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FOUR COOT AND 24 DOVES AMONG THE 31 SPECIES OF CHRISTMAS COUNT WHICH FEATURED TOO MUCH WIND

Margaret A. Smith, Christmas Count Chairman

Schenectady, N.Y. (same overall area as in 1929 and subsequent counts, with same routes as 1947). -- Dec. 26; 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and 7 to 8 p.m. Clear; min.temp. -10 to 2 to 1; wind NW to W, strong in some areas most of time, 5-25 m.p.h.; ground covered with 2-6 inches snow, main roads clear, lesser roads crusted and drifting; normal minimum of open water. Thirty-three observers in 11 groups. Total hours, 56 (45 on foot, 11 by car); total miles, 192 (58 on foot, 134 by car).

Mallard, 1; Black Duck, 3; American Merganser, 1; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Ruffed Grouse, 4; Ring-necked Pheasant, 6; Coot, 4; Mourning Dove, 24 (one flock); Screech Owl, 1; Great Horned Owl, 1; Pileated Woodpecker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 10; Downy Woodpecker, 40; Blue Jay, 52; Crow, 467; Black-capped Chickadee, 258; White-breasted Nuthatch, 55; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Brown Creeper, 20; Robin, 2; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 16; Starling, 839; English Sparrow, 409; Redpoll, 5; Pine Siskin, 1; Goldfinch, 114; Slate-colored Junco, 45; Tree Sparrow, 255; Song Sparrow, 7; Snow Bunting, 12. Total, 31 species, about 2656 individuals.

Mary Lou Aughenbaugh, Mrs. C. C. Bailey, Mr. and Mrs. George H. Bainbridge, Guy Bartlett, Mrs. Laura Beck, Mrs. George Bixby, Mrs. Walter E. Blowney, Mrs. R. K. Brockway, Mary Christie, Dr. W. Crawford Dunlap, Agnes Eddy, Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Grace, Mr. and Mrs. Esly Hallenbeck, Dr. Lawrence Hill, Alice Holmes, Mrs. H. G. Kelley, Mrs. W. S. McGraw, Gloria Keader, B. D. Miller, David Pelton, Stephanie Podrazik, Mrs. K. E. Rexford, Vincent J. Schaefer, Mrs. E. W. Scott, Rudolph Stone, Donald Tucker, Nelle G. Van Vorst, Leon A. Wiard, Glen Wilson, Margaret A. Smith (Schenectady Bird Club).

There Was a Wind, and It Was Cold

Misses aplenty showed up on this season's Christmas Count, made on Sunday, December 26. Absences were particularly noticeable in the hawk entries -- birds usually found soaring. There was a reason -- over much of the local area there was an objectionably strong northwest wind most of the day; and several groups reported sub-zero temperatures as well. And birds -- and observers -- don't like winds.

Coot, No. 72 on Composite List

The Coot, never before a local winter visitor, became No. 72 on the composite Christmas Count, now twenty years old. Four of them were on the shore on the rocks below Lock 7. It was also at that open water that the Mallard, Blacks and American Merganser were seen. No Gulls were recorded.

Mourning Doves appeared on a half dozen earlier Counts, but usually as lone birds or pairs. The flock of a couple dozen at Watervliet Reservoir was outstanding.

Perhaps an explanation should be made of the count shown by Group 8; only a dozen of the species were actually found

31 Species, 2656 Individuals**December 26, 1948**

Party	Total	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Number of Species	31	11	7	15	13	13	11	8	19	9	10	12
Total Count	2656	85	55	180	189	203	54	57	869	105	562	297
Mallard	1					1						
Black Duck	3					3						
Amer. Merganser	1					1						
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1								1			
Sparrow Hawk	1					1						
Ruffed Grouse	4					3						1
Pheasant	6	5							1			
Coot	4					4						
Mourning Dove	24			24								
Screech Owl	1								1			
Great Horned Owl	1						1					
Pileated Wdpckr.	1			1								
Hairy Woodpecker	10	1		3	2		1		1		1	1
Downy Woodpecker	40	3		6	4	7		1	1	2	13	3
Blue Jay	52	3		5	4	4			1	4	16	15
Crow	467	5	2	6	6		12		95	1	300	40
Blk-cap.Chick.	258	19	4	22	42	52	12	4	8	19	51	25
White-br.Nuthatch	55	4	1	5	10	4	1	2		7	20	1
Red-br. Nuthatch	1						1					
Brown Creeper	20		3	3	6	1	3	1			3	
Robin	2								2			
Golden-cr.Kinglet	16			2	7		6					1
Starling	839	2	40	5	4	26	2	5	600	25	30	100
English Sparrow	409	15	4	40	80	37		21	28	36	123	25
Redpoll	5	2							3			
Pine Siskin	1								1			
Goldfinch	114			1				21	50	7		35
Junco	45			30			14		1			
Tree Sparrow	255	26		27	20	62	1	2	58	4	5	50
Song Sparrow	7		1		1				5			
Snow Bunting	12				3				9			

FEATHERS



in their own territory. Those observers found the weather super-wintery atop Indian Ladder, and spent the latter part of their time "raiding" other sections. Their Goldfinches, Redpolls, Siskin, and Junco were feeding as a flock in a yard along the Sand Creek Road; their Robins were beside a house on St. David's Lane; their Sharp-shinned Hawk was along The Plaza; and the Screech Owl and high Starling Count came after dark by visits to the campus for the owl and downtown for the Starling roosts.

The Chickadee and Starling were the only birds to appear on the lists of all groups; there was one miss each for the White-breasted Nuthatch, English Sparrow, and Tree Sparrow.

Thirty-three Participants

Party 1 - Five acres, more or less, at Hilton's Crossing; 2 party-hours, 1 mile on foot. Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Grace.

Party 2 - Collins Lake and Sunnyside Road, Riverside Avenue and Ten Broeck Street, Scotia; 2 party-hours, 2 miles on foot, 1 mile by car. Dr. Lawrence Hill and Donald Tucker.

Party 3 - Watervliet Reservoir; 8 party-hours, 8 miles on foot, 25 by car. George H. Bainbridge and Esly Hallenbeck.

Party 4 - Lisha Kill, Troy Road, Lock 7, Mohawk View, Niskayuna; 8 party-hours, 9 miles on foot, 3 by car. Dr. W. Crawford Dunlap, David Pelton, and Rudd Stone.

Party 5 - Troy Road to Consaul Road, St. David's Lane, Balltown Road, north side of Lock 7, and Vischer Ponds; 6½ party-hours, 5 miles on foot, 52 by car. Nelle G. Van Vorst and Alice Holmes.

Party 6 - Schermerhorn Road; 3 hours, 2 miles on foot. Vincent J. Schaefer.

Party 7 - Myron Street to area north of Mohawk Golf Club; 3 hours, 5 miles on foot. B. D. Miller.

Party 8 - Guilderland, Voorheesville, Meadowdale Swamp, Indian Ladder, Carman Pine Barrens; 8 party hours, 3 miles on foot, 53 by car. Guy Bartlett and Glen Wilson.

Party 9 - Central Park; 2½ party-hours, 4 miles on foot. Stephanie Podrazik and Gloria Leader.

Party 10 - Urban and suburban feeding stations. Mary Lou Aughenbaugh, Mrs. C. C. Bailey, Mrs. George H. Bainbridge, Mrs. Laura Beck, Mrs. R. M. Brockway, Mrs. Walter E. Blowney, Mary Christie, Agnes Eddy, Mrs. Esly Hallenbeck, Mrs. H. G. Kelley, Mrs. M. E. Rexford, Mrs. E. W. Scott, Mrs.

W. S. McGraw, and Mrs. George Bixby.

Party 11 - Fuller Road, Six-mile Waterworks, Colonie, Karner, Pinebush School; 9 hours, 19 miles on foot. Leon A. Wiard.

A Gallupville Count

Mrs. Chester Zimmer

The 20-year-old Schenectady Christmas-count circle, of 15 miles diameter, is not large enough to include all SBC observers. At Gallupville, on the same day as the Big Count, the visitors at one feeding station in Gallupville were:

Downy Woodpecker, 4; Black-capped Chickadee, 5; White-breasted Nuthatch, 3; English Sparrow, about 30. Total, 4 species, about 42 individuals.

An Adirondack Report

Barrington S. Havens

The second successive Christmas Count for Jenny Lake, on December 26, was at or in the vicinity of the camp feeding station, from 7 a.m. to noon. The weather was clear, the wind moderate, and the temperature from -15 to 0. There were 13 individuals of six species:

Ruffed Grouse, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 1, Black-capped Chickadee, 6; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Brown Creeper, 1; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 2.

"Come Hell or Highwater"

Guy Bartlett

It was indicated last year (FEATHERS, January, 1948, p.5) that a new Christmas Count territory would be inaugurated this winter, to include Tomhannock Reservoir, the Hudson River between Troy and Stillwater, and the lower stretches of the Mohawk and Hoosic Rivers. At the December SBC meeting plans were completed for such a count, on Sunday, January 2, with Dr. Minnie B. Scotland in charge. The territory was divided and subdivided, and all was in readiness.

For twenty years the local Christmas Counts have been made on the appointed days, "come hell or highwater." There have been times when the temperature was 22 below, or when the wind was so strong it was a hazard to stand on the wall of Lock 7, or when it snowed heavily, or rained hard.

Now that "hell or highwater" bluff has been called. The Troy Count was cancelled! Of course there were such contributing causes as the four inches and more of rain December 30 and 31; the ice that broke down power and telephone lines; the downed trees that blocked roads; the exceptionally damaging floods that took out some bridges and closed others, that had not receded from the highways, and that had evacuated and crippled the river-level of all the Hudson and Hoosic cities and communities. So much for the alibi.

It Was Hard to Find This Bird

IN THE HEMLOCKS AT WOLF HOLLOW

Rudolph H. Stone

On the quiet, overcast morning of December 28 I paid a visit to Wolf Hollow. It is a deep, winding gap, a mile and a half long, and lies about 10 miles northwest of Schenectady. It was formed by a fault displacement of 1,000 feet from rim to rim. The slopes are very steep, with some sheer escarpment. Inasmuch as the Hollow runs roughly north to south, the "floor" receives comparatively little sunshine in most places. The slopes are covered with a well-developed forest of hardwoods and much hemlock, which is very shade-enduring.

I was walking up the road through the Hollow from the south end, my binoculars in hand and my eyes and ears alert, when a bird call utterly strange to me drifted down from high up the westerly slope. To my best recollection it began with a dry, soft twitter, followed by a series of loud, creaky, but rather pleasing notes. It was apparently uttered in flight, as I caught a fleeting view of the bird disappearing into some hemlocks, after which he fell silent.

Unable to see him from below, I clambered laboriously to the spot where he had disappeared, stopping frequently to catch any telltale sounds or movements that might betray his location. Soon I heard the delicate picking and tapping of a woodpecker. Then began ten long, anxious minutes before I finally sighted the chisel-billed author, a Hairy Woodpecker, largely obscured by the crown foliage of a tall, dense hemlock. Not willing to believe that this fellow, a familiar resident, could have uttered so remarkable a performance, I felt that my prize had departed through the dull gray haze that blanketed the snow-laden countryside, to some woodland miles distant.

On a Hemlock Spray

But as I shifted my eyes from the Hairy, I noticed a small, sparrow-size bird only 20 feet away, swaying and balancing on the feathery tip of a hemlock spray, almost at eye level. As soon as I saw two prominent white wing-bars and the curiously twisted tips of the mandibles, clearly visible at this close range, a real thrill of discovery crept over me. I was witness to a rare and erratic winter finch whose visits this far south of his home in Canada's boundless spruce forests are few and memorable, a White-winged Crossbill.

The beautiful rose pink of his back and flanks told me he was a male. Yellow replaces the pink in the females. Combining the tree over, I found another bird, also a White-wing. This species is the less frequent of the two Crossbills possible in this area. The Red Crossbill has no white in the wing, and the males are largely brick red.

Crossbills are a small group or genus of northern finches inhabiting the vast spruce and balsam forests of Canada. They are characterized by their crossed mandibles, which are distinctive in the bird world. Only occasionally do they wander very far south, even in winter. Failure of the cone crop is the main reason for their periodic invasion of the northern states.

Except for a few soft "peet" notes while feeding, these birds at Wolf Hollow were very quiet. They were certainly right there all the time I was seeking out the Hairy, but I could easily have passed them by. They were also largely obscured by the foliage much of the time.

A Whole Cone Is Plucked

Twice I noticed one of the birds with a whole hemlock cone in his bill. Apparently he plucked the cone off at the base. Once I watched him hold the cone fast to a stout limb with his toes and proceed to extract the seeds. The other time he took the cone to a limb within the crown of the tree, where I could not see him. This procedure may explain why I did not discover the birds earlier.

Most of a Crossbill's winter food consists of the seeds of conifers such as hemlock, spruce, balsam and pine, which he first exposes by wrenching off the scales with his bill, then laps up with his tongue. Not having a typical bill that can pick up seeds, etc., his tongue comes in handy. Incidentally, the plucking off of the entire hemlock cone is apparently mentioned in but few bird books or publications.



NEWS AND NOTES IN BRIEF

DECEMBER

Rather Weathery

December set a record as the wettest on record locally, and the warmest in 16 years. It was the driest until the 29th, with about one-half inch of precipitation until then. And then things happened. Rain of 4.97 inches on the 29th, 30th and 31st raised the month's total to 5.5 inches, or 3.27 inches above normal. More rain January 1 gave that storm a total of 5.24 inches.

Snowfall during the month reached 7.25 inches; 8.25 inches is normal. There were cold spells December 10-12, 18-21, and 24-27. The month's high was 50 degrees on the 5th and 6th; the low was -4 on the 26th. It was at zero on Christmas day itself.

Of course S B C would pick the coldest day of the month for its Christmas Count -- but think how much worse the next week-end would have been.

1948. WEATHERWISEConfusing

While on the subject of weather, it is of interest to look back at the 1948 record. It was the wettest in 16 years. Precipitation amounted to 43½ inches, about 25% above the normal 35 inches; five of those inches came in the final two days of the year. The 1947-1948 winter set a snow record of 100 inches plus -- November, 3½; December, 30; January, 31-¾; February, 17.5; and March, 18. Except for occasional flurries, the snow was officially gone March 23. Last snow was April 3.

There was an average daily temperature deficiency of 0.8 degree, City Weatherman Morris K. Cohen has reported. Normal is 47.7 degrees. January was coldest in 30 years; February the coldest in 14 years; and March smashed three low date records. April was warmer and drier than normal, May cooler and wetter. By the end of June the temperature deficiency had reached 819 degrees. The rest of the year reduced this deficiency to a year-end figure of 292 degrees. June was wetter than normal, and July the wettest on record. August was above normal in temperature, and so were September, October, November, and December.

May, it will be recalled, had an abundance of rain from the 10th to 20th, during the height of the migration. It seemed to ground enormous flocks of migrants locally.

Extremes of temperature during the year were a record-setting minus 28 on February 10, and 100 on August 28. Temperatures were sub-zero on 24 days of the early months, and twice in December.

URBAN EAGLESoaring

During mid-November a Bald Eagle was observed in slow, soaring flight over the city, by Mrs. W. H. Norris.

UNWANTEDAt Feeder

Malcolm Rix had an unusual visitor at his feeder on December 1 -- and it was not interested directly in the feed he had provided. Instead, it was interested in one of the feeding visitors. It was a Sharp-shinned Hawk, and it took one of the Chickadees.

The hawk was probably the same one that showed on the Christmas Count. It was recorded then along the Plaza.

LATE EGRETSThey Were Early, Too

Probably the exceptionally warm weather of the autumn had something to do with the lateness of Egret records last year. One was seen at Rochester November 14, on the occasion of the State Federation field trip.

Then came a local epidemic of late records. Three were seen Thanksgiving Day, November 25, at a pond on the edge of Chatham, in Columbia County. The second period of the duck

hunting season opened the following day. At least one Egret was seen in the duck-hunting area of the Hudson River about 20 miles below Albany, November 26. Two days later one was seen by P. Schuyler Miller in the vicinity of the Gateway Bridge; on the next day, November 29, we had a trace of snow.

Last year, it will be recalled, also had an exceptionally early date for the Egret. One was seen at Meadowdale Swamp on May 15, featuring the Century Run.

FIRST GROSBEAK

And Only, So Far

An Evening Grosbeak was seen December 11 by Mrs. R. M. Brockway, Rosa Road. It was gone the next day; and through early January there were no additional local records.

IN A FOG

December Ducks

Saratoga and Round Lakes and the wide waters at Niskayuna were visited by seven SBC observers on December 5. The waters were open, and so was the duck-hunting season. Saratoga Lake was heavily blanketed in fog until early afternoon, and that did not help build up the list.

Among the records were three Horned Grebes, a male Wood Duck, three male and one female Ring-necked Duck, a female Hooded Merganser, three female American Mergansers, and quantities of Scap Ducks and American Golden-eyes. At Niskayuna there were a couple dozen Black Ducks, two female Hooded Mergansers, and three Coot.

A stop was made along the Saratoga-Albany Road. Despite the heavy Sunday-afternoon traffic, a Goshawk was sitting in a low tree in light woods hardly 15 feet from the passing automobiles; a flock of 200 or more Pipits repeatedly maneuvered in flight around a nearby barnyard. A male Red-wing was also seen along that road, in with Starlings. Still other birds for the trip included Herring Gulls, a Ring-billed Gull, and a Kingfisher at Saratoga Lake. Completing the count were Sparrow Hawk, Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, English Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, and Song Sparrow.

TOMHANNOCK DUCKS

Kinds Few

Kinds were few but counts large when Tomhannock Reservoir was visited Sunday, November 28, during hunting season. The water was entirely open.

Black Ducks and American Golden-eyes were abundant, Herring Gulls were common, there were several American Mergansers, a half dozen Mallards, and a pair of Ring-necked Ducks.

Pine Siskins were recorded twice -- a group in with a flock of Chickadees, and one with a few Tree Sparrows.

The occasion for the trip was to survey the area for the Christmas Count scheduled for January 2 -- which Count did not materialize. It was easily apparent that, since it could be expected that the water would be ice-covered, the northeast shore was best for land-bird records.

A Christmas Count in the Caribbean

WHERE THE FLYING FISHES PLAY

Dr. Minnie B. Scotland

Making a Christmas Bird Count at sea was unique, but it just didn't compare in thrills with those experienced annually in the Schenectady area. Satisfaction came from counting species that were new to the writer. She was aided in catching sight of the infrequent bird travellers by passengers who became enthusiastic throughout the day. Children, too, were watchful. Perhaps an urge for further bird watching was felt by some one on that 1948 Census Day.

The location was the ship's course from Cartagena, Colombia, to that narrow stretch of water between Cuba and Haiti. While you were starting out at 7 a.m. on Sunday, December 26, your vagabond-deserter had already been on the deck of the Santa Rosa for 15 minutes. The morning promised balmy weather for the day. The sun shone, and later there formed scattered white clouds. A little breeze from the northeast prevailed.

Fishy Fliers

The sea was a bit choppy, which condition -- along with flying fishes -- challenged the census-taker. A decision to observe from the port (left) of the ship in the morning was reached because of the brilliant sun that streamed down on the starboard side. Looking for birds was much easier from portside.

After a half hour of far and near sighting "the lady with the bird glasses" was surprised by two Frigate Birds appearing high above the stern. The deeply curved anterior margins of their wings were characteristic, as were their long tails which revealed the forked structure momentarily. These large, black birds did not remain long with the ship. However, an hour later two Parasitic Jaegers were seen flying close to the water and in the same direction as the ship.

They were rapid fliers, and soon had passed us. Perhaps one should be more cautious about naming this Jaeger the Parasitic species; but by the elimination process, the Pomarine being too large and the Long-tailed with too long a tail, this observer settled for Parasitic.

At 8:30 it was time for breakfast, and for 45 minutes

there was no bird counting. Between 9:15 and 12:30 the listing of birds was as follows: Jaegers -- 2, 4, 1, 1, 1, 1. Luncheon made a break in the census-taking. After 2:15 only one bird, a Frigate or Man-o'-war-bird, was seen. A spell of observing from the starboard side did not reveal a single bird.

At 4 o'clock - or rather, 8 bells - the Christmas bird count in the Caribbean ended. The total number of birds seen was 15; number of species, 2; total number of hours "in the field," 6-3/4; estimated distance covered, 122 nautical miles.

RECENT S B C RECORDS

Compiled by G. Malcolm Andrews

Greater and Lesser Scaup - Both species identified at Inbocht Bay, near Catskill, in January (CGriffith).

Red-breasted Merganser - Several seen near island in Mohawk River opposite Locomotive Club, January (CG).

Turkey Vulture - One near Catskill January 26 (CG).

Cooper's Hawk - Several in general area in January (CG).

Red-tailed Hawk - Few in January (CG).

Marsh Hawk - Few seen recently (CG).

Great Horned Owl - Becoming more numerous this winter (CG).

Barred Owl - Several seen recently near Delanson; one heard at dawn, Fort Hunter Road (CG).

Horned Lark - (Sp?), about 16 near Sunnyside Road, Scotia, January 23 (EHallenbeck).

White-breasted Nuthatch - One at camp at Jenny Lake in January; first to have been seen in immediate vicinity although species is not uncommon fairly near (BSHavens).

Red-breasted Nuthatch - One at feeder at home January 2, my first in 12 years in New York State (LAWiard).
Regular visitor to feeder at Jenny Lake (BSH).

Winter Wren - One along Saratoga Lake west shore December 12 (NVVorst). One in Vale Cemetery January 16 and thereafter (BSH).

Robin - One along Clifton Park Road January 8 (KMarx). One

at feeding station of John H. Shultis, 18 Fenwick Avenue, on February 1.

Bluebird - One, Clifton Park Road, January 8 (Mrs. HNHHackett); two along Putnam Road January 3 (MSSmith).

Northern Shrike - Two along Thousand Acre Road, near Delanson, in January (CG).

Evening Grosbeak - One reported January 1 at Ballston Lake (HNH). One male at feeder along Randolph Road Jan. 1 (KM). Two at feeder along Harrison Avenue Jan. 19 (GMMeader). Lone grosbeak occasion at feeder in January (Mrs. RMBRockway).

Flock of 12 to 15 ten miles north of Schenectady January 2, just after the ice storm. They were having quite a time trying to find something to eat in an ice-incrusted tree along the Schenectady-Saratoga Road. The tree was so iced I couldn't tell exactly what it was; and I doubt that the birds knew, either (LAW).

Redpoll - Flock of about 40, Keyes Avenue and Dean Street, January 30 (NVV, MBSScotland). About 16 off Sunnyside Road on January 30 (EH). Very evident at Jenny Lake January 29-30, mostly flying over in small flocks or singly (RStone).

White-throated Sparrow - One immature at feeder, early February (RMB).

Fox Sparrow - One at feeder at Guilderland in January and early February (Mrs. GBigsbee).

Snow Bunting - One January record of flock (CG).

S B C FIELD TRIP REPORTS

LATE CHRISTMAS

Upper Hudson, January 16

The cancelled Christmas Count in the Troy area was merely postponed from January 2 to 16. The original segregation of observers was adhered to, with one group covering the Hudson River between Troy and Stillwater, another the lower stretches of the Lohawk, and a third party searching around Tomhannock Reservoir. A fourth group listed to visit the Hoosic River could not go on the date scheduled.

The day was generally cloudy, with temperatures ranging from 30 to 38 degrees. A slight wind blew from the southwest. Open water was found throughout the rivers, but the shores in many places were still piled high with ice left by

the floods of a week or more before. Ice covered all but a small center patch of Tomhannock Reservoir. Snow was seen only in protected spots, and then only in small quantities.

Early driving was treacherous, as a thin sheet of ice had formed on the streets and highways during the night. However, the sun did emerge for a while about 10 o'clock, and soon the ice melted away.

The 12 observers, in three groups, turned in counts that had one feature in common -- all listed the Black Duck as the most common; there were 1433 of these ducks counted. That quantity was far ahead of the next -- Starling, 197; American Merganser, 196; and Herring Gull, 190. The list included:

	I	II	III	Total
Black Duck	100	365	968	1433
Lallard		62	26	88
American Golden-eye	40		88	128
American Merganser	6	43	147	196
Herring Gull	10	18	162	190
Red-tailed Hawk			1	1
Kingfisher		1		1
Pheasant		1		1
Crow	6	13	55	74
Black-capped Chickadee	4	9	14	27
White-breasted Nuthatch		4		4
Downy Woodpecker	1	1	1	3
English Sparrow	55	20	50	125
Starling	20	40	137	197
Tree Sparrow		7		7

15 species - about 2475 individuals

I - Tomhannock Reservoir; Beatrice Sullivan, Nelle G. Van Vorst, Dr. Linnie B. Scotland.

II - Lohawk River, from Hudson River to Vischer's; Samuel Madison, Leon A. Wiard.

III - Hudson River, between Congress Street Bridge, Troy, to Stillwater Bridge; James Anderson, G. Malcolm Andrews, Guy Bartlett, William G. Bartlett, Frederick A. Klemm, Donald Tucker, J. M. Tucker.

Total party-hours afield, 16.

-- M.B.S.

There's a Concentration of Shore-birds

AT MORICHES INLET

Mabel W. French

About an hour's drive from my summer home on eastern Long Island lies Moriches Inlet, one of the best concentration points for migrating shore-birds on the Island's south shore. It also boasts a nesting colony of approximately 4,000 Common Terns, 150 Black Skimmers, 100 Least Terns, and a few Roseates.

Last summer my husband and I contacted Mr. Le Roy Wilcox, the bird authority of that section, to obtain information

relative to visiting the spot. He most graciously offered to meet us at his home and take us on a personally conducted tour.

On August 12, the appointed morning, we drove the length of the Dune Road from Westhampton Beach, parked the car by the last telephone pole, and tramped a possible quarter mile through beach grass and salt marsh. Dozens of Least Sandpipers scurried from almost beneath our feet. Then the wide, bare flats facing Moriches Bay spread before us, and with them the birds.

Skimmer, Unmistakable

The two species we wished most to see, the Black Skimmer and Least Tern, both near the northern limit of their breeding range, appeared almost at once. Certainly the spectacular adult Skimmer with that clean-cut sweep of black above and clear white below, plus that odd red bill, could never be mistaken for any other bird. The tiny white Terns, with their yellow bills and black caps apparently tipped back from their white foreheads, were also easy to place, either as they hovered along the shore line or sat on the sand.

There were literally hundreds of birds along the flats and tidal pools. By far the majority were Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers, Semipalmated and Piping Plovers, and Yellow-legs, the Lesser species predominating. There could easily have been 100 of the latter alone.

We began to pick out individuals from the mass of commoner species. Among the identified were a few Black-bellied Plover, a sprinkling of Turnstones, two small groups of Dowitchers, and three beautiful Western Willets. The latter came sweeping in, calling their name melodiously, with their boldly patterned black-and-white wings spread wide. Then they folded their wings and went in wading, and became to all appearances enlarged Yellow-legs with blue-gray legs. And then the rains came! There was nothing to do but beat a dejected retreat between walls of dripping plume grass, back to the car.

