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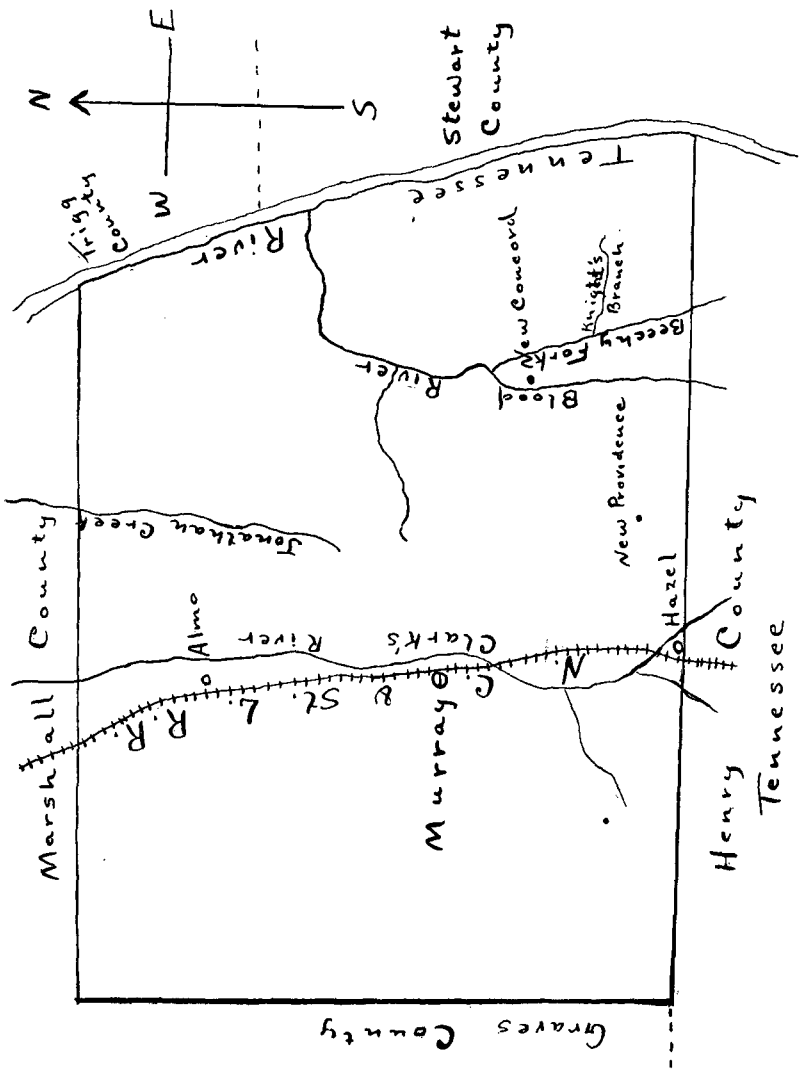
## BIRDS OF CALLOWAY COUNTY, KENTUCKY

BY GORDON WILSON

Calloway County, Kentucky, is located just west of the Tennessee River, in what is known as the Jackson Purchase, which includes all the territory between the Tennessee and Mississippi Rivers, in both Kentucky and Tennessee, and was opened for settlement by the Federal Government in 1819, after the land had been purchased from several tribes of Indians. At that time all the uplands were barrens or prairies, the creek and river bottoms being heavily wooded. After the coming of the white men and the stopping of the periodic prairies fires, the uplands became dense forests, chiefly of oak and hickory. Many of these forests were virtually untouched when I was a small boy and I remember that old citizens showed me the stumps of post oaks which were said to have been part of the original forest. A very large area in the southeastern part of Calloway county was cut over for fuel to run what was then an extensive iron furnace, but which was abandoned after the Civil War. This cut-over area soon grew up again in a very dense forest and formed until the past few years a wild haunt for Wild Turkey, Catamounts, Wild Cats, Red Foxes, and even Timber Wolves and Virginia Deer.

