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## TROY HAD FIELD SPARROWS AND SCHENECTADY A HOODED MERGANSER ON CHRISTMAS COUNTS

Schenectady had 44 species on its 27th annual Christmas Count, equaling the all-time high mark of the previous year. The Hooded Merganser became Species No. 84 on Schenectady's composite list. The variety of hawks observed was outstanding -- there were 10 kinds. New maximum counts were set for four species: Marsh Hawk, 7; Peregrine Falcon, 2; Starling, 4842 (about the same-as-usual urban count, but with additional flocking along Normanskill); and Evening Grosbeak, 179. Five species tied previous high counts: Cooper's Hawk, 2; Red-tailed Hawk, 6; Bald Eagle, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 8; and Cardinal, 1. The count was made on December 26.

Troy had 34 species on its count of January 2. Most outstanding were three Field Sparrows. Other new species included the Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, and Robin. Troy now has 59 species on its composite list. The Field Sparrows were new to both, so the Schenectady-Troy list now has 90 species and two subspecies.

### Schenectady High-lights

Schenectady - Same overall area as in other recent years; Dec. 26, 7 a. m. to 5 p. m. From clear to partly cloudy; temperature 14° to 22°; wind WNW, increasing to 25 mph with 30-mph gusts; no snow in most areas; even less open water than usual. Twenty-six observers in 7 parties; plus feeding-station observations; total party-hours 45 (30 on foot, 15 by car); total party-miles, 224 (37 on foot, 187 by car).

Group 1: Whitney estate, Lisha Kill, Rosendale Road, Lock 7, Niskayuna, Mohawk View; 9-1/2 party-hours (7-1/2 on foot, 2 by car); 32 party-miles (9 on foot, 23 by car); Malcolm McDonald, P. Schuyler Miller, Robert Yunick.

Group 2: River Road, Poentic Kill Marsh, Lock 8; 6 party-hours (5 afoot, 1 by car); 15 party-miles (5 afoot, 10 by car); G. Malcolm Andrews, Walter Kaskan.

Group 3: Vischer's Ferry and Ponds, area north of Mohawk River; 7 party-hours (5 afoot, 2 by car); 37 party-miles (6 afoot, 31 by car); Alice Holmes, Minnie B. Scotland, Nellie Silliman, Nelle G. Van Vorst.

Group 4: Independent feeding-station observers, Starling urban roosts, short-hike records; Mildred D. Crary, Hazel Eddy, Gloria Meader, Mrs. Louis Novak, Stephanie Podrazik.

Group 5: Albany Airport, Six-mile Waterworks, State Farm Road, and connecting areas; 5 party-hours (3-1/2 afoot, 1-1/2 by car); 36 party-miles (3 afoot, 33 by car); Brother E. Austin, Mr. and Mrs.

## FEATHERS

January, 1956

	SCHENECTADY -- 44/6268								TROY -- 34/3999							
	T	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	T	1	2	3	4	5	6
Great Blue Heron	1	1														
Mallard	2							*1	2	101	80		11			10
Black Duck	38	1						5	32	740	450	*35	200			90
Green-winged Teal										1	1					
American Golden-eye										113	1	*1	100			12
Hooded Merganser	1	1														
American Merganser	2	2								162	1		150			11
Red-br. Merganser										4						4
Goshawk	1		1													
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1								1							
Cooper's Hawk	2	1							1	1			1			
Red-tailed Hawk	6	1							1	8			4	1		3
Red-shouldered Hawk	1								1					1		
Rough-legged Hawk	2								2	2						2
Bald Eagle	1								1	1						1
Marsh Hawk	7								1	6						
Peregrine Falcon	2					2										
Sparrow Hawk	8	1				1			2	4	7	2	1		1	2
Ruffed Grouse	2									2						
Ring-necked Pheasant	13	5	4		2					2				2		
Herring Gull	1	1								1	1					
Mourning Dove	8	7	1													
Horned Owl	1	1														
Belted Kingfisher	3							3		1			1			
Yellow-shafted Flicker	2	1							1							
Hairy Woodpecker	16	4	2	2	3				1	4	14	6	1	3	1	2
Downy Woodpecker	31	12	3	5	3				6	2	34	8	5	2	3	14
Horned Lark										4	4					
Blue Jay	86	17	20	15	14	5	2	8	5	111	18	23	12	11	18	29
American Crow	250	8	9	17	5	75	6	96	34	321	9	6	40	29	47	190
Black-cap Chickadee	171	46	10	11	32	7		22	43	169	16	8	25	45	30	45
White-br. Nuthatch	29	11			6			8	4	7			2		4	1
Red-br. Nuthatch	7								7	2					2	
Brown Creeper	5	1	3						1	5	2			1		1
American Robin										2				2		
Eastern Bluebird	1								1							
Golden-cr. Kinglet	7	1							6							
Gray Shrike	2		2							1					1	
Common Starling	484	15	5	70	3024	1630	25	29	44	816	50	30	400	19	55	262
House Sparrow	198	7	10	15	57	3	50	12	44	669	20	110	60	169	85	225
Red-winged Blackbird	2							2								
Cardinal	1				1											
Evening Grosbeak	179	20	5			57	8	20	69	67	10		8		25	24
Pine Grosbeak	5								5							
Common Redpoll	40	20						20		15	4		10	1		
American Goldfinch	58	15	11	2			1	12	16	1		1	3	48		160
Slate-colored Junco	29	20			3	6										
Amer. Tree Sparrow	198	50	44	21	20	20	6	11	26	402	42	150	50	29	41	90
Field Sparrow										3						3
Song Sparrow	6	2	4							1			1			

\* Indicates species recorded by this group, but count considered as included in that of another group.

Additional species in the Schenectady area during the Count period:  
Oregon Junco, Mrs. Novak's feeder until 12/24 and after 12/30  
Robin, Mrs. Novak's feeder, Dec. 30.

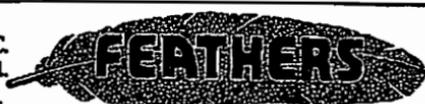
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Byron T. Hipple, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Howard T. Malone.

Group 6: Collins Lake, Sunnyside Road, Mohawk River to Lock Eight; 2-1/2 party-hours (2 afoot, 1/2 by car); 10 party-miles (3 on foot, 7 by car); Lawrence Hill, Richard Keller.

Group 7: Watervliet Reservoir and vicinity; 8-1/2 party-hours (5 afoot, 3-1/2 by car); 49 party-miles (9 afoot, 40 by car); Guy Bartlett, Esly Hallenbeck.

Group 8: Thacher Park, Altamont, Voorheesville, Meadowdale; 7 party-hours (2 afoot, 5 by car); 45 party-miles (2 afoot, 43 by car); Lucille Grace, Samuel R. Madison, James K. Meritt (compiler).

### Troy High-lights

Troy - Same overall area as in other recent years; Jan. 2, 7:15 a. m. to 5 p. m. Clear, becoming cloudy in mid-afternoon; temperature 7 below to 20 above; no wind; less open water than in other recent years, including area below Federal Dam at Green Island. Eighteen observers in 6 parties; total party-hours, 41-1/2 (17 afoot, 24-1/2 by car); total party-miles, 351 (28 afoot, 323 by car).

Group 1: Hudson River from Troy to Waterford, Mohawk River from mouth to Mohawk View, and territory west of Hudson and south of Mohawk Rivers; 9 party-hours (4 afoot, 5 by car); 60 party-miles (5 afoot, 55 by car); Guy Bartlett, Esly Hallenbeck (plus Herring Gull by Mildred D. Cray at Watervliet-Troy bridge).

Group 2: Highlands west of Hudson River and north of Mohawk River; 6 party-hours (2 afoot, 4 by car); 75 party-miles (2 afoot, 73 by car); Alice Holmes, Nelle G. Van Vorst.

Group 3: Hudson River valley, Waterford to Stillwater; 7 party-hours (5 afoot, 2 by car); 55 party-miles (5 afoot, 50 by car); Mr. and Mrs. Stephen C. Fordham, Samuel R. Madison, Walter Sabin.

Group 4: Tomhannock Reservoir; area north of Fogarty Road and east of Route 40, Schaghticoke, Valley Falls; 6-1/2 party-hours (4 afoot, 2-1/2 by car); 70 party-miles (11 by foot, 59 by car); Mr. and Mrs. Byron T. Hipple, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Howard L. Malone.

Group 5: Route 2 to Fogarty Road; 6 party-hours (1 afoot, 5 by car); 41 party-miles (1 afoot, 40 by car); Gustave Angst, Jim Meritt.

Group 6: Highlands north of Troy; 7 party-hours (1 afoot, 6 by car); 50 party-miles (4 afoot, 46 by car); Elizabeth A. Feldhusen, Mary O'Neill, Brother E. Austin, compiler.

	<u>Schenectady</u>								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Total Species	44	23	17	13	12	11	9	20	26
Total Individuals	6268	267	130	167	3170	1807	114	266	347
	<u>Troy</u>								
	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Total Species	34	18	13	20	17	13	21		
Total Individuals	3999	723	264	1083	364	314	1177		



## BRIEFING THE RECORD

James K. Meritt, Records Committee Chairman

December temperatures averaged 22.8 degrees, slightly over three degrees below normal. The official Schenectady low of 12 below was recorded Dec. 23, but temperatures were considerably lower in outlying areas. Precipitation was only about half normal.

The birding highlight of the month was, of course, the annual Christmas Count Dec. 26. Although a complete summary is given elsewhere (page 1), many of the records must be mentioned here for the sake of a reasonably informative monthly report.

Eighteen Hooded Mergansers on Saratoga Lake Dec. 6, and two Red-breasted Mergansers on Collins Lake on Dec. 9 were recorded by Esly Hallenbeck. Four waterfowl species, including a female Hooded Merganser, were seen on the 26th (SBC). No less than 10 kinds of hawks were observed that day. An adult Bald Eagle was perched in a tree near the Schenectady end of the Gateway Bridge on Dec. 29 (BSequin). One Herring Gull was observed on the Christmas Count, and a Horned Owl was also observed that day. On Dec. 20 a gray-phase Screech Owl was along Willow Lane, off Saratoga Road, for an extended time (fide GBartlett).

A Mockingbird was seen at Ballston Lake Dec. 29, and on the 1st and 2nd a Robin was seen there (M Foote). Another Robin was observed by Mrs. Novak and Mrs. Eddy in Niskayuna Dec. 30. One Eastern Bluebird was seen on the Christmas Count. On Dec. 10 a Gray Shrike was seen in Loudonville (MWFrench), and two others in the Vischer Ponds area Dec. 26 (SBC). On Dec. 18 three Meadowlarks were seen locally by three SBC members in two parties; the species was missed on the count.

The Evening Grosbeak invasion increased in intensity. The birds finally arrived at Mrs. Fitzgerald's Amsterdam feeder Dec. 6. She saw about 50 that day, including a male she banded in 1951. Among the month's many reports were those for Gallupville (GZimmer), Alplaus (AHeitkamp), Brunswick Hills, near Troy (fide Bro. Austin), Ballston Lake (M Foote), Loudonville (Mabel French), and Schenectady areas by Gloria Meader, Hazel Eddy, and Mrs. Louis Novak. The Christmas Count of 179 was record-breaking. All in all, quite an influx! In sharp contrast, there was only one report of the Pine Grosbeak, five in Thacher Park on Dec. 26 (SBC).

I know of no December Purple Finch or Pine Siskin records. Two parties reported Redpolls Dec. 26. For about the middle two weeks of the month a male Towhee was at a feeder off Saratoga Road (BS). A male Cardinal was seen by Mrs. Diggs in Niskayuna on the 3rd, and on the 18th this bird (or another) appeared at Mrs. Eddy's feeder. The bird remained to become our first Christmas-count Cardinal since 1944.

An Oregon Junco, however, was not as cooperative. A well-marked individual was present at Mrs. Novak's feeder from about the 12th until the 24th. It reappeared on the 30th. This Oregon Junco represents only our second local record, the first having been last January.

A White-throated Sparrow was seen on three occasions at Loudonville by Mrs. French during the last eight days of the month, and there was one in Scotia Dec. 22 (EH). Six Song Sparrows were seen at Gallupville on Dec. 26 (GZ). On Dec. 29 some 300 Snow Buntings were seen on the ice of Sacandage Reservoir (RYunick).



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## 1955 IN REVIEW

James K. Moritt, Records Committee Chairman

Two hundred and eight species of birds were reported in the SBC area during 1955. While the report officially covers eleven counties of eastern New York State, virtually all of the records are, understandably, close to Schenectady, Albany and Troy. The total of 208 is an increase of seven over the 1954 composite list (FEATHERS, Nov. 1955).

Three species were new for the SBC area: Spruce Grouse in Warren County, a Magpie in April, and two Oregon Juncos, in January and December. In addition, a Yellow Rail was reported at Meadowdale Marsh in July. This was a sound-record only, however, and when one considers the rarity of the bird, the report can be accepted as hypothetical only. In this the observer wholeheartedly concurs.

Although the 1954 list was below that of last year, the following 13 varieties recorded in 1954 were missed last year: Red-necked Grebe, Whistling Swan, American Brant, Shoveller, Turkey Vulture, Pigeon Hawk, Greater Yellow-legs, White-rumped Sandpiper, Iceland Gull, Black Tern, Fork-tailed Flycatcher, Tufted Titmouse, and American Pipit. That the latter bird was apparently completely missed in 1955 is almost incredible.