But there were compensations. Mr. Wilcox invited us to his home, where we spent a delightful hour looking at his beautiful and informative colored slides of birds, taken mainly in the area we had just visited, and also on Long Beach, Orient. At one point at the last-named location I had only the day before counted 32 Ospreys in sight at one time. The pictures featured Ospreys, various Terns, and Piping Plovers. Our host has the distinction of having banded the largest number of Ospreys of any known individual.

For a number of years Mr. Wilcox has been making an intensive study of the nesting Piping Plover along about an

18-mile stretch of beach. We saw numerous pictures of them, taken in the little glass or wire traps he uses to catch them for banding, or as he held them in his hand. One thing that impressed me was how fearless and peaceful the little captives looked, quite as though they realized that in a few moments they would be released to run the sands again.

Mr. Wilcox's record covers the number of adults and young banded each year, and the number of birds that are returns from previous years. In the summer of 1948 he banded 63 adults and 38 young; he considers the number of young poor in proportion to the old birds. He has charted a section of beach, indicating the exact location of every nest found. This chart is made out in relation to the location of the telephone poles on the Dune Road. He dryly remarked that if the Coast Guard should ever take a notion to remove those poles it would upset all his calculations.

Some Questions to Be Answered

A few of the questions these studies are designed to answer are: How near to their former site do returning birds nest the next year? Do the young of the preceding year return to the place they were hatched, to breed themselves? If not, where and how far away do they go?

In addition to the government band on the left leg of the Piping Plover, Mr. Wilcox last year placed colored bands of his own, using a different color or arrangement of colors for both the adult and young of each nesting area. In this way he hopes to obtain more return records through sight identifications.

A Return Visit

On August 17 I again tried my luck at the Inlet. This time I was fortunate in having a Roseate Tern hover directly in front of my face at close range. The deeply forked tail and entirely black, noticeably slender bill stood out to good advantage. It was too late in the season for the rosy flush sometimes seen on the breast.

Aside from the Roseate there were few species of note added to those of the 12th, but I did have ample opportunity to become really acquainted with the Black Skimmer, which I had merely met before. Both adults and immature were frequently shearing the water with their strange bills not farther than 20 feet from me. I was able to see how, in the young birds, the lower mandible was scarcely longer than the upper, whereas in the old birds it is considerably longer. It takes about a year before the full length is attained. The Skimmer's weird baying note, uttered frequently in flight, became a familiar sound to me. I counted 54 of them sitting on a sand bar, all headed in one direction.

The nesting colonies of the Skimmers and the three species of Terns are located on a bay island, near shore but not accessible except by boat. In a little over an hour I several times had the thrill of seeing a cloud of several hundred, possibly a thousand, Terns and Skimmers rise from the island and disperse in various directions.

Other birds not previously mentioned included lines of Double-crested Cormorants going and coming off shore, several immature Black Terns, Marsh Hawks, Great Black-backed Gulls, many Herring Gulls, little Green and Great Blue Herons, Black Ducks, Sanderlings racing the waves on the ocean side of the inlet, six American Egrets in a swamp enroute, and a number of Sharp-tailed Sparrows in the salt-marsh growth. Prairie Horned Larks were conspicuous in the beach grass by the road. I understand either 1948 or 1947 was the first time they were found nesting there.



NEWS AND NOTES IN BRIEF

FLORIDA COUNT

Quite a Few

Dr. Scotland may claim credit for the southernmost Christmas Count by S B C members (p. 9), but some other southern counters take the prize for high count. From two sources among the members of the Florida subsection of S B C there have been clippings received, from the magazine section of the St. Petersburg Sunday paper of January 23. Chester N. Moore appears in two of the half-dozen photographs on the page.

Twenty-eight observers on December 26 counted 17,296 individuals of 113 species. Chet used to be happy about lone Robins on his census counts; this year his group had 2,221 of them. At any rate, we probably had more Snow Buntings, Redpolls and Siskins than they did.

JANUARY WEATHER

Plenty Warm

January kept up the record set in December -- far warmer than usual. Its average temperature of 25.9 degrees was 3.4 degrees above normal. Highest reading was 46, on the 6th; lowest was 4, on the 31st. On the 6th and 7th the thermometer never did get down to 32.

Snowfall was 21.5 inches; 19 is normal. Precipitation was 3.24 inches; and normal is 2.17. Fifteen of the 21.5 inches of snow were in the final six days of the month, with 8-1/4 inches on the 26th and 5-1/4 on the 31st.

There was glaze -- rain which freezes as it falls -- on the 31st, and sleet on the 15th and 28th. Maximum wind velocity was attained on the 29th, at 13 mph. Mid-month was more like early spring than mid-winter.

WINTER COOTAt Buffalo

Local Christmas Counters were surprised to find Coot here December 26. Coot were present in large numbers in the vicinity of Buffalo in December, with about 500 on Chautauqua Lake December 17.

Buffalo, incidentally, recorded a total of 255 species during 1948.

LOWER HUDSONOpen Water

Train trips along the lower Hudson, Albany to New York, on February 3 and 4 showed the river more open than usual, and with the ducks increasingly common as the ocean was approached. At least 1500 were seen, with American Mergansers well in the majority.

There is, and for some time has been, a concentration of hundreds of gulls at Harmon, in flight over a dump in the distance while the train is stopped when changing engines. Much of the time these gulls are in flight, and added hundreds can be seen nearby on the shore and river ice.

NORTHERN COUNTScarce Finches

The Christmas Count on December 26 near Saranac Lake accounted for 16 species, with an additional three in the following week, Dr. Gordon L. Meade has reported. "Nothing extraordinary, but northern finches do seem to be rather scarce this year," he wrote.

BUFFALO COUNTPlenty Found

The Buffalo Ornithological Society made its Christmas Count on December 26. It listed 65 species, one additional sub-species, and about 26,644 individuals. Included were such items as 18 kinds of ducks, 5 of hawks, 5 of gulls, 4 of owls; and such quantities as 7401 Herring Gulls, 3179 American Mergansers, 2988 Greater Scaup Ducks, 2733 American Golden-eyes, 2033 Canvas-backs, 1894 Bonaparte's Gulls, 1832 Starlings -- and only 192 Crows.

ROCHESTER RARITIESMore Coot

Among unusual records at Rochester during December were Red-throated Loon, Broad-winged Hawk, Western Grebe, Iceland and Glaucous Gulls, Red and White-winged Crossbills, Towhee, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Purple and Red-backed Sandpipers, and Coot.

MARCH TRIPSHere Comes Spring

March 6 - Sunnyside Road and Collins Lake.

March 20 - Campbell and Schermerhorn Roads.

Guests are welcome on all S B C field trips.

Again, After 61 Years

AN ICELAND GULL

William G. Bartlett

The morning of February 20 dawned wet and dreary, not at all like a very good bird day. Little did we realize, as we left our Schenectady meeting place, that in a few hours we should see a bird that hadn't been seen locally for 61 years.

The stop at Green Island showed that the large concentration of ducks there had mostly left, but there were still many Blacks and a few Mallards. The immature Red-shouldered hawk seen there the previous trip had also left.

A few more stops were made above Cohoes. American Mergansers, Blacks, Mallards and Scaup were seen; and Gulls were present all along the river.

We then stopped at the dam just below Mechanicville, and got out to see what there was to see. At first there didn't seem to be much -- a few gulls, floating ice, and some ducks.

One gull in particular was noticed. It was standing on the ice very close to shore, and near to us. Around it were Crows, and it was eating a small bullhead. The queer thing about it was that it seemed all white. It was slightly larger than the Crows.

The Gull became annoyed at so many people looking at it and it flew away, up the river. We couldn't have asked for anything more opportune. On beginning its flight it showed its pinkish legs and the lack of dark wing tips of the Herring and Ring-billed Gulls. As it flew, a Herring Gull flew near enough to it so that it could be seen that the wing beat of the first was slower than that of the Herring Gull. Also noticed were the facts that there was no mantle and that it had a black beak fading into light as it neared the base. A dark area at the base of the tail showed while the bird was flying. It was an Iceland Gull.

The rest of the trip seemed uneventful after the Gull. Other stops produced more ducks and Herring Gulls, and then an unsuccessful try was made for Evening Grosbeaks at Ballston Lake.

The count for the trip was 21 species, including a flock of Redpolls, two Robins, a Red-tailed Hawk, American Goldeneyes, male Red-wings, and a Song Sparrow.

A 54-year Record of THE COWBIRD

Ernest Geiser

- In spite of the fact that some writers claim the young Cowbird soon forces the other birds out of the nest and becomes the sole survivor, I know that at least some of the rightful occupants of the nest do live. I have seen, on several occasions, a mother Warbler feeding both a Cowbird and at least two of her own young.

Among my notes referring to parasitized nests there are:

Yellow Warbler -- 1895; Cowbird egg found in nest.

Flycatcher (Least or Alder) -- 1895; nest with Cowbird egg.

Black and White Warbler -- July 28, 1907; feeding young, full-fledged Cowbird.

Chestnut-sided Warbler -- August 2, 1907; feeding young Cowbird.

Redstart -- 1910; feeding young Cowbird.

Indigo Bunting -- 1910; found Cowbird egg in nest. The egg very much like that of a sparrow, though more finely marked.

Phoebe -- 1910; found Cowbird egg on ground, and another in Phoebe nest; the nest was later deserted.

Red-eyed Vireo -- Also recorded as Cowbird-raiser.

Arrival, or first, dates on my record cards include April 10, 1908; April 15, 1909; April 5, 1910; April 16, 1911; April 7, 1912; March 20, 1938; March 10, 1939 (one male at my feeding station for a week); April 5, 1941; April 5, 1942; March 25, 1945; and March 29, 1946.

There is one winter date in the record -- a male December 3, 1948.

A Redstart was seen fighting a Cowbird June 21, 1907, in Oakwood Cemetery, Troy; and a Robin seen chasing away a Cowbird August 2, 1907.

My notes of April 5, 1910, refer to the Cowbird as "a fine-looking bird, quite plentiful. It raises itself and partially spreads its wings and tail when giving its wiry song. The bird seems to have a great deal of trouble in starting its song, and only after a great effort emits two 'Glucks' in succession, and then its wiry song. One must be quite near to hear the first two notes."

There Are a Great Many Things Yet to Be Learned about **BIRD MIGRATION**

(Adapted from a G-E Science Forum broadcast presented February 16, 1949, by Dean Amadon, Department of Birds, American Museum of Natural History.)

Bird migration has been a fascinating subject since ancient times. Many myths concerning it were once held, such as the belief that swallows hibernate in the mud. More recently, when museums began to get collections of birds from the tropics, it was found that many northern birds winter there.

Bands Tell Stories

There is a way in which the migratory travels of an individual bird can be traced -- by banding them with a numbered aluminum ring placed on the leg. Many thousands of birds are thus banded each year under the supervision of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The percentage of recoveries is rather low, for when a banded bird dies there is not much chance it will be found by someone who will report the band number. With birds shot as game, the recovery of bands is much higher.

Banding returns from sparsely populated tropical countries are naturally few and far between, but occasionally a surprise occurs. The Chimney Swift was the last American bird whose winter home remained unknown. A few winters ago, some Indians in eastern Peru noticed strange bands on Swifts they had caught. They gave the bands to a local official and eventually they were sent to Washington where it was found that they had been placed on Chimney Swifts banded at Nashville, Tennessee.

Defying Explanation

One puzzling problem that has been studied for years is how migratory patterns and behavior originated, and why closely related birds may differ in this respect. Migration permits birds to take advantage of seasonal changes that benefit them -- birds migrate from northern regions to escape the cold and starvation that would face them in winter. In the tropics migration may occur too, but in response to wet and dry seasons rather than winter and summer. Probably all migratory patterns evolved by natural selection acting on the tendencies of birds to wander in search of food or nesting places. Those individual birds that reacted to unfavorable, wintry conditions by migrating would be more apt to survive and to leave offsprings that might inherit their parents' migratory tendencies. And slow changes in climate,

such as those accompanying the glacial period, must have supplied an excellent stimulus for the gradual development of migratory habits. But some migrations are so remarkable they almost defy explanation.

Non-stop Plovers

The Eastern Golden Plover in the fall takes off from Nova Scotia in non-stop flight to Brazil and then to Patagonia, while the Pacific Golden Plover migrates from Alaska to Hawaii and other tiny islands in the mid-Pacific.

A recent ingenious theory about the origin of such migrations proposed by Dr. Albert Wolfson seeks to explain long intercontinental migrations by the theory of continental drift. His idea is that such birds began migration from a northern to a southern continent when the continents themselves were closer together. As the continents slowly drifted apart, the migration routes lengthened. Unfortunately, if continental drift occurred at all, it was apparently so long ago that no birds were on the scene, or at best very primitive ones.

When we consider the great geological and climatic changes that have occurred in past times it is perhaps not surprising that a few species of birds have migration routes not readily explained. The Sanderling, a species of Sandpiper, may winter from New Jersey to Patagonia. Perhaps birds that nest in the north and winter in the far south once had similarly long winter ranges that gradually became restricted.

Homing Pigeons Do Not Migrate

Homing Pigeons are trained by carrying them farther and farther from the home loft, so they learn to recognize the landmarks; but we must remember that the wild ancestors of the Homing Pigeon do not migrate, so the natural homing ability of this species is weakly developed. Experiments in which wild, migratory birds such as Swallows or Starlings have been carried hundreds of miles from their nests prove that a high percentage of them return promptly. Furthermore, the time required for such homing is in direct proportion to the distance, suggesting that the birds have some as yet unknown faculty for homing. If they merely found their way by random searching until they reached familiar territory, the percentage to home successfully would rapidly decrease at greater distances and the time required would be much longer. Neither is found to be true.

There are a good many ideas as to how this apparent homing ability of birds operates, but all of them have serious shortcomings. Birds have returned successfully after being carried long distances under anesthesia or in a covered box,

constantly rotated, so we know they do not return by memorizing the route over which they are carried. It has been suggested that birds navigate by sensitivity to the lines of force of the earth's magnetic field. However, this force is very slight and birds do not seem to respond even to intensive magnetic fields such as those produced by mine sweepers or other electric equipment. Much the same objections discredit the suggestion that the bird is sensitive to the Coriolis force, a minute effect associated with the rotation of the earth.

Homing and Migration, Not the Same

Professor Griffin of Cornell has released Gannets at a distance from their nests and followed them as best he could in a small aircraft. They seem to find their way by random spiralling. Gannets are coastal birds but these were released in the interior over forested hills. It is possible that their latent homing abilities did not operate in such completely strange surroundings. Probably some homing is accomplished by random searching but in many instances such an explanation is not satisfactory.

The problem of homing is not the same as that of migration, so far as bird navigation is concerned, although they are similar. In migration a bird might inherit a tendency to fly in a certain direction determined by the angle of the sun or some such natural feature. This could not explain homing, which is accomplished from any direction. In some species the young may learn the migratory routes by following their parents, but in others the young migrate weeks before or after the old birds.

As a rule, arrival dates are not quite so uniform as supposed. Migration is advanced or retarded depending on the weather. Moreover, in some species like the Song Sparrow, most migrate, but a few winter in the north. Indeed, banding has shown that a bird may migrate one year and not the next.

Not Simply Weather

It might seem that weather changes are the chief stimulus for migration, but it is not that simple. Highly migratory birds like many Sandpipers may arrive in the south by early July, long before cold weather sets in. In such birds migration is probably timed by something less changeable than weather -- for example, the daily seasonal increase or decrease in length of daylight.

Many physiological changes occur at the time of migration. In the spring the eggs begin to form and the mating and nest-building instincts become evident. Large amounts of fat accumulate and supply the energy for long migratory

flights. Many of these bodily changes are controlled by the pituitary gland, which in turn reflects the inherited or genetical make-up of the particular bird involved.

This sounds complicated, but it is no more so than studying the metabolism or heredity of man or one of his domestic animals. Study of the physiology of migration involves work with captive birds and also with wild ones. In one experiment, eggs of Mallard ducks from England, where this species does not migrate, were taken to Finland and placed in other Mallard nests. The ducks from these transported eggs migrated, showing that the English Mallards have inherited migratory habits which are revealed only when the birds are placed in a colder climate. It has also been found that caged birds exhibit great restlessness during the normal migratory period, thus revealing how fundamental the migration rhythm is.

Cooperation Is Needed

Like so many present-day scientific problems, further investigation of migration requires the cooperation of specialists in a number of fields. For example, the possible effect of magnetic fields on bird migration will remain doubtful until a team of physicists and biologists have access to modern laboratories and equipment.

I can't promise that solving the problem of bird navigation would be of any immediate practical value, but who knows? Many apparently useless scientific discoveries soon find industrial applications.

NEWS AND NOTES IN BRIEF

OFFICERS NAILED

Dues Are Due

At the S B C Annual Meeting on February 28 four committee chairmen were elected as follows:

Viola Kabb	Finance Committee
Mrs. H. G. Kelley	Junior Activities
Alice Holmes	Program Committee
G. Malcolm Andrews	Bird Records

The other chairmen, elected last year, include Nelle G. Van Vorst, secretarial committee; P. Schuyler Miller, conservation; Guy Bartlett, publications; and Margaret Smith, field trips.

Miss Van Vorst was re-elected Club Chairman at the meeting of the officers after the annual meeting. The 1949 budget will be submitted at the next business meeting, in May.

Dues for 1949 are now payable (to Miss Kabb, 1624 Becker Street). And do you know others who should belong to SBC? We need more members.

THE GROSBEAKS RETURN

To Williamstown

After an absence of two years the Evening Grosbeaks have returned to 24 Hoxsey Street, Williamstown, Mass. There was great rejoicing in the Milham family.

January 28, Friday, at 9:02 in the morning a flock of about 40 arrived. Saturday about 12 appeared, Sunday about 20, Monday about 45, and Tuesday, February 1, about 30. On the next morning, about 6:30 o'clock, about 40 were feeding.

There had been reports about town for about two weeks that one or two Grosbeaks had been seen, but they never returned. It looks now as if my flock have established themselves. I think we have them all, as no one reports any as feeding.

We are also very proud of our flock of Goldfinches. There are 22 of them. They are such gentle little birds, and I love to hear them at my window before I am up in the morning. They make the day seem more happy. I do not see why more people do not encourage birds to feed at their windows. One can learn patience and how to dwell in peace and harmony from them.

We have, of course, the other winter birds -- Nuthatches, Chickadees, Woodpeckers, Blue Jays, and Sparrows.

-- Betsey L. Milham

FEBRUARYIt Was Warm

February was the warmest in a dozen years, and for several days the ground was officially snowless -- quite in contrast with February of last year which was the coldest in 14 years and with a heavy snow blanket.

This February had only one day when the temperature got down to zero, on the 12th. One week later it hit its highest, 51 degrees. Average temperature for the month was 26.8 degrees -- a year ago it was 13.4 degrees.

The month officially had now snow covering for ten days, and snowfall was deficient until the end, with only 5½ inches for 27 days. And then the 28th brought 9 inches, giving the month a 2-¾ inches more than normal. Precipitation totaled 1.97 inches, 0.14 inch under normal. There was glaze on the 15th and 20th, but no sleet or fogs. On more than half of the days -- 15 of 28 -- there were thawing temperatures.

It was pretty spring-like weather.

COLD THERECalifornia !

While Schenestady along with the rest of the northeast had a rather snowless and warm winter, out west the story was different. Use of G-E soil-heating cable at the Gibson Ranch and Game Farm near St. Helena, Calif., enabled 4,000 rare tropical birds to survive the west coast's recent cold spell. Installed beneath the sand in many of the more than 400 pens which house the birds, the electric cable, with its

automatic thermostat, provided the necessary warmth. R. H. Gibson, owner of the aviary, explained that many of the species are from the deserts of Africa, South America, and Australia. They must have warmth.

"The little Tinamou, smallest member of the ostrich family and about the size of a partridge, is a good example," he said. "A temperature of 65 degrees means danger to him, and it is certain death if the mercury drops below 50. When the temperature went far below freezing at our ranch, the tiny ostrich buried its body in the sands warmed by the electric cable and, judging from all present indications, has suffered no ill effects from the cold."

The Sonnerat Junglefowl, native of the South Pacific, kept its six chicks safe throughout the freezing weather with the aid of the cable. Doves from the Galapagos Islands and Australia flew down from perches on high branches to enjoy the warmed soil, he said. Not a single bird was lost because of the cold weather.

HALF DOZEN BLUEBIRDS

At Rector's School

There were numerous records of wintering Bluebirds, but mostly of single birds or pairs. On January 18 two were in the Rector's School yard, and then four. Bread was put out and for days thereafter the count was six.

ICELAND GONE

And Ice Too

The Iceland Gull having been seen on Sunday, February 20 (page 17), plans were made to revisit the site on Washington's Birthday, a holiday. The weather was bad, however, so it was not until the 27th the trip was made.

The gull was not found. In fact, the duck and gull records for the Hudson were all poor. Probably the wintering birds had already headed north. A brightly plumaged male Bluebird indicated spring had arrived.

EARLY MIGRANTS

Really Early

Birds are smashing records this year for early arrival dates. There were plenty of February dates -- Robins, Bluebirds, Killdeer, Song Sparrows, Red-wings, and Ducks, among others.

Likewise being smashed are the departure dates for the winter visitors. They are disappearing early.

TRIPS AHEAD

Busy April

March 27, Sunday -- Saratoga and Round Lakes; P. Schuyler Miller, 6-7081; leave Palmer Ave. and Union St. at 8:30.

April 3, Sunday -- Watervliet Reservoir. April 9, Saturday -- Gordon Road. April 24, Sunday -- Vischer Ponds. April 30, Saturday -- Wolf hollow. See your schedule.

FEATHERS

Published by the Schenectady Bird Club

Again a White One, This Time A

GLAUCOUS GULL

P. Schuyler Miller

A Glaucous Gull, studied at close range with telescopes on the ice above the Saratoga Lake outlet bridge, provided a new record for this area and a life record for most of the observers on the SBC field trip of March 27.

The big, all-white gull stood out among a flock of adult and immature Herring Gulls; indeed, so striking was its greater size that the latter were first identified as the smaller Ring-billed Gulls.

Second-year Whiteness

Its size also separated it from the smaller Iceland Gull which was found February 20 on the Hudson at Mechanicville. The extremely white plumage suggests that it was a second-year bird.

The ice had begun to break up in Saratoga Lake on the preceding Friday, and all but the area at the outlet and in some bays along the western shore were clear, although there were floes throughout the northern half of the lake. There were relatively few ducks to be seen in scattered, small flocks or sitting on the floes, most of them divers. American Golden-eyes and Scaup Ducks were commonest, with both American and Red-breasted Mergansers, and two Hooded Mergansers. A floe near the outlet yielded eight American Scoters and several Black Ducks.

A previous stop at Round Lake in the morning produced Baldpates and Ring-necked Ducks, as well as Scaup, American and Red-breasted Mergansers, and Golden-eyes.

Courting Golden-eyes

The trip provided another new experience as the party heard the nighthawk-like note of the courting male Golden-eyes, repeated several times while a small flock was in sight near the lake shore.

The day's record, including birds seen and heard en route to and from Schenectady, numbered 38 species. It was warm, windless and cloudy, with two or three brief and sparse showers. Robins, Bluebirds, Phoebes, and Song Sparrows were well distributed. Both Ruby- and Golden-crowned Kinglets

were found, as were a large flock of Redpolls and a small, mixed flock of Juncos and Tree Sparrows. Eight made the trip.

The species recorded: Black Duck, Baldpate, Ring-necked Duck, Scaup Duck, American Golden-eye, American Scoter, Hooded Merganser, American Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Red-tailed hawk (unusually dark), Duck Hawk (in swift flight below and past the soaring Red-tailed), Killdeer, Glaucous Gull, Herring Gull, Mourning Dove, Flicker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Phoebe, Blue Jay, Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Robin, Bluebird, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Starling, English Sparrow, Meadowlark, Red-wing, Bronzed Grackle, Cowbird, Redpoll, Goldfinch, Slate-colored Junco, Tree Sparrow, and Song Sparrow.

S B C FIELD TRIP REPORTS

EARLY MIGRANTS

Scotia, March 6

One Bluebird, 60 Red-wings, and five Song Sparrows were included among the 18 species recorded on the Early-spring trip of Sunday, March 6, along Sunnyside Road, Riverside Avenue, and Collins Lake, Scotia. The trip was led by Clara and Jack Voght, with seven participants. The temperature, 40°; the weather, cloudy. The record:

American Golden-eye, 8; American Merganser, 3; Sparrow Hawk, 4; Pheasant, 3; Herring Gull, 35; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 6; Blue Jay, 4; Crow, 12; Black-capped Chickadee, 25; White-breasted Nuthatch, 3; Brown Creeper, 4; Bluebird, 1; Starling, 25; English Sparrow, 6; Red-wing, 60; Redpoll, 20; and Song Sparrow, 5.

MORE EARLY MIGRANTS

Campbell-Schermerhorn, March 20

A Bluebird, a half-dozen Prairie Horned Larks, three Meadowlarks, 25 Red-wings, two Bronzed Grackles, and eight Song Sparrows were among the spring birds of the March 20 field trip in the Campbell-Schermerhorn Road section. The temperature was down to 10-20°, but it was clear and sunny. There were 16 participants, led by G. Malcolm Andrews. Twenty species were recorded:

Black Duck, 9; Goshawk, 1 (its flight, alternately flapping and sailing was particularly noted); Sparrow Hawk, 1; Herring Gull, 1.

Downy Woodpecker, 2; Prairie Horned Lark, 6; Crow, 10; Black-capped Chickadee, 12; White-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Brown Creeper, 2.

Bluebird, 1; Starling, 2; English Sparrow, 6, Meadowlark, 3; Red-wing, 25; Bronzed Grackle, 2; Redpoll, 175 (in a compact group near the new school on Schermerhorn Road); Junco, 6; Tree Sparrow, 25; and Song Sparrow, 8.

