and 17. Harry Monk reports 3 nests of the Mourning Dove active on Sept. 13: One built Aug. 27 and 29, one established Sept. 7 and one found with brooding birds Sept. 11. A clutch of 8 Bobwhite eggs began hatching Sept. 18 and finished Sept. 19 (ARL). (2 eggs were damaged and did not hatch).

The first fall shore bird, a Spotted Sandpiper was seen at Bush Lake July 23 (HEP). He found six species of waders at the same location July 27, including Stilt Sandpiper\*. Aug. 15, Blue-winged Teal (1) (HEP) at Bush Lake, earlier than usual. Sept. 2, and 4 Black-bellied Plover\* (1) (HEP). Sept. 16, White-rumped Sandpiper (1); Pectoral Sandpiper (1); Sanderling\* (1); Semipalmated Plover (2) and Buff-breasted Sandpiper\*.

Some of our first fall records of song birds follow: Aug. 30, Magnolia Warbler, (1) (HCM); Sept. 3, Canada Warbler, (1); Blackburnian Warbler, (2); Tennessee Warbler, (2) (JO); Sept. 11, Pied-billed Grebe, (1); Golden-winged Warbler, (1) (the latter a tower casualty), (ARL). Sept. 12, Philadelphia Vireo, (1); Bay-breasted Warbler (1); Wilson's Warbler, (1); Worm-eating Warbler, (1); Nashville Warbler, (1); Ovenbird, (4); Myrtle Warbler, (1) (early); Black-throated Green Warbler, (1) and Rose-breasted Grosbeak, (2). (TOS trip to Radnor Lake). Sept. 13, Veery, (1) dead at WSIX tower (ARL); Sept. 16, White-throated Sparrow, (1) (earliest known Nashville record) (ARL); Sept. 19, White-crowned Sparrow, (2) (FL, Jr.).

SUE M. BELL, 210 Carden Ave., Nashville 5.

\* See Page 35 for further details.

COOKEVILLE.—Reports from other parts of the state, some visited recently, indicate a "damp August"—plenty of moisture and mildew, if not actual heavy rains. Ours was a **wet** August, almost three inches above the average for the month. Aside from the high humidity on numerous days, there has been nothing distinctive about the season here.

Whether the weather or some other factor (Training of the young, as believed by some), or other factors, are responsible, the summer residents have been far from numerous. About the first of September, the situation has changed. One club member (CH) reports a number of migrants at the edge of town. The same member and the writer have seen small flocks of Robins recently. The smaller ones were on Sept. 1, and about 50 were seen on Sept. 13. The latter were mostly juveniles.

P. L. HOLLISTER, Biology Department, Tenn. Tech., Cookeville.

GREENEVILLE.—For the last few years Richard and Ruth Nevius have been keeping notes on their observations of Sora Rails, Short-billed Marsh Wrens and Blue Grosbeaks in Greene county during the summer months. One Sora Rail was seen the last week of July. Two Marsh Wrens were seen about the same time in the area.

Due to the long dry spell no migrating shore birds were observed in the section in which they usually stop.

Several reports of successful Bluebird nestings have been reported this summer, and increasing numbers of these beautiful, friendly birds.

Blue Grosbeaks are not so rare as they were, or at least they were thought to be. Maybe we just hadn't found them, or maybe they are extending their territory—Six singing birds along a 10 mile drive were reported, not all in one day. Young birds not long out of the nest were observed by the Neviuses last summer, but none were seen this year, though singing males have been heard.

A pair of nesting Prothonotary Warblers was observed in May by several of the Greenville club members—a 'first-time' occasion for our chapter. According to the W. S. Neill family, the warblers have been nesting near their home in the Warrensburg Community, a few miles from Greenville, and near the Nolichucky River, for several years.

MRS. CHESTER B. DARNELL, Route 4, Greenville.

KINGSPORT.—The past spring and summer have brought a very satisfactory number of birds without many unusual records. During the spring migration the absence of shorebirds continued. Tom Finucane noticed fewer Redstarts and Black-poll Warblers than usual. Among summer residents there was a shortage of migrant herons and Grasshopper Sparrows. Also the Bluebird population here seems not yet to have recovered from the 1958 loss. Purple Martins and House Wrens appear to be increasing over their low numbers of last year.