The 1955 list included 31 kinds of warblers, 30 of finches and sparrows, 24 of waterfowl, 20 of shore-birds, and 18 of hawks and owls. Very briefly, here is the summary:

<b>Common Loon</b>	Apr. 17; Oct. 22 to Dec. 3
<b>Horned Grebe</b>	Feb. 9 to early May; Sep. 25 to Dec. 4
<b>Pied-billed Grebe</b>	Apr. 3; Sep. 25 to Dec. 4
<b>Great Blue Heron</b>	Apr. 13 to Dec. 26
<b>American Egret</b>	May 14 to Sep. 18
<b>Green Heron</b>	May 7 to Sep. 11
<b>Black-cr. Night Heron</b>	May 7 to Sep. 18
<b>American Bittern</b>	Apr. 2 to Oct. 16
<b>Mute Swan</b>	One, Saratoga Lake, Nov. 8
<b>Canada Goose</b>	Mar. 10 to Apr. 17; July 1 to Oct. 16
<b>Snow Goose</b>	Maximum of 68, Mar. 26 to Apr. 5
<b>Mallard</b>	Resident
<b>Black Duck</b>	Resident
<b>American Widgeon</b>	Mar. 20 to Apr. 3; Aug. 30 to Sep. 26
<b>Pintail</b>	Jan. 22; Mar. 13 to Apr. 17; Oct. 9
<b>Green-winged Teal</b>	First reported Apr. 9
<b>Blue-winged Teal</b>	Apr. 24 to Sep. 11
<b>Wood Duck</b>	Jan. 4; Apr. 10 to Oct. 10
<b>Redhead</b>	May 14; Oct. 22 to Nov. 24



Ring-necked Duck	Apr. 3; Sep. 26 to Nov. 13
Canvas-back	Feb. 3; Nov. 8 to Nov. 19
Greater Scaup	Apr. 2 and Apr. 17
Lesser Scaup	Apr. 3 to May 14; Nov. 8 to Nov. 24
American Golden-eye	Jan. 1 to Mar. 20; Nov. 8 to Nov. 24
Buffle-head	Mar. 20 to Mar. 27; Oct. 22 to Dec. 4
Old-squaw	Only one report, one, Saratoga Lake, Nov. 24
White-winged Scoter	Nov. 12 to Nov. 24
American Scoter	One, Hudson River, Nov. 20
Ruddy Duck	Apr. 17; Nov. 6 to Dec. 4
Hooded Merganser	Mar. 19 to Mar. 27; Nov. 13 to Dec. 26
American Merganser	Jan. 16 to Mar. 27; Sep. 25 through year
Red-breasted Merganser	Apr. 17; Nov. 9
Goshawk	One record, Vischer Ponds, Dec. 26
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Resident
Cooper's Hawk	Resident
Red-tailed Hawk	Resident
Red-shouldered Hawk	Resident
Broad-winged Hawk	Apr. 16 to Sep. 21
Rough-legged Hawk	Recorded Jan. 30, Feb. 1 and 4, Nov. 6 & 13, Dec. 26
Bald Eagle	Several winter, spring and fall reports
Marsh Hawk	Resident
Osprey	Apr. 3 to Oct. 10
Peregrine Falcon	Two, near Albany, Dec. 26
Sparrow Hawk	Resident
Spruce Grouse	Small flock in Warren County (Audubon Field Notes, Vol. 10, No. 1, Feb., 1956, p. 10)
Ruffed Grouse	Resident
Ring-necked Pheasant	Resident
Virginia Rail	May 14 to Aug. 10
Yellow Rail	Hypothetical, one heard at Meadowdale, July 3
Sora	May 14 to Sep. 17
Florida Gallinule	Summer resident, first recorded May 14
American Coot	Jan. 2; Apr. 14 to Nov. 6
Ringed Plover	May 26; July 30 to Sep. 21
Killdeer	Jan. 16; summer resident
American Woodcock	Mar. 13 through July
Wilson's Snipe	Apr. 9; July 31 to Sep. 15
Upland Sandpiper	May 17 to June 25
Spotted Sandpiper	May 7 to Aug. 30
Solitary Sandpiper	May 10; July 30 to Aug. 10
Lesser Yellow-legs	May 7 to May 14; Sep. 25 to Oct. 22
Pectoral Sandpiper	July 28 to Sep. 25
Least Sandpiper	May 3 to May 14; Aug. 2
Semipalmated Sandpiper	July 30 and 31, Watervliet Reservoir, maximum 12
Great Black-backed Gull	Several March and April reports
Herring Gull	Fall, winter and spring visitor
Ring-billed Gull	To May 14; Sep. 13 to Nov. 8
Bonaparte's Gull	April 17
Common Tern	Twenty, Saratoga Lake, Sep. 23
Mourning Dove	Resident
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	May 6 to Sep. 25
Black-billed Cuckoo	First report May 10

<b>Barn Owl</b>	Feb. 19, Apr. 24, early May
<b>Screech Owl</b>	Resident
<b>Horned Owl</b>	Resident
<b>Snowy Owl</b>	Only one record, one, Altamont, Jan. 30
<b>Barred Owl</b>	Resident
<b>Short-eared Owl</b>	One, near Catskill, Jan. 16
<b>Whip-poor-will</b>	First recorded May 14
<b>Common Nighthawk</b>	May 14 to Sep. 21
<b>Chimney Swift</b>	May 1 to Sep. 27
<b>Ruby-thr. Hummingbird</b>	May 7 to Sep. 23
<b>Belted Kingfisher</b>	Resident
<b>Yellow-shafted Flicker</b>	Resident
<b>Pileated Woodpecker</b>	Resident
<b>Red-headed Woodpecker</b>	One record, one, Indian Ladder, May 15
<b>Yellow-bellied Sapsucker</b>	Apr. 14 to Apr. 18; Sep. 25 to Oct. 8; summer resident at Jenny Lake
<b>Hairy Woodpecker</b>	Resident
<b>Downy Woodpecker</b>	Resident
<b>Eastern Kingbird</b>	May 5 to Sep. 17
<b>Crested Flycatcher</b>	May 1 to Sep. 25
<b>Eastern Phoebe</b>	Arrived Apr. 2
<b>Yellow-bellied Flycatcher</b>	Aug. 19 to Sep. 3
<b>Traill's Flycatcher</b>	First report May 22
<b>Least Flycatcher</b>	Arrived May 7
<b>Eastern Wood Pewee</b>	May 19 to Sep. 5
<b>Olive-sided Flycatcher</b>	May 14; Aug. 28 to Sep. 16; summer resident at Jenny Lake
<b>Horned Lark</b>	Resident
<b>Tree Swallow</b>	Arrived Apr. 2
<b>Bank Swallow</b>	Arrived Apr. 24
<b>Rough-winged Swallow</b>	Arrived Apr. 24
<b>Barn Swallow</b>	Arrived Apr. 24
<b>Cliff Swallow</b>	Arrived May 7
<b>Purple Martin</b>	Arrived Apr. 12
<b>Blue Jay</b>	Resident
<b>American Magpie</b>	One, Slingerlands, Apr. 22
<b>American Crow</b>	Resident
<b>Black-capped Chickadee</b>	Resident
<b>Brown-capped Chickadee</b>	One through January, Hudson Lock 1
<b>White-breasted Nuthatch</b>	Resident
<b>Red-breasted Nuthatch</b>	Resident
<b>Brown Creeper</b>	Resident
<b>House Wren</b>	Apr. 30 to Oct. 23
<b>Winter Wren</b>	Summer resident, Jenny Lake; also Oct. 1 and 2
<b>Carolina Wren</b>	One, Collins Lake, first 9 months of year
<b>Long-billed Marsh Wren</b>	May 14 to Sep. 17
<b>Short-billed Marsh Wren</b>	Two, Meadowdale, July 3
<b>Mockingbird</b>	May 18; Nov. 27; Dec. 29
<b>Catbird</b>	May 3 to Oct. 5
<b>Brown Thrasher</b>	Feb. 15; first spring report Apr. 30
<b>American Robin</b>	Resident
<b>Wood Thrush</b>	May 5 to Oct. 11
<b>Hermit Thrush</b>	Apr. 16 to Nov. 22
<b>Olive-backed Thrush</b>	May 22; Sep. 11 to Sep. 25; summer resident at Jenny Lake
<b>Gray-cheeked Thrush</b>	May 10 to 22; Sep. 3 to Oct. 9
<b>Veery</b>	May 10 to 27; Sep. 4 as transient; summer resident
<b>Eastern Bluebird</b>	Resident
<b>Golden-crowned Kinglet</b>	No spring records; arrived Oct. 2

<b>Ruby-crowned Kinglet</b>	Apr. 24 to May 13; Sep. 13 to Oct. 22
<b>Cedar Waxwing</b>	Resident
<b>Gray Shrike</b>	Recorded January, November and December
<b>Loggerhead Shrike</b>	Mar. 2; Apr. 3
<b>Common Starling</b>	Resident
<b>Yellow-throated Vireo</b>	May 14 to Sep. 27
<b>Solitary Vireo</b>	Summer resident; transient May 8 to 14, and Sep. 25 to Oct. 7
<b>Red-eyed Vireo</b>	May 1 to Oct. 13
<b>Philadelphia Vireo</b>	Sep. 17 and 20
<b>Warbling Vireo</b>	Arrived May 2
<b>Black and White Warbler</b>	May 1 to Oct. 1
<b>Worm-eating Warbler</b>	May 14, only record
<b>Golden-winged Warbler</b>	Arrived May 7
<b>Blue-winged Warbler</b>	First reported May 14
<b>Tennessee Warbler</b>	May 8 to 20; Sep. 3 to Oct. 9
<b>Orange-crowned Warbler</b>	Sep. 24 and Oct. 9
<b>Nashville Warbler</b>	Summer resident; transient May 3 to 14, Sep. 13 to 27
<b>Parula Warbler</b>	Arrived May 8
<b>Yellow Warbler</b>	May 2 to Sep. 25
<b>Magnolia Warbler</b>	May 7 to 14; Aug. 29 to Oct. 18
<b>Cape May Warbler</b>	May 7 to 14; Sep. 24
<b>Black-thr. Blue Warbler</b>	May 8 to Sep. 22
<b>Myrtle Warbler</b>	Apr. 24 to Nov. 3
<b>Black-thr. Green Warbler</b>	Apr. 30 to Oct. 19
<b>Cerulean Warbler</b>	One, Amsterdam, Sep. 2
<b>Blackburnian Warbler</b>	Arrived May 1
<b>Chestnut-sided Warbler</b>	Arrived May 7
<b>Bay-breasted Warbler</b>	No spring reports; Sep. 3 to Oct. 2
<b>Black-poll Warbler</b>	May 14; Sep. 2 to Oct. 17
<b>Pine Warbler</b>	Arrived May 14
<b>Prairie Warbler</b>	Arrived May 14
<b>Palm Warbler</b>	May 7; Oct. 12 to 18
<b>Oven-bird</b>	May 5 to Sep. 23
<b>Northern Waterthrush</b>	May 1 to 14; Sep. 4 to 20
<b>Louisiana Waterthrush</b>	Arrived May 8
<b>Connecticut Warbler</b>	One, Scotia, Sep. 27
<b>Common Yellowthroat</b>	May 8 to Sep. 29
<b>Yellow-breasted Chat</b>	Arrived May 22
<b>Black-capped Warbler</b>	One, Loudonville, Sep. 17
<b>Canada Warbler</b>	First spring report May 8; first fall, Aug. 19
<b>Redstart</b>	May 17 to Oct. 9
<b>House Sparrow</b>	Resident
<b>Bobolink</b>	May 14 to Sep. 5
<b>Eastern Meadowlark</b>	Arrived Mar. 6
<b>Yellow-headed Blackbird</b>	One, Vischer Ponds, June 5 to 19
<b>Red-winged Blackbird</b>	Arrived Mar. 6
<b>Baltimore Oriole</b>	May 3 to Sep. 18
<b>Rusty Blackbird</b>	Apr. 18 to May 14; Oct. 4 to 9
<b>Purple Grackle</b>	First recorded Jan. 24
<b>Brown-headed Cowbird</b>	First report March 6
<b>Scarlet Tanager</b>	May 8 to Sep. 19
<b>Cardinal</b>	Several resident birds
<b>Rose-breasted Grosbeak</b>	May 5 to Nov. 2
<b>Indigo Bunting</b>	May 14 to Sep. 22
<b>Dickcissel</b>	Jan. 1 to 26; Aug. 19 to 30
<b>Evening Grosbeak</b>	Left May 22; arrived Nov. 6; summer resident in Adirondack section of territory

Purple Finch	First report Jan. 10
Pine Grosbeak	Recorded January, March, April, December
Common Redpoll	Left Apr. 4; Dec. 26
Pine Siskin	Left May 22; no fall records
American Goldfinch	Resident
Red Crossbill	Twelve, Schenectady, Apr. 21
White-winged Crossbill	Ballston Lake, group in early March
Eastern Towhee	Arrived Apr. 30; one in December
Savannah Sparrow	May 7 to Sep. 25
Grasshopper Sparrow	Arrived May 3
Henslow's Sparrow	Arrived May 14
Vesper Sparrow	March 27 to Oct. 27
State-colored Junco	Resident
Oregon Junco	Jan. 9; Dec. 12 through year
American Tree Sparrow	Left Apr. 21; arrived Oct. 23
Chipping Sparrow	Apr. 11 to Oct. 23
Field Sparrow	Apr. 11 to Oct. 2
White-crowned Sparrow	May 5 to 16; Sep. 25 to Oct. 23
White-throated Sparrow	Summer resident, and winter visitor
Fox Sparrow	March 13 to April 5; Oct. 2 to Nov. 20
Lincoln's Sparrow	Two separate records, Oct. 2
Swamp Sparrow	Arrived Apr. 24
Song Sparrow	Resident
Lapland Longspur	Two, near Troy, Jan. 2
Snow Bunting	Recorded through March; arrived November

## BRIEFING THE RECORD

James K. Meritt, Records Committee Chairman

January temperatures averaged 25.2 degrees, a good 3.7 degrees above normal. Precipitation was 1.87 inches, about a half inch below average. The official Schenectady high of 49 degrees was recorded on January 9; the low of -2 on the 2nd. Ornithologically, the month was a most interesting one. A good total of 56 species was reported.

A Great Blue Heron was observed at Collins Lake, Scotia, Jan. 17 (E.Hallenbeck). Near Mechanicville the Hudson River was largely open throughout the month, and this accounted for several interesting waterfowl observations. Approximately 1100 ducks of six species were observed on the Troy Christmas Count on Jan. 2 (SBC). A Green-winged Teal and four Red-breasted Mergansers were among the best finds that day. As expected, Black Ducks made up more than half the waterfowl numbers. Eight species of ducks were seen along the upper Hudson on Jan. 15, with a Redhead, two Scaup (presumably Greater), two White-winged Scoters, and some 40 Red-breasted Mergansers being particularly noteworthy (SBC). On Jan. 21 a male Barrow's Golden-eye was seen on the Hudson about four miles south of Mechanicville. This rare winter visitor, which had not been reported locally since 1952, was first spotted by Ken Hart of New York City. The bird was simultaneously and subsequently seen by several other observers.

A Cooper's Hawk, two Rough-legged Hawks, and a Bald Eagle were among the species recorded on the Troy Count. Another Cooper's Hawk was seen in Schenectady on Jan. 11 by Mrs. F. Lamprey. A Sharp-shinned Hawk was reported on several occasions from the Voorheesville area (L.Grace). The only gulls reported were all ob-

served on the Upper Hudson field trip of Jan. 15 -- seven Great Black-backed, 30 Herring, and 10 Ring-billed (SBC).