RECENT S B C RECORDS

Compiled by G. Malcolm Andrews

(Records of scheduled SBC trips are not included)

- Canada Goose - 17, Basic Rsvr., Westerlo, 3.13 (SRM^{Madison})
- Baldpate - 75, Vischers Ponds, 3.6 (JJA^{Anderson}); 50 there 3.20 (JJA, GB^{Bartlett}).
- Pintail - Pair, Vschr, 3.6 (JJA); 12 there 3.18 (RS^{Stone}); 30 there 3.20 (JJA, GB)
- Green-winged Teal - 20, Niskayuna & Vschr, 3.20 (JJA, GB)
- Shoveller - Nine, Vischer Ponds, March 6 (JJA)
- Ring-necked Duck - One, Vischer Ponds, March 6 (JJA)
- Greater Scaup Duck - Two, Niskayuna, 3.20 (JJA, GB)
- Hooded Merganser - Three, Mohawk at GE, 3.8 (RS); pair, Al-cove Rsvr, 3.13 (SRM); 1 male, Nisk., 3.20 (JJA, GB)
- American Merganser - Five reports; max. 500, Nisk, 3.6 (JJA); 300 there 3.20 (JJA, GB)
- Red-breasted Merganser - 15, Vschr, 3.20 (JJA, GB)
- Red-tailed Hawk - One each; 2.27, 3.8, 3.14; river islands
- Red-shouldered Hawk - One, Nisk, 3.18 (RS); remains of one found, Nisk, 3.29 (Mrs. Fraser Price)
- Broad-winged Hawk - One, Niskayuna, March 20 (JJA, GB)
- Rough-legged Hawk - One, Gateway Bridge, 3.1 (EH^{Hallenbeck})
- Bald Eagle - One immature, so. of Castleton, 3.1 (SRM)
- Marsh Hawk - Single records; 2.10, 2.25, 3.19
- Sparrow Hawk - Three reports 2.18 thru 3.20; three on 3.20
- Ruffed Grouse - Four, Woestina Woods, 2.4 (RS)
- Pheasant - Apparently scarce, 48-49 winter; 2 males, 6 females, Loudonville (MVF^{French})
- Coot - Three, Niskayuna, March 18 (RS)
- Killdeer - One heard, Ballston Lake, 2.16 (Mrs. HNH^{Hackett}); next records 3.18, 3.19, 3.20

- Herring Gull - River open, Gulls present; max. 100, Nisk, 3.20 (JJA,GB)
- Ring-billed Gull - Few, Vschr, 3.6 (JJA); 8 there 3.18 (RS)
- Mourning Dove - Two wintering at Guilderland, 2.5 (Mrs. Geo. Bigsbee); 1, Sarat. Rd. 3.1 (Mr.&Mrs.JLVoght); 2, Nisk, 3.9 (KMarx)
- Short-eared Owl - Three, hunting in daylight over fields near Meadowdale, 2.10 (RS)
- Saw-whet Owl - Freshly killed (broken neck) mature bird in good condition found along tracks, Gordon Rd, 3.6 (RS)
- Screech Owl - Heard evenings, Vale Cemetery (RS)
- Prairie Horned Lark - Six reports, 2.20 thru 3.13; max 115, Sacandaga Rd, 3.1 (JLV)
- Brown Creeper - Five reports, 12.29 thru 3.21; regularly at Loudonville (MWF) and Ballston Lake (HNH)
- Red-breasted Nuthatch - 1, Rotterdam pitch pines, 3.10 (RS)
- Robin - 8 reports, 12.2 thru 3.19; 12 along Gordon Rd. 2.22 (RS); singing, territorial males in many parts of city on 3.22, and increasingly common thereafter
- Bluebird - 10 reports, 1.1 thru 3.20; max 12, Schermerhorn Rd, 2.4 (RS)
- Cedar Waxwing - Four reports, 2.18 thru 3.18; max 80, Nisk, 3.18 (RS)
- Meadowlark - First, along Mohawk at GE, 3.8 (RS)
- Red-wing - 10 reports, 2.18 thru 3.19; max 1000, Hudson between Rensselaer and Catskill, (SRM)
- Bronzed Grackle - 8 reports 3.10 thru 3.20; max 150, Look 8, March 18 (RS)
- Evening Grosbeak - Max 12, Ballston Lake feeders thru late Feb (HNH)
- Purple Finch - One, Loudonville, 1.30 (MWF); 20 near Basic Rsvr, 3.13 (SRM)
- Redpoll - 11 reports, 1.30 thru 3.20; max 130, Rotterdam Hills, 3.10 (RS)
- Pine Siskin - 23, Plaza, Feb. 26-28 (Edna Sachs); 10 in "Long-eared Owl" woods, Meadowdale, 2.25 (RS)

Field Sparrow - One, Rosa Road, Feb. 5 (Mrs. R.M. Brookway); was first identified as White-throat (p. 11)

Fox Sparrow - Four Scotia reports, 2.17 thru 3.9; three on each of three dates (Mrs. H. G. Kelley)

Lapland Longspur - One during snowstorm, Plotter Kill flats, with Snow Buntings, Redpolls and Horned Larks, 2.4 (RS)

Snow Bunting - Five reports, 1.2 thru 2.9; max 70-80, Plotter Kill flats, 2.7 (RS)

You'd Hardly Expect to See

AN EXOTIC GOOSE

Samuel R. Madison

On May 29, 1948, I observed a pair of strange birds at the Delmar Game Farm. At first I was not certain whether they were ducks or geese, but further observation convinced me they were geese.

They had a reddish brown spot about the eye, approximately one inch in diameter, and a brown ring at the base of the neck. The tips of the wings were also brown and black. Their legs and feet were reddish orange. The balance of their coloration was a grayish white.

A check of the available literature on the subject revealed nothing similar to what I had seen.

I observed these creatures several other times during last summer and autumn. My first impression was that they were barnyard fowl which had escaped to the wild. My observations brought out such an even color pattern that I discounted this theory, although I had no satisfactory one to replace it. My later observations brought out that they had orange bills, which were not quite as bright as their legs.

On March 6 of this year I had a very good look at them, and noticed that they had brown spots, about two inches in diameter, on the lower part of their breasts. They "pumped" their heads back and forth when standing. I also noticed that, when they stretched their wings, they had a bright white area on the shoulder. In bright sunlight the black at the tips of their wings took on a bluish cast.

Finally I telephoned Mr. Fordham at the Game Farm. He confirmed my observations and informed me that these geese had suddenly appeared at the Game Farm early last summer and had caused him no end of puzzlement. He informed me that Clayton Seagers of the Conservation Department believes they are a pair of Egyptian Geese which had probably been kept on a private estate and, for reasons of their own, had departed

therefrom for the Delmar Game Farm. Mr. Fordham also told me that they had trapped the geese a couple of times and had clipped their wings to confine them to the farm. However, the birds have made no attempt to leave since their wings have grown out.

(The Egyptian Goose is a recognized domestic breed, with no change in color pattern from the wild Egyptian Goose. It is the smallest of the domestic ducks.)



NEWS AND NOTES IN BRIEF

MARCH, WEATHERWISE

Warm, and Dry

It was the driest March in a quarter century -- a mere 0.73 inch of rainfall, with another inch needed for par. As for snow, there were 3.8 inches instead of the normal 11.

The 1948-1949 winter was the warmest in 17 years. March averaged 33.1 degrees, a tenth above normal. High for the month was 70 degrees, and low was 5.

There was severe lightning during the month, unaccompanied by either thunder or rain. The previous winter had 101 inches of snow; this most recent only 47 inches.

ICELAND/GLAUCOUS

Unlike

There are several notes of interest in connection with the two birds added to the local list so far this year -- the Iceland Gull, seen at Mechanicville February 20 (p. 17), and the Glaucous Gull, seen at Saratoga Lake March 27.

The birds were alike in only one major respect -- both were white and without dark wing tips. The difference in size was striking. The Iceland Gull was with, and only slightly larger than Crows. The Glaucous Gull was with, and much larger than Herring Gulls.

Both had black-tipped bills. The Iceland had a "moderate" bill, black from the tip back two-thirds of its length. The Glaucous had a large, heavy bill, black from the tip back only one-third of the length.

Both had pinkish legs, and both showed light brown flecks in their white plumage -- indication of second-year plumage. The Iceland was more nervous and faster in his movements, but that might have been because it had a fish on the ice and had four Crows around it, hoping for the fish. -- G.B.

SCAUP DUCK

Greater/Lesser

Most S B C records simply show Scaup Duck, without indicating which species -- Greater or Lesser -- is meant. This is usually because the birds are seen as distant rafts on

the water. Relative size is hardly of use in separating the two species, but there are certain field marks when the birds are close enough and in good enough light. The male Greater may show a green gloss of its head, and the Lesser a purple gloss. The Lesser has a more angular head, like that of the Ring-necked Duck. The Lesser may also show up as more gray on the flanks. In flight, however, there is a good field mark. The wing stripe of the Lesser is short.

In general, the Scaup found locally during the winter is the Greater. The Lesser is the common migrant.

TOMHANNOCK RESERVOIRAnd Its Roads

An SBC group which visited Tomhannock Reservoir Saturday, April 2, found a disappointingly small count of gulls and ducks -- possibly 300 all told -- but did obtain a number of first dates for themselves. Included in these were the Pied-billed Grebe and Vesper Sparrow. There were two flocks of Pipits, many flocks of Juncos, and some flocks of Tree Sparrows in song. Among the ducks were Black, Baldpate, Ring-necked, Scaup, American Golden-eye, and American Merganser.

A few hints, just in case some other groups might want to drive completely around the reservoir. Assuming approach to the south end, on the road from Troy, and assuming use of the topographical map, don't go all the way to the bridge and turn left just before the bridge. That road is very poor, and the reservoir is immediately out of sight. Go north along the west side of the reservoir by turning left before reaching Raymertown.

As of April 2 the road along the east shore was under construction, but in use and satisfactory. The bridge across Sunkawissia Creek was closed but the detour was good, and interesting.

AFTER DARKEarly

SBC's late evening trip for the songs of the Whip-poor-will and the Woodcock has been announced for May 4. The end of March was that warm that some SBC members made the circuit of Rosendale-Vly-Balltown Roads on March 30. The night was colder than expected and there was some breeze. Even so, however, the song of the Woodcock was heard at two of the usual locations.

Spring peepers and wood frogs were also to be heard, as were a very few American toads. Wood frogs, incidentally, were also heard the previous Sunday, the 27th, in a Saratoga Lake swamp.

GENTLE REMINDERDues Are Due

Here it is, April; and dues are still to be received by our treasurer from several of our members (The SBC year is as of February 1). The treasurer? Miss Viola Mabb, 1624

Becker Street. The dues? Active membership, \$2.00 annual; Family active, \$2.50. Associate membership, \$1.00 annual; Family associate, \$1.50. Junior membership, 50 cents.

Incidentally, you must know of people in our area who should be interested in SBC membership. Miss Mildred Crary, 804 Locust Avenue, as chairman of the membership committee, is anxious to receive such lists.

S B C CALENDAR

April and May are the big months, bird-wise. The S B C schedule, hence, has plenty to offer. Two of the April field trips have already been held. Here are the other April and the May dates:

April 24, Sunday - Vischer Ponds and Crescent Lake, leaving Union and Palmer at 8 a.m. Samuel R. Madison, leader.

April 30, Saturday - Wolf Hollow; meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Armory. Dr. Lawrence S. Hill, leader.

May 1, Sunday - Central Park breakfast trip. Meet at 6 a.m. at Oregon and Golf Rd., or at park picnic grounds at 8:30. Mr. and Mrs. Esly Hallenbeck, leaders.

May 4, Wednesday - Late evening trip for night-calling birds and amphibians, leaving Union and Palmer at 8:30 p.m. Barrington S. Havens, leader.

May 7-8, Sat.-Sun. Copake Falls camp-out. Nelle G. Van Vorst and Dr. Minnie B. Scotland, leaders. Details in March supplement, or call the leaders. Reservations required.

May 8, Sunday - Big Nose (all day) with Mohawk Valley Hiking Club.

May 14, Saturday - ALL-OUT ALL-DAY CENTURY RUN. Unlimited territory. Guy Bartlett, leader.

May 15, Sunday - Wiskayuna-Crescent Lake, leaving Union and Palmer at 7 a.m. Dorothy Sawyer, leader.

May 22, Sunday - Helderbergs, from Altamont railroad station at 6:30 a.m. Nelle G. Van Vorst, leader.

May 30, Monday - Karner Sand Barrens; at Drive-in Theater at 8 a.m. Leon A. Wiard, leader.

MEETINGS

April 25, Monday, 8 p.m. - Regular club meeting, Pine Room, First Methodist Church. Enter through door at Chapel and Lafayette Streets. See supplement for program.

May 24, Tuesday - Fifth, and season's final, Audubon Screen Tour, Central Park Junior High School Auditorium. Alexander Sprunt, "Our Living Earth."

May 28-30, Sat.-Mon. Annual convention of The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs. Business meetings and programs at American Museum of Natural History. Field trips to famous Long Island sections. All SBC members automatically belong to the Federation, and are welcome at all meetings and on all field trips. See you in New York City!

Published by the Schenectady Bird Club

There Were 177 Kinds of Birds on
SBC FIELD TRIPS - 1948

Margaret A. Smith, Field Trip Chairman

Twenty-five scheduled field trips were conducted by S B C during 1948. With two exceptions they were in "local" territory, the others being excursions into Massachusetts. A total of 177 kinds of birds appear on the composite list, with only four of them not in local territory.

Trips were conducted with a variety of results in mind. Several of them showed relatively few species, but that was expected, and planned. There was, for instance, a May trip with only two species -- and there was a May trip, only four days later, with 146 kinds.

In the following table reports in FEATHERS of 1948 or 1949 are in parentheses, as are the four species recorded only on the Massachusetts trips.

FIELD TRIP RECORDS -- 1948

A Upper Hudson (p.15)	Jan.18 - 12
B Cohoes, Green Island, Upper Hudson (p.21)	Feb.15 - 12
C Sunnyside & River Rds., Collins Lake (p.30)	Mar. 7 - 15
D Schermerhorn and Campbell Roads (p.30)	21 - 24
E Saratoga and Round Lakes (p.42)	Apr.11 - 38
F Watervliet Reservoir (p.42)	17 - 31
G Vischer Ponds (p.43)	25 - 48
H Beaverdam Road (p.49)	May 1 - 34
I Central Park (p.50)	2 - 28
J Big Nose (p.50)	9 - 20
K After Dark, Balltown and Vly Rds. (p.50)	11 - 2
- Freeman's Bridge (p.50) (Combined in L)	15 - 28
L Century Run (p.46)	15 - 146
M Pleasant Valley (Mass.) Sanctuary (p.51)	22 - 50
N Karners (p.51)	30 - 51
O Hudson Valley and Massachusetts (p.66)	June 6 - 50
P Berne Swamp (p.67)	12 - 62
Q Mt. Greylock (Mass.) (p.67)	19-20 - 31
R Niskayuna - Mohawk View (p.75)	Jul.25 - 33
S Watervliet Reservoir (p.81)	Aug.22 - 34
T Stoner Boat Trip (p.77)	Sep.12 - 45
U Hawk Day, Helderbergs (p.89)	26 - 29
V Vischers - Niskayuna (p.90)	Oct. 3 - 43
W Watervliet Reservoir (p.90)	17 - 20
X Saratoga and Round Lakes (p.96)	Nov. 7 - 30
Y Christmas Count (p.1, 1949)	Dec.26 - 31

FEATHERS

May, 1949

SPECIES	ABCD	EFG	HIJ	KIM	NOP	QRS	TUV	WXY
Common Loon		e						x
Horned Grebe								x
Pied-billed Grebe		ef		l			t v	x
Double-crested Cormorant							t	
Great Blue Heron		e g		lm		r	t v	wx
American Egret				l		rs	t v	
Little Blue Heron							t	
Green Heron		g		l		qrs	t	
Black-crowned Night Heron		g		l			t	
American Bittern		g		l		s	t v	
Canada Goose		ef		l			v	
Mallard		fg		l	op		t v	w y
Black Duck	ab d	efg		l	nop	r	t v	wxy
Baldpate		e g						
Pintail		e						
Green-winged Teal							v	
Blue-winged Teal		f			o		t v	
Wood Duck				lm	op	s	t	
Ring-necked Duck		e						
Scaup Duck		ef		l				
American Golden-eye	ab	e						
Buffle-head								x
American Scoter								x
Hooded Merganser		e		l				
American Merganser	ab d	ef		l				xy
Red-breasted Merganser	b	g		l				
Turkey Vulture							u	
Goshawk				l				
Sharp-shinned Hawk				l			t	y
Cooper's Hawk		f		l			uv	
Red-tailed Hawk		f h		lm	p		u	
Red-shouldered Hawk		g		lm	o		uv	
Broad-winged Hawk				m			t v	
Rough-legged Hawk	c		h				u	w
Bald Eagle	b			l			t	
Marsh Hawk		e	h	l	n		t v	
Osprey		g	h	l			t	
Duck Hawk		h	h	l	o	s	u	
Sparrow Hawk	bod	h	h	l		s		wxy
Ruffed Grouse		f	j	lm				y
Pheasant	bc	g		l			v	y
Virginia Rail				l	o	q		
Florida Gallinule				l	o	qr	v	
Coot		g						y
Killdeer	d	fg	h	l	n p	qrs	t v	w
Woodcock				kl				
Upland Plover				l				
Spotted Sandpiper				l	p	qrs	t	w

FEATHERS

May, 1949

SPECIES	ABCD	EFG	HIJ	KIM	NOP	QRS	TUV	WXY
Solitary Sandpiper				l		s	t	
Greater Yellow-legs						s	t	v w
Lesser Yellow-legs						s		
Pectoral Sandpiper						s		
White-rumped Sandpiper				l				
Least Sandpiper				l			t	
Herring Gull	d	efg		l			t	v x
Ring-billed Gull		g		l			t	x
Black Tern				l				
Mourning Dove	d	efg	h	lm	n	p	rs	v w y
Black-billed Cuckoo					n			
Screech Owl								y
Great Horned Owl						s		y
Barred Owl				l				
(Saw-whet Owl)						q		
Whip-poor-will				kl				
Nighthawk				l				u
Chimney Swift				lm	op	r	t	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird				lm	n	p	s	t
Kingfisher	cd	efg	j	l			rs	t
Flicker		efg	hij	lm	nop		rs	tu
Pileated Woodpecker				l	p			y
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		e		l				
Hairy Woodpecker	a c	f	ij	lm	p		v	xy
Downy Woodpecker	c	efg	ij	l	n	rs	tuv	xy
Kingbird				l	nop	r		
Crested Flycatcher				l	nop		t	
Phoebe	d	e g	hi	lm	nop		tu	
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher				l				
Acadian Flycatcher				l	p			
Alder Flycatcher				l	p			
Least Flycatcher				lm	nop	q		
Wood Pewee				l	op	rs	u	
(Olive-sided Flycatcher)						q		
Prairie Horned Lark	d		h	l				
Tree Swallow		g	h	l	op	r	t	
Bank Swallow				l				
Rough-winged Swallow				l				
Barn Swallow			h	l	op	rs	t	
Cliff Swallow				l	o			
Blue Jay	abod	efg	hi	lm	nop	s	uv	wxy
Crow	abcd	efg	hij	lm	nop	s	tuv	wxy
Black-capped Chickadee	a cd	efg	hij	lm	nop	s	tuv	wxy
White-breasted Nuthatch	cd	e	j	lm		s	u	y
Red-breasted Nuthatch				l				y
Brown Creeper	c	e		l		q		y
House Wren		g	i	lm	nop	r		
Winter Wren				l		q		

FEATHERS

May, 1949

SPECIES	ABCD	EFG	HIJ	KLM	NOP	QRS	TUV	WXY
Long-billed Marsh Wren				l	o	r		
Short-billed Marsh Wren				l				
Catbird				l	nop	rs	tuv	
Brown Thrasher			i	l	n	q		
Robin	d	efg	hij	lm	nop	rs	tuv	wxy
Wood Thrush				lm	nop	r		w
Hermit Thrush		f	hij	lm	p			
Olive-backed Thrush				lm		q		
Gray-cheeked Thrush				l				
(Bicknell's Thrush)						q		
Veery				lm	n p			
Bluebird	d	efg	h	l	n p		uv	wx
Golden-crowned Kinglet				l				y
Ruby-crowned Kinglet		e g	hi	lm				
Pipit			g	l				
Cedar Waxwing			i	lm	op	s	tuv	x
Starling	abcd	efg	hi	l	op	r	tuv	xy
Yellow-throated Vireo				l	no		v	
Blue-headed Vireo				lm				
Red-eyed Vireo				l	nop			
Warbling Vireo				l	o			
Black and White Warbler			hij	l	no	s		
Golden-winged Warbler				lm	n			
Lawrence's Warbler				l				
Blue-winged Warbler				l				
Tennessee Warbler				l				
Nashville Warbler			i	l	n			
Parula Warbler				lm	p			
Yellow Warbler				lm	nop	qrs		
Magnolia Warbler				lm				
Cape May Warbler				l			u	
Black-throated Blue Warbler				lm		q		
Myrtle Warbler		g	ij	lm			v	wx
Black-throated Green Warbler			j	lm	p	q		
Blackburnian Warbler				lm	p	q		
Chestnut-sided Warbler				lm	n p			
Bay-breasted Warbler				l				
Black-poll Warbler				l	n p	q		
Pine Warbler				l	n			
Prairie Warbler				l	n			
Yellow Palm Warbler				l			v	
Oven-bird				lm	nop	q		
Northern Water-thrush				l	n			
Louisiana Water-thrush			j	lm		s		
Connecticut Warbler				l				
(Mourning Warbler)						q		
Northern Yellow-throat				lm	op	qrs		
Hooded Warbler				l				

SPECIES	ABCD	EFG	HIJ	KLM	NOP	QRS	TUV	WXY
Wilson's Warbler				l				
Canada Warbler				lm	n p			
American Redstart				lm	nop	q s		
English Sparrow	abcd	efg		l	nop		tuv	xy
Bobolink				l	nop	r		
Meadowlark		d fg	h	l	nop			
Red-wing		d efg	ij	lm	nop	qr	t v	x
Baltimore Oriole			j	lm	nop	s		
Rusty Blackbird		e g	i	l			uv	
Bronzed Grackle		d efg	i	lm	nop		t v	wx
Cowbird		efg	hi	l	nop		v	
Scarlet Tanager				lm	no	qr		
Rose-breasted Grosbeak				l	no	q		
Indigo Bunting				l	n	qr		
Purple Finch	d	g	hi	l	p	q	t	
Redpoll								y
Pine Siskin								xy
Goldfinch	a	efg	hij	lm	nop	rs	tuv	wxy
Towhee		g	hi	l	nop	q	u	
Savannah Sparrow		g		l	p		v	
Grasshopper Sparrow			j	l	p	r		
Henslow's Sparrow		g	h	l		r		
Vesper Sparrow		g	h	l	n p			
Slate-colored Junco	a cd	e	h	lm		q	u	xy
Tree Sparrow	abcd	e		l			v	xy
Chipping Sparrow		g	hi	l	nop	r		
Field Sparrow		g	hij	l	n p		u	
White-crowned Sparrow				l				
White-throated Sparrow		g	hi	lm	p	q	uv	w
Fox Sparrow								x
Swamp Sparrow		g		lm	op	q	v	
Song Sparrow	d	efg	hij	lm	nop	rs	tuv	wxy
Snow Bunting								y

RECENT S B C RECORDS

Compiled by G. Malcolm Andrews

(Records of scheduled SBC trips are not included)

Horned Grebe - Recorded 3.20, 4.4, and maximum of 3 on 3.29 (RStone)

Pied-billed Grebe - Three, Tomhannock, 4.2; (GBartlett, MBScotland, NVVorst)

Great Blue Heron - Four, 6-mi. Waterworks, 4.10 (LAWiard)

Black-crowned Night Heron - Pair, Collins Lake 4.4 (DTucker)

American Bittern - One, Central Park, 3.29 (RS)

Whistling Swan - One immature, brownish plumage, off Brown's

- Beach, Saratoga Lake, 4.17 (DT); still there 4.24 (RS)
Canada Goose - Fifty, Jenny Lake, 3.26 (BSHavens)
Mallard - Numerous March and April dates; maximum of 150 on 3.20 (GB, JJAnderson)
- Baldpate - Regularly on river and Vischer Ponds March and April; seven there 4.30 (GB)
Pintail - 15, Vischers, 3.21 (RS); there 4.9
Green-winged Teal - Four reports, 3.26 through 4.9; max. 6, Vischers, 4.9 (RS, SRMadison)
- Blue-winged Teal - Six or more through April at Vischers
Wood Duck - Reports numerous; max 5, Waterworks, 4.10 (LAW)
Ring-necked Duck - 30, Tomhannock, 4.2 (GB, LBS, NVV); 30, Vischer Ponds, 4.9 (SRL, RS)
Canvasback - Two, Hudson at Mechanicville, 3.20 (MWFrench)
Lesser Scaup Duck - Three, Gateway Bridge 3.30 (DT); also reported 3.23 and 4.2
American Golden-eye - Last report, Tomhannock, 4.2 (MBS, NVV)
Hooded Merganser - Four males, two females, Lansingburg, 3.20 (MWF); three males, Vichers, 3.21 (RS)
Sharp-shinned Hawk - One, Campbell Rd., 3.23 (RS)
Cooper's Hawk - 3.30, Loudonville; 4.4, Gateway Bridge; 4.10, Colonie, nesting
Broad-winged Hawk - One, Jenny Lake, 3.26 (BSH)
Pigeon Hawk - One near Hudson 3.19 (NVV)
Coot - Three, Niskayuna 3.29 (RS); several there 4.30 (GB)
Florida Gallinule - Several, Niskayuna, 4.30 (GB)
Woodcock - One, Jenny Lake, 3.26 (BSH); two in flight song, Balltown Rd., 3.27 (RS)
Wilson's Snipe - One, Collins Lake, 4.3 (DT)
Mourning Dove - Regular after 3.20
Great Horned Owl - One, Gateway Bridge, molested by crows, 3.25 (RS)
Barred Owl - One, Riverside Ave., Scotia, 3.17 (DT)
Flicker - Arrived 3.21 (RS)
Phoebe - Arrived 3.26
Tree Swallow - Two, Niskayuna, 3.29 (RS); 30, Vischers, 4.9 (SRL, RS)
Brown Creeper - Five reports, 3.29 through 4.9
Winter Wren - One, Vale Cemetery, 3.22 (BSH); one, Indian

FEATHERS



Ladder Ravine, in song, 4.2 (RS)

Hermit Thrush - Colonie, 4.23 (LAW)

Golden-crowned Kinglet Four reports, 3.30 and April

Pipit - One, Poentic Kill flats, 3.23 (RS); 40, Tomhannock, 4.2 (GB, MBS, NVV)

Cedar Waxwing - 40, Mechanicville, 3.20 (MWF); other reports to 4.9

Blue-headed Vireo - Arrived 4.27, Vale Cemetery (NVV)

Black and White Warbler - East Greenbush, 4.24 (MBS)

Myrtle Warbler - Arrived 4.17, Colonie (LAW)

Pine Warbler - 4.10 and 4.23, Colonie (LAW)

Yellow Palm Warbler - One at Seward, 4.17 (LAW)

Meadowlark - Reported regularly after 3.20

Rusty Blackbird - Two, Niskayuna, 3.29 (RS); two, upper Albany Street, 3.30 (RS)

Evening Grosbeak - 20 to 25, 3.6 and 3.11, Middle Line Road, by Margaret Wiswall. Four males, 6 females, feeding in a Rosendale Road yard 3.29 (RS)

Redpoll - Over 300, Rotterdam Hills, 3.23 (RS); also recorded 3.21 and 4.2

Pine Siskin - 18, Plaza, 3.21 (ESachs)

Towhee - One, Guilderland, 3.25 (MBS); one, Colonie, 4.23 (LAW); common, Central Park, 4.30 (GB)

Vesper Sparrow - First report 3.30

Junco - Wintered at Loudonville (MWF); numerous reports after 3.13

Tree Sparrow - Present to 4.10, 12 at Colonie (LAW)

Field Sparrow - 3.30 and thereafter

White-throated Sparrow - Six, East Greenbush, 4.1 (MBS)

Fox Sparrow - Six reports, 3.8 to 4.10; max. 12, Pine Barrens, 3.30 (RS)

Swamp Sparrow - One, immature, Niskayuna, 3.29 (RS)

NEWS AND NOTES IN BRIEF

WE COULD USE ...