Though the smaller valleys opening into the Tennessee River bottom are 400 feet or more above sea level, most of them were marshy until the hillsides were cleared, when the sand from the gulleys filled many of these marshes, making some of them unfit for cultivation. Very few of the sloughs and ponds of thirty years ago are left unfilled. Consequently the hordes of water birds are no longer to be found, partly because of the filling of the marshes, partly because of wanton destruction of bird life. There are left now only a few retired spots where the rarer water birds are to be found.

Although a hundred years have passed since the land was



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opened for settlement, thousands of acres in Calloway and the adjoining counties are yet wholly or partially in timber, particularly the rough hillsides and the wetter parts of the creek and river bottoms. There are a number of worn-out farms which were exhausted by tobacco-raising in slave days and still are not in cultivation. These have grown up in blackberries and in bushes and offer harbor to the bush birds. From my experience in this section I am sure that insectivorous and song birds are more numerous now than they were a generation ago. By degrees a better attitude toward wild life has grown up and slowly birds are being sought after as companions on the farms.

The principal streams in this area are Blood River and its numerous small creeks, Jonathan Creek, Clark's River, and a number of very small creeks which flow directly into Tennessee River. All these streams have broad, flat valleys which are easily overflowed. Springs are very numerous, especially at the foot of the hills between Blood and Clark's Rivers. The hill ranges are still quite heavily wooded in many places.

The area covered by this article is approximately fifteen miles east and west by twenty-five miles north and south and includes all the county east of the N. C. and St. L. Railroad. The data have been gathered on some dozen vacations spent there, with the addition of observations made near Almo, Kentucky, by Professor L. Y. Lancaster, and near New Providence by Professor Ivan Wilson, both of these gentlemen being members of the faculty of the Western Kentucky State Teachers' College. All three of us spent our boyhood in this area and have visited there often in recent years. Most of my more recent visits have been made in late summer; consequently, my Warbler list is small. The area offers exceptional advantages to the bird student and it is hoped that this meager article will influence some one who lives there to more carefully study the rich bird treasures.

1. PIED-BILLED GREBE—*Podilymbus podiceps*.

Known locally as Die-dapper. Rare, probably summer resident in the wilder swamps.

2. LOON—*Gavia immer*.

Formerly seen rarely, but not seen or heard of in the last few years.

3. WATER-TURKEY—*Anhinga anhinga*.

Probably a rare summer resident.

4. MALLARD—*Anas platyrhynchos*.

A fairly common migrant, formerly very common.

5. GREEN-WINGED TEAL—*Nettion carolinense*.

Rare migrant.

6. BLUE-WINGED TEAL—*Querquedula discors*.  
Rare migrant.
7. WOOD DUCK—*Aix sponsa*.  
Fairly common migrant, with a few remaining through the summer.
8. WHITE-WINGED SCOTER—*Oidemia deglandi*.  
Very rare migrant.
9. WHISTLING SWAN—*Olor columbianus*.  
Rare migrant.
10. CANADA GOOSE—*Branta canadensis canadensis*.  
Rather common migrant.
11. BITTERN—*Botaurus lentiginosus*.  
Migrant, and probably a rare summer resident.
12. LEAST BITTERN—*Ixobrychus exilis*.  
Rare summer resident. The last one I saw was in August, 1917, on Blood River.
13. GREAT BLUE HERON—*Ardea herodias herodias*.  
A rare migrant or visitor now, but it formerly bred along the sloughs near New Concord.
14. LITTLE BLUE HERON—*Florida cærula*.  
Rare summer resident.
15. GREEN HERON—*Butorides virescens virescens*.  
Fairly common summer resident and apparently becoming more so.
16. SANDHILL CRANE—*Grus mexicana*.  
Fairly common migrant.
17. PURPLE GALLINULE—*Ionornis martinicus*.  
Rare summer resident, but seen regularly every summer on Knight's Branch.
18. WOODCOCK—*Philohela minor*.  
Common migrant.
19. WILSON'S SNIFE—*Gallinago delicata*.  
Common migrant.
20. LEAST SANDPIPER—*Pisobia minutilla*.  
Rare migrant.
21. KILLDEER—*Oxyechus vociferus*.  
Common resident.
22. BOB-WHITE—*Colinus virginianus virginianus*.  
Common resident; becoming commoner since the farmers have been interested in protecting this valuable bird.
23. RUFFED GROUSE—*Bonasa umbellus umbellus*.  
Rare resident now, but formerly common. Locally known as Pheasant.
24. WILD TURKEY—*Meleagris gallopavo silvestris*.  
A very rare resident in the colon section. When I was a small boy it was fairly common, even around my own home.
25. MOURNING DOVE—*Zenaidura macroura carolinensis*.  
Common to abundant resident.
26. TURKEY VULTURE—*Cathartes aura septentrionalis*.  
Common resident.