Five Mourning Doves were seen Jan. 8 (SPodrazik). No owls were recorded during the month. The only Pileated Woodpecker report was from Gallupville on Jan. 5 (GZimmer). A Flicker was reported on two occasions from Slingerlands (LG). Four Horned Larks were seen on the Troy Count, and on Jan. 28 one was seen near Ballston Lake (M Foote). Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported on several dates. Two Brown Creepers were recorded by separate parties on the Troy Count. A Mockingbird was seen near Ballston Lake on the 7th, 16th, and 29th (MF). Two Robins were observed near Troy Jan. 2 (SBC), and another was reported during the month by Mrs. Louis Novak. On Jan. 10 a Hermit Thrush was seen by Mrs. Lamprey, and on Jan. 16 another individual was reported in Scotia (EH). Cedar Waxwings were reported on several occasions by Hazel Eddy and Mrs. Lamprey. A Bluebird was recorded at Slingerlands early in the month (LG).

There were several Gray Shrike reports. One was seen catching a mouse in a field near Troy Jan. 2, and another bird was reported on the upper Hudson SBC trip Jan. 15. One was at Vischer Ponds Jan. 22 (JMeritt), and still another was seen on the 31st by Mrs. Novak. A pair of Cowbirds was observed at Gallupville Jan. 18, and daily thereafter (GZ). Three Purple Finches were seen by Hazel Eddy Jan. 8, and a male Cardinal was a daily visitor to her feeder through the month.

Evening Grosbeaks were, as in December, widely reported. These birds appear to be more generally distributed this winter than last. The following are only a few of the reports received: Jan. 9, Alplaus (AHeitkamp); throughout the month, Niskayuna (CDiggs, HE, Mrs. Novak); Jan. 15, upper Hudson (SBC); throughout the month, Gallupville (GZ); and Jan. 25, Scotia (EH).

There were quite a few reports of Redpolls. Fifteen were observed on the Jan. 2 Troy Count. On Jan. 8 a group was seen in Niskayuna (HE), and on that same date another group of about 30 was seen near Rexford (SP). Mrs. Lamprey reported the species present along Grand Boulevard from Jan. 23 on. The species was also recorded by C. Jennings. No Pine Grosbeaks or Pine Siskins were reported. That the latter was apparently missed is somewhat surprising for there have been a fair number of Siskin reports from areas to the south of us.

The Oregon Junco which first appeared at Mrs. Novak's feeder about Dec. 12 was again reported, but only early in the month. A White-throated Sparrow was observed on several occasions during the period at Loudonville by Mabel French. Three Field Sparrows were seen near Troy Jan. 2 (SBC). There were several Song Sparrow reports. A small group of Snow Buntings was near Fultonville Jan. 7 (JM), and this species was also reported during the month by Carrington Howard.



## STATE FEDERATION NEWS



It is none too early to start making your plans for attending the annual meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs. The dates are Saturday and Sunday, May 12 and 13. Headquarters will be the Roger Smith Hotel, White Plains. There are three hosts -- the Bedford, Saw Mill and Scarsdale Audubon Societies. The time is appropriate for a really big field-trip list.


 NEWS AND NOTES IN BRIEF
CHRISTMAS AT GALLUPVILLE

Additional to the local Christmas Counts already published, Mrs. Chester Zimmer continued hers at Gallupville -- in SBC territory, but outside the 15-mile circle. She listed eight species: Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Downy and Hairy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Song Sparrow, House Sparrow, Starling, and Crow. Except for the last, all were feeder-visitors.

CHRISTMAS AT SANTA FE

Up until the last Count, Leon and Betty Wiard had been participants in the Schenectady and Troy Counts. The 1955 Count found them in decidedly different territory -- Santa Fe, New Mexico. Their list of 26 species (plus one recognized subspecies) included many birds we know here, but also many we do not. Their list:

Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Red-shafted Flicker, 5; Lewis's Woodpecker, 4; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Scrub Jay, 13; Common Raven, 28; Pinon Jay, 137; Black-capped Chickadee, 13; Plain Titmouse, 1; White-breasted Nuthatch, 10; American Robin, 4; Western Bluebird, 13; Townsend's Solitaire, 19; Common Starling, 95; House Sparrow, 44; House Finch, 110; Brown Towhee, 7; Spotted Towhee, 5; Slate-colored Junco, 2; Oregon Junco, 129 (including 1 Pink-sided Junco as recognized subspecies); Gray-headed Junco, 224; White-crowned Sparrow, 51; and Song Sparrow, 5. Totals, 26 species, plus 1 subspecies; 923 individuals.

WILLIAMSTOWN'S EVENING GROSBEAKS

This season's Evening Grosbeaks first appeared at the Williams Inn on October 18. The six remained just one day and then moved on; no more were seen anywhere in Williamstown until October 29. Thus October 18 may be considered the date of the passing of the first migrants.

The characteristics of their coming in the autumn are often quite different. Once in a while a considerable number will arrive suddenly and settle down at once to form a permanent group. Usually a very few come; they remain a day or two, and then move on; then others come and it may be a couple of months before a permanent winter colony has formed. From November 2 to 9 grosbeaks were seen every day, and the number increased to about 30. They spread out over a larger area of the town. The permanent winter colony was apparently forming. By November 28 the number had reached 100, and by the end of December there were probably 300 grosbeaks in Williamstown. They are strongly concentrated in the Williams Inn and School Street area, but are found in all parts of the town. They are quite at home, tame, and settled down for a long stay, presumably until May.

They usually come to the feeders about 7 o'clock in the morning, and remain until 1 or 2 in the afternoon. They do not spend the night in Williamstown. The number of males and females is about equal, the males possibly predominating slightly. No banded, marked or unusual birds have been seen so far this year.

As regards food, they will disdainfully eat native foods from trees and shrubs, bread crumbs and the like -- but what they want is sunflower seed and, mind you, not the small, dark, so-called Mexican seed but the larger, light-striped kind.

-- Willis I. Milham

WILSON O. S. AT BUFFALO

The 37th annual meeting of the Wilson Ornithological Society will be held at Buffalo Thursday, April 26 through Sunday, April 29. Host societies will be Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences, Buffalo Audubon Society, and Buffalo Ornithological Society. If interested in attending, Dr. Ralph S. Palmer, State Museum, Albany, can supply more information.

NEW YEAR'S ON THE COAST

Fine weather over the long New Year's weekend found us on the Massachusetts coast. On the last day of 1955 we joined a group from the Brookline Bird Club covering Nahant for the Christmas Count. We were in luck, and soon added the Barred Owl and European Cormorant to our list, which brought us to our goal for the year -- 200 birds. We went on to add the Purple Sandpiper and Barn Owl to bring our grand total to 202 for the year. The other interesting birds in the afternoon's count of 25 were two Robins and a dozen Sanderlings. Thus ended 1955.

New Year's Day found us on Cape Ann with a fresh list and a temperature of 4 above zero. The ocean was steamy, making the visibility only fair, and the cold air did not let us stay out of the car too long at any one time. Our prizes on Cape Ann were a Common Eider at Andrews Point, Snow Buntings at Rockport, and an Iceland Gull at Bass Rocks. We also saw the European Cormorants and Purple Sandpipers.

In the afternoon we went down to Plum Island and were disappointed to find the road to the Sanctuary flooded and frozen, and driving unsafe. However, we did find another Sanderling on the ocean beach and many Grebes, Loons, Buffleheads and Mergansers in Newburyport Harbor. But best of all, not one but two mature Bald Eagles sitting on pilings in the harbor. After we had had time to study them at length through the scope, they obligingly took to the air, soaring ever higher, a wonderful finish to our day's birding.

-- The Footes

PILEATED TROUBLES

Utility companies in Pennsylvania have provided a research grant for a three-year study at Pennsylvania State University, hoping they can find a way to make their poles less attractive to Pileated Woodpeckers. Damage amounting to thousands of dollars a year are attributed to this spectacular bird -- they treat poles just like dead pines in some areas.

ARCTIC HEADLINER

At Atlantic Fulmar made the headlines, with a two-picture spread, in the New York City newspapers last month because it saw fit to be found beside to the road between Ramsey and Mahwah, N. J. The bird was taken first to the American Museum of Natural History, and then set free near Yonkers.

BOOK ON BIRDS OF PREY

"North American Birds of Prey" by Alexander Sprunt, Jr., has been published by Harper & Brothers, sponsored by the National Audubon Society. The book grows out of an earlier work, "The Hawks of North America" by John B. May, published 20 years ago. The book is illustrated with 46 plates in full color, the majority by the late Allan Brooks. The text describes each species as it may be seen in its natural habitat, and includes information on recognition, nesting habits and range.



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## SEEING, AND OBSERVING, BIRDS

Mildred M. Betts

While I have seen birds of many kinds all my life, it has been only about two or three years that I have been Observing them. Like an amateur artist who first picks up a brush to do a landscape; at first all he sees is the green forest. Gradually he begins to realize that it isn't all one shade of green, or even all green, and so his eyes open -- so it is with birds.

Actually, I am a misplaced nature lover who lives in the middle of the city, surrounded by House Sparrows, Starlings, Rock Pigeons, and gray squirrels, plus neighbors who do not take to any form of wild life.

So it is a joy in the spring to take to the country. I cover certain spots close to Albany, like the land around Watervliet Reservoir, up the Kinderhook near West Lebanon, and, best of all, at our camp at Little Wolf, in the northwestern Adirondacks. It is up there that I thought I'd take you birding.

### Up the Ottawa

It is early June, and a heavy fog still blankets Little Wolf at 6 a. m. The chill in the air makes me pause for a cup of hot coffee, for I have my breakfast stuck in my pocket. The Wood Pewee calls from the woods outside, so I know it's time to be "Up the Ottawa". My binoculars, 7x35, notebook, pencil, reference books, are in the car. The books include Roger Tory Peterson on birds, one on wild flowers, and one on trees. If you don't know the trees and flowers that birds light and feed upon, the background of your picture is missing.

As I get into the car I hear the Flickers wicker-wickering to each other in a family confab. As the car rises to the old dirt road, at least 15 or 20 take off from where they were ground-feeding. They rise in dips and swoops, showing their white rump spots, as they go into the red maples that shrub the sides of the road. A red fox daintily crosses in front of me. Down near the pond outlet, over the bridge on a telephone wire, perches the Kingfisher in his usual spot, waiting with wary eye upon the creek for his breakfast to swim past.

This is one of the birding spots that I leave until later in the morning. Closeby there is a colony of about a hundred Bank Swallows, but I head north through the village and up the Ottawa. This is a term used by the villagers for what is now a narrow gravel road. It was at one time a spur of the New York Central Railroad which ran to Ottawa, Canada. Nature is in its second growth up here since the big fires of 1903. The young forest is largely red and black spruce, tamarack and balsam, with some ash, sugar maple, beech, and even some white pine. At different times of the year sheep laurel, Labrador tea, bog

gentians and moccasin flowers all may be found in bloom. I wish this area could become part of the Forest Preserve, and forever be kept as a sanctuary. It is a paradise in more than one way, and it is a wonderfully wild spot for bird-watching, for land so close to a village. It is typical Adirondack country -- beaver dams, small ponds, lake-marsh, brooks, fields, meadow and forest, all at an altitude of about 1600 feet.

#### Cause for Alarm?

Beside the sandy road, near a big old pin-cherry, I park the car. Here I get scolded by a little chipmunk, who runs up and down the tree and in and out of the brambles. He finally convinces a couple of Catbird tenants that there is cause for alarm. They try to lead me out of there. I sit tight under the edge of the old tree and slather on some 612, which the black flies take for French dressing. The mist has now lifted, and on the barbed-wire fence sits a Kingbird. Up on the telephone wire there is a Robin, a Phoebe, and two Starlings. Near the lower end of the lake, over the cat-tails, and gliding low, comes a Marsh Hawk, graceful and slow of wing movement. He too is out for his breakfast. Over near the edge of the woods, in the low white spruce, sits the Shrike. Usually there are two, each with a spruce tip to himself. They do business sometimes down at the corner near the thorn-apple trees.

Many I can now tell by their songs and their calls. Little Chickadees come in bands of from two to seven or eight, and clown around, half the time upside down. A foot or two away from my face one lands and looks at me right in the eye, as if to size up my intents toward him. Just as I think he's going to fall from the twig tip, he rights himself and eats something so minute that I can't see it at all.

High up there is a silhouette carolling against the sun. With my binoculars I see that American beauty. It's a male Scarlet Tanager, perched on a bare limb and singing his heart away. (In August I see him again with two irregular splashes of yellow-green on his breast, and in September once again, almost all a greenish yellow except for black wings and tail.) He and his song are the peak of one particular morning.

#### Tame Redstart

A twitchery-twitchery-twee sort of song is coming from some of the saplings and brush, and with my glasses I can see the fluttering tail-spreading and fanning of the little male "fire-bird", who has come north from Mexico. I investigate his doings and find the even smaller, yellow-marked female Redstart setting snug upon her nest in the vertical crotch of a maple sapling. One year I watched the eggs and family, and saw the young as they first appeared. They were such tiny, almost naked bits of life. Later, after the female had apparently come to the understanding that I meant them no harm, she allowed me to touch her back gently with my finger. There are many rewards for patience.

This is, as I said, a birding paradise, and the last of May and all of June is a symphony of winged song. In every paradise there is some tragedy and of course I find it once in a while. . . . A tiny Magnolia Warbler, a bird-jewel of black and yellow-gold, spiked on a thorn bush. His tiny body fits in the palm of my hand, and I get angry at the Shrike. Then I remember that I too eat lamb and am no vegetarian, so I take the warbler home and make a sketch of him and his color pattern in my journal. On a stormy day when the clouds come down to the blacktop roads, I find big, golden wings spread on the wet pavement. I see the incredible beauty that was a Flicker. Last spring I found a very lively

Flicker in the stove. I released him and he went out into the sky like a rocket. A week later, on cleaning the stovepipe, we found three more, who were less fortunate. In the fall I picked up a White-throated Sparrow. Here again I learned through tragedy, for in no bird book that I have read, have I ever seen the marginal thread of pale yellow along the wing edge, close to the breast. You have to look twice to see it at all, it is so fine. The yellow frontal eye mark is outstanding compared to this marking.

### Little Wolf

When the sun warms things up a bit in the early morning, I go down or back to the outlet of Little Wolf, the bridge and the dam. Here I numb my toes in the icy water as it comes tumbling over the spill, and breakfast on the orange and banana, watching the Kingfisher get his food. This is the buggiest spot around the pond. Alders, birch and witchhazel line the banks, and it is here I find the Phoebe, Wood Pewee, Black and White Warbler, Kingbird, and Olive-sided Flycatcher, all very busy.

Up at the camp, about an eighth of a mile along the shore, the Veeries are sending their songs down to the lake in a cascade of liquid notes, all sliding down the scale in loops of melody. Farther up in the woods the Hermits are hitting tremulous highs.