... And Really Need

S B C needs more active members -- both more active and more, active. Amsterdam, with a far smaller population than our Schenectady-Albany-Troy area, has a far larger membership in its Sassafras Bird Club. Have you some names to

suggest to our membership committee (Miss Mildred D. Crary)?
And are you regularly turning in your records to G. Malcolm Andrews?

ANOTHER WHISTLERAt Saratoga

Last year there was a Whistling Swan on the Vischer Ponds and the neighboring river. This year there was one at Saratoga Lake. It was first recorded April 17 by Donald Tucker and his father, in the vicinity of Brown's Beach. It was last recorded a week later, April 24, by Rudd Stone. The bird apparently was not at the lake on the 16th, when the lake was also visited.

The bird was relatively tame and approachable. The bill markings were seen easily, as could the grayness of the neck which indicated a young bird.

G-E SCREECH OWLPhotographed

A Screech Owl picked the sill of one of the first-floor windows of General Electric's main office structure, Building 2, as a day roost in late March. It was discovered and photographed, whereupon its picture appeared in the Office News of April 1.

FOR THE FEEDERNext Season

Possibly some local feeders are still in operation, but most of them have been closed down for the season. Come late fall, however, and George Bainbridge's hint has real possibilities. Having witnessed such a feeder, he suggests the use of meal worms along with the other foods, particularly for the insect-eating visitors. Such worms are easily raised in a box of earth, oatmeal and occasional additions of bread, kept slightly moist in the cellar. They should be plunged into hot water for a moment before being put out on the feeder. The birds really go for such a meal.

S B C CALENDAR

- May 28 and 29 - Federation of New York State Bird Clubs; annual meeting, New York City, at American Museum; Sunday all-day trip, Long Island. Open to all S B C members. Details from Nelle G. Van Vorst or Guy Bartlett.
- May 30 - Field trip, Karner Sand Barrens; Leon A. Wiard, leader. Meet at Drive-in Theater at 8 a.m. This is that big, annual Memorial Day trip, with the Prairie Warbler as just one of the features.
- June 8, Wednesday - Evening picnic at Miss Antemann's Camp at Indian Ladder.
- June 12, Sunday - Field trip, Consalus Vlaie; C. N. Moore.

An Immature Pigeon Hawk Featured the
CENTURY RUN - 130 SPECIES

Guy Bartlett

Schenectady's Century Run, on Saturday, May 14, accounted for 130 species -- not a high figure, but higher than expected. The weather for weeks had been unusually warm; the ducks had departed, the winterers and early migrants had left well before that date, and the well advanced foliage concealed the relatively uncommon warbler migrants.

New on the composite list for the Century Runs were the Pigeon Hawk and Screech Owl, bringing the total to 179. The Pigeon Hawk was in immature plumage, with the perched bird studied leisurely near Selkirk by Group 4. The Blue-winged Warbler was another highlight; a male, in song, was along with singing Golden-winged Warblers at Rosendale-River Roads, and recorded by Group 1. Blue-wings have been listed previously below Albany, but not before so close to Schenectady.

Donald Tucker was the only observer to record more than 100 species -- he had 97 as a member of Group 4, plus six more during further observations after the group trip was completed. Group 1 showed a total of 99, including a newly killed Junco, the only one for the day.

First record for the day was just after 3 a.m., and some were still seeking calls of owls and rails at 10:30 p.m. Groups 1, 4 and 5 all elected to greet daybreak at Vischer Ponds, and during the day such popular spots as Meadowdale, Karners and the Ladder were visited independently by several groups. Participants included:

Group 1 - G. Malcolm Andrews, Guy Bartlett, Esly Hallenbeck, Alice Holmes, Chester N. Moore, Dr. Minnie B. Scotland, Nelle G. Van Vorst, Jack Voght. 3 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Vischer Ponds, Niskayuna Wide Waters, Central Park, Karners, Indian Ladder, Meadowdale, etc. 99 species.

Group 2 - Mrs. Laura Beck. Vicinity of home, Schenectady, in morning; Jenny Lake in afternoon. 18 species.

Group 3 - Barrington S. Havens. Jenny Lake. 41 species.

Group 4 - Stephanie Podrazik, Rudolph Stone, Donald Tucker, Julius Tucker, Robert Underwood. Vischer Ponds, Ravena, Washington Park, Wemple Swamp, Albany Reservoir. 97 species.



Also, Riverside Avenue and Collins Lake later by Donald Tucker; his total, 103 species.

Group 5 - S. R. Madison, Jack Rothstein, Leon A. Wiard. Vly Road, Vischer Ponds, Green Island, Karners, Leadowdale, Delmar. 3:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. 76 species.

Group 6 - Label W. French. Bacon Lane and Schuyler Road sections of Loudonville. 5:15 a.m. to 1 p.m.; 3 to 4 p.m. 51 species.

Group 7 - Byron T. Hipple, Margaret Hipple, Mrs. Lillian C. Stoner. 5 miles walking, 80 miles driving. 6 to 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m. to noon, 1:45 to 8 p.m. 70 species.

Group 8 - Gladys L. and Naomi Zimmer. Vicinity of home, Gallupville. 8 a.m. to noon. 17 species.

Group 9 - Dr. and Mrs. R. E. Gale. Stowe, Vt. 37 species. Included was one - Wood Pewee - not on other lists, but this is not shown in composite list since it was beyond our "Eastern New York" limits.

The weather was generally good -- mostly fair, slight wind, and cool; but there were occasional stiffer breezes or slight showers in different areas.

"One-group Only" Records

One hundred and one of the 130 species were recorded by two or more of the groups. The lone records were:

Group 1 - Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks, Virginia Rail, Screech Owl, Nighthawk, Pileated Woodpecker, Cliff Swallow, Pipit, Blue-winged Warbler, Junco (dead).

Group 3 - Ruffed Grouse, Barred Owl, Sapsucker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet.

Group 4 - Pied-billed Grebe, American Merganser, Pigeon Hawk, Bay-breasted Warbler, Lincoln's Sparrow. By Donald Tucker only: Duck Hawk, Pectoral Sandpiper, Black-poll Warbler.

Group 5 - Canada Goose.

Group 6 - Cedar Waxwing, Gray-cheeked Thrush.

Group 7 - White-crowned Sparrow.

The composite record follows; it includes the records of Groups 1 to 8 inclusive.

FEATHERS

June, 1949

Pied-billed Grebe	4	Crow	1 34567
Great Blue Heron	2 7	Blk-cap. Chickadee	1 345678
Green Heron	1 4567	White-br. Nuthatch	1 4 78
Blk-cr. Nt. Heron	1 45	Red-br. Nuthatch	3
American Bittern	1 345 7	Brown Creeper	3
Canada Goose	5	House Wren	1234567
Mallard	1 45 7	Winter Wren	3
Black Duck	1 4567	Long-b. Marsh Wren	1 45 7
Blue-winged Teal	1 4	Catbird	12 4567
Wood Duck	1 45	Brown Thrasher	12 45 7
Amer. Merganser	4	Robin	12345678
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	Wood Thrush	1 34567
Cooper's Hawk	1	Hermit Thrush	1 3
Red-shouldered Hawk	2 45	Gray-cheeked Thrush	6
Marsh Hawk	45	Veery	1 34567
Osprey	4 7	Bluebird	12 45 78
Duck Hawk	T	Golden-cr. Kinglet	3
Pigeon Hawk	4	Ruby-cr. Kinglet	T 7
Sparrow Hawk	1 45 7	Pipit	1
Ruffed Grouse	3	Cedar Waxwing	6
Pheasant	1 4567	Starling	12 45678
Virginia Rail	1	Yellow-thr. Vireo	1 45 7
Florida Gallinule	1 45	Blue-headed Vireo	1 34567
Killdeer	1 45 7	Red-eyed Vireo	12 456
Woodcock	1 45	Warbling Vireo	1 4 7
Spotted Sandpiper	1 34567	Blk. & Wh. Warbler	1 34
Solitary Sandpiper	1 4	Worm-eating Warbler	1 4
Pectoral Sandpiper	T	Golden-w. Warbler	1 4 6
Herring Gull	1 45	Blue-winged Warbler	1
Ring-billed Gull	45	Tennessee Warbler	4 7
Mourning Dove	1 45 7	Nashville Warbler	1 34
Screech Owl	1	Parula Warbler	1 4
Barred Owl	3	Yellow Warbler	1 4567
Whip-poor-will	1 3 5	Magnolia Warbler	4 6
Nighthawk	1	Cape May Warbler	456
Chimney Swift	1 4567	Blk-thr. Blue Warbler	1 4 67
Ruby-thr. Hummingbird	3T	Myrtle Warbler	1 34567
Belted Kingfisher	1 45	Blk-thr. Green Warbler	1 34
Flicker	1234567	Blackburnian Warbler	345
Pileated Woodpecker	1	Chestnut-sided Warb.	1 34567
Yel-bel. Sapsucker	3	Bay-breasted Warbler	4
Hairy Woodpecker	1 4567	Black-poll Warbler	T
Downy Woodpecker	12 45678	Pine Warbler	1 4 7
Kingbird	12 45 7	Prairie Warbler	1 45 7
Crested Flycatcher	1 34567	Oven-bird	1234567
Phoebe	1 345 7	No. Water-thrush	45
Least Flycatcher	1 345678	La. Water-thrush	1 T
Prairie Horned Lark	1 5	No. Yellow-throat	1 34567
Tree Swallow	1 4567	Wilson's Warbler	1 7
Bank Swallow	1 45 7	Canada Warbler	1 45
Rough-winged Swallow	1 45	American Redstart	1 3456 8
Barn Swallow	12345678	English Sparrow	12 45678
Cliff Swallow	1	Bobolink	1 4567
Blue Jay	1234567	Leadowlark	1 4567

Red-wing	1	4567	Grasshopper Sparrow	1	7
Baltimore Oriole	12	45678	Henslow's Sparrow	1	4 7
Bronzed Grackle	12	45678	Vesper Sparrow	1	45 7
Cowbird	1	345678	Slate-colored Junco	1	
Scarlet Tanager	1	34567	Chipping Sparrow	1	345678
Rose-breasted Grosbk	1	345678	Field Sparrow	1	4567
Indigo Bunting	1	4	White-cr. Sparrow		7
Purple Finch	1	4 67	White-thr. Sparrow	1	34 67
Eastern Goldfinch	1	345678	Lincoln's Sparrow		4
Red-eyed Towhee	1	4567	Swamp Sparrow	1	45 7
Savannah Sparrow	1	45	Song Sparrow	1	345678

It will be noticed that only two species -- Barn Swallow and Robin -- appear on all lists. In line with the records of previous years, the Rock Dove has not been shown.

Totals for previous Century Runs, all in mid-May, have been: 1948, 146 species; 1947, 126; 1946, 105; 1934, 105; 1933, 98; and 1932, 102.

GEORGE HERBERT BAINBRIDGE

Last month S. B. C. again suffered the loss of an active member who played an important role in the history of our organization. George H. Bainbridge, a charter member and officer of S. B. C., died May 4 following an accidental fall from a roof of his home at 32 Washington Road, Scotia. Our deepest sympathy is extended to his wife, Anna Bainbridge, and his two sons, Douglas and Robert.

His intense enthusiasm for the out-of-doors and all aspects of Nature study made George one of the most active naturalists and conservationists of this area. For years he was active in the Mohawk Valley Hiking Club. Later, when it was decided to form the Schenectady Bird Club, George was one of those who played an active part in its founding. He held various S. B. C. offices at different times, and when he died he was one of the Club's three directors.

He was always an enthusiastic participant in all Club affairs, from helping to stage an Audubon lecture to taking an active part in censuses and field trips. He was a regular contributor to FEATHERS.

Friendly, unassuming, with a ready smile that sprung not only from a genuine liking for people but also from a never-failing sense of humor, George was a staunch, loyal, and helpful ally to his friends and a tireless worker for the splendid causes and ideals he believed in.

There Were Vultures and Duck Hawks for the COPAKE CAMP-OUT

Mrs. R. H. Gale

The May 7-8 trip to Copake Falls, Taconic State Park, led by Dr. Minnie B. Scotland and Nelle G. Van Vorst revealed, as anticipated, Warblers in abundance and Turkey Vultures -- definitely!

For the 28 assembled members and friends a moisty morning became a sunny afternoon with a slight wind. The 3 p.m. trip was by car to the mountain crest overlooking Bash-Bish Creek, where eight Turkey Vultures soared overhead and came to rest on dead trees on the mountainside and where two Duck Hawks were riding an updraft from the slopes below. More birds were added, and by evening the total was 56. Many of these (starred in the list below) were observed en route to Copake Falls. The day's list included:

Dbl-cr. Cormorant*	Barn Swallow*	Blackburn. Warbler
Great Blue Heron*	Blue Jay	Oven-bird
Turkey Vulture	Crow	La. Water-thrush
Red-should. Hawk*	Blk-cap Chickadee	No. Yellow-throat*
Marsh Hawk*	Wh-br. Nuthatch	Redstart
Osprey*	House Wren	English Sparrow
Duck Hawk	Catbird	Meadowlark*
Sparrow Hawk*	Robin	Red-wing
Fla. Gallinule*	Wood Thrush	Baltimore Oriole*
Killdeer*	Bluebird	Grackle*
Herring Gull*	Starling	Cowbird
Chimney Swift*	Blue-headed Vireo	Scarlet Tanager
Kingfisher*	Warbling Vireo*	Indigo Bunting*
Flicker	Blk. & Wh. Warbler	Purple Finch
Hairy Woodpecker	Yellow Warbler*	Goldfinch
Kingbird	Blk-thr. Blue Warb.	Red-eyed Towhee
Crested Flycatcher	Lyrtle Warbler	Vesper Sparrow*
Phoebe	Blk-thr. Green Warb.	Chip., Swamp*, Song

It Was Cold at Dawn

In the dark of 4 o'clock Sunday morning, with the thermometer reading 36 degrees, early birders gathered over hot coffee and doughnuts prepared by Dr. Scotland and Miss Van Vorst -- and what a welcome eye-opener! As the first chirps of the Robin accompanied by first one and then several Wood Thrushes preluded the dawn, we started out. At first there seemed few identifications -- a Veery, Water-thrush and increasing calls from Oven-birds, one or two Black-throated Green Warblers and one Parula Warbler high on a tree-top. As the sun rose two Wood Ducks were added to our list. Then gradually we saw: Purple Finches, Chestnut-sided Warblers, two Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Blue-headed Vireo, Blackburnian Warbler, Redstart, Catbird, Cowbirds; and we heard a clear call of the White-throated Sparrow. Then with varying de-

grees of chilliness and hunger we made our way back to camp for breakfast and a rest before the trip to the Falls.

The trip to the Falls started at 9 o'clock and ended about noon. To the already accumulated list were added: Ruby-throated Hummingbird, and a Broad-winged-Hawk in a tree beside the camp.

There were 40 identifications by Sunday noon, bringing in all a total of 67. Perhaps next time we can make it a hundred! We all enjoyed the trip -- even those who traveled by Route 23!

Conservation Keynoted the Meeting of the
FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS
Dr. Minnie B. Scotland

The second annual meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs was held at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City on May 28 and 29. The Linnaean Society of New York, host for the meeting, deserves much praise for the hospitality and the skillful management of the many details that are essential to the success of any gathering.

Six SBC members registered. Following the registration there was the Council session where officers' and committee reports were given. Briefly, these reports included such information as (1) membership now includes 16 clubs of more than 1600 members, and about 20 individual members; (2) emphasis on conservation should be a large part of the Federation's program, with the individuals of all the clubs backing up the committee's work through contacts with legislators; (3) a Federation Bulletin is desirable; and (4) a Records Committee is in the offing with a view to aiding in revision of Eaton's Birds of New York.

The 1950 president will be Winston W. Brookner of Buffalo who with Dr. Gordon K. Meade, current president, was a force in the establishment of the Federation. Eugene Eisenmann of The Linnaean Society was elected 1950 vice-president, and Reginald Hartwell, Rochester, corresponding secretary. John L. Wolff of Scarsdale and Guy Bartlett continue next year in their respective offices of recording secretary and treasurer. The choice of Watkins Glen for the 1950 meeting was a happy one. One new club was admitted to the Federation, the Burroughs Audubon Nature Club of Rochester, organized in 1913 and with a present membership of 179.

The afternoon was devoted to the reading of papers. These brought out the results of observation and research carried on by eight of the members. The first was a consideration of the hearing mechanism of the Barn Owl. This was followed

by an ecological discussion of the bird associations in a small balsam-hemlock bog in Cattaraugus County. A summary of the skyscraper-loss of birds during last September's migration, the construction of artificial nests for Cliff Swallows, and accounts of the present status of the Purple Sandpiper on the Great Lakes and the breeding of Gadwalls on Jones Beach, and the stories of the successful establishment of the House Finch and the European Goldfinch on Long Island were given.

Federation's Role in Conservation

The annual dinner was held at the Men's Faculty Club of Columbia University, with about 60 members and guests present. Dr. Leade reviewed the history of the formation of the Federation, stating that the infant had now been carried through the diaper period and that it now shows signs of growth. He offered suggestions for aiding this growth to the incoming president and to the Federation members. Carl Buchheister spoke briefly of the friendly and cooperative association of the Audubon Society and the Federation. Mr. Brockner accepted his new office of president with marked plans for continuing the healthy development of the organization.

The guest speaker was Richard H. Pough, Curator of Conservation and Use of Natural Resources, American Museum of Natural History. His subject was "The Federation's Role in New York State Conservation." He emphasized the importance and the work of a Conservation Research Committee along the line of inventorying colonial nesting species and safeguarding them, the preserving of marshes to the point of buying local spots, and the greater protection of currently persecuted species. He suggested the formation of a Sanctuary Establishment Committee and also a Legislative Committee. In concluding his address he stressed the encouraging of the younger generation to study birds. These boys and girls are tomorrow's leaders in this work of conservation.

Inlanders Added to Their Life-lists with the

BIRDS OF LONG ISLAND

Nelle G. Van Vorst

Birding on Long Island was a thrill for the inland members of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs. The clear, cool morning of May 29 saw well over 50 people at the Lynbrook station to meet the many local members with their cars.

The first stop was near a fresh-water pond where the Pied-billed Grebe with her family swam into sight. Coots hurried along their way. A Least Bittern perched in front of a Mute Swan and swayed in the breeze as he clung to the

stem of a phragmite as though posing for the group. The drive then continued through a residential section near Hewlett, where the roses were in full bloom and brilliant rhododendrons graced the lawns.

House Finches

This was the section the House Finch had chosen to colonize. Wandering through vacant lots and over lawns, where tall spruces grew, some one called "There they are!" Atop a spruce was a singing male, so much like our Purple Finch. The crowd tarried until all had heard and seen the stranger.

To another stop the 18 cars advanced. Here was a chance to wander through a wooded section almost completely covered with a fern new to most of the folk -- the netted veined chain fern.

Nesting Yellow-crowned

Almost every spot echoed with songs of the Blue-winged Warbler. This section furnished homes for the White-eyed Vireo (new for many), and the Yellow-crowned Night Heron. This last one could not be flushed so the crowd moved toward the nesting tree and enjoyed an excellent view. Fish Crows were also heard in this area.

Time flies, so the birders were rushed to a salt marsh near the shore of Lawrence Park. From this marsh a Clapper Rail was flushed, the first shore-bird. Black-bellied Plovers, Ruddy Turnstones and small "peeps" dotted the water's edge. A few Least Terns and a Ring-billed Gull flew overhead.

After some difficulty in getting the people away from this enticing spot we hurried to Massapequa in quest of the European Goldfinch, about which we had all heard the previous afternoon. Here the first miss seemed evident; after a pause and search it seemed best to have lunch at Amityville.

The European Goldfinch Is Glimpsed

After lunch the search for the goldfinch was continued. John J. Elliott came back with the good word that he had located the birds down the road, so away all sped to an old road through a field covered with small bushes and cedar trees. A new song and a flash of a bird raised hopes. This bird could not be found so the walk continued, to be stopped to listen to a distant but distinct call of a Bob-white.

As the group retraced their way there was an unusual call and a bird with a characteristically goldfinch flight flew over the heads of all. Those who had their glasses ready saw the spots on the wings and the red patch on the face.

So the European Goldfinch was sighted, thanks to Mr. Elliott and his untiring efforts, although the bird did choose to hide in dense foliage in the distance.

Shore-birds Aplenty

Now came perhaps the best shore-birding of the day, at Jones Beach. Here smaller groups took turns in studying the many nesting Gadwalls, and the Ruddy Ducks and Gulls, including both Herring and Great Black-backed. The American Egret, Little Blue Heron in changing plumage, Red-backed Sandpipers, Greater Yellow-legs, Knots, Dowitchers, and the "peeps" were seen. Farther along the beach the Snowy Egret was found (it is nesting this year on Long Island).

What a treat it was to catch sight of the Piping Plover and Black Skimmers flying to their homes as members drove along. This section, where the sand dunes gave shelter to many cold picnickers as the west became dark and rain was in the offing, certainly was most interesting. The sea and the sands joined with birds and birders in extending an invitation for a return visit.

Among Those Seen

Lists of observers varied, of course. Schenectadians recorded 97 species:

Pied-billed Grebe	Ruddy Turnstone
American Egret	Spotted Sandpiper
Snowy Egret	Greater Yellow-legs
Little Blue Heron	Lesser Yellow-legs
Green Heron	Knot
Black-crowned Night Heron	Least Sandpiper
Yellow-crowned Night Heron	Red-backed Sandpiper
American Bittern	Dowitcher
Least Bittern	Semipalmated Sandpiper
Lute Swan	Sanderling
Lallard	Great Black-backed Gull
Black Duck	Herring Gull
Gadwall	Ring-billed Gull
Ruddy Duck	Common Tern
Red-tailed Hawk	Least Tern
Red-shouldered Hawk	Black Skimmer
Broad-winged Hawk	Rock Dove
Marsh Hawk	Mourning Dove
Sparrow Hawk	Chimney Swift
Bob-white	Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Clapper Rail	Belted Kingfisher
Virginia Rail	Flicker
Florida Gallinule	Kingbird
Coot	Crested Flycatcher
Piping Plover	Phoebe
Killdeer	Least Flycatcher
Black-bellied Plover	Wood Pewee

Tree Swallow	Oven-bird
Bank Swallow	Yellow-throat
Barn Swallow	Yellow-breasted Chat
Blue Jay	Redstart
Crow	House Sparrow
Fish Crow	Meadowlark
Black-capped Chickadee	Red-wing
House Wren	Baltimore Oriole
Long-billed Marsh Wren	Grackle
Catbird	Cowbird
Brown Thrasher	Scarlet Tanager
Robin	House Finch
Wood Thrush	British Goldfinch
Veery	Eastern Goldfinch
Starling	Towhee
White-eyed Vireo	Grasshopper Sparrow
Yellow-throated Vireo	Henslow's Sparrow
Red-eyed Vireo	Sharp-tailed Sparrow
Blue-winged Warbler	Chipping Sparrow
Parula Warbler	Swamp Sparrow
Yellow Warbler	Song Sparrow
Chestnut-sided Warbler	Total -- 97 species.

S B C FIELD TRIP REPORTS

SPRING WAS EARLY

Watervliet Reservoir, April 3

What to expect on a trip this spring of 1949 has been most uncertain. In many cases the records have been the unexpected, as were those of the Iceland and Glaucous Gulls when an eagle and spring ducks were expected.

The Watervliet Reservoir trip is always an early-spring one, and normally the ice is just disappearing and, except for pussy willows, there are very few signs of spring. The trip of April 3 found the reservoir all open and somewhat lower than usual, so the sand bars by the bridge were exposed, allowing the Killdeer to feed. The maples and aspens bordering the shores showed the bright red of the flowers and the downy gray of the catkins, as though warning the finches and warblers that they had better hurry up their migration.

Club members wandered lazily through the fields and woods on the south side, fully expecting to hear the Winter Wren in the wooded ravine and to see the somewhat usual Great Horned Owl in a hemlock. But only the Kinglets - Ruby- and Golden-crowned - greeted them from the tall trees. Not a single Gull or Duck could be seen on the reservoir.

Not to be discouraged, the group drove farther and parked their cars. They proceeded through the bushy field along the gravel pits. Along this path the Sparrows greeted them -- the Song, Tree and Fox Sparrows vied with the Juncos and

Chickadees in full song. As background music the Mourning Doves and Field Sparrows could be heard. While enjoying the sight and sound of the first Tree Swallows, a Red-tailed Hawk soared high overhead. A silent Hermit Thrush hurried away through the bushes. The chuckle of the Ruby-crowned Kinglet teased the folk as they walked along the road, accompanied by an early Mourning Cloak butterfly.

When the first glimpse of the reservoir was visible the members approached in a close group so all would see what might be hiding. A pair of Horned Grebes managed to get away without many seeing them. The high spot of the morning was the splendid view of a male Green-winged Teal through the 26-power telescope.

Some Pied-billed Grebes, Wood Ducks and American Mergansers completed the list of water-birds. Others, not already mentioned, included Ruffed Grouse, Herring Gull, Kingfisher, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Phoebe, Prairie Horned Lark, Blue Jay, Crow, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Robin, Bluebird, Starling, English Sparrow, Meadowlark, Red-wing, Bronzed Grackle, Cowbird, and Goldfinch. The total for the trip was 39 species. -- Nelle G. Van Vorst, Leader

SEEK AND YE SHALL FIND ... LAYBE

Gordon Road, April 9

Eight wind-eating members of S B C came forth more or less hopefully on April 9 for the Gordon Road trip, only to find again that, with a temperature of 40F and winds at 20 to 25 mph with speedier gusts in between, many birds disappear. Under such conditions one begins to appreciate the truth in that trite old saying "Seek and ye shall find."

Nevertheless there were redeeming features such, for example, as the Ruffed Grouse drumming his challenging love song in a group of evergreens.

To those who saw the male Bluebird in his flashing nuptial plumage for the first time this season, there was the usual thrill this bird produces.

Two large hawks soaring, seemingly at ease, in the wind proved to be Red-tails. A third large hawk of the Buteo family was apparently a Rough-legged in the dark phase, although at no time was it seen to hover.

Along a part of the road a lone Phoebe kept ahead of the cars, one fence post at a time, dropping to the ground occasionally for some delicacy. One interesting feature, seen by some of the group on the way home, was a large flock of Blackbirds, including an estimated 75 Red-wings and 40 Cowbirds. Some small birds are due for a busy time feeding the progeny of those Cowbirds. Meadowlarks down in the grass and weeds were calling out "See you see her" in their characteristic flute-like notes.

Besides the birds already mentioned there were also the American Merganser, Hairy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, Robin, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Starling, Junco, Field and Song Sparrows, a total of 19 species.