27. BLACK VULTURE—*Catharista urubu*.  
Much less common than the Turkey Vulture. Unscientific observers have always regarded it as the immature young of the last species.
28. MARSH HAWK—*Circus hudsonicus*.  
Fairly common winter resident.
29. SHARP-SHINNED HAWK—*Accipiter velox*.  
Fairly common resident.
30. COOPER'S HAWK—*Accipiter cooperi*.  
Fairly common resident.
31. RED-TAILED HAWK—*Buteo borealis borealis*.  
Rare resident.
32. RED-SHOULDERED HAWK—*Buteo lineatus lineatus*.  
Rare resident.
33. BALD EAGLE—*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*.  
Very rare resident in the rougher parts of this territory.
34. SPARROW HAWK—*Falco sparverius sparverius*.  
Common resident.
35. AMERICAN LONG-EARED OWL—*Asio wilsonianus*.  
Fairly common winter resident; it probably nests here.
36. SHORT-EARED OWL—*Asio flammeus*.  
Fairly common resident.
37. BARRED OWL—*Strix varia varia*.  
Common resident.
38. SCREECH OWL—*Otus asio asio*.  
Common resident.
39. GREAT HORNED OWL—*Bubo virginianus virginianus*.  
Common resident.
40. YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO—*Coccyzus americanus americanus*.  
Common summer resident.
41. BELTED KINGFISHER—*Ceryle alcyon*.  
Common resident.
42. HAIRY WOODPECKER—*Dryobates villosus villosus*.  
Rather common resident.
43. SOUTHERN DOWNY WOODPECKER—*Dryobates pubescens pubescens*.  
Rather common resident.
44. YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER—*Sphyrapicus varius varius*.  
Rare winter resident.
45. PILEATED WOODPECKER—*Phlatomus pileatus pileatus*.  
Fairly common to common resident.
46. RED-HEADED WOODPECKER—*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*.  
Abundant in summer, common in winter. In other parts of the state it is usually found only in summer.
47. RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER—*Centurus carolinus*.  
Common resident.
48. FLICKER—*Colaptes auratus auratus*.  
Common to abundant resident.
49. CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW—*Antrostomus carolinensis*.