Our back woodlots I don't like to bother much, for I know there are two Veery nests, one on the ground and one about a foot off in a stump. Song Sparrows have a nest in the young spruce. Chipping Sparrows live about seven feet up in a balsam near the shed, on the other side of which are Robins. These all have eggs or newly hatched young, so I keep away, for there is a wandering bird-dog at the next camp, a pack of coon hounds from the village, and numerous temporary camp-cat pets. The dogs all run with their noses close to any trail left by man or animal.

The day coming to a close has even more attractions, and as I get ready the food pans for the skunk who lives under the camp, and old Ma coon and her family of four young, who live up back of the North Pole (a detached, isolated structure on the lot), I hear the plaintive last calls of the Pewee and the first nostalgic evening Avè of the Whip-poor-will from across the bay. Once I was fortunate enough to have the latter perch in the white pine outside my window, where I saw him well before he flew.

### Late Summer

In the later summer when the coons are coming into my living room, and the skunk drags his tail nonchalantly past us, things are quieter. Even so, a day's recording in my journal reads:

Aug. 19: 65° at 7 am, 90° at noon; humidity high; day clear and sunny, "Up the Ottawa" 8 am to 11:30 am. Evening Grosbeaks (40, first flock I have ever seen); Kingbird, Flickers, Catbirds, Robins, Blue Jays, Barn Swallows, Phoebe, Wood Pewee, Bank Swallows (100 to 200), Sparrow Hawk, Kingfishers, Magnolia Warblers, Black Ducks, Goldfinches, Hummingbird, Northern Water-thrush, Oven-bird, White-throated Sparrow, Chickadees. Two immature Redstarts touching beaks quickly, while fluttering wings fast, chattering softly. Affection, or a fight?

In September, as we get ready to leave for the south and home, most of the birds up there are doing the same thing. We are battening down shutters, and our feathered friends are fattening themselves on seeds, fruits and insects against their much longer journey.

## FROM ALBANY TO SANTA FE

Leon A. Wierd

Santa Fe is quite a bit different than we had expected -- even from the Chamber of Commerce write-ups! You take a perfect October day in New York, and that is what you get every day.

The Sangre de Cristo mountains are eastward from the city, with Santa Fe at the foot of and on the lower slopes. These mountains contain huge growths, areawise, of quaking aspen, which are at their best at this time (October). There are also ponderosa pine, blue spruce, and various other types of evergreens reaching up to timberline. These trees are big and well watered. The growth reminds me somewhat of that in the Catskills and Adirondacks, except that it is practically all coniferous except where the aspens are covering areas where fires probably once burned over and killed the conifers. The road leads up to within 500 feet of timberline. There is a power line going nearly to the top; then you can cut across this low saddle and be at timberline. It's really quite a drive going up there. It is definitely an unimproved road, a 2500- to 3000-foot rise, with many turns. The mountainside just drops away, and I mean that, in places.

Along the Way

On our trip across we did not get a chance to see much except large birds, or flocks. We did not get the Dickcissel but saw Western Meadowlarks. We stopped at Springfield and drove out to Salem, where Lincoln lived and kept store. It is a state park, and I had little opportunity for birding there. We saw Robins, Yellow-shafted Flickers, Cardinals, White-throats, Catbirds, Titmice, and similar species not too much different from what you get in New York.

Coming through Missouri, we stopped for lunch along the road and saw more Titmice, and large flocks of migrating Blue Jays. At the Lake of the Cherokees in Oklahoma, just west of the Missouri border, we saw lots of Herons and Egrets. There were Americans and, I believe, Little Blues. Also plenty of Gulls.

The highlights really started between Tulsa and Oklahoma City where we found the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher. They are as colorful as a parakeet, and as smooth as a Cedar Waxwing. Through Oklahoma and Texas we saw quite a few. To go back a bit, we had the Mockingbirds at the Will Rogers Memorial at Claremore.

It was becoming late in the afternoon when we were approaching Clinton, Okla. We saw a huge, milling flock of what I at first thought were Crows. It turned out to be made up of several hundred Swainson Hawks, which migrate in flocks like the Broad-winged. They are a common type of buteo and we saw several singles and pairs. One also sees Marsh Hawks out here.

We were driving along the next day outside of Amarillo when off in the northwest we saw a flock of what I at first took to be geese. It was made up of a large flock with a small flock of stragglers nearby. As we stopped the car they started to circle just to the north of us. Looking through the glasses, we picked up another, much higher flock right above the first one. Hold on -- they weren't geese, but Sandhill Cranes!

The Hawks, Scissor-tails and Cranes were probably the main ornithological highlights of the trip. We saw lots of Shrikes in Oklahoma, Sparrow Hawks, Falcons which were probably Prairies, Horned Larks, Clay-colored Sparrows, the ever-present (even here) House Sparrow.

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### Black Birds

I doubt that we had driven 500 feet into New Mexico when we had a Raven sitting on a fence post along the highway. How would you like to be in an area where you examine each large black bird to see if it is a Crow? That is the way it is out here. Ravens are all over the place. You sit outside, and one flies overhead. You look across the valley and see a half dozen of them sailing around. You think at first you are seeing some sort of a black hawk.

Coming up from Clines Corners to Santa Fe we made our first identification of the Brewer's Blackbird when we found a flock along the road. We had been looking for them, but had found only Cowbirds.

Later, on a trip up into the high country, we added some more. It was really the first opportunity that we had to look for birds. We found a few Robins. The Blue Jay is replaced here by Stellar's Jay, a big, dark blue, almost black fellow with a sharply pointed crest which is depressed when he flies. We saw several in flight and I had one perched. The Rocky Mountain Jay resembles the Canada, although his color is "fuzzier". They are thick around the picnic grounds up at the top. On the way up I picked up a Clark's Nutcracker and thought I saw another. The Stellar's Jay seems to have a wide range, elevationwise, but the Mountain Jay was found only at the top. We ran into flocks of Gray-headed Juncos above 9000 feet. Up there we had the Mountain Jays and a Mountain Chickadee, similar to our Black-caps but with a white eyebrow stripe and shaggier appearance.

After coming down off the mountain we drove over to the Tesuque Pueblo and ran across a few Western Bluebirds. Not bad for one afternoon, was it?

### Some "Lifers"

Here is my list of species for our first five weeks out here. Many are old friends, and plenty are "lifers" on my list. The species:

Red-tailed Hawk (very plentiful), Marsh Hawk, Sparrow Hawk (practically a pet), Scaled Quail, Ring-necked Pheasant, Sandhill Crane, Killdeer, Western Sandpiper, Mourning Dove, Robin, Red-shafted Flicker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Lewis's Woodpecker, Say's Phoebe, Horned Lark, Oregon Jay, Stellar's Jay, Woodhouse's Jay (?), American Magpie, Raven, Crow, Pimon Jay, Clark's Nutcracker, Mountain Chickadee, Titmouse, Bush-tit, White-breaster Nuthatch, Rock Wren, Western Bluebird, Mountain Bluebird, Townsend's Solitaire, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Shrike, Myrtle Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Western Meadowlark, Red-wing, Brewer's Blackbird, House Finch (almost as common as House Sparrow), House Sparrow, Starling, Pine Siskin, Canon Towhee, Spotted Towhee, Sage Sparrow, Oregon Junco, Gray-headed Junco, Brewer's Sparrow (?), White-crowned Sparrow, and Song Sparrow.

## WHAT PRICE WASTE ?

Dr. Minnie B. Scotland

Plants require an enriched soil in which to grow best. This is especially true of food plants. To accomplish this enrichment, man uses many kinds of fertilizers for the growth of his crops. The best of all these fertilizers is a substance called guano. Simply stated, guano is the excrement of sea-birds.

Islands off the coast of Peru have been favored by the presence of millions of sea-birds, mostly Cormorants, Boobies, and Pelicans. It is on these Peruvian islands that the birds have deposited tons of guano, valued at hundreds of millions of dollars. The rainless climate of this region of Peru has aided in the preservation of this material. Depths of deposits over the years had reached as much as 120 feet when demands for the prized fertilizer by the United States and Europe almost exhausted its abundance. It was then that the Peruvian government decided to control the guano trade. The islands are guarded by government employees, the birds are protected against shrill sounds of boat whistles and the noise of planes overhead, and whole colonies have special "isolation walls" which form barriers against predators. It is said that today the guano business is the greatest of all industries built upon the conservation of wildlife. In 1954 the entire production amounted to 250,000 tons, worth about \$100 a ton.

Sydney Clark in his book "All the Best in South America - West Coast" writes: "It should be said that you and I, who travel by Grace Line, must thank these birds for our trip to the Latin Pacific. It was young William Grace who set himself to acquire ships to carry guano to the world's markets and, in so doing, established the beginning of the empire of trade and travel which bears his name."

Last summer it was my privilege to see guano islands and to observe the movements of two large colonies of sea-birds. I had walked to a rise of land near the ruins of Pachacamac (a holy city dating back 4,000 or 5,000 years, only 25 miles from Lima). In front of me stretched the Pacific, and to the left and the right was the shoreline of Peru. Not far from the shore at the left was a guano island. Between the shore and the island there was a large black patch on the surface of the water. It was moving smoothly en masse but with my glasses I could see that the movement was really caused by individual birds flying forward over their fellows, always the bird in the rear gliding to a position ahead in an orderly fashion, much in the way we played leap-frog as children. The whole colony (or was it only part of a colony?) moved to the left, passed in front of me, and swam off to the right in a very few minutes. I then looked back to the left, only to discover another large black patch of bird life following the direction of the first group. How many more masses of moving birds up and down the coastal area of Peru one can only guess. The number is estimated up in the millions. It is the waste egested from these birds that has made possible the quantities of fine foods found in our markets today.

Over at the edge of the guano island from which I had seen the black patches emerge I could see the caretaker's white house, while above over the whole island I observed the whiteness of the guano deposits. I was looking at the most unusual factory in the world, whose product had retained the same superior quality through many centuries, and whose workers were the "most valuable birds in the world", the so-called Guano Birds.

## TO FLORIDA, BUT NOT FOR BIRDS

Bessie Wood

Imagine anyone interested in birds going to Florida, and then seeing more birds from the train window than during the week spent in the South. The occasion was the Conference of the American Forestry Association which met in Jacksonville in October. I think we passed all the flocks on the way down.

Boarding the train at Albany, I watched ducks and herons along the Hudson. Since I had been on the Stoner Bird Trip the year previous, it was exciting to watch for a quick flash of white feathers, namely, the Egrets just above the Henry Hudson Bridge. They were there, about 30 in number, many in the trees, but a few along the shore line. It's surprising how few people on a train ever notice a bird, although the Hudson had hundreds of ducks that morning.

It is not unusual to find many foresters on such a trip interested in ornithology. I noted many of them, with field glasses, following Mockingbirds through the graceful branches of palm trees.

Have you given much thought to why trees such as pines or large-topped elms do not topple over more often in a wind storm? Does the root system underground resemble the shape above the ground? Those questions were answered for all of us on this trip. I have seen all kinds of trees used to decorate ballrooms, but this is the first time I had ever seen a root system fulfill this purpose. The Chief Foresters in Florida thought this would be unusual. Therefore the committee decided to pull up a Longleaf Pine by its roots, since the theme of the conference was Southern Forestry, an Industrial Revolution with Roots. The 200 or more delegates were surprised to see a long tap root, 10 feet high and 70 feet wide spread laterally across the speaker's platform; the tree had been 10 inches in diameter.

On the first tree even the chief foresters were unsuccessful. This was because the bark of the root system is very brittle, and more difficult to work with than the branches above ground. Not to be beaten, the St. Regis Paper Company foresters called on the Elgin Air Force Base for the loan of a quarter of a mile of hose and the only Pacific Hydraulic Pressure Pump in the area. With this equipment six foresters and two helpers set forth to wash away the soil clinging to the roots. After 2-1/2 days the roots were freed. Three more men were needed to load and haul the long tap root and its many trailers to Jacksonville. Little wonder the total cost was \$2,000. After this demonstration I could easily believe that half of all the saw timber in the U. S. grows in the south. It surely gets a good start in life and matures in 20 years.

Our field trip took us to St. Augustine, Marineland, Silver Springs, and the Olustee Experiment Station. It is all in a day's study to find the students climbing to the top of a tall pine to cross-pollinate its flowers, or adding sulphuric acid to the cut faces of other trees to increase the turpentine yield.

The Hercules Powder Company demonstrated its work by having tractors pull old, buried roots and stumps from the ground, pile them, and blow them into small sections. These they loaded into trucks and sent into Georgia, where they are processed into naval stores.

After the fields are cleared, the tractor-drawn tree planters move in and, at a rate of 1800 or more trees per hour, soon have a young forest planted. In 10 to 12 years the stand will be producing turpentine and in 15 to 18 years the trees will be thinned. This is neatly done with a self-propelled bicycle-type saw that needs only one man to cut the tree down. Then, by turning the saw sidewise, he cuts it into lengths. "A baby carriage with a buzz" one forester called it.

I have ceased to worry about enough lumber for the next generation, or suitable resting or nesting places for Northern Migrants, either man or birds. Just leave it to the Foresters; automation has nothing on them!

## S B C FIELD TRIP REPORTS

G. Malcolm Andrews, Field Activities Chairman

### CO-OPERATIVE DUCK COUNT (Upper Hudson, January 15)

SBC's field trip of Sunday, January 15, was chiefly to assist in the annual state-wide (and national) Duck Count. The six observers had, for those figures:

Mallard, 30; Black Duck, 700; Redhead, 1; Greater Scaup, 2; American Golden-eye, 150; White-winged Scoter, 2 males; American Merganser, 100; and Red-breasted Merganser, 40. Also included in the 28 species for the day were Red-shouldered Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Ring-necked Pheasant, 1; Great Black-backed Gull, 7; Herring Gull, 30; Ring-billed Gull, 10; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Blue Jay, 4; American Crow, 20; Black-capped Chickadee, 4; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Gray Shrike, 1; Common Starling; House Sparrow; Evening Grosbeak, 30; American Goldfinch, 3; Slate-colored Junco, 1; American Tree Sparrow, 30; and Song Sparrow, 1. -- G. B.