Perhaps the local Ruffed Grouse population is growing: Tom Finucane reports hearing them more frequently on Bays Mountain. The extremely large flocks of Grackles widely commented on last winter continued throughout the summer.

Our records show only a few unusual dates. The Blue Grosbeaks noticed around May first at the E. M. McMabons' feeder for the past two years appeared April 26. On July 21, I saw a Canada Warbler in a purple-leaved plum tree in clear view of our windows. This is almost a month earlier than we expect to see Canada Warblers. On August 24, Arthur Smith reported a Wilson's Warbler; our only previous fall record was Sept. 21, 1952. (On Sept. 4, Elizabeth Smith and I saw a Semi-palmated Plover at the Old Fish Hatchery. Our only other fall record is Sept. 21, 1952). Again this year my family and I saw Common Terns on Boone Lake near Rockingham Dock Sept. 11. This same day we recorded the first Blue-winged Teal of the fall, a flight of over fifty, and first Broad-winged Hawk. On Sept. 13, my son and I saw a Peregrine Falcon pursuing a flock of Starlings; we were able to watch it across the sky for several miles. On that same day we saw a Great-crested Flycatcher, a late record. From the first reports of club members hawks are migrating in very large numbers earlier than usual.

ANN H. SWITZER, 1678 Fairidge Place, Kingsport,

## ROUND TABLE NOTES

**SPARROW HAWKS NESTING** — Newly fledged Sparrow Hawks (*Falco sparverius*) were being fed by parent birds in the tall oaks of the open woodland that is Glenview Park, Memphis, on June 12, 1959. On this date the parent birds were courting and I was surprised to find that they had chosen a conspicuous site on the edge of a heavily traveled drive used by picnickers. Two dirt, paddle tennis courts had been used heavily all summer at the base of the tree. This did not seem to bother them in spite of the fact that the nesting cavity was only 15 feet up on the dead trunk facing the road.

Again, three small birds were in the nest on July 26. On Aug. 10, they were sitting in the opening waiting to be fed, occasionally exercising their wings. However, the parent birds were noisily attacking nesting songbirds nearby and a resident there occasionally found feathers. Upon examination, by me, these appeared to be feathers of Red-headed Woodpeckers, House Sparrows, Chimney Swifts and Robins. However, young squabs and Starlings that had tumbled from the nests were possibly eaten also. Since this was the height of the moulting season, feathers were easily found. It was after much effort that I succeeded in persuading the nearby resident that this species of hawk offsets any harm it might do, by eating many large insects and mice, thus maintaining the balance of nature through its raids on populous species. A plan to have the local zoo collect the young birds was averted after I explained this species was protected by law.

Another crisis developed when the children heard about the nest. Young boys wanted to capture the birds to train them for use in falconry, but when the first bird left the nest on Aug. 14 the parents set up a fierce battle, leading the bird down the paved road into a privet hedge and coaxed it onto an overhanging limb. This was repeated until the last bird left on Aug. 17. A photograph was taken of this family in the nest.

OLIVER S. IRWIN, 1789 Glenview Ave., Memphis 14.

**BROWN THRASHER NESTING**—Last summer Brown Thrashers twice saved themselves the trouble of nest building by using a second-hand Mockingbird nest that had survived the wind and rain of winter about seven feet from the ground in a cherry laurel protected by the low eaves of our house. I first noticed the occupation on April 8 when I was entertaining with a coffee. Throughout the morning a thrasher sat in the nest glaring balefully from a large yellow eye at all the guests as they came and went on the walk from our front door close enough to the nest to reach out and touch it. During the afternoon two Thrashers carried a few twigs to refurbish the nest. Occasionally on the next day a twig or a bit of paper was added to the structure. On April 10 the female started laying. From four eggs only two young birds appeared both by April 21. I didn't see the nestlings leave the nest, but they were being fed by the parent birds under the shrubbery in front of our house on May 2. On the afternoon of May 3 I heard both young birds, which could not fly, in the semi-circular area about three feet deep in front of a basement window. My daughter restored them to the protection and freedom of the shrubbery after we had watched for an hour during which no parent bird came to feed them. Later in the afternoon we saw one parent feeding them. After that we didn't see either parents or young for more than a week.