-- George H. Bainbridge, Leader

OSPREYS, SHOW--STEALERSVischer Ponds, April 24

Several Ospreys stole the show during the Vischer Ponds trip of Sunday, April 24. We watched one drop down to the Lohawk near Rexford and come up with a golden fish which glistened in the sunlight -- it was one of the red carp. Another Osprey perched atop a dead tree at the ponds for all to view through the telescopes. A third hovered directly overhead, quite low, giving all an excellent view.

The temperature rose from 46 at 8 a.m. to 52 at 11:30, but a strong "breeze" made it seem colder than that. It was partly cloudy, but the sun came through at the critical moments.

We had a spectacular view of a Mallard drake taking off from the water, with full sunlight highlighting his brilliant coloration. The sun also brought out the blue of the Teal's wings beating in rapid flight, as well as the blue-green of the Tree Swallows which were coursing about everywhere.

Canada Geese swimming about majestically and the clear views of the Black-crowned Night Heron made it a memorable trip. There were 13 observers in the party. The 35 species included:

Pied-billed Grebe, 3; Black-crowned Night Heron, 3; American Bittern, 2; Canada Goose, 3; Mallard, 12; Black Duck, 8; Baldpate, 12; Blue-winged Teal, 12; Wood Duck, 3; American Merganser, 40; Osprey, 4; Killdeer, 1; Herring Gull, 12; Mourning Dove, 3; Flicker; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 10; Phoebe, 10; Tree Swallow; Bank Swallow; Rough-winged Swallow; Barn Swallow; Blue Jay, 1; Crow, 12; Black-capped Chickadee, 4; White-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Robin; Bluebird, 2; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 1; Starling; English Sparrow; Meadowlark, 10; Red-wing; Bronzed Grackle; Cowbird, 20; Vesper Sparrow, 2; Junco, 20; Chipping Sparrow, 6; Field Sparrow, 2; Swamp Sparrow, 12; and Song Sparrow. The Mergansers were all on the river proper.

-- Samuel R. Madison, Leader

COOL, AND DAMPWolf Hollow, April 30

It was a cool, damp walk through the ravine at Wolf Hollow on April 30; there were nine hikers on the trip. The highlight was the flushing of a Broad-winged Hawk from the brush. He flew to an exposed branch about a hundred feet away, to sun himself and to give an exceptional view.

The presence of ten Louisiana Water-thrushes was also noted. There was an early discussion on the decision between this and the Northern Water-thrush. The latter is found more at wooded swamps and ponds; the Louisiana prefers ravines and clear running water.

Thirty-four species were found in all on this ideal spring morning. The wind was about 3 mph, and it was clear and sunny. In the following list the birds were common unless otherwise indicated. Included were: Sharp-shinned

Hawk, 1; Cooper's Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Broad-winged Hawk, 1; Flicker; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Phoebe; Barn Swallow; Blue Jay; Crow; Chickadee; White-breasted Nuthatch, 2; House Wren, 1; Winter Wren, 1; Robin; Hermit Thrush, 2; Bluebird, 1; Starling; Blue-headed Vireo, 1; Myrtle Warbler, 1; Black-throated Green Warbler, 1; Louisiana Water-thrush, 10; English Sparrow; Meadowlark; Red-wing; Bronzed Grackle; Cowbird; Henslow's Sparrow, 1; Vesper Sparrow; Slate-colored Junco; Chipping Sparrow; Field Sparrow; White-throated Sparrow; and Song Sparrow.

-- Dr. Lawrence Hill

THE BREAKFAST TRIP

Central Park, May 1

It was a beautiful morning for the 15 SBC observers who took part in the before-breakfast trip around Central Park. Several early warblers were seen: Black and White, Nashville, Myrtle, Pine, and Yellow Palm. Rudd Stone found the Wood Duck near the pond; it was a novelty for many of the observers to see a duck in a tree. The Prairie Horned Lark was found in Parkview Cemetery, as was the Savannah Sparrow.

Miss Van Vorst and Bartlett located the Pine Warbler and the Pine Siskin, in a pine tree.

Twenty-five members gathered around the tables to eat pancakes covered with butter and syrup and drink coffee. Between helpings of pancakes several observed the Blue-headed Vireo in the top of a nearby tree. Well fed and happy after the breakfast, the members soon left for home. The 42 species:

Wood Duck, Red-tailed Hawk, Killdeer, Mourning Dove, Flicker, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Phoebe, Prairie Horned Lark, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Hermit Thrush, Bluebird, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Starling, Blue-headed Vireo; Black and White, Nashville, Myrtle, Pine and Yellow Palm Warblers; English Sparrow, Meadowlark, Red-wing, Rusty Blackbird, Bronzed Grackle, Cowbird, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, Goldfinch, Towhee, Junco; Savannah, Chipping, Field, White-throated and Song Sparrows.

-- Esly Hallenbeck

NIGHT CALLS

May 4

The story of the annual after-dark trip for the notes of Woodcock and Whip-poor-will can be told quickly. The Woodcock was heard by all, the Whip-poor-will by a few. There were several automobiles in the procession, and numerous observers. The first stop, along Balltown Road, quickly produced the Woodcock record. The Vly Road stop was disappointing. A few heard another Woodcock and, just twice, a Whip-poor-will. Incidentally, several recorded the Whip-poor-will there on Century Run day. The time-table turned out poorly; it was late for Woodcock, early for the Whip-poor-will.

-- Guy Bartlett

A CONNECTICUT WARBLER

Niskayuna, May 15

The field trip of Sunday, May 15, left much to be desired from standpoint of numbers, both people and birds -- probably the Century marathon of the previous day had much to do with the slight turn-out. There were four of us on the trip - Mr. and Mrs. Sessions, Jack Hunt, and I. It was cool, 45 degrees at start; the wind mild northwest; the territory included Rosendale and River Roads.

In the following list the type of territory is keyed as follows: W - woods; O - Gardens, orchards and semi-open country; M - marsh; F - open fields; X - other birds. The 50 species included:

Killdeer, 2	F	Cape May Warbler, 1	W
Sandpiper (sp?), 1	M	Myrtle Warbler, 4	W
Mourning Dove, 3	O	Black-thr.Green Warb., 6	W
Chimney Swift, 10	X	Chestnut-sided Warb., 6	W
Flicker, 2	W	Oven-bird, 3	W
Downy Woodpecker, 1	W	Connecticut Warbler, 1	W
Phoebe, 1	O	Yellow-throat, 8	X
Least Flycatcher, 3	O	Redstart, 1	W
Tree Swallow, 15	X	English Sparrow, 12	X
Barn Swallow, 8	X	Bobolink, approx. 20	F
Blue Jay, 2	W	Meadowlark, approx. 25	F
Crow, 6	X	Red-wing, approx. 50	M
Chickadee, 2	W	Baltimore Oriole, 4	O
House Wren, 3	O	Grackle, approx. 15	M
Catbird, 6	O	Scarlet Tanager, 2	W
Brown Thrasher, 1	O	Rose-br.Grosbeak, 1	W
Robin, approx. 30	X	Purple Finch, 2	O
Wood Thrush, 6	W	Goldfinch, 5	O
Veery, 5	W	Towhee, 6	W
Bluebird, 2	O	Savannah Sparrow, 3	F
Starling, approx. 20	X	Menslow's Sparrow, 1	F
Yellow-thr.Vireo, 1	O	Chipping Sparrow, 10	O
Warbling Vireo, 1	O	Field Sparrow, 1	O
Golden-wing.Warb., 4	W	White-thr.Sparrow, 1	W
Yellow Warbler, 12	O	Song Sparrow, 10	X

-- Dorothy Sawyer

NO WORM-EATER

Helderbergs, May 22

May 22 proved to be a cold, windy morning, so no Worm-eating Warbler was expected, and the few members on the trip were not disappointed when the warbler could not be heard or seen. However, a Pileated Woodpecker did fly across open land in front of us.

Not only Indian Ladder but also Leadowdale Swamp and the ponds near Voorheesville were visited. The wind became so strong - not to mention rain - that the trip ended with the following enumeration of 62 species:

Black-crowned Night Heron, American Bittern, Black Duck, Sparrow Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper,

Chimney Swift, Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Kingbird, Crested Flycatcher, Phoebe, Least Flycatcher, Wood Pewee, Tree Swallow, Bank Swallow, Barn Swallow, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Catbird, Robin, Wood Thrush, Veery, Bluebird, Starling, Red-eyed Vireo; Black and White, Golden-winged, Parula, Yellow, Magnolia, Black-throated Green, and Chestnut-sided Warblers; Oven-bird, Louisiana Water-thrush, Yellow-throat, Canada Warbler, Redstart, English Sparrow, Bobolink, Meadowlark, Red-wing, Baltimore Oriole, Grackle, Cowbird, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Goldfinch, Towhee; Grasshopper, Henslow's, Chipping, Field, Swamp, and Song Sparrows.

-- Nelle G. Van Vorst

A Young Grosbeak Can Be A

SURPRISING LITTLE VENTRILOQUIST

Gertrude Blowney

It was early afternoon of a summer day -- that quiet time when few sounds from insects or birds are usually heard -- that we first noticed the call. It was two notes so insistently repeated that they aroused our curiosity. The sound seemed to come from the meadow but as we followed it we suddenly came upon a young bird in the flower border -- only about twenty feet from where we had been sitting!

The surprising little ventriloquist was still downy and wide-mouthed but had feathers on its wings and a few very short ones on its tail. We left it alone in the hope that the parents would find and feed it, but its plaintive call continued unceasingly until dusk. It was then that we cautiously approached the sound and might have stepped upon the bird but for the fact that it changed its far-away call to a chirping clatter and opened its yellow-edged mouth toward us hungrily.

It was taken into the house for the night and fed soft-bodied insects and moistened "cheerios" which it accepted eagerly. There had been Towhees around, so at first we thought it belonged to them. Later on Guy Bartlett came to see it and identified it as a Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

For a week it was brought in at night (protective custody), and then allowed complete freedom. It could fly pretty well at that time but often made awkward or "crash landings." For the first two weeks it was completely dependent on us for food and water which we felt duty-bound to produce every half hour upon the advice of Professor Leonard Clark, the biologist and our neighbor. It took much time and patience to find insects and worms enough to satisfy the needs of the fast-growing bird. Mrs. Frank Lewis, who owned a good source book on birds helped out on suggestions as to diet. To some

farmers the Grosbeak is known as the "potato-bug bird" but we had no source of potato bugs. Green peas are also listed as popular, and we found them so indeed. These were easy to have on hand in the frozen variety.

As time passed the young Grosbeak feathered out, and its flying became more perfect. To teach it to be independent now took a hard-hearted attitude that was the hardest thing about raising the orphan. It begged to be let into the house, and had learned other bad habits that would be potentially lethal to a wild bird.

The Monday before Labor Day it left. We hope it was to join a flock of its kind. Birds had been showing signs of flocking for about a week.

Although it was exacting work to care for the young bird, the experience was so rewarding that we would not mind trying it again. Circumstances keep us at home during June, July and August, and birds are very diverting!

An Unexpected Canada

GOOSE IN THE CORNFIELD

Virginia C. Freligh

On the first of April as the last fingers of sun exercised out of the eastern horizon across the Lisha Kill, a man with his faithful horse set to work discing up last year's corn field. Being a very observant and nature-loving farmer, he first scanned the field with watchful eye for any sign of a Killdeer's nest but instead, bobbing along on a knoll not too far distant, he observed a large goose. Thinking that one of the neighbor's domestic fowls had escaped confining quarters, he went on about his business of harrowing. Upon returning to the barnyard, the farmer went into the house and got in touch with his neighbors by phone, inquiring if any were missing a goose. None were.

Thereupon, as he returned to the field alone, he recalled that during the night he had heard a great honking of wild fowl skimming through the darkness far above, and thought sleepily that the geese were already northward bound in spring migration.

He approached the stranger warily. The goose plucked at the new growth about him as he waddled along, occasionally squatting, but not for long intervals. My uncle was within ten feet of the goose, a Canadian, before it seemed aware of his presence. Then with a raucous "honk-honk" it stretched its long neck forward and took to the air without further adieu. It gained altitude quickly, headed due north, and was soon lost to sight. Perhaps it had tired during the night and dropped out of the great feathered V.

206 Kinds of Birds Show on the

SUMMARY OF 1948 RECORDS

Mildred D. Gray

There were 206 kinds of birds in the composite list of Schenectady Bird Club members during 1948 in the ten-county local area -- 206 kinds rather than 206 species since one hybrid, Lawrence's Warbler, was shown. The Rock Dove was not included in the count.

One of the year's features was the "invasion" of the white herons -- with American Egrets exceptionally numerous and widespread, here as early as May 15 and as late as November 28. There were more records than usual of the white-plumaged, immature Little Blue Heron; and the Snowy Egret was found in two local areas.

A young Whistling Swan tarried here for two weeks in the spring; and a Greater Snow Goose was on Saratoga Lake simultaneously.

The Turkey Vulture was seen several times between early August and mid-November. Some Coots tarried for inclusion in the Christmas Count.

There were a mid-November Woodcock and a mid-May White-rumped Sandpiper. A Barn Owl occupied a conspicuous tree roost in Scotia in July and August; a Saw-whet Owl was captured in a Barrett Street office.

Details concerning the records of the 1948 SBC scheduled field trips, with 173 kinds found locally, have already been summarized (May FEATHERS, pages 33-37) by Margaret A. Smith.

The mid-May Century Run of 146 species included both the Blue-winged and Lawrence's Warblers, below Albany. At the same time a Hooded Warbler was seen in Scotia, and two days later one in Schenectady.

There was one Cardinal record, in early April. The story of the Evening Grosbeak was almost nil -- none at all in the whole of the 1947-1948 winter, and only a Rosa Road record on December 11 for the second winter season. At the end of December there were White-winged Crossbills at Wolf Hollow.

Records of the 206 have been highly condensed in the following tabulation. There is an explanation of the abbreviations at the bottom of Page 62.

1948 RECORDS

- Common Loon: Tv 4-4 SarL; tv 11-28 TmkRsv
 Holboell's Grebe: Tv 4-4 SarL; tv 10-31 WtvRsv(V)
 Horned Grebe: Tv 11-7 to 12-5 SarL
 Pied-billed Grebe: Sr, 4-7 VsrF(S) to 11-7 SarL
 Double-crested Cormorant: Tv, 9-12 HdsR, two Oct. WtvRsv
 Great Blue Heron: Sr, 4-25 VsrF to 11-7 SarL & VsrF
 American Egret: Unusually numerous and widespread; first on
 5-15; 14 on 7-25; 239 on 9-12 HdsR; last 11-28 MhkR (M)
 Little Blue Heron: Several records, maximum of two, 8-10
 NskW to 9-15 WtvRsv (V)
 Snowy Egret: Aug. 9, Sacandaga Rsvr (C); Aug. 10, Niskayuna
 Wide Waters (B); several, late August, Otsego and Good-
 year Lakes (G)
 Green Heron: Sr, 3-27 ClnL (K) to 9-20 WtvRsv (V)
 Black-crowned Night Heron: Sr, 4-7 VsrF (S) to 9-12 HdsR
 American Bittern: Sr, 3-23 VsrF to 10-3 NskW
 Whistling Swan: One immature, Vischer Ponds, 4-7 (S) to
 4-20 (A)
 Canada Goose: Tv, 4-10 SarL (H) to 5-6 Cohoes (Sc), and
 11-17 and 11-18 (G)
 Greater Snow Goose: Tv 4-10 SarL (H)
 Mallard: Sr, ar 4-17; wv 12-26
 Black Duck: Sr, wv, ab tv; nest, 9 eggs, 4-11 SarL
 Baldpate: Tv 3-23 (A) to 4-25, and 9-11 (S)
 Pintail: Tv 3-24 to 4-7 (S); several in hunters' bags in
 autumn (G)
 Green-winged Teal: Tv 3-23 (S); and 9-11 to 10-3
 Blue-winged Teal: Sr; tv 3-26(S) to 4-17 and 8-14 to 10-3
 Shoveller: One male, 3-27
 Wood Duck: Sr, 3-19 (S) to September
 Redhead: Tv 3-19 to 3-25 VsrF (S)
 Canvas-back: Tv 3-6 Cohoes (V) and 3-23 VsrF
 Greater Scaup Duck: Tv 4-4 (H) and 10-17 (A)
 Lesser Scaup Duck: Tv 3-23 (A) to 5-15; in fall to 12-5 SarL
 American Golden-eye: Wv to 4-14 SarL; ar 12-5 SarL
 Buffle-head: Tv 3-19 Normanskill (Sc) and 11-7
 Old-squaw: Ten 3-23 VsrF (A); two NskW 11-7; one female shot
 by hunters (G)
 Surf Scoter: 10-15
 American Scoter: Several flocks 10-15 to 10-17 (A); to 11-17
 at Round Lake
 Ruddy Duck: Tv, four 10-17 NskW (A) to four there 11-21(S)
 American Merganser: Wv, to 5-15, ar 11-7; also sr Sacandaga
 Reservoir
 Hooded Merganser: Tv 3-25 VsrF (S) to 5-15; and 12-5 at
 SarL and NskW
 Red-breasted Merganser: Tv 2-15 to 5-15
 Turkey Vulture: 8-10 NskW (B); 9-25 and 9-26 Hldbg; one in
 autumn to 11-11, Princetown Road
 Goshawk: Recorded 3-11 Mariaville (S), 5-15, and 12-5

- Sharp-shinned Hawk: Recorded throughout the year
 Cooper's Hawk: Sr, March (Bk) to 9-26
 Red-tailed Hawk: Sr, 3-13(S) to 12-20 Sc (H)
 Red-shouldered Hawk: Sr 3-18 (S) to 10-3
 Broad-winged Hawk: Tv 9-12 to 10-3
 Rough-legged Hawk: Tv 3-7 to 5-1; 9-26 to 10-17
 Bald Eagle: 2-15 upper HdsR; 3-23 (A); November; nested at Otsego Lake (G)
 Marsh Hawk: Sr 3-11 (S) to 10-3 NskW
 Osprey: Tv 4-25 and 9-12
 Duck Hawk: Recorded 5-1, 5-15 (H), 9-26, and 8-22
 Sparrow Hawk: Recorded throughout the year
 Ruffed Grouse: Resident
 Hungarian Partridge: Six, Swaggertown Road area in Oct. (G)
 Ring-necked Pheasant: Resident
 King Rail: Recorded 5-15
 Sora: Recorded 5-5 (S)
 Florida Gallinule: Sr 4-30 (Sc) to 10-3 NskW; 8-14 with young
Coot: Recorded 3-20 (S), 9-24 (Aw) to 11-7 NskY; and three on 12-5 and four on 12-26
 Semipalmated Plover: Tv 9-19 WtvRsv (Aw)
 Killdeer: Sr 3-7 to 11-17; fifty at WtvRsv 10-17
 Black-bellied Plover: 9-10 to 9-21 NskW (S); 9-19 WtvRsv
 Woodcock: Sr 4-18 through fall; to 11-16 Hldbg (Bn)
 Wilson's Snipe: Recorded 5-10 (S) and 9-8 (S) to 11-21 (S)
 Upland Plover: Recorded 5-15 (H)
 Spotted Sandpiper: Sr 5-5 (S) to 10-17
 Solitary Sandpiper: Tv 5-4(S) to 5-15 VsrF, 8-22 to 9-12
 Greater Yellow-legs: Tv 4-30 (Sc), 9-9 WtvRsv to 10-31 (v)
 Lesser Yellow-legs: Tv 5-5 (S) and 8-22 WtvRsv to 10-3 NskW
 Pectoral Sandpiper: Recorded 8-22 WtvRsv
White-rumped Sandpiper: 5-15 HdsR
 Least Sandpiper: 5-15 HdsR; 9-12 HdsR
 Sanderling: 9-19 and 9-26 WtvRsv (Aw)
 Herring Gull: Recorded regularly except summer months; in summer at Sacandaga Reservoir (B)
 Ring-billed Gull: Tv 3-22 (S), 8-31 HdsR to 12-5 SarL
 Bonaparte's Gull: Recorded 9-2 WtvRsv (S)
 Black Tern: Tv 5-15, and eight Aug. 20-21
 Mourning Dove: Sr ar 3-19 (S); wv flock of 24 on 12-26
 Black-billed Cuckoo: Sr 5-30 to 8-24 (H)
 Yellow-billed Cuckoo: One 8-24 (H)
 Barn Owl: One regularly, July and August, Sootia tree roost
 Screech Owl: Res, few records
 Great Horned Owl: Resident
 Barred Owl: Resident
 Saw-whet Owl: One captured 10-26 in Barrett Street office.
 Whip-poor-will: Sr, arrived 5-11
 Nighthawk: Sr 4-19 (S) to 9-26 Hldbg (Hm)
 Chimney Swift: Sr 5-2 (B) to 9-12

- Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Sr 5-11 (Hm) to 9-12
 Belted Kingfisher: Recorded 3-7 to 12-5 SarL
- Flicker: Sr 4-1 (F) to 10-10 (W)
 Pileated Woodpecker: Resident; including Galway (C)
 Red-headed Woodpecker: Sr 5-10 (Bk) to 7-1 (Bk)
 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Tv 4-8 (C) to 5-15, and 10-10 (W)
 Hairy Woodpecker - Resident
 Downy Woodpecker - Resident
- Kingbird: Sr 5-15 (H) to 9-23
 Crested Flycatcher: Sr 5-1 (H) to 9-12
 Phoebe: Sr 3-21 to 9-26 Hldbg
 Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Tv 5-10 Washington Pk, Alb (F) to 5-15; 9-5, Otsego County (W)
 Acadian Flycatcher: Recorded 5-5 Loudonville (F); and 6-12, Berne Swamp
 Alder Flycatcher: Recorded 5-15 to 6-12
 Wood Flycatcher: Sr ar 5-10 (H)
 Wood Pewee: Sr 4-30 (C) to 9-26
 Olive-sided Flycatcher: Nested at Jenny Lake (Hv)
- Prairie Horned Lark: Sr; tv 3-14 (Bn) to 3-21
- Tree Swallow: Sr 4-25 to 9-12
 Bank Swallow: Sr 5-15 (H) to 8-24 (S)
 Rough-winged Swallow: Sr 4-20 (S) to 8-14 (S)
 Barn Swallow: Sr 5-1 to 9-12
 Cliff Swallow: Sr 5-15 to early August (S)
 Purple Martin: Recorded 8-21 NskW (S)
- Blue Jay: Resident
 Crow: Resident
 Black-capped Chickadee: Resident
 White-breasted Nuthatch: Resident
 Red-breasted Nuthatch: Wv to 3-14 (H), ar 9-15 (F)
 Brown Creeper: Wv, dates meager
- House Wren: Sr 4-24 (F) to 10-5 (F)
 Winter Wren: Tv 3-23 Vale Cem. to 5-15; 11-29 (Hv) to 12-12 SarL
 Long-billed Marsh Wren: Sr ar 5-10 (S)
 Short-billed Marsh Wren - 5-15
 Catbird: Sr 4-25 (H) to 10-10 (W)
 Brown Thrasher: Sr ar 5-2
- Robin: 3-7 through year
 Wood Thrush: Sr 4-20 (H) to 10-17 WtvRsv
 Hermit Thrush: Sr 4-17 to 10-10 Loudonville (F)
 Olive-backed Thrush: Tv 5-10 (C) to 6-5 (H); 9-23 WashPk, Alb (F) to 10-10 Colonie (W)
 Gray-cheeked Thrush: Tv 5-1 Loudonville (F) to 5-15, and 5-30 (N)
 Veery: Sr 5-2 (C) to 10-14 (C)
 Bluebird: Sr 3-21 to 11-7
- Golden-crowned Kinglet: Recorded 5-15 and 12-26
 Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Tv 4-11 to 5-15; 10-5 to 10-10

FEATHERS

July-August, 1949

American Pipit: Tv 3-23 (S) to 5-15; 9-10 (S) to 12-5

Cedar Waxwing: Sr 3-11 Gordon Rd.(S) to 11-7

Northern Shrike: 3-11 Mariaville Rd.(S)

Migrant Shrike: 4-7 VsrF (S)

Starling: Resident

Yellow-throated Vireo: Sr 5-15 to 10-3

Blue-headed Vireo: Loc sr, 5-9 (S) to 10-10 Colonie (W)

Red-eyed Vireo: Sr 5-12 (S) to 9-6

Warbling Vireo: Sr 5-4 (S) to 9-11 (S)

Black and White Warbler: Sr 5-1 to 8-22 WtvRsv

Worm-eating Warbler: Loc sr; 5-9 Ravena; 6-20 (H); 7-20 Hldb

Golden-winged Warbler: Sr ar 5-9

Blue-winged Warbler: 5-15 HdsRLawrence's Warbler: 5-15 HdsR

Tennessee Warbler: 5-10 (C)(S) to 5-15, tv

Nashville Warbler: Tv 5-2 CentPk to 5-30; 10-3 (F)

Parula Warbler: 5-10 to 6-12 Berne Swamp

Yellow Warbler: Sr 5-5(S) to 8-22

Magnolia Warbler: Loc sr, 5-10(H) to 9-23 Albany (F)

Cape May Warbler: Tv 5-10 (Bk) to 5-29(H); 9-26 Hldbg

Black-throated Blue Warbler: Loc sr; tv 5-9 (S) to 5-25(F),
and 9-22 (F)

Myrtle Warbler: Ar 4-20 ValeGem (V); tv 10-17 to 11-7

Black-throated Green Warbler: Sr 5-5(S) to 10-3(F)

Blackburnian Warbler: Tv 5-9(S) to 6-5(F)

Chestnut-sided Warbler: Sr ar 5-12 (C)

Bay-breasted Warbler: Tv 5-15 to 5-31(H)

Black-poll Warbler: Tv 5-15 to 6-3(F), and 9-12(C)

Pine Warbler: Sr 4-11 Colonie (W) to 9-12 Karners (W)

Prairie Warbler: Sr 5-15 Karners to 9-12 Karners (W)

Yellow Palm Warbler: Tv 4-23 VsrF (S) to 5-24(C), and
9-12(W) to 10-3 NakW

Oven-bird: Sr ar 5-9 (S)

Northern Water-thrush: Recorded May 10 to May 30

Louisiana Water-thrush: Sr 4-24 Tippecanoe (S) to
8-22 WtvRsv

Connecticut Warbler: Tv 5-15 Hldbg and 9-2 WatvRsv (S)

Mourning Warbler: Tv 5-26(F)

Northern Yellow-throat: Sr 5-10(C) to 9-26(F)

Yellow-breasted Chat: Sr ar 5-10 (S)

Hooded Warbler: Tv May 15 (K) Scotia to May 17 City (Sg)Wilson's Warbler: Tv 5-10(S) to 5-26; 9-2 (S)

Canada Warbler: Sr 5-10(H) to 8-8(C)

American Redstart: Sr 5-6(C) to 9-16(F)

English Sparrow: Resident

Bobolink: Sr ar 5-15

Meadowlark: Sr 3-18 (S) to 10-24(Aw)

Red-wing: Sr, ar 3-10 (H); wv 12-5

Baltimore Oriole: Sr 5-9(H) to 9-4(V)

Rusty Blackbird: Tv 3-29(H) and 10-3

Bronzed Grackle: Sr 3-1 to 11-11

Cowbird: Sr 3-18(S) to 10-3

Scarlet Tanager: Sr, 5-12 (C) to 9-10 (N)
 Cardinal: One, Van Antwerp Road, April 5
 Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Sr ar 5-15
 Indigo Bunting: Sr 5-12 to 9-21 NskW (S)
 Evening Grosbeak: Complete absence in 1947-1948 winter;
 recorded 12-11 (Bk)
 Purple Finch: 3-21 to common on 5-6, last record 10-15 (F)
 Pine Grosbeak: 2-27, Oxford Rd., Albany (So)
 Common Redpoll: 12-26
 Pine Siskin: Wv ar 11-7 SarL
 Eastern Goldfinch: Recorded each month
 White-winged Crossbill: 12-28 Wolf Hollow (S)
 Red-eyed Towhee: Sr 4-25 to 10-10
 Savannah Sparrow: Sr 4-7 VsrF to 10-3 NskW
 Grasshopper Sparrow: Sr ar 4-7 (S)
 Henslow's Sparrow: Sr 4-25 to 7-25
 Vesper Sparrow: Sr ar 3-26 VsrF (S)
 Slate-colored Junco: Recorded each month
 Tree Sparrow: Wv to 3-21, ar 11-7
 Chipping Sparrow: Sr 4-25 to 11-2 (H)
 Field Sparrow: Sr 4-1(H) to 9-26
 White-crowned Sparrow: Wv 2-21 (S); tv 4-20(C) to 5-15, and
 10-10 (F)
 White-throated Sparrow: Few loc sr; tv 4-16 (C) to 5-15;
 and 10-17
 Fox Sparrow: Tv 3-15 (B); 11-8 (F) to 11-16 Hldbg (Bn)
 Lincoln's Sparrow: Tv 5-10 (F) and 9-21 NskW (S)
 Swamp Sparrow: Sr 3-11 CollinsLake (S) to 10-3
 Song Sparrow: Resident; tv ar 3-21
 Snow Bunting: 12-26

Abbreviations used in the tabulation include:

A	JJAnderson	ClnL	Collins Lake
Aw	GMAndrews	HdsR	Hudson River
B	CBartlett	Hldbg	Helderbergs
Bk	MrsRMBrockway	MhkR	Mohawk River
Bn	MrsMrsGHBainbridge	NskW	Niskayuna Widewaters
C	MDCrary	SarL	Saratoga Lake
F	MWFrench	Sco	Scotia
G	CGriffith	TmkRsv	Tomhannock Reservoir
H	EHallenbeck	VsrF	Vischer Ferry ponds
Hm	AHolmes	WtvRsv	Watervliet Reservoir
Hv	BSHavens		
K	MrsHGKelley	ab	abundant
M	PSMiller	ar	arrive
N	MrsWENorris	com	common
S	RStone	res	resident
Sc	MBScotland	sr	summer resident
Sg	BRSeguin	tv	transient visitor
V	NGVanVorst	unc	uncommon
W	LAWiard	wv	winter visitor

S B C FIELD TRIP REPORTS

The July Field Trip Proved

OVERCAST SKIES HELP

Rudd Stone

To our great mutual surprise ten of us eager Bird Clubbers showed up for the midsummer trip to Niskayuna and Vischer Ferry July 17, despite the calls of vacation time. We were also most fortunate in having an overcast day, which not only kept the heat within comfortable limits, but stimulated the birds and kept them active during the entire time of the trip. The long list of 71 species and 840 individuals can be largely attributed to this meteorological happenstance.