### DUCKS AGAIN (Upper Hudson, February 12)

Participants in the SBC field trip of February 12 included only 4 observers, from Troy and Saratoga. The weather at Albany and Schenectady caused changes in plans, and during the trip along the Upper Hudson there was some rain. Eleven species were noted:

Mallard, 25; Black Duck, 600 plus; Green-winged Teal, 1; American Golden-eye, 10; American Merganser, 30; Red-breasted Merganser, 1; Herring Gull, 1; American Crow, 100 plus; Evening Grosbeak, 11; American Goldfinch, 50; and Tree Sparrow, 20. --Bro. E. Austin

### RED-WINGS RETURN (Scotia and Campbell Road, March 4)

There were 16 participants when on Sunday, March 4, a visit was made to Collins Lake, Scotia dump, Lock 8, and the Campbell-Rice Roads intersection. Red-winged Blackbirds and Horned Larks were the only new species for the year. As the day grew older the wind grew stronger and the birds fewer. The 14 species for the trip:

Herring Gull, 10; Belted Kingfisher, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Horned Lark, 12; Crow, 6; Black-capped Chickadee, 2; Starling; House Sparrow, 1; Red-winged Blackbird, 5; Evening Grosbeak, 12; Redpoll, 15; American Goldfinch, 12; and Tree Sparrow, 12. Totals: 14 species, 70 plus individuals.

The weather featured a high overcast, it was windy, and the temperature was just below the 32° freezing point. It was a surprisingly good turnout of participants for a day of such poor weather.

-- Fraser P. Price



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## 172 SPECIES ON LOCAL FIELD TRIPS IN 1955

G. Malcolm Andrews, Field Activities Chairman, 1955

One hundred and seventy-two species were recorded on the twenty-two local field trips of 1955. The list was augmented by six more seen on the two additional, non-local trips -- to Elmira and Pittsfield. The local 172 was two above the corresponding total for 1954.

Among the relatively rare species seen on local trips were the Snow Goose, Goshawk, Bald Eagle (two trips), Peregrine Falcon, Upland Sandpiper, Great Black-backed Gull, Bonaparte's Gull, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Purple Martin, Brown-capped Chickadee, Carolina Wren, Worm-eating Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Cardinal (three trips), Pine Grosbeak (two seasons), and Lapland Longspur.

In the following table the page references are to the detailed reports in FEATHERS during 1955 (or 1956). In the next table the birds shown in parentheses were seen only at Elmira or Pittsfield. The list:

Key	Date	Place	No. Seen	Page
A	Jan. 2	Troy Christmas Count	38	1
B	16	Upper Hudson River	25	35
C	Feb. 13	Upper Hudson River	17	35
D	Mar. 6	Collins Lake, Scotia	12	35
E	20	Campbell-Schermerhorn Roads	18	35
F	Apr. 2	Vischers Ponds	35	35
G	17	Saratoga and Round Lakes	36	36
H	24	Watervliet Reservoir	34	36
I	May 1	Central Park (Breakfast trip)	33	50
J	8	Wolf Hollow	55	50
K	11	Vespers	3	50
L	14	Century Run	131	37, 60
M	22	Meadowdale - Indian Ladder	69	50
N	28-29	State Federation Trip (Elmira)	86	51
O	30	Karners	37	51
P	June 5	(Pittsfield, Mass.)	44	77
Q	Aug. 21	Watervliet Reservoir	37	77
R	Sep. 11	Vischers Ponds	48	78
S	17	Lower Hudson River	47	78
T	25	Tomhannock Reservoir	41	78
U	Oct. 1	Rensselaer Plateau	21	78
V	16	Crescent Reservoir	26	79
W	Nov. 13	Saratoga Lake	30	79
X	Dec. 26	Schenectady Christmas Count	44	56-1

## 1955 FIELD TRIPS

Common Loon			G					T	W
Horned Grebe			G						W
Pied-billed Grebe			G		L			T	VW
Great Blue Heron			F		L	NO	QRST		VX
American Egret					L		RS		
Green Heron					L	MNP	QRS		
Black-cr. Night Heron					KL		RST		
American Bittern			H		L	M			V
Canada Goose				I					V
Snow Goose			F						
Mallard	ABC		F		LM	P	RST		VX
Black Duck	ABC		FG		LM		RST		VWX
American Widgeon								T	
Pintail			F						
Blue-winged Teal			F		LM		RS		
Wood Duck					L		QR	U	
Redhead		C	F		L				W
Ring-necked Duck			F					T	W
Canvas-back	A	C							W
Greater Scaup			FG						
Lesser Scaup			FG		L				W
American Golden-eye	ABC		G						W
Buffle-head			G						W
White-winged Scoter									W
Ruddy Duck									W
Hooded Merganser									WX
American Merganser	ABC		FG						WX
Red-br. Merganser	A		G						
Goshawk									X
Sharp-shinned Hawk					L				WX
Cooper's Hawk					J		R		X
Red-tailed Hawk	B				L		S		X
Red-shouldered Hawk			H		L	P	S		X
Rough-legged Hawk									X
Bald Eagle	B								X
Marsh Hawk	A				LM	P	RST		X
Osprey			H		L		RS		
Peregrine Falcon									X
Sparrow Hawk	AB		EF		J	LMN	S		X
Ruffed Grouse							P	U	X
Ring-necked Pheasant	A	D	F		LMNO		ST		X
Virginia Rail					L				
Sora					L		S		
Florida Gallinule					LM		R		
American Coot	A				L				
Killdeer	B		FHI		LMNO		QRST		
Woodcock					KL				
Wilson's Snipe							R		
Upland Sandpiper						O			
Spotted Sandpiper					L	N	Q		
Solitary Sandpiper					L				
Lesser Yellow-legs					L			T	
Pectoral Sandpiper								T	
Least Sandpiper					L				
Gr. Blk-backed Gull			F						
Herring Gull	ABC		FG		L		RST		VWX
Ring-billed Gull	AB				L		RS		VW
Bonaparte's Gull			G						

## FEATHERS

April, 1956

Mourning Dove	B	E F G H	I J	L M N O P	Q R S T	X
Yellow-billed Cuckoo (Black-billed Cuckoo)				L M N P N		
Screech Owl				L		
Horned Owl				L		X
Whip-poor-will			K L			
Nighthawk				L N		
Chimney Swift			I	L M N O	R S T	
Ruby-thr. Hummingbird				L N P Q		
Belted Kingfisher	A		I J	L N P	Q R S T	U X
Yel. -shafted Flicker	A B	G H	I J	L M N	Q R S T	W X
Pileated Woodpecker (Red-headed Woodpeck.)	B			L N	Q	
Yel-bellied Sapsucker		G	I			U
Hairy Woodpecker	A B C D E	F G H I		L M N	R	W X
Downy Woodpecker	A B D	E F H	I J	L M N P	Q R S T	V W X
Kingbird			J	L N O P	R S	U
Crested Flycatcher			J	L M N	Q R T	
Phoebe		G H	I J	L M N	R S T	
(Yel-bel. Flycatcher)				N		
Trail's Flycatcher				M N P		
Least Flycatcher			J	L M N O	R	
Wood Pewee				L M N	Q T	
Olive-sided Flycatcher				L		
Horned Lark	A		I	L N		
Tree Swallow		F G H		L M P		
Bank Swallow		H		L M N		
Rough-winged Swallow				L M N		
Barn Swallow		G H	J	L M N P	S	
Cliff Swallow				L N		
Purple Martin				L N		
Blue Jay	A B C D	F G H	I J	L M N O P	Q R S T	U V W X
American Crow	A B C D	E F G H	I J	L M N O P	Q R S T	U V W X
Black-capped Chickadee	A B C D	F G H	I J	L M N O	Q R S T	U V W X
Brown-cap. Chickadee (Tufted Titmouse)	A B			N		
White-br. Nuthatch	A B C D	E F G H	I J	L M N	Q R	U W X
Red-br. Nuthatch	A		J	L		T X
Brown Creeper	A					X
House Wren			J	L M N		
Carolina Wren				L		
Long-bill. Marsh Wren				L M	S	
Catbird			J	L M N O P	Q R S T	
Brown Thrasher			I	L M N O		
Robin		E F G H	I J	L M N O P	Q R S T U V	
Wood Thrush			J	L M N O P		
Hermit Thrush		H		L		
Olive-backed Thrush				N	T	
Veery				L M N O P	Q	
Bluebird		F H		L M N P	S	V X
Golden-crowned Kinglet	A			L M N P		X
Ruby-crowned Kinglet			H I J	L		V
Cedar Waxwing	A			L N P	Q R S T U	
Gray Shrike	A					X
Common Starling	A B C D	E F G H	I J	L M N O P	Q R S T	V W X
Yellow-throated Vireo				L N P	Q R	
Solitary Vireo			J	L	P	U
Red-eyed Vireo			I	L M N O	Q R	
Warbling Vireo				L N	Q	
Blk&White Warbler			J	L M N		



## S B C FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Gustave Angst, Field Activities Chairman

### SPRING, BUT WINTER (Campbell-Schermerhorn Roads, March 18)

There were some spring birds but also winter birds and winter weather for the March 18 Campbell-Schermerhorn Roads trip. There were four participants, the temperature 5 to 20 deg, the sky clear, and the wind calm. In addition to the 16 recorded species the group possibly heard a Cardinal, but could not locate the bird. The list:

Sparrow Hawk, 1; Herring Gull, 2; Downy Woodpecker, 2; Horned Lark, 4; Blue Jay, 6; Am. Crow, 10; Black-capped Chickadee, 6; White-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Am. Robin, 20; Com. Starling; House Sparrow; Red-winged Blackbird, 1; Common Redpoll, 50; Am. Goldfinch, 4; Am. Tree Sparrow, 6; and Song Sparrow, 10. -- The Footes.

### LONE OBSERVER (Vischer Ponds, March 24)

Schenectady and Albany started the day with such bad weather that non observers showed up from those areas. Perhaps Troy weather was less rugged or Troy observers more rugged. Brother Austin was the only one to show up for the March 24 trip at Vischer Ponds. He showed strong wind, 24 deg., and snowing, and listed 19 species:

Black duck, 41; Am. Golden-eye, 13; Am. Merganser, 8; Herring Gull, 6; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 3; Horned Lark, 7; Am. Crow, 100 plus; Black-capped Chickadee, 3; Am. Robin, 1; Common Starling; House Sparrow; Eastern Meadowlark; Red-winged Blackbird, 50; Evening Grosbeak, 22; Common Redpoll, 17; Am. Tree Sparrow, 12; Song Sparrow, 2; and Snow Bunting, 46 (flocks of 31 and 15).

## BRIEFING THE RECORD

Compiled by James K. Meritt

February precipitation in the Schenectady area was 3.64 inches, slightly less than an inch and a half above normal. Temperatures averaged 28.2 deg, an almost phenomenal 6.3 deg above normal. The official Schenectady low was only -2 (Feb. 4); the high was 52 deg on Feb. 25. This relatively warm weather may explain to some extent the multitude of Robin reports. These birds were reported throughout the northeast in relatively heavy numbers during the winter. As was the case last year, Redpolls were observed with greater frequency during February than January. Evening Grosbeaks continued to be widely reported. Those are the highlights in brief. A total of 51 species was reported from local areas during the month.

A Great Blue Heron was observed on at least two dates at Collins Lake, Scotia. The previously reported Barrow's Golden-eye was still present on the Hudson a few miles south of Mechanicville on Feb. 4. A Green-winged Teal, probably the same individual recorded on the Troy Christmas Count, was seen at Cohoes on several dates early in the month.

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A Marsh Hawk was seen in the Meadowdale area Feb. 15 (EH), and the species was also reported near Troy on the 26th (EA). Two Peregrine Falcons were reported, one at Collins Lake on Feb. 19 (RS), and the other just east of Troy Feb. 26 (EA). Good numbers of Pheasants were reported, especially near Scotia. There were several Herring Gull records, and on the 22nd seven Ring-billed Gulls were seen on the Hudson near Troy (EA). The Mourning Dove was reported from near Grooms Corners Feb. 23 (HE). The only owl reported was a Screech Owl heard at Albany (SM). A Kingfisher was present throughout the month at Collins Lake. Two Pileated Woodpeckers were reported, one at Ballston Lake on the 5th and the other at Charlton on the 21st (MF). There were several reports of Horned Larks, the high count of 34 being made just north of Amsterdam Feb. 9 (EA). Both species of Nuthatches were recorded. A Winter Wren was observed at Collins Lake Feb. 19 (FT, RS, RY). A Mockingbird was seen near Burnt Hills Feb. 6 (MF); this bird had been seen there on several occasions earlier in the winter. A Hermit Thrush was observed at Collins Lake Feb. 28 (EH), and four Bluebirds were seen near Slingerlands on the 12th (LG).

The Robin incursion was probably unprecedented. One bird was seen at Loudonville on three dates during the month (MWF). Two were observed in the Meadowdale area Feb. 11, and that same day six were at Vischer Ponds (MF). Robins were reported from Scotia on the 15th and 25th (EH), and on Feb. 16 about 20 were seen at Albany (AS). On Feb. 5 one was seen near Troy (EG). Peak numbers, however, were reported from Slingerlands, where over a hundred were seen on Feb. 12 (LG). It is virtually impossible to pin down an arrival date for this species.

The Cedar Waxwing is normally a rather sporadic winter resident, but during February there were many reports of the birds. A Gray Shrike was seen in Scotia Feb. 4 (JM), and another in the Meadowdale area on the 11th (MF). There were several records of Meadowlarks. A female Redwing (which normally arrives later than the male) was observed at Watervliet Reservoir Feb. 11 (MF). A Grackle, apparently present all winter, was reported from Albany (AS). A Rusty Blackbird was observed at Loudonville Feb. 7 and again on the 27th (MWF). A Cardinal was reported from Niskayuna through the 18th (HE).

Evening Grosbeaks were frequently recorded, with reports received from these localities: Alplaus (AH), Scotia (EH), Burnt Hills (MF), Loudonville (MWF), Slingerlands (LG), Voorheesville (SD), Albany (AS), Gallupville (GZ), the Mechanicville area (MB, EH, JM), and the Schenectady area (CD, WK, HE, SP, and LN). For the second month in a row there were no reports of Pine Siskins or Pine Grosbeaks. Redpolls, however, were recorded in good numbers. On Feb. 4 about 10 were seen with Goldfinches near Mechanicville, and a flock of about 30 was also observed that day in Niskayuna (EH, JM). Eight Redpolls were seen near Troy on the 22nd (EA). These birds were reported on several occasions during the month by other observers: Loudonville (MWF), Niskayuna (HE), Albany (AS), and Schenectady (FL, RY).

There were several reports of Slate-colored Juncos. Mrs. Novak's previously recorded Oregon Junco was observed in Niskayuna on several

dates, the last being Feb. 29. A White-throated Sparrow was reported from Loudonville Feb. 2 (MWF). Snow Buntings were seen along Grooms Corners Road Feb. 16 (HE), and on the 16th a flock of about 45 was seen near New Esperance (GZ). On Feb. 4 some 80 individuals were seen near Mechanicville (EH, JM). Snow Buntings were also reported on several occasions from Rotterdam during the last half of the month (GMA).