Observations in Bent, **Life Histories of North American Nuthatches, Wrens, Thrashers, and Their Allies**, indicate that usually a female Thrasher starts building a second nest a few days after the first brood leaves the nest. I don't know if that were true of this female. However, by June 1, there were once more eggs in the old Mockingbird nest, five this time. These eggs raised two questions: (1) whether the female was the same which occupied the nest in April, and, if so, (2) was this her second or third brood? Banding would have provided an answer, at least to the first question. On June 12 one egg had hatched. Once again only two nestlings resulted from the incubation. One of these was much larger and more active than the other. The vigorous one left the nest at 11:30 A.M. on June 23. That day it seemed to get most of the attention of both parents. By late evening the weaker nestling was on the ground. For the next two weeks we saw the birds only now and then. Each parent seemed to be followed in his search for food always by the same fledgling. Sometimes we'd see one parent on the front lawn accompanied by his chirping charge at the same time the other parent with his was in the back or side yard. As late as July 26 one of the parents was still being trailed by a begging dependent, by this time adult size with a tail almost adult length.

ANN H. SWITZER, 1620 Fairidge Place, Kingsport.

TRAILL'S FLYCATCHER.—The Traill's Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*) returned to the site of the 1958 nesting records (THE MIGRANT, 29, 37-42, 1958), at the County Farm near Elizabethton. The first bird noted singing was on May 9, 1959. The following day at least two were singing in the area.

A systematic search was made for nests on June 21, the approximate date on which they were first found last year. One nest was found containing three eggs, in an American elm, about five feet above ground level and directly over a small stream.

A second nest was located, also in an elm bush, about 5 feet above ground but it contained no eggs. On June 27 it contained 3 eggs and on June 28, 4 eggs. On July 5 the eggs were gone but the nest was intact.

Also on July 5 the first nest found contained 3 newly hatched young. An additional nest was found lying on the ground where it had been dislodged from an alder bush. Still another nest was found containing four young, almost ready to leave the nest. This nest was about 8 feet above ground in a clump of willows.

The birds in the first nest were observed several times and they were almost ready to leave the nest when last observed on the afternoon of July 19. Assuming that these and the other four were safely fledged, at least seven birds were produced in this area this year.

LEE R. HERNDON, 1533 Burgie Place, Elizabethton.

#### FOOD PREFERENCE OF BIRDS

Needless to say the feeding station used in conjunction with my banding operations is well patronized. As it is only ten feet from our living room window, the behavior of birds can be followed very closely. A 4-year study of their eating preferences is summarized below. The following are my recipes used:

Cheesecake: 4 parts corn meal, 1 part flour, 2 parts melted suet, 2 parts sugar. Cook corn meal in melted suet for 5 minutes over low fire, stirring constantly. Add flour and sugar and mix well for a few minutes. Pour in molds. It hardens.

Suet-Corn: Pour melted suet over fine cracked corn, stirring until all is thoroughly wet. Use plenty of suet, otherwise it gets too crumbly. When cooled, press into food sticks.

Peanut Butter Cake: Stir corn meal into peanut butter until mixture is quite dry yet will hold its shape when squeezed into a ball. Then ram the mixture in a tin can. Lay can on its side on the tray and birds will eat out of it. Should nail it down, probably, so it will not roll off or be carried away by prowling animals.

Location of Food: G-On ground; T-On feeding tray; S-In holes on a stick or pole.