- Common to abundant summer resident. Locally known as Dutch Whippoor-will.
50. WHIP-POOR-WILL—*Antrostomus vociferus vociferus*.  
Common summer resident.
  51. NIGHTHAWK—*Chordeiles virginianus virginianus*.  
Common summer resident.
  52. CHIMNEY SWIFT—*Chætura pelagica*.  
Abundant summer resident.
  53. RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD—*Archilochus colubris*.  
Common summer resident.
  54. KINGBIRD—*Tyrannus tyrannus*.  
Common summer resident.
  55. CRESTED FLYCATCHER—*Myiarchus crinitus*.  
Common summer resident.
  56. PHOEBE—*Sayornis phæbe*.  
Common summer resident.
  57. WOOD PEWEE—*Myiochanes virens virens*.  
Common summer resident.
  58. ACADIAN FLYCATCHER—*Empidonax virescens*.  
Fairly common summer resident.
  59. LEAST FLYCATCHER—*Empidonax minimus*.  
Rare migrant.
  60. PRAIRIE HORNED LARK—*Otocoris alpestris praticola*.  
Fairly common winter resident.
  61. BLUE JAY—*Cyanocitta cristata cristata*.  
Abundant resident.
  62. CROW—*Corvus brachyrhynchos brachyrhynchos*.  
Abundant resident, especially so in winter.
  63. BOBOLINK—*Dolichonyx orzivorus*.  
Common spring migrant.
  64. COWBIRD—*Molothrus ater ater*.  
Common summer resident.
  65. RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD—*Agelaius phæniceus phæniceus*.  
Common in summer; abundant in migrations.
  66. MEADOWLARK—*Sturnella magna magna*.  
Common to abundant resident.
  67. ORCHARD ORIOLE—*Icterus spurius*.  
Fairly common summer resident.
  68. BALTIMORE ORIOLE—*Icterus galbula*.  
Common summer resident.
  69. RUSTY BLACKBIRD—*Euphagus carolinus*.  
Fairly common migrant.
  70. BRONZED GRACKLE—*Quiscalus quiscula æneus*.  
Common to abundant in summer, a few remaining through the mild winters.
  71. PURPLE FINCH—*Carpodacus purpureus purpureus*.  
Fairly common winter resident.
  72. GOLDFINCH—*Astragalinus tristis tristis*.  
Common resident.
  73. SNOW BUNTING—*Plectrophenax nivalis nivalis*.

I saw a flock of 25 or more in my father's orchard several times during Christmas week, 1909. They were very gentle and could be easily approached. I identified them without doubt, as I studied them with bird book in hand. They were reported there in greater numbers during the winter of 1908.

74. VESPER SPARROW—*Poæcetes gramineus gramineus*.  
Fairly common migrant.
75. GRASSHOPPER SPARROW—*Ammodramus savannarum australis*.  
Common summer resident.
76. LARK SPARROW—*Chondestes grammacus grammacus*.  
Fairly common summer resident. I remember finding a nest in the summer of 1911 or 1912.
77. WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW—*Zonotrichia leucophrys leucophrys*.  
Rather rare winter resident.
78. WHITE-THROATED SPARROW—*Zonotrichia albicollis*.  
Rather rare winter resident, but commoner in migrations.
79. TREE SPARROW—*Spizella monticola monticola*.  
Rather rare winter resident; never known before the hard winter of 1917-1918.
80. CHIPPING SPARROW—*Spizella passerina passerina*.  
Common resident; a little more common in summer.
81. FIELD SPARROW—*Spizella pusilla pusilla*.  
Common summer resident.
82. SLATE-COLORED JUNCO—*Junco hyemalis hyemalis*.  
Abundant winter resident.
83. BACHMAN'S SPARROW—*Peucæa æstivalis bachmani*.  
Fairly common summer resident.
84. SONG SPARROW—*Melospiza melodia melodia*.  
Common winter resident.
85. LINCOLN'S SPARROW—*Melospiza lincolni*.  
Fairly common migrant.
86. FOX SPARROW—*Passerella iliaca*.  
Rare migrant.
87. CARDINAL—*Cardinalis cardinalis cardinalis*.  
Common to abundant resident.
88. TOWHEE—*Pipilo erythrophthalmus erythrophthalmus*.  
Common to abundant resident.
89. ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK—*Zamelodia ludoviciana*.  
Rare migrant.
90. INDIGO BUNTING—*Passerina cyanea*.  
Common summer resident.
91. DICKCISSEL—*Spiza americana*.  
Common summer resident.
92. SCARLET TANAGER—*Piranga erythromelas*.  
Rare migrant.
93. SUMMER TANAGER—*Piranga rubra*.  
Common summer resident.
94. PURPLE MARTIN—*Progne subis subis*.  
Common summer resident.