March temperatures locally averaged 30.2 deg, slightly over 2 deg below normal. The high of 50 was recorded March 2; the low of 4 on March 18. Total precipitation (measured in terms of water) was 4.90 inches, 2.21 inches above average. Snowfall during the month equalled 32.6 inches, the highest recorded locally during any one-month period since January, 1945. The heavy snows and relatively cold weather which prevailed throughout the latter part of the month did little to encourage an early migration on the part of most land birds. Robins, which had previously arrived in some numbers, were a familiar sight in the snow, and feeding stations did a brisk business. Since most area rivers were largely open, the duck migration was reasonably good. The larger bodies of water remained completely frozen.

Surprisingly enough, there was only one Pied-billed Grebe report, along the upper Hudson March 3 (BH). Ten Canada Geese, 15 Pintail, 2 American Widgeon, 20 Canvas-backs, and 2 Hooded Mergansers were observed along the lower Hudson March 11 (MF). A Hooded Merganser was seen near Cohoes March 18 (WK), and a pair near Schodack March 31 (JM). Three Hooded Mergansers were along the upper Hudson March 10 (BH). On the 31st the Pintail and Ring-necked Duck were recorded by Kaskan on the Mohawk near Vischer Ponds. A pair of Green-winged Teal was seen near Columbiaville, Columbia County, March 31 (JM). There were several reports of Scaup. A Red-breasted Merganser was along the upper Hudson March 3 (EH). There were quite a few reports of the Mallard, Black Duck, American Golden-eye, and American Merganser. The Wood Duck is a possible late March arrival, but apparently none was recorded.

On March 10 a Rough-legged Hawk was seen near Meadowdale (EH, JM), and on the 31st a beautiful black-phase bird, showing the striking under-wing pattern, was seen just a few miles south of Ravena (JM). On March 21 Lillian Stoner saw a Turkey Vulture along the Thruway not too far north of Saugerties; the record thus may or may not be within SBC territory, but it is certainly of interest. The only Bald Eagle report was from Castleton, an immature bird on March 31 (JM). Reports of the more common hawks were frequent, especially late in the month. Pheasants were widely reported, but I know of no March Ruffed Grouse records. There were quite a few Killdeer reports but, in contrast to last March, there were no Woodcock reports. Several observers reported the Ring-billed Gull; a count of 15 along the upper Hudson on March 3 is noteworthy (EH). Great Black-backed Gulls were recorded along the lower Hudson on March 11 and again on the 31st.

Mourning Doves were reported, but in below-average numbers. A Barred Owl was recorded near Ballston Lake on March 14 (GH). A Snowy Owl was observed by the ranger at Saratoga National Historical Park either in very early March or very late February (fide MF); the exact date cannot be determined. No other owls were reported. A Pileated Woodpecker was observed at East Chatham (ER), and another was seen near Vischers Ferry March 18 (WK). Flickers were very scarce, and Sapsuckers were apparently completely absent. The late March snows and cold weather can probably be blamed for the lack of any Phoebe or Tree Swallow reports. A good group of about 80 Horned Larks was seen

near Rexford March 18 (HB). There were several Brown Creeper reports. Robert Yunick saw one at Collins Lake March 4; one was seen at Loudonville March 10 and 12 (MWF), and still another was seen at Tomhannock Reservoir March 18 (EA). Bluebirds were apparently not seen in above-average numbers. On March 2 a Golden-crowned Kinglet was recorded in Scotia (EH); this was the only report for the species. Cedar Waxwings were observed on several occasions. A Loggerhead Shrike was seen at Collins Lake March 6, and another was at Vischers Ferry March 13 (EH). Shrikes of undetermined species were seen near Ballston Lake March 14, 17, and 31 (GH).

A Grackle was observed by Mrs. Lamprey March 2, and the birds were subsequently present in good numbers. A flock of Cowbirds was seen near Slingerlands early in the month (GA). Two Rusty Blackbirds were observed at Loudonville March 3, and another was seen there on March 8 (MWF). The Cardinal was reported from Niskayuna March 6 and 7 (CD) and again on the 15th (HE). The species was also reported from the lower Hudson area (fide LG).

Evening Grosbeaks continued to be present in good numbers. The Pine Grosbeak, which has been extremely scarce this winter, was reported from the Saratoga Springs area March 11 (fide MF). There were several records of the Purple Finch. The species was seen at Slingerlands on the 21st (LG); several were in Niskayuna on the 22nd (HE); three were seen in Alplaus March 23 (HB); and about 20 were seen on the G-E grounds March 21 (GB).

The Redpoll incursion reached a climax in March, following the pattern of last winter when the birds were also relatively common. These birds were scarce in the early winter (only one of eight parties reported them on the Schenectady Christmas Count), but by mid-February they were quite widespread. The birds were reported at feeders, in other city areas, and many outlying regions. The largest single flock recorded was a group of some 300 near Meadowdale March 10. Probably the most unusual spot where the species was reported was along lower State Street in downtown Schenectady. On March 3 Byron Hipple recorded a Hoary Redpoll (in with a group of Common Redpolls) near Vischers Ferry. This rare northern visitor should be looked for whenever Redpolls are present. There was not a single report of the Pine Siskin, as has been the case all winter.

The Fox Sparrow was recorded near Slingerlands March 14 (LG), and was seen on later dates by Brother Austin and Walt Kaskan. Slate-colored Juncos were frequently observed late in the month. The Oregon Junco which first appeared at Mrs. Novak's feeder in Niskayuna in mid-December was recorded throughout the period. On March 30 this bird (presumably) appeared at another feeder several blocks away (HA). Four White-throated Sparrows were resident during the month at a feeder near East Chatham (ER), and a Field Sparrow was recorded near Burnt Hills March 28 (MF). There were several observations of Snow Buntings. They were reported in good numbers near Vischers Ferry March 18 (HB, WK). About 50 were seen in that same vicinity March 24 (EA), and a group of about 100 was observed near Rotterdam Junction on the 18th (EH, JM).

KEY to Observers mentioned above: Brother EAustin, GAngst, GAndrews, HArnold, GBartlett, HBundy, MBetts, CDiggs, SDurban, HEddy, MFoote, MWFrench, EGeiser, LGrace, AHeitkamp, BHipple, EHallenbeck, GHackett, WKaskan, Mrs. FLamprey, JMeritt, SMadison, Mrs. LNovak, SPodrazik, ERadke, ASchafer, RStone, FTurrentine, RYunick, and GZimmer.



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## SBC'S MOST RECENT BARROW'S GOLDEN-EYE

SBC's most recent Barrow's Golden-eye -- on the Hudson below Mechanicville from January 21 to February 5 -- was a record-setter several ways. It high-lighted SBC's participation in the State Federation's Second Annual Waterfowl Census; it was the first of its species to appear on the censuses; it gave Upstate New York its first waterfowl that was not also found along Long Island; and it was a "lifer" for the man who discovered it and for several other observers on later trips.

### The Count

Schenectady's census was conducted from January 14 to 22, as were those in the other nine sections of the state and the rest of the country. The local count included 1260 waterfowl of 11 species, with eight observers and 20 party-hours afield. The 1955 record was 2291 individuals of only four species.

Statewide, the count was 222,408 birds of 39 species, with 268 observers field 655 party-hours. In 1955 the count was 189,324 birds of 36 species, with 231 observers afield 550 party-hours. "Waterfowl" includes loons, grebes and coot as well as swans, geese and ducks.

Omitting the figures for Long Island, the 1956 "fresh-water" totals were 28 species and 80,556 individuals -- with Lakes Erie and Ontario the heavy contributors.

Only three species -- Black Duck, American Golden-eye and American Merganser -- appeared on the reports of all 10 regions. The Mallard and Greater Scaup were each on 9 lists.

In the accompanying table for the local census the areas have been keyed:

- A-1 Hudson River at Green Island
- A-2 Hudson, lower Mohawk and Hoosic Rivers
- A-3 Hudson, Troy to Stillwater
- A-4 Hudson, Troy to Mechanicville
- B Hudson, Albany to Selkirk
- C Normanskill and Meadowdale
- D Mohawk River at Lock 7

Other waters were checked, but were not open. In the total count only the maximum of the "A" counts is included for each species, and is underlined in the "A" columns. The observers were Brother E. Austin, Guy Bartlett, Allen Benton, Marjorie Foote, Bill Foote, Esly Hallenbeck, Ken Hart, and Arthur Long.

## SBC'S SECOND ANNUAL WATERFOWL COUNT ---- January 14-22, 1956

Date	Total	1-14	1-15	1-21	1-22	1-19	1-14	1-22
		A-1	A-2	A-3	A-4	B	C	D
Area included								
Observers	8	1	6	3	3	2	1	1
Party-hours	20	2	3½	6	3	2½	2	1
Species	11	5	8	8	8	2	2	4
Total count	1260	526	1085	464	296	7	48	48
Mallard	103	100	30	30	30		3	
Black Duck	778	420	700	300	200		45	33
Green-winged Teal	1	1						
Redhead	1		1	1	1			
Greater Scaup	2		2	2	2			
American Golden-eye	161	4	150	60	40	5		6
Barrow's Golden-eye	1			1	1			
White-winged Scoter	2	2						
Hooded Merganser	1							1
American Merganser	170	1	160	50	20	2		8
Red-breasted Merganser	40		40	20	2			

Preceding the census time there had been more than usual of cold weather, and hence less open water. The decrease in Black Ducks (1955 had 1885 of them) was possibly because of the more-than-usual amount of ice below the Federal Dam at Green Island. Sacandaga, Tomhannock and Watervliet Reservoirs, Saratoga Lake, etc. were frozen -- automobiles were driven on the ice for fishing. Open water was less than usual in the upper Hudson, lower Hoosic, and Lohawk above Cohoes. Occasional spring-fed marshes and streams were partly open. The Hudson below Albany had floating ice, and was open in only a few places. Gulls were entirely absent on some of the days -- and that is unusual. The Hudson from Troy to Stillwater (about 15 miles) is canalized; most of the dunes are up in winter, so there are stretches (about 30 to 35%) of shallow, unfrozen rapids or swift waters.

Barrow's

It was Ken Hart of New York City, a Linnaean Society member, who discovered the Barrow's Golden-eye -- and for him the species was a "lifer." It was about four miles south of Mechanicville, with but at the edge of a large flock of the American Golden-eyes. Having been spotted, it was not difficult to find it thereafter. It was observed first from 11 to 11:30 a.m., with a bright sun to the rear of the observers, with the bird about 150 feet away. All distinguishing marks and characteristics were easily observed, then and on succeeding days. Perhaps there were also two female Barrow's in the flock -- repeatedly it was observed that two of the females were with him, but identification could not be made.

**BRIEFING THE RECORD**

James K. Meritt, Records Committee Chairman

April temperatures in the Schenectady area averaged an even 44 degrees, a little more than a degree below normal. The month was relatively dry, with total precipitation about 80 percent of average.

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Editor: Guy Bartlett, 1053 Parkwood Blvd.



Although the average temperature deviated relatively little from normal, it was still the coldest April in six years (and the coldest in 13 years in New York City). This condition, coupled with the heavy snows of the previous month, accounted for slow bud development in comparison to recent springs and for a somewhat late migration of most land birds, especially during the first half of the month. During the last few days there were several reports of species not recorded last year until May.

Twelve Common Loons were seen at Tomhannock Reservoir Apr.19 (EA), and about 25 were seen at Saratoga Lake Apr.25 (HB,MF). A flock of over 50 Horned Grebes in breeding plumage was observed near Mohawk View on the 22nd (JM). The Black-crowned Night Heron was first recorded Apr.12(EH), and a good total of 22 was seen on the 30th (HE,MF). The American Bittern was not reported until Apr.24, more than three weeks later than last year's early date (EH).

One of the rarities of the year to date was a Whistling Swan seen at a backwash of the Mohawk near Fultonville Apr. 30. The bird was closely observed by Gladys Zimmer. This species was unrecorded locally in 1955. Over 100 Canada Geese were at Saratoga Lake on the 25th(HB,MF). Ducks were reported in good numbers. Especially noteworthy was a flock of 40 to 50 Old-squaws on the Mohawk Apr.30(GZ); two others were seen near Vischer Ponds on the 20th(JM). Both species of Teal were recorded, with the Green-winged reported only Apr.30(GA). On April 1 two Red-breasted Mergansers were on the Mohawk near Crescent (MF,JM). On Apr.5 three to eight Hooded Mergansers were at Vischer Ponds(EA), and the species was subsequently recorded there by other observers. Six hooded Mergansers were at Tomhannock Reservoir the 19th(EA).

One of the more interesting finds of the month was a Turkey Vulture, seen along the Thruway just west of Albany Apr. 5(AB). A Cooper's Hawk was seen at Albany Apr.29(AB), and the first Broad-winged was reported from Burnt Hills on the 28th(MF). Ospreys were quite frequently reported during the last half of the month. A Ruffed Grouse was recorded at Tomhannock Reservoir Apr.19(EA), and one was heard drumming in Central Park on the 29th(SBC). A Coot was seen at Collins Lake, Scotia, Apr.12(EH), and a Florida Gallinule was heard at Meadowdale Marsh on the 28th(EH,JM). A Woodcock was seen near Sacandaga Reservoir Apr.8(EC,JH); two were recorded along Rosendale Road on the 30th(HE,MF), and a Woodcock nest with four eggs was found by Alvin Cook near Shaker Road, Albany, Apr.28. An unexpected find was a Greater Yellow-legs near Vischer Ponds Apr.4(EH). Six Great Black-backed Gulls were also observed Apr.4, near Mohawk View(EH). The Great Black-backed was recorded by Walt Kaskan on the 4th and 15th. On the 29th six Common Terns were seen over the river near Mohawk View (MN). A Horned Owl's nest with four young was reported near Alplaus (fide GA), and an owl of undetermined species was recorded near Tomhannock Reservoir Apr.19 (EA).

A Pileated Woodpecker was seen near Saratoga Springs Apr. 16(GM), and Walt Kaskan also reported one that day. On the 27th three Pileateds were seen near Watervliet Reservoir(MS, NVV). Sapsuckers were reported quite commonly during the month. A Crested Flycatcher in Central Park on the 29th was a bit early(SBC). The first Phoebe was reported Apr.5(SM, NVV). Purple Martins arrived at Selkirk Apr.17(fide NVV), their earliest arrival date there in at least four years. Two Barn Swallows, the first of the season, were seen at Ballston Lake Apr.12(GH). Tree Swallows were not reported until Apr.6, when about 20 were seen at Scotia(EH). Two Carolina Wrens, apparently present for some time, were seen at the Delmar Game Farm Apr.13(SF). Another individual was reported through the month at Collins Lake(EH), and one was seen in Slingerlands on the 28th(WS). The Winter Wren was reported from Albany(BH). The first Catbird was seen on the 30th(MF). Ruby-crowned kinglets were reported in above-average numbers late in the month. The sole report of the Golden-crowned was from Gallupville on the 16th(GZ). This species was missed entirely last spring. Several Water Pipits were seen near Scotia on at least one occasion during the month(WS). A Northern Shrike was observed on the late date of Apr.8(WK), and two Shrikes of undetermined species were recorded that same day near Ballston Lake(GH). Several Blue-headed Vireos were recorded in Central Park on the 29th(SBC), and one was seen in Loudonville the next day(MWF).