Leaving Palmer Avenue at 6:20 a.m. we tried unsuccessfully for the Blue-winged Warbler of Census Day at Rosendale and River Roads. A female Pheasant perched on a wooden fence enjoying the gentle breeze as she contemplated the several tall towers of Station WTRY near Niskayuna village. Only a few already-drab Bobolinks could be seen and heard in faint, fragmentary song or calling "pink, pink" from overhead.

Great numbers of Black Ducks, Mallards and Gallinules flushed from or skittered over the marsh when we alarmed them, or dabbled placidly amidst the great meadows of water chestnut. This pestiferous aquatic immigrant chokes most of the quiet waters not given over to cattails and other reeds at this vast, sweeping bend of the Mohawk.

The cattails gurgled and clattered to the appropriately reedy throatings of the irrepressible Prairie (Long-billed) Marsh Wren, so numerous here.

Countless birds scattered along the gravelly River Road and its edges, mostly picking up fine pebbles. Flickers, Goldfinches, Song Sparrows, Catbirds, etc. kept flying up as we startled them from the petrological pickings so necessary for their gizzards.

A great flock of Red-wings and Starlings were dispersed over the recently mowed hillside meadow as we approached Mohawk View.

But the highlights of the trip were not these. A first-year Bald Eagle appeared, dimly at first, to some sharp eyes of the party while it was still far across the river. However, as he flapped and sailed up river past our party, his great size, wholly brown plumage and flat pinions while gliding became plainly evident to all.

We then lowered the bars of the gate at the Coal Pocket Pasture and strolled down to the beach, which has consistently proved itself the one best fall birding spot on this shore of the Mohawk. En route about 15 Cowbirds flew up and followed a herd of cows as they ambled lazily away through a sprinkling of chicory that tinted the meadow a delicate blue-green.

We were not disappointed. Great Blue, Green, and Black-crowned Night Herons were well seen; also an American Bittern, distinguished from the Night Heron by dark wing-tips on flight. Two American Egrets appeared on the far bank of the river.

While watching two unidentified small Sandpipers flying back and forth among numerous Bank, Barn and Tree Swallows, a rolling whistle was heard several times overhead, and we soon saw a lone Upland Plover heading upriver with his characteristic fluttery flight and shallow wingbeat.

A Least Bittern was seen flying a short distance over the cattails, into which it dropped before all could see it. We promptly approached the spot as closely as possible. Surely enough, a Least Bittern came out on the chestnut and perched there for several minutes. A Pied-billed Grebe quietly rested on the chestnut near the Bittern. A Virginia Rail called "kid-dick" from some adjacent cattails; another was later seen at close range by all at Vischer Ponds.

Two lone ducklings appeared in a chestnut paddy and we caught one. It was a Black Duck. Our only Wood Ducks of the day were two adults flushed from Ringneck Pond at Vischer with anguished "whoo-eeek" cries.

For some of us the one highlight of the trip were the 16 or more fine American Egrets in the marsh bordering the towpath at Vischer Ponds. The pleasure of seeing these birds at close range and in striking flight poses was difficult to match with anything seen previously.

It is well to watch for future overcast days. They are not likely to disappoint the alert birdman.

The 71 species of the trip: Pied-billed Grebe, 1; Great Blue Heron, 10; American Egret, 30; Green Heron, 15; Black-crowned Night Heron, 30; American Bittern, 4; Least Bittern, 2; Mallard, 20; Black Duck, 60; Wood Duck, 2; Bald Eagle, 1 immature; Pheasant, 1; Virginia Rail, 3; Florida Gallinule, several, with broods; Killdeer, 15; Upland Plover, 1; Spotted Sandpiper, several; small Sandpiper (sp?).

Louning Dove, Chimney Swift, Kingfisher, Flicker, Downy Woodpecker, Kingbird, Crested Flycatcher, Phoebe, Alder Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Pewee; Tree, Bank, Rough-winged and Barn Swallows, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Catbird, Robin, Wood Thrush, Veery, Bluebird.

Cedar Waxwing, Starling, Yellow-throated Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Northern Yellow-throat, Redstart, English Sparrow, Bobolink, Meadowlark, Red-wing, Baltimore Oriole, Grackle, Cowbird, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Goldfinch, Towhee, and Savannah, Grasshopper, Henslow's, Chipping, Field, Swamp, and Song Sparrows.

A ONE-MAN FIELD TRIP

Karners, May 30

Those were evidently too tired who had gone on the State Federation field trip on Long Island the previous day. At

any rate, the annual Memorial Day trip to Karners was a one-man affair; the leader did attend. The only highlight, so far as I was concerned, was the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. Most of the list was compiled in back of and near the old, abandoned house just beyond the Drive-in. The 42 species:

Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Marsh Hawk, 2; Killdeer, 1; Spotted Sandpiper, 3; Mourning Dove, 1; Chimney Swift, 4; Flicker, 1; Phoebe, 2; Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, 1; Wood Pewee, 2; Bank Swallow, 1; Blue Jay, 4; Crow, 6; Chickadee, 2; House Wren, 1; Catbird, 5; Brown Thrasher, 3; Robin, 15; Wood Thrush, 2; Veery, 3; Bluebird, 6; Starling, 25; Red-eyed Vireo, 1; Chestnut-sided Warbler, 6; Black-poll Warbler, 4; Prairie Warbler, 10; Oven-bird, 1; Northern Water-thrush, 1; Northern Yellow-throat, 6; Canada Warbler, 2; English Sparrow, 10; Red-wing, 2; Baltimore Oriole, 3; Grackle, 5; Cowbird, 1; Scarlet Tanager, 1; Indigo Bunting, 1; Goldfinch, 4; Towhee, 10; Chipping Sparrow, 8; Field Sparrow, 15; Song Sparrow, 10.

-- L. A. Wiard

WINDY, COOL

Helderberg Picnic, June 8

About 20 SBC members gathered to enjoy their picnic lunch at Miss Anteman's Camp atop the Helderberg Escarpment on June 8. After the meal a short walk was taken but there were few birds seen, because of the cool weather and the very high wind. A few warblers and thrushes about completed the list, with the vesper song of the Oven-bird the feature.

-- Esly Hallenbeck

NOT WHAT IT HAD BEEN

Consalus Vlaie, June 12

Consalus Vlaie was visited years ago by SBC as a very moist, insect-ridden, bird-populated, and botanically interesting area. This year's trip showed it ditched, all grown up and dried up, and apparently recently sprayed with DDT. It is no longer good birding territory. The list for the June 12 trip showed 61 species, but only 44 of these were in the walked-through area. The 44 were:

Red-shouldered Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Pheasant, Wilson's Snipe, Flicker, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Crested Flycatcher, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, House Wren, Catbird, Robin, Wood and Hermit Thrushes, Veery, Cedar Waxwing, Red-eyed Vireo; Black and White, Nashville, Yellow, Magnolia, Chestnut-sided, and Canada Warblers, Oven-bird, Northern Yellow-throat, Redstart, Bobolink, Meadowlark, Red-wing, Baltimore Oriole, Grackle, Scarlet Tanager, Goldfinch, Towhee, and Savannah, Grasshopper, Henslow's, Vesper, Field, White-throated, Swamp and Song Sparrows.

Species additional during the driving included: Black-crowned Night Heron, Killdeer, Upland Plover, Mourning Dove, Chimney Swift, Kingbird, Phoebe, Least Flycatcher, Pewee, Prairie Horned Lark, Barn Swallow, Bluebird, Starling, Warbling Vireo, English Sparrow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Chipping Sparrow.

-- Chester N. Moore

RECENT S B C RECORDS

Compiled by G. Malcolm Andrews

The previous Recent SBC Records, published in May (p.37), covered items through late April. This list, then, automatically is long, for May is the Big Month. Except for occasional items, records of regularly scheduled SBC field trips have not been shown. The asterisk (*) indicates a species not listed in the earlier tabulations of the year, or season. Among recent records:

- *Common Loon - 4/8 thru 4/24; max. 3 Saratoga Lake on latter date (MWFFrench)
- Horned Grebe - 8 records 3/29 thru 4/24; max 12 Saratoga Lake 4/24 (MWF)
- Pied-billed Grebe - 7 records 4/5 to 5/14, max 2; sum.res.
- Great Blue Heron - Records 4/15 thru 5/30; notably fewer in numbers this spring
- *Green Heron - Summer resident, arrived Apr. 23
- Black-crowned Night Heron - First record Mar.25; 60 at Poentic Kill meadows 4/15 (RStone); common sum.res. along river below Schenectady, with large rookery below Crescent
- American Bittern - Sum.res.; five at Niskayuna 4/13 (RS)
- Canada Goose - 12 on Mohawk near Schen. 5/7 (RS,DTTucker)
- *Black Duck - Increasingly common as breeder; common after 3/6. Large concentration at Castleton 3/19 (NVVorst); over 1000 at Niskayuna 3/20 (JJAnderson, GBBartlett)
- Green-winged Teal - Over 30, Poentic Kill meadows 4/15 (RS); last seen 4/29, 5 males, 1 female, river at Scotia (RS). Better than normal spring flight
- Blue-winged Teal - 11, Gateway Bridge 4/22 (RS)
- Shoveller - One male, Vischer Ponds 4/3 (MWF) thru 4/9 (RS, SRMadison)
- Wood Duck - Increasingly common as breeding summer resident. 8 at Poentic Kill meadows 4/15 (RS). At least 5 breeding pairs with young on Ballston Lake (GB)
- Ring-necked Duck - Pair, Sarat.L. 4/17 (DT); 20-30 there 4/24 (MWF, RS)
- Greater Scaup Duck - Sarat.L. 4/10 and 4/17, with over 500 on latter date (DT); last record 4/25 Scotia (DT)
- Lesser Scaup Duck - 4/10 thru 4/24, Sarat.L., max 50 on 4/24 (MWF)
- American Golden-eye - 4/10 thru 4/24, Sarat.L., with over 100 on 4/17 (DT)
- Hooded Merganser - Last report, pair, Vischers 4/8 (RS)

FEATHERS

July-August, 1949

- American Merganser - Reported commonly thru 4/30; last report, single bird, Albany Rsvr 5/14 (RS,DT)
- Red-breasted Merganser - Last seen 4/5 Scotia (DT)
- Sharp-shinned Hawk - 4/20 Scotia (DT); 4/26 Vale Cem (NVV)
- Cooper's Hawk - One, Loudonville 4/23 (MWF)
- Red-tailed Hawk - Several reports; max 3 4/2 Ind.Lad. (RS)
- Red-shouldered Hawk - 11 reports; 2 pairs Vischer 4/8 (RS)
- Broad-winged Hawk - One, river at Vischer 4/22 (RS, DT)
- Rough-legged Hawk - One, Scotia, 4/30 (DT)
- *Osprey - 7 reports 4/23 thru 5.14; dozen at Vischer Ponds 4/29 (NVV, MBS,Scotland)
- *Duck Hawk - One, Poentic Kill 5/23 (DT)
- Pigeon Hawk - One immature, Selkirk 5/14 (RS, DT)
- Sparrow Hawk - Numerous reports of transients 3/20 thru 5/14; max 18 Tomhannock Rsvr 4/2 (NVV, GB, MBS)
- Ruffed Grouse - Heard drumming, Jenny Lake 3/26 (BSHavens); recorded Scotia 3/29 (DT)
- Ring-necked Pheasant - Max 7 Niskayuna 5/7 (RS, DT)
- *Sora - One, Poentic Kill 5/7 (RS)
- Florida Gallinule - Numerous reports Nisk-Vischer; sum.res.
- *Semipalmated Plover - Four, Niskayuna 5/30 (DT)
- Killdeer - Numerous reports; flock of 15 flying over West-hill, Rotterdam (GMAndrews)
- Woodcock - Sum.res.; heard Balltown Rd. 3/30 to 5/4 (NVV)
- Wilson's Snipe - One along river 4/30 (DT)
- Upland Plover - Westcott Rd 4-27 (RS); Rosa Rd. 5/8 (G&A); at new location off Sacandaga Rd. 5/21 (JJA, GB)
- *Spotted Sandpiper - Sum.res.; first record 4/17
- *Solitary Sandpiper - 4, Poentic Kill 5/7 (RS); 5/15 thru 5/30, Scotia (DT)
- *Greater Yellow-legs - One, Watervliet Rsvr 3/25 (MBS)
- *Pectoral Sandpiper - One, Niskayuna 5/7 (DT, RS)
- *Least Sandpiper - Scotia 5/15 (DT); with Semipalmated Plovers at Niskayuna 5/30 (DT)
- Herring Gull - Records throughout spring; immatures in majority in mid-lay
- Ring-billed Gull - Two, Niskayuna 4/30 (GB)
- *Black Tern - 20, Niskayuna 5/29 and 5/30 (DT)
- *Yellow-billed Cuckoo - One, Guild.Cntr 5/11 (NVV); one, Loudonville 5/17 (MWF)
- *Whip-poor-will - First, 5/1, Troy Rd (VFreligh)

FEATHERS

July-August, 1949

- *Nighthawk - Arrived 5/14, Ellis Hosp. (GB)
- *Chimney Swift - Arrived 5/6 (MWF)
- *Ruby-throated Hummingbird - Arrived 5/17 (Mrs. EHallenbeck)
- *Belted Kingfisher - Arrived 3/25; sum.res.; max 7 on 5/7 at Watervliet Rsvr (NVV)
- *Pileated Woodpecker - Pair seen regularly all winter and spring at Gallupville (Mrs. CGZimmer); 3/26 at Jenny Lake (BSH)
- *Yellow-bellied Sapsucker - Two, Vale Cem 3/30 (NVV); last record, 8 in Scotia 4/30 (DT)
- *Kingbird - Arrived May 14
- *Crested Flycatcher - Arrived 5/7 Niskayuna (RS, DT)
- *Alder Flycatcher - Arrived 5/30 Collins Lake (DT)
- *Least Flycatcher - Arrived 5/5 Loudonville (MWF)
- *Wood Pewee - Arrived 5/24 Loudonville (MWF)
- Prairie Horned Lark - 8 reports, 3/24 thru 4/30; sum.res.
- Tree Swallow - Increasingly common summer resident; max 100 at Vly Road swamp 5/7 (RS, DT)
- *Bank Swallow - Arrived 5/7 (RS, DT)
- *Rough-winged Swallow - Arrived 4/20 (RS)
- *Barn Swallow - Arrived at Niskayuna 4/20 (RS)
- *Cliff Swallow - Arrived 5/14; new colony at Broadalbin 5/21 (JJA, GB); 16 at pond near Troy 5/29 (DT)
- Red-breasted Nuthatch - Numerous at Jenny Lake 3/26 (BSH)
- Brown Creeper - Last recorded 4/22 Vischers (RS, DT)
- *House Wren - Arrived 4/23 Loudonville (MWF); abundant two weeks later
- Winter Wren - Last seen, Vale Cem 4/21 (RS)
- *Long-billed Marsh Wren - Arrived 5/7 Scotia (DT); common a week later
- *Catbird - First record, Dean St. 5/1 (IHeacox); common a week later
- *Brown Thrasher - First record 4/27, Westcott Rd (RS); common a few days later
- *Wood Thrush - Arrived 5/5, Scotia (EH) and Loudonville (MWF)
- Hermit Thrush - Arrived 4/21; in song 5/15 Shaker Rd (MWF)
- *Olive-backed Thrush - Arrived Central Park 5/8 (RS); at Gallupville 5/16 (CGZ); 5/20 and 5/28 at Scotia (DT)
- *Gray-cheeked Thrush - Two, Washington Pk, Albany 5/17 (MWF); one, Scotia 5/28 (DT)
- *Veery - Arrived 5/7 (RS,DT); common a week later
- Golden-crowned Kinglet - Last record 4/30, Niskayuna (GB)

FEATHERS

July-August, 1949

- *Ruby-crowned Kinglet - Transient visitor 3/27 to 5/14; 16 recorded 4/27 (RS)
Pipit - Records 4/8, 4/27, 5/7 two each time; flock 5/14
- *Yellow-throated Vireo - Arrived Poentic Kill 5/7 (RS)
Blue-headed Vireo - Transient to 5/14; max from 5/1 to 5/7
- *Philadelphia Vireo - 5/10 and 5/30, Scotia (DT)
Red-eyed Vireo - Arrived 5/6 Scotia (EH)
- *Warbling Vireo - Arrived 5/4 Scotia (EH) and Loudonv. (MWF)
Black and White Warbler - Common first two weeks of May
- *Worm-eating Warbler - 5/14, Indian Ladder (EH, GMA), and Ravena (DT, RS)
- *Golden-winged Warbler - Arrived 5/7, Vly Road swamp (RS, DT);
Tennessee Warbler - Arrived 5/7 (RS, DT), four reports thru 5/17; max 4 on 5/7
- *Nashville Warbler - Six reports 5/6 thru 5/17; max 4 on 5/7 (RS, DT)
- *Parula Warbler - Five reports, 5/7 (RS) thru 5/21
- *Yellow Warbler - Arrived 5/5 Loudonville (MWF); abundant 5/7 and on
- *Magnolia Warbler - Transient 5/7 (RS) to 5/24
- *Cape May Warbler - Transient 5/6 Loudonville (MWF) to 5/17 in Washington Park, Albany (MWF)
- *Black-throated Blue Warbler - Arrived 5/5 Vale Cem (NVV)
Myrtle Warbler - Maximum count of 36 on 5/7 (RS, DT)
- *Black-throated Green Warbler - Reports fewer, first 5/7
- *Blackburnian Warbler - First 5/7 Poentic Kill (RS); next report 5/8 Scotia (DT)
- *Chestnut-sided Warbler - Arrived 5/7 Karners (RS, DT)
- *Bay-breasted Warbler - Arrived 5/11, Wash. Pk., Alb. (MWF); single bird 5/20 and pair 5/30 Scotia (DT)
- *Black-poll Warbler - Arrived Central Pk 5/8 (RS); at Wash. Pk, Alb, 5/17 (MWF)
Pine Warbler - Transient to 5/14; six in Cent. Pk 5/1 (NVV)
- *Prairie Warbler - Three at Karners 5/7; sum. res.
Yellow Palm Warbler - Four reports, 4/7 thru 4/27
- *Oven-bird - Arrived 5/7
- *Northern Water-thrush - Arrived 4/30 in Scotia (DT)
- *Louisiana Water-thrush - Arrived 5/8 Vischers (GMA)
- *Northern Yellow-throat - First record 5/6 Albany (MWF)
- *Hooded Warbler - One at Gallupville 5/28 (CGZ)
- *Canada Warbler - Arrived 5/14

FEATHERS

July-August, 1949

- *Redstart - Arrived Niskayuna 5/7 (RS,DT)
- *Bobolink - Arrived 5/7, Indian Ladder area (EH) and Niskayuna (RS,DT)
- *Baltimore Oriole - Arrived Scotia 5/4 (EH)
Rusty Blackbird - Last recorded 4/17
- *Cowbird - Arrived 3/26 Loudonv. (MWF) and Guilderland Center (NVV); common a week later
- *Scarlet Tanager - Arrived 5/8 Central Park (RS); common within week
- *Rose-breasted Grosbeak - Arrived Loudonville 5/5 (MWF); eight on 5/6 (MWF)
- *Indigo Bunting - Arrived 5/14
Evening Grosbeak - Twelve at Rosendale Road feeder thru 5/9
Purple Finch - 11 reports, 4/20 thru 6/20
Pine Siskin - Four reports 4/21 thru 5/8; max 26 Central Park 5/8 (RS)
- *Goldfinch - Transient 3/20 and on; common in early May
- *Savannah Sparrow - Arrived Balltown Rd 4/8 (RS)
- *Grasshopper Sparrow - Arrived Westcott Rd 4/27 (RS); next recorded 4/30
- *Henslow's Sparrow - Arrived 4/27 Westcott Rd (RS)
Slate-colored Junco - Transient to 4/30 (GB); one found dead Karners 5/14
Tree Sparrow - Last recorded 4/28 Scotia (DT)
- *Chipping Sparrow - Arrived Niskayuna 4/13 (RS)
- *White-crowned Sparrow - Transient 5/8 (RS) to 5/20 (GMA); one at GE parking lot 5/20
White-throated Sparrow - Common 4/21 and on to 5/14 as transient; max about 5/1
- *Lincoln's Sparrow - Two (possibly four) on Schenectady Museum grounds on 5/15 (BSequin)
Swamp Sparrow - Regularly recorded 4/8 and on
Song Sparrow - Transients appeared 3/20, with maximum in another two weeks

Do your dates show items earlier or later than some of the above? Have you departure dates to fill in some of the blanks? Have you breeding records that should be included?

Fourteen observers have been quoted in the above list. That is not enough -- only if all records are turned in will the whole story be told. Why not decide now that, at least monthly, you will send in your own list to the Records Committee (G.M. Andrews)?

Marking Back a Century, Here's a Story about

THE PIGEON ROOST

S. H. Hammond

(The following account of a roost of nesting Passenger Pigeons, seen just one hundred years ago near Tupper Lake, in the Adirondacks, appears in Chapter XVIII of a little book entitled Hills, Lakes, and Forest Streams: or, A Tramp in the Chateaugay Woods by S. H. Hammond, published by J. C. Derby, New York, in 1854. Hammond, later editor of the Albany State Register, reports that the early chapters of his book, full of stories of the wildlife of the then unbroken Adirondack wilderness, were first published as letters to editors of various publications; later he used his reminiscences as "fillers" for his own paper. The book was reprinted in the paper-bound Columbian Library, in 1890, under the title In the Adirondacks; or Sport in the North Woods, in which form it was called to my attention by Katherine Flickinger, one of Schenectady's more active hikers, skiers, mountain climbers, and collectors of Adirondackiana. Hammond's "tramp" from Dannemora to "Long Neak", on the Raquette River below Tupper Lake, was made with a northwoods philosopher named Tucker and his large dog "of no particular breed or beauty" named Shack, in the summer of 1849. According to Eaton's Birds of New York, the last Passenger Pigeons in New York State were recorded in the Catskills and at Rensselaerville in 1907. -- P. S. Miller)

* * *

We were startled, in the gray twilight of the morning, by a distant roaring; not like a waterfall, or far off thunder, but partaking of both. We heard it several times, at short intervals, and were unable to account for the sound, until, as the light grew more distinct, we saw vast flocks of wild pigeons, winging their way in different directions across the lake, but all appearing to have a common starting-point in the forest, a mile or more down the lake.

"I understand it all now," said my guide; "there's a pigeon roost down there, and, Squire, if you've never seen one, let me tell you it's worth going miles and miles to see."

I had heard and read of these brooding places of the wild pigeon, and was right glad to have an opportunity of judging of the truth of the statements in regard to them. We paddled down the lake, to a point opposite to where it seemed to be, and struck into the woods. We had no difficulty in finding it, for the tundering sound of those vast flocks, as they started from their perches, led us on. About half a mile from the lake we came to the outer edge of the roost. Hundreds of thousands of pigeons had flown away that morning, and yet there were hundreds of thousands, and perhaps many millions, old and young, there yet. It covered acres and acres -- I have no idea how many, for I did not go round it.

The trees were not of large growth, being mostly of spruce and stunted birch, hemlock, and elm, but every one was loaded with nests. In every crotch, on every branch, that would support one, was a nestful of young of all sizes, from the little downy thing just escaped from the shell, to the full-grown one, just ready to fly away. The ground was covered with their offal, and the carcasses of the young in every stage of decay. The great limbs of the trees outside of the brooding place were broken and hanging down, being unable to sustain the weight of the thousands that perched upon them. Evidently the wild animals had fattened upon the unfledged birds, that had fallen from the nests, for we saw hundreds of half-devoured carcasses laying around. The hawks and carrion birds congregated about. We heard the cawing of the crows, and the hoarse croaking of the raven in every direction, and saw them at a distance, devouring the dead birds on the ground. We saw dozens of hawks and owls, sitting upon the trees around, gorged with food, that flew lazily away as we approached. Every few minutes would be heard the roar of a flock of the birds, as they started from among the trees.