95. CLIFF SWALLOW—*Petrochelidon lunifrons*.  
Common summer resident.
96. BARN SWALLOW—*Hirundo erythrogastra*.  
Fairly common summer resident.
97. BANK SWALLOW—*Riparia riparia*.  
Rare summer resident.
98. CEDAR WAXWING—*Bambycilla cedrorum*.  
Common winter resident.
99. MIGRANT SHRIKE—*Lanius ludovicianus migrans*.  
Fairly common summer resident.
100. RED-EYED VIREO—*Vireosylva olivacea*.  
Common to abundant summer resident.
101. WARBLING VIREO—*Vireosylva gilva gilva*.  
Fairly common summer resident.
102. YELLOW-THROATED VIREO—*Lanivireo flavifrons*.  
Common summer resident.
103. WHITE-EYED VIREO—*Vireo griseus*.  
Common summer resident.
104. BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER—*Mniotilta varia*.  
Common summer resident.
105. PROTHONOTARY WARBLER—*Protonotaria citrea*.  
Rare summer resident.
106. WORM-EATING WARBLER—*Helmitheros vermivorus*.  
Rare migrant.
107. NASHVILLE WARBLER—*Vermivora ruficapilla ruficapilla*.  
Common migrant.
108. TENNESSEE WARBLER—*Vermivora peregrina*.  
Common to abundant migrant.
109. NORTHERN PARULA WARBLER—*Compsothlypis americana usnea*.  
Rare migrant.
110. CAPE MAY WARBLER—*Dendroica tigrina*.  
Rare migrant.
111. YELLOW WARBLER—*Dendroica aestiva aestiva*.  
Common summer resident.
112. MYRTLE WARBLER—*Dendroica coronata*.  
Common winter resident.
113. MAGNOLIA WARBLER—*Dendroica magnolia*.  
Common migrant.
114. BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER—*Dendroica virens*.  
Rare migrant.
115. OVEN-BIRD—*Sciurus aurocapillus*.  
Rare summer resident.
116. LOUISIANA WATER-THRUSH—*Sciurus motacilla*.  
Rare summer resident.
117. MOURNING WARBLER—*Oporornis philadelphia*.  
Rare migrant.
118. MARYLAND YELLOW-THROAT—*Gothlypis trichas trichas*.  
Common summer resident.
119. YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT—*Icteria virens virens*.



- Common summer resident.
120. CANADA WARBLER—*Wilsonia canadensis*.  
Rare migrant.
121. AMERICAN REDSTART—*Scotophaga ruticilla*.  
Common to abundant in migrations; a few nest each year.
122. MOCKINGBIRD—*Mimus polyglottos polyglottos*.  
Common to abundant resident.
123. CATBIRD—*Dumetella carolinensis*.  
Common summer resident.
124. BROWN THRASHER—*Toxostoma rufum*.  
Abundant summer resident.
125. CAROLINA WREN—*Thryothorus ludovicianus*.  
Common to abundant resident.
126. BEWICK WREN—*Thryomanes bewicki*.  
Common resident.
127. LONG-BILLED MARSH WREN—*Telmatodytes palustris*.  
Rare resident. I have found the nests several times in swamps in Blood River bottom.
128. WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH—*Sitta carolinensis*.  
Common resident.
129. RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH—*Sitta canadensis*.  
Rare to common migrant.
130. TUFTED TITMOUSE—*Bæolophus bicolor*.  
Common resident.
131. CAROLINA CHICKADEE—*Penthestes atricapillus*.  
Common resident.
132. GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET—*Regulus satrapa*.  
Winter resident, less common than formerly.
133. RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET—*Regulus calendula*.  
Fairly common migrant.
134. BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER—*Polioptila cærulea*.  
Common summer resident.
135. WOOD THRUSH—*Hylocichla mustelina*.  
Common summer migrant.
136. WILSON'S THRUSH—*Hylocichla fuscescens*.  
Common migrant.
137. OLIVE-BACKED THRUSH—*Hylocichla ustulata swainsoni*.  
Rare migrant.
138. HERMIT THRUSH—*Hylocichla guttata pallasi*.  
Rare migrant.
139. ROBIN—*Planesticus migratorius migratorius*.  
Formerly a very rare resident, but becoming much more common.
140. BLUEBIRD—*Sialia sialis sialis*.  
Common resident.
141. KENTUCKY WARBLER—*Oporornis formosus*.  
One found and heard singing at Sulphur Springs, August 19, 1923.  
Bowling Green, Ky., June 12, 1923.