Only three Warbler species were reported. A Palm was observed near Saratoga Lake on the 18th(MF). The first Myrtle was not reported until Apr.28(EH, JM). On the 29th several Black and Whites were seen in Central Park(SBC).

Many area feeders continued to harbor Evening Grosbeaks, but by month's end numbers were down quite sharply. The Cardinal was reported from Scotia(EH), Niskayuna(CD, HE), and Delmar(CS). On Apr.13 six Red Crossbills were observed by Gloria Meader; a dead one had been picked up in her yard several days earlier. A Hoary Redpoll, the second report of the year, was seen at a ground feeder near Scotia Apr.1 and 2(fide GB). The last Common Redpoll report for April was from Niskayuna Apr.20(MN). The first Towhee was recorded at Albany Apr.28(AB).

A Savannah Sparrow was seen Apr.7(RH), and on the 9th six Vesper Sparrows were reported from Burnt Hills(MF). Juncos were reported in good numbers throughout the period, but the Oregon Junco, which had been present in Niskayuna since Dec. 12, was not recorded. The White-crowned Sparrow was first observed Apr.29(WK). Tree Sparrows were present throughout the period, but by month's end were relatively scarce. There was a Chipping Sparrow at Alplaus Apr.19(HB). Some 20 Fox Sparrows were recorded by several observers at Saratoga Lake Apr.8. Swamp Sparrows were conspicuous and vociferous at Meadowdale Marsh Apr.28 (EH, JM).

KEY to Observers mentioned above: SBC - Schenectady Bird Club field trip; Gangst, Brother EAustin, GBartlett, HBundy, ECummings, CDiggs, HEddy, MFoote, SFordham, MWFrench, GHackett, EHallenbeck, JHicks, RHunt, WKaskan, SMadison, GMeader, JMeritt, MNovak, WSabin, CSafford, MScotland, NVVorst, and GZimmer.



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## SIX NEW SPECIES ON CENTURY RUN

Gustave Angst

Eleven parties participated in this year's Century Run, SBC's eleventh. None reached the 100 mark. However, the composite total was 137 species, exceeding last year's Run by six species -- the maximum so far was 154 species in 1953. Forty-six persons, in 11 groups, took part in this year's count.

The 1956 spring will go down in history as one of the most wintry. Three snowstorms in late March and generally cold and raw weather for April and the few days of May before the Run on the 5th delayed buds and birds by at least two weeks. This was particularly noticed with the warblers. Only 14 species of warblers were listed; the average in the previous 10 years was 23 kinds, ranging from 18 in 1950 to 28 plus one hybrid in 1952. However, the unseasonable weather also meant some birds tarrying. Geese and ducks were second to 1953 only -- 14 kinds this year, 16 then; the 10-year average for waterfowl was 9 species.

Six species appeared for the first time on a local Century Run list: Canvas-back, Great Black-backed Gull, Mockingbird, Migrant Shrike, Redpoll, and Fox Sparrow. The composite total for the 11 years is 212 species, plus two hybrids and two additional "next-day" records.

The 1956 count also features three other species which had been recorded in only one previous Run: Green-winged Teal, Buffle-head, and Carolina Wren.

Only a dozen species were seen by all 11 groups: Mourning Dove, Flicker, Blue Jay, Crow, Robin, Starling, House Sparrow, Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Purple Grackle, Cowbird, and Song Sparrow.

On the other hand, 31 species were recorded by only one party each:

- Party A - Black Tern, Migrant Shrike, Warbling Vireo
- Party B - Greater Scaup, Blackburnian Warbler, Siskin
- Party C - Pintail, Gray-cheeked Thrush
- Party D - Double-crested Cormorant, Yellow-throat
- Party E - Screech Owl, Upland Sandpiper, Red-eyed Vireo, Magnolia Warbler
- Party F - Canvas-back, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Virginia Rail, Bonaparte's Gull, Traill's Flycatcher, Winter Wren
- Party G - Wilson's Snipe, Great Black-backed Gull, Common Redpoll, Fox Sparrow
- Party I - Red-breasted Merganser, Carolina Wren, Cedar

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Waxwing, Bobolink, Baltimore Oriole

Party J - Acadian Flycatcher

The other "one-party-only" species was the Mockingbird, seen by Dr. Minnie B. Scotland in Slingerlands.

Among 1956's misses: Various owls and warblers, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Nighthawk.

#### Participants and Areas

Party A Alice Holmes, Nelle G. VanVorst, Esly Hallenbeck, Gus Angst. Consaul Road, Vly Road, Lock 7, Niskayuna Wide Waters, Cohoes, Vischer Ponds, Central Park, Six-mile Waterworks, Meadowdale, Saratoga Lake. Two cars, separate or together to Central Park; one car thereafter. 4:10 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., Angst to 2 p.m. 80 species.

Party B Sam Madison, Jim Meritt, Walt Sabin. Washington Park (Albany), Alcove Reservoir, lower Hudson River. 5:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. 83 species.

Party C Elizabeth Feldhausen, Mary O'Neill, Mrs. B. Phinney, Wilma Martin, Brother E. Austin and three other Brothers from Hillside. Tomhannock, Saratoga Lake, Vischer Ponds. 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. 43 species.

Party D Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Foote, Mr. and Mrs. Howard E. Fuller of Buffalo, Mrs. F. P. Bundy, Dr. Roy Hunt. Burnt Hills, Alplaus, Central Park, Lock 7, Vischer Ponds, Collins Lake. 5:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. Only Mrs. Foote and Mrs. Bundy for entire trip. 71 species.

Party E Hazel Eddy, Viola Mabb, Stephanie Podrazik. Central Park, Pine Barrens, Vischer Ponds, Niskayuna Wide Waters, Saratoga Lake. 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. 65 species.

Party F Guy Bartlett. Niskayuna Wide Waters, Vischer Ponds, Round Lake, Saratoga Lake, Jenny Lake, Sacandaga Reservoir. 6 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. 83 species.

Party G Mrs. R. E. Arnold, Mr. and Mrs. Louis C. Novak. Vischer Ponds, Lock 7, Niskayuna Wide Waters, Central Park, Parkview Cemetery. 5 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. 65 species.

Party H Gloria Meader, Mrs. Perry, Charles Greene. Saratoga, Greenfield Center. 1 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. 27 species.

Party I Pauline Baker, Mr. and Mrs. Betts, Mrs. C. English, Mrs. Stephen Fordham, Lucile Grace, Mr. and Mrs. Byron T. Hipple, Mr. and Mrs. Malone, H. O'Meara. Mrs. L. C. Stoner. Participants not together all of time. Washington Park (Albany), Six-mile Waterworks, French Mills, Grace Sanctuary, Delmar Game Farm, Hudson River below Albany, Meadowdale, Karner Road, Saratoga Lake, Tomhannock Reservoir. 5 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. 88 species.

Party J Mrs. Chester Zimmer and family. Gallupville; Schoharie, Albany and Greene Counties. 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. 31 species.

Party K Dr. Allen H. Benton. Saradale Avenue and Albany Shaker Road. Two hours. 27 species.

## 1956 CENTURY RUN

## MAY 5

## 137 SPECIES

Common Loon	bc f	Crested Flycatcher	bc i
Horned Grebe	a c ef	Eastern Phoebe	abdefghij
Pied-billed Grebe	e i	Acadian Flycatcher	j
Dbl-cr.Cormorant	d	Trall's Flyctchr	f
Grt.Blue Heron	b i	Least Flycatcher	a def i
Green Heron	abc f i	Horned Lark	def i
Blk-cr.Nt.Heron	a d fg i	Tree Swallow	abdefg ij
Amer. Bittern	a d f i	Bank Swallow	ab d f i
Mallard	abc efg i	Rough-wing.Swallow	a d g i
Black Duck	abdefg i	Barn Swallow	abdefghij
Pintail	c	Cliff Swallow	ab d
Green-winged Teal	ab g	Purple Martin	abc ef hi
Blue-winged Teal	a d g i	Blue Jay	abdefghijkl
Wood Duck	bed f i	American Crow	abdefghijk
Ring-necked Duck	a d	Blk-cap.Chickadee	abdefghij
Canvas-back	f	White-br.Nuthatch	abdefg ij
Greater Scaup	b	Red-br. Nuthatch	c f hi
Lesser Scaup	c f i	Brown Creeper	d f i k
Amer. Golden-eye	a c f	House Wren	ab defg ij
Buffle-head	ab ef	Winter Wren	f
Amer. Merganser	b d f	Carolina Wren	i
Red-br. Merganser	i	Mockingbird (byMBS)	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	f	Catbird	b efg i
Cooper's Hawk	fg	Brown Thrasher	ab de g i k
Red-tailed Hawk	ab i	American Robin	abdefghijkl
Red-should. Hawk	ab fg i	Wood Thrush	ab defg i
Broad-winged Hawk	ab f	Hermit Thrush	ef
Marsh Hawk	ab d fg i	Gray-cheeked Thr.	c
Osprey	abdefg i	Veery	a efg i
Sparrow Hawk	abdef i	Eastern Bluebird	ab ef hi
Ruffed Grouse	b fg	Gold-cr.Kinglet	b d
Pheasant	abdefg i k	Ruby-cr. Kinglet	ab defghi k
Virginia Rail	f	Cedar Waxwing	i
Florida Gallinule	a f i	Loggerhead Shrike	a
Killdeer	abdefg i	Common Starling	abdefghijkl
Amer. Woodcock	a ef i	Yellow-thr. Vireo	b g
Wilson's Snipe	g	Solitary Vireo	ab d f i
Upland Sandpiper	e	Red-eyed Vireo	e
Spotted Sandpiper	abcd g i	Warbling Vireo	a
Solitary Sandpiper	bdefg	Blk.&Wh. Warbler	b defg ijk
Greater Yellowlegs	ab de i	Nashville Warbler	f
Gr.Blk-backed Gull	g	Yellow Warbler	ab de g ij
Herring Gull	abdefg i	Magnolia Warbler	e
Ring-billed Gull	ab def	Myrtle Warbler	abdefg i k
Bonaparte's Gull	f	Blk-thr.Green Wblr	b e
Black Tern	a	Blackburnian Wrblr	b
Mourning Dove	abdefghijk	Pine Warbler	ef i
Screech Owl	e	Palm Warbler	ab e i k
Whip-poor-will	a g k	Oven-bird	b g
Chimney Swift	abcd fg ij	No. Water-thrush	b d i
Belted Kingfisher	abdefg ij	La. Water-thrush	b e
Flicker	abdefghijk	Com. Yellow-throat	d
Pileated Woodpckr	a fg	Redstart	ab d
Yel-bel.Sapsucker	b d f i	House Sparrow	abdefghijk
Hairy Woodpecker	abdefghij	Bobolink	i
Downy Woodpecker	ab defghij	East. Meadowlark	abdefghijk
Eastern Kingbird	a de g ij	Red-winged Blckbrd	abdefghijk

## 1956 CENTURY RUN (Cont'd)

Baltimore Oriole		i	Grasshopper Spar.	a	i
Rusty Blackbird	b	g i	Vesper Sparrow	ab d f	i k
Purple Grackle	ab c d e f g h i j k		Slate-colored Junco	ab c d e f g h i k	
Brown-hd. Cowbird	ab c d e f g h i j k		Amer. Tree Sparrow	a d	g i
Cardinal	b e g i		Chipping Sparrow	ab	de f g h i j k
Evening Grosbeak	de g h i j		Field Sparrow	ab	de f g h i j k
Purple Finch	ab	de f g i j	White-cr. Sparrow	de	g i
Common Redpoll		g	White-thr. Sparrow	abcd	f g h i k
Pine Siskin	b		Fox Sparrow		g
Amer. Goldfinch	ab	de f g i	Swamp Sparrow	ab d f	i j
Eastern Towhee	ab	de f g h i k	Song Sparrow	ab c d e f g h i j k	
Savannah Sparrow	abc	f i k			

## BRIEFING THE RECORD

James K. Meritt, Records Committee Chairman

May temperatures in the Schenectady area averaged 55.4 degrees, 2.7 degrees below normal. The high of 86 was recorded May 22; the low of 32 on both the 8th and 9th. Record low temperatures were set on five days of the month. An indication of the relative coolness was the fact that some snow was present below the Indian Ladder falls until at least the beginning of the last week of the month. Total precipitation was 3.23 inches, just a shade above normal; much of this came on the last two days of the month.

Overall, the migration can only be described as excellent. Several observers commented that the spring flight was the best they had ever witnessed. The migrants arrived in definite waves, and such influxes can probably be attributed to the alternate periods of warm and cool weather that we experienced. Since foliage development was considerably behind schedule, conditions for observing birds, the warblers in particular, could hardly have been better. In contrast to last year, tent caterpillar infestation was minor, a condition undoubtedly related to the late foliage development. The warbler migration was possibly unprecedented, both as to numbers seen and varieties recorded. Thrushes, too, were present in well above average numbers.

Because of more intensive field work early in the month, most May arrivals were reported earlier this year than last. On the May 5 Century Run, for example, more participants covered a wider area (and saw more species) than on the 1955 trip. No less than 180 species were reported from local areas in May. Some 198 kinds have been recorded locally during the first five months of the year.

Three parties reported the Common Loon May 5, and four parties reported the Horned Grebe that day (SBC). A Common Loon was present at Jenny Lake, Saratoga County, the last few days of the month (GB). One of the better finds on May 5 was a Double-crested Cormorant at Vischer Ponds. This species was unreported locally in 1955. No American Egrets were observed. A flock of about 75 Canada Geese passed over Loudonville May 1 (AB). A Greater Scaup was seen at Alcove Reservoir May 5, while three parties that day reported the

Lesser Scaup. There were several scattered reports of the Bufflehead on the Century Run. There were several May reports of the Turkey Vulture, a species missed last year. On May 10, 23 and 28 one was seen at East Chatham(ER). Another was seen May 18(MF), and two to four were seen near Catskill May 30(JM). There was a report of one from the Albany area May 14(SM). Inasmuch as the nesting season was underway, reports of the other hawks were not overly numerous.

