

the nesting birds for comparison, as the birds themselves, aside from their new record, may be specialized. Only one other bird of this species has been taken so far north. This was secured by Mr. Figgitt, in Maryland. My record was announced by Mr. William Palmer, in *The Auk**, as also, I believe, Mr. Figgitt's was. Mr. Palmer thinks the bird will be found abundantly in eastern Virginia. The nature of the ground where the nest was found was very red and dry, and the trees are Scrub Oaks, Old Field Pine and Dogwood.

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THE LORAIN COUNTY, OHIO, 1898 HORIZON.

Considerable has already appeared in the BULLETIN on the birds of Lorain County, in furtherance of the plan suggested by your committee on Geographical Distribution. It seems only fitting to round out that work, at the close of the year, by making a full report of what has been accomplished. It should be said at the outset that the work here reported has been carried on by Mr. W. L. Dawson and the writer more or less jointly, at least as much so as it would be possible for two persons to work together without making a business of it.

During the year eighty-seven excursions were made more or less out of town into the woods and fields for the purpose of observation and study of the birds. Of these only seventeen were trips to the more distant parts of the county, occupying the whole day in the majority of cases. Five of these long trips were made in company with a considerable number of students as class excursions. Of the seventy short trips, thirty-seven were with the Ornithology class, leaving forty-five short trips independent of the class. These trips with the class would not ordinarily be considered equal in importance to the others, but at such times a careful record was kept and often unusual species noticed. It seems necessary, therefore, to include them as a part of the whole work of the year.

Rather more than half of the seventy short trips were devoted to early morning work and were therefore of short duration—never more than three hours, and often half that. But the early morning is the best time for the study of birds. Some few were half day trips to neighboring

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fields and woods with a view to making a careful search for the more uncommon species.

While the work varied somewhat with the months, yet enough was done in each month of the year to make a fairly complete record. April, May and June have forty-seven trips credited to them, a large proportion of them being trips with the class. Nearly all of the class work was done in these three months, of necessity. A little was carried into July.

It must not be supposed that the whole work of the year was confined to the trips enumerated. Many valuable records were made during walks to and from work and during a few minutes on the college campus when the warblers were unusually numerous. At least two records were made in Mr. Dawson's door-yard which were not duplicated during the year. Mr. Dawson's weekly appointments at a neighboring country village afforded excellent opportunities for observation. Were these trips counted with the others the number would aggregate more than a hundred for the year.

The whole number of species recorded for the county during 1898 is 175, there being but twenty which were not seen by both of us. The whole number of species recorded for the county in twenty years is 221. Of this number thirty-nine are casual and accidental, leaving but seven species which might reasonably be expected which we did not see. Of these seven four are irregular in their occurrence. On the other hand, twelve species now considered rare were recorded. These twelve are: Horned Grebe, Greater Yellow-legs, Baird's and Red-backed Sandpipers, Golden Eagle, Barn Owl, Short-eared Owl, Lincoln's Sparrow, Pine Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Bewick's Wren and Gray-cheeked Thrush. Bewick's Wren is the only species new to the county list.

So much for details. What results, beyond the strengthening of the county list, can we show for the twelve-month of labor? Four species were added to the writer's list and seven to Mr. Dawson's. Several little known species have been better learned and the songs of those and others heard for the first time. The conviction that usually aimless walks purely for exercise can be turned to pleasurable and profitable account deepened. Better health resulting from a definite plan for every half holiday as well as every whole holiday for open air work with the birds, bringing more and better exercise than any unplanned ramble could. Assurance made doubly sure that birds are creatures of all weathers, and that they are more easily approached and many of their habits better studied during stormy than during fair weather. An aroused public sentiment in favor of the birds among both citizens and

students, resulting in far better protection of our native birds. A clearer conception of the relations existing between the migrations of the birds and other natural phenomena. In short, it has been a year full of profit.

LYNDS JONES, *Oberlin, Ohio.*

A SHORTEST-DAY-OF-THE-YEAR HORIZON.

December 22nd of this winter completed in this locality a week of south winds and thawing weather. The snow having vanished, except for fence-row drifts, the walking was very heavy in most places. Occasional spatters of rain all day long, detracted only a little from the pleasures of a tramp which Professor Jones and I made to lake Erie, via Chance creek. The course to be traversed called for twenty-one miles on foot with a return in the evening "on the electrics."

The Professor had set his heart on finding a Red-breasted Nuthatch in the Chance creek gorge—and so we did, just one, in company with W. B's. (as we called the White-breasted Nuthatches, for short) and Brown Creepers. He was evidently established for the winter and right glad we were to find him; for this is the first winter record for the county.

While we were beating through a copse near the top of the bank I was suddenly rooted to the spot by that sweetest note in any language, "*Cheery, cheery!*" When I could recover my breath I shouted, "Jones, there's a Bluebird!" And immediately from the top of a tree, hard by, there floated down the delicious strains of a Bluebird's spring song. Scarcely could I restrain the impulse to fall on my knees, so like a heavenly messenger it seemed. It was indeed a Bluebird, dropped down out of the sky on the shortest day of winter. The first note we heard a little to the north of us, while the bird was on the wing, and he passed off into the murky south, flying high. It was perhaps a laggard from the north; but if this be true, its song was all the more remarkable, for it sang incessantly during the minute it stayed upon the tree. On the other hand, it might have been lured north by the mild weather, but struck with sudden misgiving at sight of the chilly lake a few miles further on. At any rate we respectfully submit it as either the latest "fall" or earliest "spring" record for this vicinity.

Red-headed Woodpeckers appeared in another wood some three miles south of the lake. I say "another" because we had already found