

THE WILSON BULLETIN

A Quarterly Magazine Devoted to the Study of Living Birds
 Official Organ of the Wilson Ornithological Club

Edited by **LYNDS JONES**

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EDITORIAL.

The editor will be at Woods Hole, Mass., after June 25, where letters should be addressed, until September 1st. After that date, and until the September BULLETIN is mailed, address Oberlin, Ohio.

Bird-Lore has established the Christmas Census, we have established the New Year Census and the May "All Day" record, and now are ready to add another to this intensive field study of the birds. Shall we not at least try to fittingly celebrate the birth of our nation by making a list of the birds to be found on that day? Would not such a use of the day be more in accord with the real spirit of the anniversary than the usual noisy and dangerous celebration? To those who record 75 or more species on July 4, 1904, the editor will present volumes 9 and 10 of the Wilson Bulletin, or a copy of Bulletin 31, "A Monograph of the Flicker." This summer study will include only the breeding birds and will therefore be of value as showing what birds nest in your vicinity. We trust that this beginning of the study of the breeding birds will prove so interesting that careful studies may follow. It is only by the careful study of the breeding birds of many localities that we shall be able to know for certain the actual distribution of many of our birds. Present day knowledge of summer distribution is largely general; we should make it exact by thoroughly working our own localities.

In asking for New Year records and May records, and now in asking for July 4th records, the editor has in mind a general campaign of field study such as few have ever undertaken systematically. He hopes to prove the intrinsic interest of this sort of work by inducing many to undertake it in these small ways so that they will be glad to broaden out to more and more studies, first looking toward monthly lists of the birds of each locality represented by an observer, and finally making these monthly records into strictly seasonal records for the purpose of determining accurately the bird population during each season. We

should then have Winter Birds, Birds of the Spring Migrations, Breeding Birds, Birds of the Fall Migrations. At first these would run into each other, but as the work grew and experience increased the different groups would separate themselves out, and the records would be of inestimable value in determining distribution. Monthly lists are not only possible but entirely feasible and within the reach of all who work in the field a little. Of course these monthly lists will not be complete, not even for the best of us, and likely not even if we could spend all our time in the field studying, for birds are not stationary structures and man's ability is limited, but they will be not less interesting for that reason. The check-book method of recording briefly field studies ensures annual, seasonal and monthly lists, for the record is a daily record. It is not complete, to be sure, but what is recorded is definite. It is also the easiest sort of record to keep. It can be made to give records of special localities if the observer wishes. Thus the writer's check-book records the birds found at the water-works reservoir, on the college campus, in his yard, at Oak Point, while giving the whole general record, all in one column for each species for one day. Simply transcribing gives each list, or only one, at one's pleasure. At best book-keeping is irksome, but here the labor is small for the results obtained. Furthermore, the records, when there are any, are definite even if meagre. They may be made as full as one pleases. Our plea is for more field study looking toward the exact determination of the birds of your region. Work easily, but carefully.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Bird Life Stories, Book One, by Clarence Moores Weed.

The book contains twenty-four chapters, each chapter treating of one familiar species. The author has taken the text from the writings of one of four of our most famous writers upon bird life, and therefore, the book is designed as a classical reader wholly devoted to birds. The four writers—Alexander Wilson, John James Audubon, Thomas Nuttall, and Charles E. Bendire—are sufficient guaranty of the matter selected for these twenty-four familiar birds. The book is clearly designed on the lines of The Nature Calendar series which the author of this book has begun for the purpose of combining the usually uninteresting part of learning to read with a training of the senses to recognize the pupil's natural surroundings. It is unfortunate that the excellent quality of the text and general makeup of this admirable book should be marred by the quality of the colored pictures. The three color photograph process is responsible for not a little of the trouble, the mechanical process of printing being evidently carelessly done, but the taxidermy is not always satisfactory. We shall await the appearance of the other two numbers of this series with interest. The series is published by the Rand, McNally Company, Chicago. L. J.

Wild Birds in City Parks. By Herbert Eugene Walter and Alice Hall Walter, Third Edition.

The new features of this edition are the addition of forty-five bird—the majority of which are shore and water birds—and a simple field