	Cheesecake	Nutmeats	Raisins	Fine cracked corn	Coarse cracked corn	Millet	Hemp	Melted Suet Corn	Peanut Butter Cake	Sunflower Seeds
Bobwhite				G	G	G	G			
Hairy Woodpecker	T							S		
Downy Woodpecker	T							S		
Y.-bel. Sapsucker								S		
Pil. Woodpecker								S		
R.-bel. Woodpecker	T				G			S		
Blue Jay		G			G					
Purple Finch				T,G		T,G	T,G			T,G
Harris Sparrow				G	G					
W-crowned Sparrow				G		G				
W-throated Sparrow				G		G				
Tree Sparrow				G	G					
Chipping Sparrow				T,G		T,G				
Field Sparrow	T			T,G		T,G			T	
Slate-color. Junco	T,G			T,G		T,G			T	
Song Sparrow				G		G				
Lincoln's Sparrow				G		G				
Fox Sparrow				G		G				
Ruf.-sd. Towhee				G	G	G	G			G
Cardinal	T	T			T,G	T,G	T,G		T	T,G
R-breasted Grosbeak							T,G			T,G
Indigo Bunting						T,G				
Y.-breasted Chat	T								T	
Catbird	T								T	
Brown Thrasher		G	G	G		G	G			
Carolina Wren	T	T						S	T	
Winter Wren		T							T	
W.-breas. Nuthatch	T							S	T	T
Tufted Titmouse	T	T						S	T	T
Carolina Chickadee	T	T						S	T	T
Wood Thrush				T,G						
Hermit Thrush		G		T,G						

—RALPH L. DUNCKEL, 523 North Washington Ave., Cookeville

PARULA WARBLERS NESTING IN A REGION DEVOID OF MOSS.—As the Parula Warbler (*Parula americana*) shows a decided nesting preference for regions abounding in Usnea or Spanish moss, it was interesting to find it fairly common in a high altitude area where there is no moss of any kind.

High Hampton Inn is located in the mountains of North Carolina at 3500 feet elevation two miles from the Post Office of Cashiers and twelve miles from Highlands (4100 feet). My husband and I have been there many times in late September, and twice in May, but this year were there from June 15 to 22, and assume that birds found there at this season are nesting in the area. They conform closely to those recorded at similar elevations by Henry M. Stevenson and Arthur Stupka in their article: "The Altitudinal Limits of Certain Birds in the Southeastern States" (MIGRANT, 19, 33, 1948) and by James T. Tanner in: "The Altitudinal Distribution of Birds in a Part of the Great Smoky Mountains" (MIGRANT, 26, 37, 1955). No Veerys, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Juncos or Winter Wrens were found at this lower limit of their breeding range, although Canada Warblers and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were singing and one pair of Blackburnian Warblers was seen.

In the immediate area which surrounds a lake perhaps a half mile in length, the terrain is mountainous and—except for the golf course—is densely wooded. There are many very tall pines, including solid stands of white pine, and deciduous hardwoods including oak, hickory, ash, maple and tulip poplar. The undergrowth of rhododendron, azalea, and mountain laurel is particularly dense all around the lake, and along the many small watercourses. The lake is somewhat marshy at the upper end where it is fed by a small stream. Hemlocks are abundant, and buckberry bushes make the hillsides almost impenetrable. Here, the Parula Warblers sing continuously. Nowhere in the area is there moss of any size, nor are there any climbing vines. Stevenson reported Parulas nesting near Highlands in 1941, but made no mention of nest location. I quote two other authorities on this subject. Thomas Burleigh (GEORGIA BIRDS) says that "in the mountains where there is no Spanish moss, breeding pairs have been seen in well-covered ravines where hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) grows along streams. It is at the end of the upper branches of this tree that the nest is built" of light green moss-like lichen. Ludlow Griscom and Alexander Sprunt, Jr., (THE WARBLERS OF NORTH AMERICA) say that "the nest is found in the northern range in festoons of Usnea, in the south in clusters of Tillandsia moss . . . and elsewhere in coniferous trees such as hemlock, and occasionally in mixed hardwood without lichen."

In the immediate area around High Hampton Inn and lake I found eleven species of warblers in this order of abundance: Oven-bird, Hooded Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, abundant. Black-throated Blue Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, common; Parula Warbler, Yellow Warbler, fairly common; Louisiana Waterthrush, Canada Warbler, uncommon; Blackburnian Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, rare. In nearby more open habitats there are, in addition, Chats and Yellowthroats. Notably absent were Redstarts, which in our May visits, gave the impression of defending territory.

In every instance where a parent bird of any species was seen carrying food, it was to young birds already out of the nest. So next spring I hope to go to High Hampton somewhat earlier to locate the nest of the "Blue Yellow-backed Warbler" in this region.

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