After examining to our satisfaction this wonderful exhibition of the habits and instincts of this truly American bird, we took from among the largest of those in the nests, what would serve for our breakfast and dinner, and turned to the lake. As we passed back, we saw, just outside the roost, two gray foxes stealing away into the thickets. These, and such as them, were having a good time of it that season, among the countless hosts of young pigeons.

We struck across to an island, some half a mile from the shore, where we breakfasted upon young pigeons, broiled upon the coals. They were very fat and tender, and constituted a pleasant change from fish and venison, which, if the truth must be told, were becoming somewhat stale to us.



NEWS AND NOTES IN BRIEF



HERONRY IN PRINT

On an Island

There is a feature article about the Black-crowned Night Heronry, on a island above the Crescent Bridge over the Mohawk, in the June-July issue of New York State Conservationist.

AT MARKER 93

Eagle, Of Course

A late-afternoon sail down the Hudson July 9 revealed a mature Bald Eagle in the vicinity of Marker 93. Night Herons, Spotted Sandpipers and "Rock Doves" were dominant. -GB.

Published by the Schenectady Bird Club

The Great Horned Doesn't Give a Hoot, and the Screech Owl Is a
Mere Triller -- So Much for Some of

THE HOWLS OF OWLS

Barrington S. Hevens

For the benefit of those who, like myself, are puzzled about the various hoots and ullulations of our local owls, I'd like to pass along the benefit of my experience with and researches into these matters. It seems to me that anything which will shorten the period of investigation necessary to familiarity with this subject will be worth while; in my own case, it has taken me 15 or 20 years to accumulate the meager store of lore which follows.

So far my knowledge is confined to the notes of three species: the Screech, the Barred and the Great Horned Owls. Fortunately, these are our most common local species, which is not so much of a coincidence as it appears to be, but rather a matter of cause and effect.

Neither Weird Nor Mournful

The Screech Owl, which is our most abundant urban species, has two normally common utterances. The first is a long, wavering trill on a low pitch -- probably around middle C on the piano, if my untutored ears are not playing me tricks. In form it is like the note of the American toad, but pitched very much lower. The second common Screech Owl note is also a trill, but one which starts on a high note and slides chromatically down to a lower one. Neither of these notes is by any stretch of the imagination a screech, nor do they, in my opinion, have any of the weird or mournful characteristics which have been attributed to them by some writers.

Juke-joint Competitor

The Barred Owl notes, on the other hand, are characterized by all the lusty health and vigor of a teen-ager in a juke-joint. Any Barred Owl worth his salt can produce a yell that can be heard for miles, and if you ever have the good (or bad, according to the state of your nerves) fortune to hear one sound off at night within a distance of 100 yards or so, you'll undoubtedly recall the effect as being something like that of having a locomotive whistle go off unexpectedly right outside your bedroom window.

The barred owl, according to the descriptions in the

field books, is an eight-hooter; that is to say, he hoots eight times each time he hoots. To be a little more accurate about it, he usually expresses himself in the form of two phrases of four hoots each, all on the same pitch except the last note, as follows:

Hoo-hoo-h'hoo; hoo-hoo-h'hoo-oo-oo!

That last hoot is long-drawn-out; I like to call it the slide-trombone note, for it sounds something like that musical (sic) instrument. Be that as it may, whether you like slide trombones or not, this peculiar effect at the end of the Barred Owl's cry is unique and a positive identification of the species, if you had any doubt about it otherwise.

Even Unbirdlike

The Barred Owl has other utterances, especially when it is bringing up a brood of young ones, and these are so odd and unbirdlike that I wish I could describe them. Many persons have been mystified by them, remaining skeptical of their true origin even after convincing assurances of those who have investigated for themselves. One particular variation of the Barred Owl notes, however, is worthy of mention: A repetition of an occasional slide-trombone "Hoo-oo-oo!" all by itself. When I first heard it, in the wilds of the Adirondack foothills, it sounded as if someone were lost at night in the woods of Nigger Hill and were calling desperately for help. The resemblance to a man's voice at a distance crying "Help!" is very striking.

Toots for Bubo

Finally we come to the only utterance of the Great Horned Owl with which I am so far familiar. This bird, says the guide books, is a five-hooter, as distinguished from the eight-hooting Barred Owl. But to dismiss the description with this is to dismiss it much too quickly.

First of all, whereas the Barred Owl sounds off with two four-note phrases, making eight hoots in all, the Great Horned Owl utters but a single phrase of five hoots. These, like those of the Barred Owl, are all on the same pitch, but there the resemblance ends. For one thing, the notes are decidedly lower in pitch than those of the Barred Owl. For another, they are comparatively subdued. And for still another, they have an entirely different quality; if we consider that the Barred Owl expresses himself in hoots, then I contend that the Great Horned Owl toots rather than hoots, as follows:

Toot-t'toot (pause) toot-toot!

In order to give you an idea of the rhythm, I suggest you count to five during the utterances of these notes. The

first, or "toot-t'toot" part, takes place during the first two of your five counts. The remaining three counts coincide with the pause and the final two toots.

I have been told that the Great Horned Owl can produce much more noisy utterances when he wants to, but so far I haven't heard those other, noisier cries. Probably in another 15 or 20 years I'll learn those and the notes of a few other species.

Here's Why You Hear It Called the

WHISKY-JACK

P. Schuyler Miller

Somewhere in the folklore of my first bird-study days I picked up the story that the Canada Jay's common nickname of "whisky-jack" had been given it by French-Canadian lumberjacks in the days when our great eastern forests were first invaded by the axe. It sounded reasonable, though a look at Webster would have ruined the story. "Jack", presumably, came in some way from "Jacques" -- look at "lumberjack" itself. As for the "whisky" part, everyone knows about lumberjacks' proverbial capacity for liquid entertainment.

As a matter of fact, to this day I have never had a good look at a whisky-jack outside of the Bronx zoo. There have been grey shadows slipping through the trees, deep in the Adirondacks, which could have been Canada Jays, and there was a weekend at Beaver Lake in the Moose River country when we just missed a whole flock which had been trained to catch pancakes in midair. As for our own area, a few years ago U. S. Massoth reported one near his lean-to in the pine woods back of Columbian Park. Nevertheless, the jays and I never seem to be at the same place at the same time.

It's an Indian Name

Recently the old legend had its pins knocked out from under it when I picked up the book Naskapi by the ethnologist Frank G. Speck. Here, in a chapter on the animal-lore of these Labrador Algonkians, is the true story of whisky-jack.

The name is simply the Indian -- Algonkian -- name, no more French than Pocahontas or Hiawatha. French lumberjacks may have brought it to our woods after learning it from their Indian friends and neighbors in Canada, but if the bird was common enough here in Indian days to have a Mahican or a Delaware or a Pequot name, the likelihood is that that name sounded much like "whisky-jack", for all Algonkians spoke the same mother language as the Montagnais, the Naskapi, or the Cree of the far north.

The average typewriter does not have the phonetic symbols which Mr. Speck, our foremost student of the forest Indians of the north, used to transcribe the Naskapi name of the Canada Jay. A fairly close approximation in ordinary letters is "Wishkedjakush". Webster, it turns out, gives the Cree word as "wiskatjan". Whatever his phonetics, whisky-jack is a very important little bird in the far north.

The Noisier, the Better

Whisky-jack has much the same varied repertoire of weird woods-cries as his more familiar cousin of our own parks and woodlands, the Bluejay. To the Naskapi hunter, intent for any clue which the spirits of the wild may give him as to the fortunes which may mean life or death in the long Labrador winter, these notes are omens or oracles. If whisky-jack "whets his knife" with a chip-chip-chip call, it is a sign that good hunting is ahead. "Wiyas, wiyas" means "meat, meat" in Montagnais, and a guarantee of big game when the grey woods-spirit comes to report. The more noise the jays make, the better; it is only when they are silent and ignore the hunter that he knows his luck has turned black and starvation may be ahead for himself and his family.

Whisky-jack's role as the Indian hunter's guide falls on him because he is the guardian and protector of small animals in the forest, and helps man kill game so that the small ones can eat. When the rifle cracks, he is there waiting for his share. But, the Naskapi say, he does not gather meat for himself but for his little wards -- the smaller birds, the martens, the squirrels, even the insects. It is for them that he hides scraps of meat from the kill in holes in the trees or behind flakes of bark, where they can find them when they need food. Other birds of prey will not kill him, they say, and neither will they. Why should they harm their friend and enrage the spirits which guide them to game?

There are bad omens connected with the jay, however. If he flies into a wigwam it is a sign of a coming pain in the head. If an Indian finds his nest, it is a sign that he may die soon.

Wiskedjak, Mythical Hero of the Forests

Why has this little bird such an important part to play in the life of the forest hunters of the far north? Because his very name means "soul of Wiskedjak" -- and Wiskedjak, to the Cree and northern Ojibwa and other Algonkians of the north, is the great mythical hero of the forests. He is less important as a hero to their Naskapi and Montagnais cousins of the east, but not so his little grey bird-spirit.

We have, really, very few Indian names for our birds. The

European settlers who first saw them used descriptive terms of their own, like "Bluebird", or tried to find a counterpart among the birds back home, as with the Robin.

Perhaps we can see to it that "whisky-jack" does not die away with the establishment of a standard terminology and the tendency to raise an eyebrow at "local" or "colloquial" names.

There Are Things We Must Do About

SCIENCE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Richard A. Pough

(Based upon a WGY talk by Richard A. Pough, Curator of Conservation and Use of Natural Resources at the American Museum of Natural History, New York City; given as a G-E Science Forum talk March 2, 1949.)

Anything in our physical environment that contributes to our health or happiness, either directly or indirectly, can be quite properly termed a natural resource. The air we breathe, the pure, fresh water we drink, the soils that produce our foods, the grasslands that support our cattle, the forests that produce our timber, the many mineral deposits that we depend on for the materials from which we fabricate the gadgets of our civilization, and the energy we use to power them. Also, the many things like wildlife, scenery and wilderness areas that provide us with recreation, inspiration, and, when we need it, solitude -- things as essential to man's higher nature as the first are to his more animal needs. In fact, without these latter, the earth to many would seem little better than a workhouse in which they were imprisoned for life.

Equally important, although they may not always be thought of as natural resources, are those things that are essential to the health and productivity of the various living communities from which we draw food and other raw materials and on which we depend for such recreation as hunting and fishing. These range from hawks, owls, and other predators that help to hold rodent populations within bounds, to deposits of phosphate rock and other minerals from which we draw those substances that we must put back on the land to compensate for the large quantities of these soil nutrients that are taken from it each year by our crops.

These things have been here a long time, and, as long as man remained a primitive savage, the world had no conservation problems. Today, however, the story is very different. Not only has the human race become much more numerous, but civilized man now possesses powers over his environment that

make him a very different factor from any animal that has ever lived before. Ecologically speaking, man has acquired some extremely bad habits. He takes the products of the land and transports them to his towns and cities, where eventually all the precious minerals that they have taken up from the soil are washed down his sewers to end up in the ocean.

We're Not Compensating for Losses

We are fertilizing our fields, but not our forests, to compensate for these losses. Here in the United States we are to a degree making up for this drain on our soils by mining phosphate rock and potassium salts and incorporating them in fertilizers. To date, however, the rate of replacement through fertilization has been so small compared to the rate of loss via crops, soil leaching and erosion, as to be insignificant. One U. S. Department of Agriculture specialist estimated it recently at only 1/50th to 1/60th of the rate of depletion. Unfortunately, we are still making practically no effort to reclaim any of our wastes and put them back on the land where they belong, a course of action that we will presumably have to undertake in time, as our deposits of phosphates and other minerals gradually become exhausted.

Materials like oxygen, carbon, nitrogen and water are rapidly recirculated by natural processes. Humus, nitrates, and moisture, in the proper amounts, can be put back into the soil simply by proper management. But phosphorus, potassium and the host of trace elements that we now know to be so necessary to the health of certain plants, can only be replaced naturally by the slow weathering of rock particles during the course of the formation of new soil, a process that usually takes centuries.

Pastures of the Sea

Our so-called renewable resources are not always as renewable as we would like to believe. Under the impact of our modern methods of resource exploitation, only the oceanic environment seems likely to remain unimpaired in its fertility. Even this environment will contribute very little to our civilization if we don't stop destroying the organisms that concentrate the products produced by the "pastures of the sea" into exploitable units.

We must stop destroying runs of salmon, shad and other migratory fish through the building of dams and the polluting of our rivers. We must stop over-exploiting to the point of virtual extinction organisms like whales, seals and our marine fish. We must learn to restrict ourselves to the harvesting of a crop that can be fully replaced during the following breeding season. To do otherwise is to live off

capital, not income, and that always leads to bankruptcy, both in business and in the field of natural resource exploitation. Without these larger animals that we can harvest, the oceanic environment ceases to be an exploitable resource.

Things We Must Do

We can all do a great deal about conservation, once we become sincere conservationists. We can learn not to waste the products of resources that are not renewable. We will salvage for re-use as much metal as we can, or if possible use substitutes derived from a renewable resource. We will insist that mining procedures be reorganized, so that the low-grade as well as the high-grade ore is utilized even though it does increase production costs. We will see to it that our coal, oil and natural gas are used both efficiently and for that purpose which in the long run represents their highest form of usefulness. In time this may even mean going back to coal for heating our houses, so that our liquid fuels can be reserved for those applications where their unique properties make them essential. We may even in time agree to limit the weight and horsepower of our automobiles to that reasonably necessary to do the job.

The land-owner, of course, can do more than anyone else. If he is a farmer, he can see that his soils always have a reasonably high content of organic matter, or humus as we often call it, so that mineral salts put on them in the form of fertilizers will not leach away with the next rain. Such a procedure will also to a very large degree protect his land from erosion, although contour plowing or terracing may also be necessary where the land has considerable slope. If he owns a piece of forest land he will keep livestock out of it, to protect the young seedlings of the next generation and to keep the forest floor loose and leaf-mulched to promote aeration and water infiltration. He will protect his woodland from fire and cut only the poorer, deformed or crowded trees until he is ready to harvest a crop of those that are mature.

We Are Trustees for Future Generations

Basically the practice of conservation involves a change in our whole philosophy of life and our attitude toward the world we live in. We must more and more think of ourselves as trustees of our land, not owners -- trustees for future generations, our children, our grandchildren. We must not wastefully use any resource and we must recognize an obligation to hand land on to its next trustee with its soil and its fertility in as good condition, if possible, as when we received it. We must recognize our obligation to hold the rain that falls on our land so that it doesn't run off onto that of our neighbors and create floods in our river valleys.

Instead, our land should absorb it, where it will benefit the forests and crops and slowly seep into the underground water table on which we are increasingly dependent in many areas for water supplies.

In normal times we still produce more grain, more cotton and more potatoes and other products than we can use or even sell. We are at the moment one of the few lucky nations where this is still the case. But it will not be so for long if our population continues to increase and we continue to let our soils erode or continue to "mine" them of their nutrients at an ever-increasing rate with our new high-yield crops. Every acre of soil we lose, every pound of phosphate that is not replaced, reduces the continent's maximum carrying capacity for human beings and hastens the day when our rising population curve will cross our declining productivity curve. The real pinch will probably come first in wood supplies for lumber, paper and chemical use. A recently released Forest Service report indicates that we are using wood 50 per cent faster than we are growing it. Fortunately, we still have some virgin stands, representing the accumulated growth of centuries. However, they are shrinking fast, and, while they still give us a few more years to put our house in order, we cannot afford to delay a day longer in getting started. In a sense we are "mining" a non-renewable backlog.

Not by Bread Alone

Unfortunately, we are not doing as much as we should about preserving wilderness areas and wildlife. As a people, we still have a tendency to place economic values above recreational and inspirational ones. We seem to have forgotten the old truth that "man does not live by bread alone". Congress is not yet willing to appropriate adequate sums for such things as the buying out of the private holdings in our national parks that continue to impair their full value, nor has it been willing to purchase with government funds the few areas that are still sufficiently unspoiled to make them suitable as parks. We are even permitting reclamation projects to be built where they destroy fishery resources and recreational areas at a time when placing more land in cultivation is only going to aggravate our agricultural surplus problem.

NEWS AND NOTES IN BRIEF

NOT THE USUAL

This Time Red

Most -- in fact nearly all -- local records for the Screech Owl are for birds in the gray phase. In late July, on Brandywine Avenue, Rudd Stone found a red one, dead.

Published by Schenectady Bird Club, Inc.

Corporation By-laws Adopted, and

NELLE G. VAN VORST ELECTED PRESIDENT

Miss Nelle G. Van Vorst is the first president of Schenectady Bird Club, Inc., having been unanimously elected at the organization meeting held September 26. She had served as secretary ever since SBC was organized early in 1939, and has also served as SBC chairman most of the time. There is no doubt she has been the most active of all in SBC, both in organization work and scheduled field activities.

Also elected to office at the meeting were: Guy Bartlett, vice president; Beatrice Sullivan, secretary; and Viola Mabb, treasurer.

The four officers automatically are members of the Board of Directors. The other five Directors were elected as: Samuel Madison, Dr. Minnie B. Scotland, and Margaret A. Smith, terms expiring in 1950; and Alice Holmes and G. Malcolm Andrews, terms expiring in 1951.

The board of directors, at their meeting following the club meeting, appointed by resolution an executive committee to include Misses Van Vorst, Holmes, and Mabb.

Committee chairmen were appointed by President Van Vorst to include: Alice Holmes, program; G. Malcolm Andrews, bird records; Mrs. H. G. Kelley, junior activities; Mildred D. Cray, membership; P. Schuyler Miller, conservation; Guy Bartlett, publications; Margaret A. Smith, field trips; and Albert M. Sachs, auditing committee.

Except for those directors whose terms do not expire until 1951, all hold office until the annual meeting of February 27, 1950.

By-laws of Schenectady Bird Club, Inc. were adopted before the election of officers. Necessarily differing in many respects from the by-laws of the previously unincorporated Schenectady Bird Club, the new by-laws were read and explained by Samuel Madison who, with Jack Rothstein, had prepared them. Copies of both the incorporation papers and the by-laws will be available shortly from the secretary.

Briefly, and not following the official wording, some of the organization high-lights follow:

There are provisions for sustaining members, with dues of

Schenectady Bird Club, Inc.

Guy Bartlett Editor
1053 Parkwood Blvd.

\$5 annually; this membership is additional to the active, associate and junior, as well as family, memberships as before. The Club's year has been changed to begin January 1, so membership roles will be complete at the time of the annual meeting.

Election of members shall be by majority vote of members, after submission of application through the membership committee. There are provisions for the removal of members for conduct deemed prejudicial to the Corporation.

The annual meeting of the members shall be held on the last Monday of each February. Additional meetings shall be called by the President or by appropriate petition of the voting members. Voting members include active and sustaining members. Nine voting members currently constitute a quorum.

The business, property and affairs shall be managed by a board of directors composed of nine voting members of the corporation. Included are the four elective officers. Officers will be elected annually and, starting with the February, 1950, meeting the other directors will be elected for two years, with three elected in even-number years, and two in the others.

The board of directors shall meet on the second Monday of odd-number months, and additionally as may be required.

The by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the voting members, provided the proposed amendment has been presented in writing at the previous meeting, or notice of the proposed amendment is contained in the notice of the meeting called for that purpose.

RECENT S B C RECORDS

Compiled by G. Malcolm Andrews

Records received by the committee through the end of September included:

Pied-billed Grebe - Two, Tomhannock Reservoir, September 25
(GMAndrews)

Snowy Egret - One, August 28, with American Egrets at Water-vliet Reservoir bridge; yellow feet seen at close range
(LAWiard)

American Egret - First report, May 6, along Hudson River below Hudson (BSHavens); Eight reports, July 1 to September 16, with maximum of 30 at Niskayuna 16; flight below normal

- Little Blue Heron - One August 24 at Watervliet Reservoir bridge, with American Egrets (NVVorst)
- Green Heron - Several young seen with adults in June, Collins Park area, Scotia (DTucker)
- Turkey Vulture - Two near Schenevus, Otsego County, on July 9 (LAW)
- King Rail - One at Niskayuna July 2 (DT)
- Virginia Rail - Summer resident from May 14, Niskayuna area
- Woodcock - One near Seward, Schoharie County, Aug. 27 (LAW)
- Solitary Sandpiper - Three near Colonie Sept. 11 (LAW)
- Greater Yellow-legs - About 8 on mud flat in cove on eastern shore of Tomhannock Reservoir September 25 (GMA)
- Pectoral Sandpiper - Two near Seward August 24 (LAW)
- Black Tern - Two, Round Lake, September 5 (GBartlett)
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo - Two, Vischer Ponds, June 25 (DT & RStone)
- Nighthawk - Flocks noted August 3 and 21 over the city, and August 27 at Guilderland Center. Two still present at Guilderland Center September 16 (NVV)
- Pileated Woodpecker - Pair seen near Glenville August 28 (PSMiller)
- Red-headed Woodpecker - One near Breakabeen, Schoharie County, July 16 (LAW)
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker - Male, July 5, Taconic State Park (MWFrench)
- Acadian Flycatcher - One near Seward August 20 (LAW)
- Alder Flycatcher - Heard near Vischer Ponds on June 25 and July 17, giving both local and more western breeding characteristic songs
- Least Flycatcher - Last report Sept. 11, near Colonie (LAW)
- Olive-sided Flycatcher - Two probable nesting localities near Jenny Lake during summer (RS)
- Purple Martin - Saratoga colony has increased to 40-50 birds this year (NVV); pair reported and female seen near junction of Balltown and Troy Roads, June 7-10 (RS); pair at Caroga Lake July 9 (Mrs. CGZimmer)
- Red-breasted Nuthatch - Three near Colonie Sept. 11 (LAW)
- Brown Creeper - First autumn record, September 13, near Colonie (LAW)
- House Wren - End record, September 11, Colonie (LAW)
- Short-billed Marsh Wren - Singing males along Meadowdale Road May 21 and June 11 (RS & DT)
- Robin - Third nesting July 9, Loudonville (MWF)

- Olive-backed Thrush - Only one fall report, September 11, Colonie (LAW)
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet - Two, Colonie, September 11 (LAW)
- Cedar Waxwing - Nesting, DeCamp Avenue, July (AHolmes)
- Yellow-throated Vireo - Adult seen feeding young Cowbird, Collins Park, June
- Worm-eating Warbler - Singing at Indian Ladder Ravine June 11 (RS,DT)
- Brown-winged Warbler - One heard June 11, Indian Ladder (RS,DT)
- Nashville Warbler - One near Colonie September 11 (LAW)
- Louisiana Water-thrush - Adult with young July 5, Bash Bish Creek, Taconic State Park (MWF)
- Mourning Warbler - One male in song June 19, Jenny Lake (RS)
- Yellow-breasted Chat - Only one report for the summer, June 25 at Vischer Ponds (RS)
- Wilson's Warbler - Two near Seward August 27 (LAW)
- Baltimore Oriole - Last report August 27, Guilderland Center (NVV)
- Bronzed Grackle - Urban nesting records, Schenectady and Scotia
- Cowbird - Laying eggs in Song and Chipping Sparrow nests May 6, Gallupville (CGZ); seen following Chipping Sparrow family June 26-30, Loudonville (MWF)
- Scarlet Tanager - Last report, Sept. 11, Colonia (LAW)
- Henslow's Sparrow - Common breeder in July along Ridge Road, above Sacandaga Road (DT)
- Field Sparrow - Last report, Sept. 11, Colonie (LAW)

Plan to Participate in Our

CHRISTMAS COUNT, DECEMBER 26

The National Audubon Society has announced that this year's Christmas Count dates will be December 25 to January 1. SBC's field-trip schedule, as already published, left the date open.

December 26, Monday (which is a work holiday) will be the date for the Schenectady census -- the Club's eleventh, and the city's 21st.

Complete details concerning the Christmas Count will be in the December issue. In the meantime, locate those unexpecteds at feeding stations -- the owls -- and those other hard-to-finds.



S B C FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Margaret A. Smith, Field Activities Chairman

As for Unexpected, Here's an

EVENING GROSBEAK IN AUGUST

Nelle G. Van Vorst

The SBC field trip at Watervliet Reservoir on August 21 gave the 10 participants both disappointments and thrills. The morning was perfect, after a couple of cool days -- clear, no wind, and warm.

Despite the long drought, the reservoir was not as low as usual, so there were fewer shore-birds. Several fishermen dotted the shores, and that did not help much.

While waiting on the highway near the bridge for some late-comers, and also watching to see what might come our way, a strange August bird announced his presence. Having had Bluebirds aplenty in February, we were ready for anything.

A male Evening Grosbeak in all his gay attire perched in a willow beside the highway, just across the road from the group. As if he thought we would not see him, he turned around several times, constantly uttering his loud call. He flew away after several minutes, only to return shortly to another nearby willow. This continued for several minutes.

In almost every direction we aimed our glasses we saw Hummingbirds darting among the few flowers. It was definitely a concentration for migration.

We proceeded to the south side of the reservoir, walking through the fields and then the woods. As had been true earlier in the day, we heard and saw signs of the warbler migration. Foliage was dense, and it was almost impossible to identify many of the small birds.

Lying in the sunshine along the edge of the woods were a doe and two fawns, also unexpected.

Sixty species appeared on the list for the trip: American Egret, 1; Green Heron, 5; Mallard, 6; Black Duck, 25; Blue-winged Teal, 2; Wood Duck, 3; Broad-winged Hawk, 1; Pheasant, 1; Killdeer, 12; Spotted Sandpiper, 6; Greater Yellowlegs, 1; Pectoral Sandpiper, 6; Least Sandpiper, 10.

Mourning Dove, 2; Chimney Swift, 10; Ruby-throated Hummingbird, 12; Kingfisher, 6; Flicker, 3; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Kingbird, 2; Crested Flycatcher, heard one; Phoebe, 1; Wood Pewee, 2; Tree Swallow, 3; Bank Swallow, 20; Rough-winged Swallow, 2; Barn Swallow, 40.

Blue Jay, 2; Crow, 4; Black-capped Chickadee, 6; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1 heard; Long-billed Marsh Wren, 6; Catbird, 6; Brown Thrasher, 1; Robin; Wood Thrush, 4; Veery, 1; Bluebird; Cedar Waxwing; Starling; Yellow-throated Vireo; Black and White Warbler, 1; Magnolia Warbler, 1; English

Sparrow; Bobolink; Red-wing, 15; Baltimore Oriole, 5; Cowbird, 10; Scarlet Tanager, 1 female; Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 1 female; Indigo Bunting, 1 male; Evening Grosbeak, 1 male; Purple Finch, 2; Goldfinch; Vesper Sparrow, heard; Chipping Sparrow; Swamp Sparrow, 2; and Song Sparrow.

HEADING SOUTHMariaville Lake, Sept. 18

The Mariaville Lake trip, a new one on SBC field schedules, was led by Helen Cole, and attracted 17 participants. It was very evident that migrations were underway, with the warblers in evidence, and some of our winter species already here. There were 38 species listed before mid-morning rain terminated the record. Included were:

Marsh Hawk, 1; Herring Gull, 2; Mourning Dove, 3; Hummingbird, 1; Kingfisher, 1; Flicker, 3; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Phoebe, 4; Wood Pewee, 1; Tree Swallow, 24; Blue Jay, 6; Crow, 12; Chickadee, 8; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Catbird, 6; Robin, 6; Cedar Waxwing, 12; Starling, 6; Blue-headed Vireo, 1; Red-eyed Vireo, 3; Warbling Vireo, 1; Black and White Warbler, 1; Magnolia Warbler, 4; Cape May Warbler, 5; Black-throated Blue Warbler, 4; Myrtle Warbler, 6; Black-throated Green Warbler, 10; Bay-breasted Warbler, 2; Northern Yellow-throat, 1; Redstart, 1.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 1; Goldfinch, 12; Towhee, 3; Junco, 1; Chipping Sparrow, 10; White-throated Sparrow, 3; and Song Sparrow, 6.

SHARP-TAILEDCrescent Lake, Oct. 8

There was no question as to what bird was the feature of the trip of Saturday, October 8, along the Niskayuna shore of the Crescent Lake section of the Mohawk River. It was the Sharp-tailed Sparrow. The trip was led by Esly Hallenbeck, with an attendance of eight.

Donald Tucker went into the marsh at the coal-pocket point and found one of the sparrows. Rudd Stone went in and located two of the birds. Further trips on later days were made, and the birds again seen.

For the official record it is hardly possible to go beyond identification as the Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Ammodramus caudacuta. The birds were seen at close range, under favorable light, and for considerable time. They seemed to answer the description of the Hudson Bay subspecies, Ammodramus c. altera, a race intermediate in characteristics between the Nelson's and Acadian races. Of the different races, the Hudson Bay subspecies is one which might be expected locally.

Forty-four species were listed: Pied-billed Grebe, 2; Great Blue Heron, 4; American Bittern, 3; Mallard, 30; Black Duck, 200; Baldpate, 2; Pintail, 2; Green-winged Teal, 3; Wood Duck, 12; American Scoter, 3; Marsh Hawk, 1; Pheasant, 1; Coot, 10; Killdeer, 40; Wilson's Snipe, 5; Greater Yellow-legs, 2; Herring Gull, 30.

Downy Woodpecker, 3; Prairie Horned Lark, 10; Blue Jay, 6;

Crow, 6; Chickadee, 12; White-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Winter Wren, 2; Long-billed Marsh Wren, 3; Catbird, 1; Robin, 10; Bluebird, 35; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 2; American Pipit, 8; Cedar Waxwing, 10; Starling, 1,000.

Myrtle Warbler, 40; Northern Yellow-throat, 6; Red-wing, 600; Rusty Blackbird, 5; Bronzed Grackle, 4; Cowbird, 50; Goldfinch, 6; Savannah Sparrow, 12; Slate-colored Junco, 6; White-throated Sparrow, 50; Swamp Sparrow, 20; and Song Sparrow, 40.

CANCELLED TRIPSFor the Records

So the records will be straight, in that all SBC field trips are being reported in FEATHERS, it is to be noted that the Big Nose trip of May 8 and the Mt. Greylock week-end camp-out of June 18-19 were not held. It was simply a case each time of no members seeming to want to go.

Climb Mt. Marcy If You Want to See**BICKNELL'S THRUSH**

The Mt. Marcy region offers plenty of opportunity to study the Bicknell's Thrush, Rudd Stone reported after he, with two boys, camped out in the Heart Lake - Marcy region July 13 to 16. They found eight pairs of the birds. His notes on the birds found on the trip show:

Bicknell's Thrush -- Eight pairs; particularly near the timberline, below Indian Falls on Avalanche Camp Trail (north slope), and but seldom below 3000 feet as nesting bird. Song heard above Indian Falls, with several birds heard and seen. Common call note "Queer" or "Quee-arr"; song and calls most resembling Veery. Song dipped down, then up. Quality utterly unlike Olive-backed. Most birds obviously paired, and very active and excited upon approach. Apparently still nesting.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher -- Judging by calls, not particularly numerous; only at upper elevations in swampy, mossy, balsam thickets.

Olive-sided Flycatcher -- Only one, at dead tree stump just east of Lake Colden.

Canada Jay -- Enormously inquisitive and hardly shy; along trail slope between Plateau Camp and Indian Falls. Many small birds gathered about, scolding excitedly. Apparently this Jay is just as unpopular as the Blue Jay and other Jays among songbirds. Not a sound from the Canada Jay. Fanned his tail, and showed very evident white forehead. No Blue Jays found here or at upper elevations.

Tennessee Warbler -- Singing repeatedly not far below Plateau Camp.

Bay-breasted Warbler -- Not heard at or near timberline.

Nashville Warbler -- Found only near timberline; in evidence at Plateau.

Purple Finch -- At all elevations; seemed just as numerous at timberline as elsewhere.

Slate-colored Junco -- Abundant everywhere; most frequent bird above timberline; singing from rocks.

Song Sparrow -- Not apparent at timberline, and not abundant anywhere in mountains; plenty in lowlands.

The Junco, Olive-backed Thrush, Black-poll and Myrtle Warblers, and White-throated Sparrow dominant, particularly on the upper slopes. The Winter Wren and Red-breasted Nuthatch also with them.

The weather on the trip was mostly clear, the wind slight and the temperature from the 50's to the 80's. There were records of 47 species:

Broad-winged Hawk, 2; Flicker, 4; Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, 3; Wood Pewee, 4; Olive-sided Flycatcher, 1, Col-den; Barn Swallow, 2; Blue Jay, 6; Crow, 8; Black-capped Chickadee, fairly common; Brown-capped (Acadian) Chickadee, fairly common; Red-breasted Nuthatch, common; Brown Creeper, 3; House Wren, fairly common, low lands; Winter Wren, very common; Catbird, Heart Lake; Robin, Heart Lake; Olive-backed Thrush, abundant; Bicknell's Thrush, 8 pairs.

Golden-crowned Kinglet, fairly common; Cedar Waxwing, 10; Blue-headed Vireo, fairly common; Red-eyed Vireo, fairly common; Tennessee Warbler, one near timberline; Nashville Warbler, 4 near timberline; Magnolia Warbler, common; Black-throated Blue Warbler, 2; Myrtle Warbler, common; Black-throated Green Warbler, fairly common; Blackburnian Warbler, 4; Chestnut-sided Warbler, 6, lower elevations; Bay-breasted Warbler, not uncommon; Black-poll Warbler, abundant; Mourning Warbler, 1, Marcy Dam; Northern Yellow-throat, 2, in clearings; Redstart, 4, lower elevations.

Red-wing, 10, lower-elevation marshes; Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 1, lower elevation; Indigo Bunting, 1, lower elevation; Purple Finch, fairly common; Goldfinch, fairly common; Slate-colored Junco, abundant.

Chipping Sparrow, 2, lower elevation; Field Sparrow, 2, lower elevation; White-throated Sparrow, common; Swamp Sparrow, 6; Song Sparrow, common, lower elevation; Canada Jay, 1.

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Two Decades of Christmas Counts

**Seventy-two Species in Total Count, with Nearly 78,000
Individuals Included -- Only Ten Kinds Show on All
Twenty Lists -- Starling and Crow Total More Than
Two-thirds of All -- 123 Participants, 3,113 Miles**



Seventy-eight thousand is quite a lot of anything -- in fact, it's considerably more than the population of our neighboring city of Troy. That many birds have been counted locally on Christmas trips.

Three thousand is a lot of miles -- it's enough to take one from here to San Francisco, with some left over. That's how far the Christmas hikers have travelled.

Seventy-two kinds is quite a few -- it's considerably more than the 57 varieties we see advertised. There have been that many different birds on Christmas Counts.

Seventy-eight degrees is quite a temperature range, but that's what it has been -- from 22 below to 56 above.

And twenty years is quite a stretch -- it takes us back to the crash of '29. That's when the first of the unbroken series of local Christmas Counts was made.

It's slightly erroneous to say that 78,000 birds have been counted. The correct figure seems to be only 77,977. One hundred and twenty-three names are included on the roster of participants; and they have gone, in groups, 879 miles on foot and 2,234 miles by car, or a matter of 3,113 miles total.

All sorts of weather have been encountered -- clear and windless days, cloudy and windy ones, and more than once either rain or snow. And some of the windy days have been stiff and biting. Almost without exception it has been a case of "minimum of open water, except below dams."

A 15-year summary of the local Christmas Counts was published in FEATHERS of February, 1944. Reference should be made to that article for data omitted from the following tables -- data on the complete details of those 15 trips. Similarly, a detailed map of the 15-mile Christmas circle is shown with the 10-year summary, FEATHERS, December, 1939.

TABLE I

CHRISTMAS COUNT	1929-43	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	Yrs&Total
Number of species	62	40	29	33	38	31	72
Individuals	59,530	3951	1579	3105	7156	2656	77,977
Horned Grebe	1- 1						1- 1
Great Blue Heron	1- 1						1- 1
Mallard	1- 9					1	2- 10
Black Duck	7- 43	2	5	17	7	3	12- 77
Amer. Golden-eye	3- 14						3- 14
Amer. Merganser	13- 200	1	3			1	16- 205
Red-br.Merganser	1- 24						1- 24
Goshawk	5- 6		1	1			7- 8
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2- 3					1	4- 5
Cooper's Hawk				1	2		2- 3
Red-tailed Hawk	9- 18	2	1	2	6		13- 29
Red-should. Hawk	7- 11						7- 11
Rough-legged Hawk	8- 17	2			1		10- 20
Marsh Hawk	10- 16	1		3	1		13- 21
Sparrow Hawk	14- 59	7	1	2	7	1	19- 77
Ruffed Grouse	14- 110	6		3	4	4	18- 127
European Partridge	1- 7						1- 7
Ring-nk.Pheasant	15- 226	13	31	6	22	6	20- 304
Coot						4	1- 4
Herring Gull	15- 95			10	1		17- 106
Ring-billed Gull	1- 3				1		2- 4
Mourning Dove	4- 8			6	1	24	7- 39
Screech Owl	7- 8		2			1	9- 11
Great Horned Owl	7- 11	2			1	1	10- 15
Snowy Owl	1- 1		2				2- 3
Barred Owl	7- 10		1		1		9- 12
Long-eared Owl	1- 6						1- 6
Belted Kingfisher	9- 17	2	1	1	2		13- 23
Flicker	2- 3	2					3- 5
Pileated Woodpekr.	2- 4	2			3	1	5- 10
Yel-bel.Sapsucker					1		1- 1
Hairy Woodpecker	13- 112	22	8	8	19	10	18- 179
Downy Woodpecker	15- 412	50	22	38	38	40	20- 600
Phoebe				1			1- 1
No. Horned Lark	2- 25		1				3- 26
Prairie H. Lark	8- 101			1			9- 102
Blue Jay	15- 722	95	39	79	93	52	20- 1081
Crow	15-22040	232	542	427	1342	467	20- 25050
Blk-cap.Chickadee	15-2750	262	150	205	296	258	20- 3928
White-br.Nuthatch	15- 496	56	21	39	35	55	20- 702
Red-br. Nuthatch	9- 29	2		1	2	1	13- 35
Brown Creeper	13- 83	26	10	14	20	20	18- 173
Winter Wren	7- 12	1	1				9- 14
Robin	4- 4	1	1		2	2	8- 10
Hermit Thrush	2- 2	2					3- 4
Bluebird	3- 7	8					4- 15
Golden-cr.Kinglet	12- 181	18		8	10	16	16- 233
Ruby-cr. Kinglet					2		1- 2
Cedar Waxwing	5- 13	108					6- 121
Northern Shrike	8- 13				1		9- 14

TABLE I (Cont'd)	1929-43	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	Yrs&Total
Starling	15-19963	1394	227	894	3966	839	20- 27283
Myrtle Warbler					1		1- 1
English Sparrow	15-5783	710	267	219	531	409	20- 7919
Meadowlark	4- 9						4- 9
Red-wing	5- 6				1		6- 7
Cowbird	3- 79	1					4- 80
Cardinal		1					1- 1
Evening Grosbeak	1- 12		19				2- 31
Purple Finch	3- 18	4		1	2		6- 25
Pine Grosbeak	4- 12						4- 12
Greater Redpoll				1			1- 1
Redpoll	5- 800	5	27	579		5	9- 1416
Pine Siskin	3- 36	15		16		1	6- 68
Goldfinch	15- 923	106	2	82	8	114	20- 1237
Slate-col. Junco	14- 552	53	6	116	119	45	19- 891
Tree Sparrow	15-3794	473	170	308	578	255	20- 5578
White-thr. Sparrow		2					1- 2
Fox Sparrow		3					1- 3
Swamp Sparrow	1- 4						1- 4
Song Sparrow	14- 194	58	3	8	28	7	19- 298
Lapland Longspur	2- 21						2- 21
Snow Bunting	4- 118	200	15	8		12	8- 353

Starling, 35% -- Crow, 32%

Most abundant species has been the Starling, with 27,283, or 35%. In different years its count has ranged from as low as 227 in 1945 to 3966 in 1947. Only within the last two years did it attain top count -- and then chiefly because of the high downtown-roost inventories at dusk. Until then the Crow had been high.

The Crow, with a count of 25,050, or 32% is second high. Its figures have ranged from a low of 127 to a high of 4600, with crow roosts visited in the high-count years.

The English Sparrow is third with 7919, or 10%. The Crow and Starling together account for more than two-thirds of the figures, and with the English Sparrow for more than three-fourths. Table II lists the birds in order of abundance, without regard to how many years a species might have been missed. The Redpoll, for instance, has been seen in less than half of the years, yet is sixth high in total count. The first column of Table II shows the total for the 20 years; the second column shows the maximum count of the species in any one year. It is of interest to note that in the case of seven species there have been but lone-individual records for the whole span. On the other extreme, five species have accounted for nearly 90% of the count, and the first ten species for over 96%. The ten species which have been seen each year occupy, with the Redpoll as a ringer, the topmost positions in Table II.

TABLE II

Starling	27283	3966	Sparrow Hawk	77	8	Robin	10	2
Crow	25050	4600	Pine Siskin	68	16	Meadowlark	9	5
Engl. Sparrow	7919	1400	Mourn. Dove	39	24	Goshawk	8	2
Tree Sparrow	5578	748	Red-br. Nuth.	35	12	Red-wing	7	2
Chickadee	3921	376	Eve. Grosbeak	31	19	Eur. Partridge	7	7
Redpoll	1416	579	Red-tail. Hk.	29	6	Long-ear Owl	6	6
Goldfinch	1237	374	No. H. Lark	26	15	Flicker	5	2
Blue Jay	1081	148	Purple Finch	25	10	Sharp-shin. Hk	5	2
Junco	891	142	Red-br. Merg.	24	24	Swamp Sparrow	4	4
Wh-br. Nuth.	702	83	Kingfisher	23	4	Hermit Thrush	4	2
Downy Woodpkr	600	65	Marsh Hawk	21	3	Ring-bill Gull	4	3
Snow Bunting	353	200	Lapl. Longsp.	21	20	Coot	4	4
Pheasant	304	54	Rough-leg. Hk	20	9	Fox Sparrow	3	3
Song Sparrow	298	58	Gr. Horn Owl	15	3	Snowy Owl	3	2
Gold-cr. King.	233	31	Bluebird	15	8	Cooper's Hawk	3	2
Am. Merganser	205	66	Am. Gold-eye	14	11	Ruby-cr. Kingl.	2	2
Hairy Woodpkr	179	22	Winter Wren	14	3	Wh-thr. Sparrow	2	2
Br. Creeper	173	26	No. Shrike	14	3	Horned Grebe	1	1
Ruffed Grouse	127	13	Barred Owl	12	2	Gr. Blue Heron	1	1
Cedar Waxwing	121	108	Pine Grosbeak	12	5	Yel-bel. Sapskr	1	1
Herring Gull	106	23	Red-shld. Hk.	11	3	Phoebe	1	1
Pr. Horn Lark	102	32	Screech Owl	11	2	Myrtle Warbler	1	1
Cowbird	80	75	Mallard	10	9	Cardinal	1	1
Black Duck	77	23	Pil. Woodpkr.	10	3	Greater Redpoll	1	1

Ten 20-year Birds -- 15 One-timers

Table III summarizes the species according to the number of years in which they have been seen. Ten of them have been on every list; three have been missed only once; and 15 species have been found in only one year.

If we consider only the most recent decade -- the ten years of the official life-span of SBC -- the story is somewhat different. In that case 14 kinds are on every list -- Sparrow Hawk, Pheasant, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Starling, English Sparrow, Goldfinch, Junco, Tree Sparrow, and Song Sparrow. Seen in 9 of the 10 recent years have been Red-tailed Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, and Brown Creeper.

Ninety SBC Participants

Ninety SBC members and their guests have taken part in the hikes of the past ten years and, additionally, several more have contributed feeding-station hikes records. Of the 90, two-thirds have been on two or more hikes. In the following tabulation the numbers in parentheses show the total number of hikes, including those made before SBC was organized.

TEN YEARS -- Guy Bartlett (20), Esly Hallenbeck (13), Alice Holmes (14), Nelle G. Van Vorst (15). Total, 4.

TABLE III

<u>20 years</u> (10)	<u>10 years</u> (2)	<u>3 years</u> (4)
Pheasant	Rough-leg.Hawk	Amer. Golden-eye
Downy Woodpecker	Gr.Horned Owl	Flicker
Blue Jay	<u>9 years</u> (6)	No.Horned Lark
Crow	Screech Owl	Hermit Thrush
Chickadee	Barred Owl	<u>2 years</u> (6)
Wh-br. Nuthatch	Pr.Horn Lark	Mallard
Starling	Winter Wren	Cooper's Hawk
English Sparrow	No. Shrike	Ring-billed Gull
Goldfinch	Redpoll	Snowy Owl
Tree Sparrow	<u>8 years</u> (2)	Evening Grosbeak
<u>19 years</u> (3)	Robin	Lapland Longspur
Sparrow Hawk	Snow Bunting	<u>1 year</u> (15)
Junco	<u>7 years</u> (3)	Horned Grebe
Song Sparrow	Goshawk	Great Blue Heron
<u>18 years</u> (3)	Red-should.Hawk	Red-br. Merganser
Ruffed Grouse	Mourning Dove	Europ. Partridge
Hairy Woodpecker	<u>6 years</u> (4)	Coot
Brown Creeper	Cedar Waxwing	Long-eared Owl
<u>17 years</u> (1)	Red-wing	Yel-bel.Sapsucker
Herring Gull	Purple Finch	Phoebe
<u>16 years</u> (2)	Pine Siskin	Ruby-crown.Kinglet
Amer. Merganser	<u>5 years</u> (1)	Myrtle Warbler
Gold-cr. Kinglet	Pileat.Woodpkr.	Cardinal
<u>13 years</u>	<u>4 years</u> (5)	Greater Redpoll
Red-tailed Hawk	Sharp-shin.Hawk	Wh-thr. Sparrow
Marsh Hawk	Bluebird	Fox Sparrow
Kingfisher	Meadowlark	Swamp Sparrow
Red-br.Nuthatch	Cowbird	
<u>12 years</u> (1)	Pine Grosbeak	
Black Duck		

NINE YEARS -- Frank Freese (11), Rudolph H. Stone (10). Total, 2.

EIGHT YEARS -- George H. Bainbridge (14), B. D. Miller (14), Vincent J. Schaefer (12), Dr. Minnie B. Scotland. Total, 4.

SEVEN YEARS -- Pauline E. Baker, P. Schuyler Miller (11), Alice Moore (10), Chester N. Moore (13), John H. Voght. Total, 5.

SIX YEARS -- Stephanie Podrazik, Benton R. Seguin. Total, 2.

FIVE YEARS -- Mrs. George H. Bainbridge, Mrs. Laura S. Beck, Idella M. Heacox, Mrs. H. G. Kelley. Total, 4.

FOUR YEARS -- G. Malcolm Andrews, Mrs. W. E. Blowney, Edna Hallenbeck, Mrs. M. E. Rexford, Mrs. E. W. Scott, Mrs. John H. Voght. Total, 6.

THREE YEARS -- William G. Bartlett, Edna Becker (5), Mrs. R. M. Brockway, Dorothy W. Caldwell, Mary E. Christie, Barrington S. Havens (11), Marilyn Kelley, Edna Dromms Sachs. Total, 8.

TWO YEARS -- Alice Abel, H. V. D. Allen, Mrs. C. C. Bailey, Elizabeth Bigsbee, Mrs. W. Lawrence Butler, Agnes Eddy, Mrs. Frank Freese, J. W. Freese (5), H. G. Kelley, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Kornecke, Viola Mabb, Mrs. L. J. Mattimore, Gloria Meader, Harry Oleson, David Pelton, D. A. Ruddy Sr. (4), Dorothy Sawyer, E. W. Scott, Margaret A. Smith, Beatrice Sullivan, Dr. Franklin H. West, Leon A. Wiard, Glen Wilson. Total, 24.

ONE YEAR -- James J. Anderson, Mary Lou Aughenbaugh, Myrtice A. Blatchley, Helen Cole, Dr. W. Crawford Dunlap, Mrs. L. S. Davenport, Mary Ellis, Dan Fiscusi, Virginia Freleigh, Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Grace, Chester Griffith, Dr. Lawrence Hill, Mrs. Hans Huthsteiner, John Kelly, Arthur L. Kimball, L. J. Mattimore, Lois Maxson, Mrs. W. S. McGraw, Frances Reeves, Carl Renscheid, Ruth Retzloff, Edward Rindfleisch, D. A. Ruddy Jr. (3), W. Roy Steele (4), Mrs. Roy Steele, Robert L. Stone, Mrs. Lillian C. Stoner, Donald Tucker, Robert Underwood (5), and James Zell. Total, 31.

During the pre-SBC decade there were 33 additional hikers. In total there have been 123 persons on 313 group trips, of which 169 trips were made in the most recent 10 years.

Summaries of Conditions

Statistics for the first 15 years are in FEATHERS of February, 1944. The most recent five years show:

1944 -- Dec. 24; 9 hours; 18 to 32°; west wind, 0 - 5 mph; partly cloudy. 32 observers; 44 party-hours; 52 miles on foot, 129 by car. 40 species, 3951 individuals.

1945 -- Dec. 23; 9½ hours; 1 to 19 to 5°; wind W to NW, 5 - 30 mph; clear. 26 observers; 45 party-hours; 42 miles on foot, 106 by car. 29 species, 1579 individuals.

1946 -- Dec. 22; 9½ hours; 28 - 36°; wind W, 5 - 35 mph; cloudy, snow flurries. 29 observers; 50 party-hours; 51 miles on foot, 163 by car. 33 species, 3105 individuals.

1947 -- Dec. 21; 9½ hours; 20 to 31°; wind W to NW, 0 to 20 mph; hazy, light sleet, snow, clear. 43 observers; 76 party-hours; 76 miles on foot, 225 by car. 38 species, 7156 individuals.

1948 -- Dec. 26; 10½ hours; -10 to 1°; wind NW to W, 0 to 25 mph; clear. 33 observers; 56 party-hours; 58 miles on foot, 134 by car. 31 species, 2656 individuals.

FEATHERS



Schenectady Bird Club, Inc.

Guy Bartlett Editor
1053 Parkwood Blvd.

And in Conclusion

20-year averages -- 9½ hours per count; 25° (averaging 19° for low of day and 31.5° for high of day); 22 observers; 52 party-hours; 44 miles on foot, 111 by car. 31 species, 3899 individuals.

20-year totals -- 72 species, 77,977 counted individuals. 123 different observers; 1036 party-hours afield; 879 miles on foot, 2234 miles by car; 3113 total miles.

Highest count, 40 species in 1944; lowest count, 18 species in 1929.

Highest total, 9000 in 1932; lowest total, 1029 in 1929.

Maximum duration, 11 hours; minimum, 8½ hours.

Maximum temperature, 56° in 1936; minimum, -22° in 1942.

Most observers, 43 in 1947; fewest, 14 in 1929.

Maximum party-hours, 76 in 1938 and 1947; minimum, 14 in 1929.

Miles on foot, from 13 (1929) to 76 (1947); miles by car from 33 (1929) to 225 (1947). -- G.B.



NEWS AND NOTES IN BRIEF

CHRISTMAS COUNT

Monday, December 26

There is, as noted in the preceding short item, a 20-year background for SEC's next scheduled field trip. It's the Christmas Count, and will be staged Monday, December 26. For the complete details, consult this month's supplement.

If you will be able to get out with any of the groups, by all means do so. And if you have unusuals at your feeders, or know where owls, unexpecteds, or particularly interesting kinds are to be found, let the trip chairman know in advance.

SNOW GEESE

High-flying, Safe

On the afternoon of Friday, October 21 -- the opening day of the first half of the duck-hunting season -- Jim Anderson saw a high-flying, loose-V, flock of about 150 Snow Geese go over the Crescent-Niskayuna area. Familiar with these birds at Chesapeake and similar areas, he noted the black-tipped wings. The flock apparently was on its way places, and not flushed from local waters.

LATE GALLINULEBoth Ways

A Florida Gallinule recorded November 12 by Rudd Stone was late in two ways. It was dead, and beyond season. The bird, in first-year plumage, was in the middle of River Road, Niskayuna, at Stop 23, and was freshly killed.

EVENING GROSBREAK YEAR ?October Records

Will this winter be a season for local abundance of the Evening Grosbeak? Not to mention the one at Watervliet Reservoir in August, there were numerous records of the birds in late October, at least as early as the 24th. They were in the city, and at Ballston Lake, among other areas.

Mrs. Harold N. Hackett, in reporting the birds at Ballston Lake, also spoke of three Great Horned Owls there.

SNOWY OWL YEAR ?Just a Hunch

Perhaps there will be a Snowy Owl invasion this winter. Although no reports were in when this issue went to press, it is entirely possible that the birds have arrived. All we have to go on, however, is the usual "cycle" which brings up this winter for a southward flight of the Arctic visitors.

BRANT AT NISKAYUNAVery Definitely

That there were Brant on the Niskayuna wide waters during the first half of the hunting season was very definitely shown. A hunter bagged at least one of the birds -- the fine and costs were \$17.50.

OVER THEY WENTBy the Hundreds

At least as early as mid-October and extending into November, many people in the city noticed repeated flocks of various blackbirds -- Grackles, Redwings, Cowbirds, Starlings -- in relatively fast and high flight in late afternoon, in a generally easterly direction. Most of the flocks contained from a dozen to a score of the birds but, as the clock moved on, the flocks became larger.

Over Niskayuna the flocks were even more noticeable. And those in the right area were well aware at dusk that the birds were flocking in the marshes and light woods along the river in the wide-waters area.

URBAN FLOCKSThe Usual Starlings

Of course something might happen, or be caused to happen, to change the story. With the first cool nights, however, it became apparent that Schenectady will probably be a downtown host to its customary thousands of squealing, squawking Starlings. First indications are that all of last winter's roosts are again being used, or misused.