A Ruffed Grouse nest with about 15 eggs was found in the southeast portion of Central Park May 10(PL). A Virginia Rail was recorded May 5, the only rail report for the entire month. The Wilson's Snipe was reported from Charlton May 9(GH). A pair of Upland Sandpipers was present throughout the month near the Delmar Game Farm (JP), but to my knowledge no nest was discovered. There were several reports of the Greater Yellow-legs on the Century Run (and subsequently), and two Lessers were reported May 12 near Mohawk View (GA). The only report of the Least Sandpiper was from Troy on May 16(EA). On May 13 two Semipalmated Sandpipers were seen at the Delmar Game Farm(RS). Some 80 Bonaparte's Gulls were seen at Ballston Lake May 6(PC). A Black Tern was observed near Mohawk View May 5(SBC), and a Common Tern near Albany May 31(MB). The Black-billed Cuckoo was first seen May 17(JM), and there were relatively few reports thereafter. Surprisingly enough, there were no reports submitted of the Yellow-billed Cuckoo. The Whip-poor-will was first heard on May 5. Nighthawks were not as common as might be expected. Chimney Swifts were first seen near Scotia May 1(GA, JM). The Ruby-throated Hummingbird was first observed May 13 at Loudonville (MWF) and at Amsterdam (MFitz).

There were an encouraging number of reports of the Pileated Woodpecker from several areas. An adult Red-headed Woodpecker was present near Rotterdam Junction on May 16 and for several days thereafter(CH). There were several reports of the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. On May 22 one was seen in Washington Park, Albany (AB, MWF). On May 30 and 31 one was observed in Loudonville(MWF). Another was seen in the Karner pine barrens May 30(SBC), and still another in Scotia on the following day(EH). An Acadian Flycatcher, a rarity locally, was seen and heard at Gallupville May 5. There were several reports of the Olive-sided Flycatcher, not an overly common spring migrant.

The Long-billed Marsh Wren was first seen near Troy on May 4(EA). A pair of Carolina Wrens was present throughout the month at the Delmar Game Farm, and appeared to be breeding (SF). Another individual was seen consistently during the month at Collins Lake (EH). On May 5 and 6 a Mockingbird was seen near Albany (MS), and another was seen in Scotia on May 9 (AM). One was reported near Burnt Hills May 17 (MF). As previously stated, Thrushes were present in very good numbers. The last Ruby-throated Kinglet was from East Chatham May 21 (ER).

The first report of the Yellow-throated Vireo was from the lower Hudson area May 5 (SBC). On the latish date of May 19 a Blue-headed Vireo was seen in Loudonville (MWF). Another was seen at Mt. McGregor May 26 (SBC). The only report of the Philadelphia Vireo was from Troy May 22 (EA).

No less than 34 species of warblers were reported locally during the month, but the Blue-winged was missed. A hybrid Brewster's was seen at Ravena May 13 (RS) and one at East Chatham May 20 (ER). A Worm-eating was observed at Wolf's Hollow on May 13 (SBC); this was the only report for the species. Tennessee Warblers were quite widely reported. On the latish date of May 29 a fairly compact and vociferous group of about 20 was observed in Niskayuna (JM). The Tennessee was last reported May 30 (GMA). On May 22 an Orange-crowned Warbler was seen and heard in Washington Park, Albany (MWF). The species was reported from Collins Lake, Scotia, May 18 and 29 (EH), and Walt Sabin had one late-May report. On May 17, and again on May 23, Mrs. Gordon Randall closely observed a Prothonotary Warbler along a creek bank on her property off the Troy Road. Cape May Warblers were reported in good numbers. The species was first seen at Alplaus May 11, and was last recorded there May 29 (HB). The Cape May arrived in Amsterdam May 12 (MFitz), and the species was recorded at Gallupville (GZ), Loudonville (MWF) and Niskayuna (HE), all on May 14.

The Black-throated Blue was first seen at Albany May 6 (BH); a good total of 29 was observed at Wolf's Hollow May 13 (SBC). The only report of the Cerulean Warbler was from Thacher Park May 19 (EH, JM, WS). The Blackburnian was first seen May 1 (MF), and was subsequently present in good numbers. On May 19 Mac Andrews spotted a Yellow-throated Warbler on his property near Schenectady. He first observed the bird with naked eye at a distance of about 20 feet, and a bit later was able to observe it through 8X binoculars at about the same distance. Records of this species anywhere north of Maryland or Delaware are certainly a matter of interest.

The Bay-breasted Warbler, a species missed completely last spring, was widely reported. The first report was of six at Wolf's Hollow May 13 (SBC), the last reports were May 29 from Loudonville (MWF) and Niskayuna (JM). A latish Palm Warbler was seen near Lock 7 May 12 (GA). The Ovenbird was first reported on May 4 from the Slingerlands area (WS), and the Northern Water-thrush was first observed May 1 (MF). On May 17 a Kentucky Warbler was accidentally trapped in a screened-in porch at the home of Alan Lukens in Niskayuna. A Connecticut Warbler, a rare spring transient, was closely observed near Saratoga Springs May 20 (EF). The Mourning Warbler is normally a late-May arrival, but there were several reports in mid-month: Schenectady, May 14 (WK); Niskayuna, May 15 (HA) and May 16 (HE); Troy, May 16 (EA), and Thacher Park May 19 (EH, JM, WS). The species was also reported from Burnt Hills May 26 (MF). The only record of the Yellow-breasted Chat was from Albany May 15 (AB). There were a surprising number of reports of the Black-capped Warbler. The species was first seen at Vischer Ponds on the early date of May 3 (MF). Among some of the other reports were: Schenectady May 14 (WK), Amsterdam May 15 (MFitz), Troy May 17 (EA), Saratoga Lake May 18 (EH), Niskayuna May 21 (HE), and Loudonville May 29 (MWF).

Several Orchard Orioles, a species unreported locally last year, were observed. A female appeared in Amsterdam

May 17, was banded May 24, and last seen May 28 (MFitz). An immature male was seen in Amsterdam May 19 (MFitz). The Orchard Oriole was reported from the Troy area May 18 and again May 22 (EA). Between May 10 and 26 Mrs. Fitzgerald banded 116 Baltimore Orioles at Amsterdam. The last report of the Rusty Blackbird was May 5, and at least a half dozen Cardinals were observed that day. The first Scarlet Tanager was seen at Slingerlands May 6 (LG).

Evening Grosbeaks were last seen at Amsterdam May 6, thus bringing to a close an unprecedented incursion in that area. During the winter season Mrs. Fitzgerald banded no less than 1212 of these birds. A single Evening Grosbeak was at Gallopville the last week of the month (GZ). A pair of Purple Finches nested at Delmar, but the nest was deserted after two Cowbird eggs were laid (AL). A late Redpoll was reported May 5. A small group of Pine Siskins was seen at Amsterdam May 15 (MFitz), and three others were seen at Slingerlands May 15 and 18 (WS). On May 24 three Red Crossbills were observed at Schenectady (GM).

The Tree Sparrow was last seen May 7 (MF). The White-crowned Sparrow migration was extremely good throughout the month. A latish White-throated Sparrow was heard near Saratoga Springs May 20 (EF, WM, ERob). The late date for the species was May 21 at Niskayuna (HE). The Lincoln's Sparrow was first seen in Amsterdam May 6, and several were subsequently banded there (MFitz). The species was also reported from Loudonville May 19 (MWF) and from Burnt Hills May 26 (MF). There was at least one report from Niskayuna (MN).

KEY to observers mentioned above: GAndrews, Gangst, Harnold, Eaustin, Gbartlett, Abenton, Mbetts, Hbundy, Pcurrier, Heddy, Efeldhausen, Mfitzgerald, Mfoote, Sfordham, Mwfrench, Lgrace, Ghackett, Ehallenbeck, Bhipple, Choward, Kaskan, Plemon, Along, Smadison, Wmartin, Gmeader, Ameritt, Jmeritt, Mnovak, Jpell, Eradke, Erobinson, Wsabin, Mscotland, Rstone, Gzimmer.



## NEWS AND NOTES IN BRIEF

### WILLIAMSTOWN'S GROSBEAKS

Aplenty

On April 1 there were some 500 Evening Grosbeaks in Williamstown, Mass. They had been with us all winter, and formed a permanent winter colony. They were strongly concentrated in the Williams Inn and School Street areas, but were found in all parts of the town. There had been no marked or banded birds in the winter colony, in which males slightly predominated.

On April 15 four or five banded females suddenly appeared for two days. By May 2 the flock was perhaps at its largest. By May 12 the number began to lessen, and by the 13th the number was down to half. On the 14th there were only about 15 birds, and they remained until the 19th. By May 21 there were only four, on May 22 two, and on the 23rd none.

-- Willis I. Milham

# GROUNDED WARBLERS

Mabel W. French

I shall always remember May of 1956 as the month of the grounded warblers. Why were so many of these birds of the tree-tops and thickets hopping about like Robins, not only on lawns but on dirt heaps and cinder driveways? My first thought was that they came to earth because they were tired out from a long migration flight, or that there was more warmth at a lower level than up in the trees where foliage was thin and chill breezes blowing. Probably, however, food was the main factor. In this connection I quote from Newsweek: "The cold weather also brought Scarlet Tanagers to New York City. They came looking for food, the cold having kept the insects on which they normally feed from developing." Possibly here the foliage could not supply the warblers with their usual supply of insects, but the moist earth could.

All my notes were made in the mornings, mainly before 9 o'clock, and all are in the period of May 17-21. After then the warblers were back where one expects to find them. Also by then the delayed foliage was in a normal stage of development. I have summarized my notes by species as follows:

## Nine Species Down

Nashville Warbler - May 19, on the ground of vacant lot.

Magnolia Warbler - May 17, in the grass of our next-door neighbor's yard.

Cape May Warbler - May 18, on our cinder driveway.

Black-throated Blue Warbler - May 17, on our neighbor's lawn, with the Magnolia.

Blackburnian Warbler - May 18, a female on the lawn across the Lane. May 19, on our drive and later on that of the next-door neighbor. May 20, on unplowed ground of a friend's garden. May 21, on lawn among blooming dandelions. All but first males.

Chestnut-sided Warbler - May 17, on a heap of stones and a piece of tile. May 18, two on our lawn and later on a neighbor's. May 19, one on our driveway, and later a neighbor's. May 20, on a driveway and later on ground of unplowed garden with Blackburnian and Redstarts.

Common Yellow-throat - May 18, on dirt in flower border and in grass beside it.

Canada Warbler - May 18, on cement deck in front of our garage door, flying up a few inches now and then to fly-catch. May 19, running up a patch by our garage and onto the cement, as the day before. May 21, repeat performance.

Redstart - May 17, one male on a huge dirt pile thrown up by a bulldozer at a housing development, and one in neighbor's drive. May 18, two males and a female together on a lawn. May 20, three males and a female on the ground of an unplowed garden, mainly in an old strawberry bed; also one on a heap of dirt.



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## S B C WILL BE HOST AT FEDERATION'S '57 MEETING

Nelle G. Van Vorst and Minnie B. Scotland

The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc. will hold its 10th annual convention in Schenectady during 1957, it was announced at this year's convention, held May 11-13 at Pleasantville. Schenectady, it will be remembered, was host at the 5th convention, in 1952.

Dr. Peter Paul Kellogg, president of the Federation, opened this year's convention, which met at the Pleasantville High School under the auspices of the Audubon Societies of Scarsdale, Bedford, and Saw Mill River. Chairman of the various state committees gave their reports at the business meeting. The detailed report of the Conservation Committee, concerning the sale of outside parcels of state land, was interesting.

The group adopted a resolution asking the State Legislature for a model hawk and owl law. It was also suggested that thought be given to the control of the Red-winged Blackbird as they have taken over the country and are reported to be causing a great deal of crop damage.

The question of a state bird was discussed. The Wood Duck and the Bluebird were suggested, but definite action was not taken.

The Reickerts had an interesting demonstration of binophotography. They were on hand to answer any question about that and about scopes and binoculars in general.

Mrs. Lillian Stoner read the report of the Incorporation Committee, which also included Samuel R. Madison and Guy Bartlett. The draft was accepted, with suggestions for some minor changes to be considered next year as amendments.

After reports by the Finance, Kingbird, Budget, Membership and Auditing Committees, the report of the State Book Committee was given by Robert Arbib, who emphasized the great amount of work already accomplished. The report of the nominating committee was accepted, and Albert W. Fudge then elected president for 1957.

Luncheon was served in the cafeteria by a caterer to both the delegates at the meeting and folk who had been on field

trips to either Todd Point for shore-birds or to the Greenwich Audubon Center for warbler migration.

The Saturday afternoon paper session was opened by Jack Wolff, Scarsdale Audubon Society president. He was followed by Charles E. Mohr, of the Audubon Center at Greenwich, as Program Chairman. "Ecology of Life on a Log" by Stanley O. Grierson of Katonah was among the seven interesting papers at the afternoon meeting, as was the paper by SBC's Dr. Allen H. Benton.

Between the afternoon and evening sessions there was time for local birding. Dinner, at 7 o'clock in the cafeteria, was followed by a program in which Dr. Kellogg told about his recent trip to Kenya, Africa. Angelo d'Angelo of Union City, N.J., an amateur bird-photographer and professional photoengraver, presented an outstanding film in color of area birds.

### To Mianus Gorge

On Sunday morning at 7 o'clock, with the promise of a warm and calm day, many birders assembled in the school's parking lot, with Mr. Hastings to lead the trip to Mianus Gorge. This gorge, in New York and Connecticut, is one of the finest examples of virgin forest in Eastern U.S. It was rescued by Nature Conservancy from the bulldozers and turned into the Mianus River Wildlife and Botanical Preserve Area. A unique feature is that the copperhead snake is protected by law.

The group of about 90 observers was divided into four parties, three going into the gorge and one staying on the ridge overlooking the beautiful hemlock-filled ravine. They had good birding.

A very nice box luncheon was enjoyed in the fields of the Todd Farm. The Todd family were very gracious hosts to the entire group.

Noontime saw groups starting homeward. Adieus were said with the statement, "We'll see you in Schenectady in '57."

## BRIEFING THE RECORD

James K. Meritt

June temperatures in the Schenectady area averaged 68.3 degrees, just a shade above normal. The high of 94 was set June 14; the low of 43 was recorded on June 19. The month was a relatively dry one, with rainfall considerably less than half the average. In spite of the fact that most observers were resting up after a strenuous May, there were still some interesting reports submitted.

A Common Loon was seen at Jenny Lake June 9 (GB). Insofar as water and marsh birds are concerned, Vischer Ponds was a complete disappointment through the month. No American Egrets were seen there (or elsewhere locally); and Black-crowned Night Herons were, in contrast to last spring, quite scarce. Breeding waterfowl, too, appeared to be down in numbers.

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Hawk reports were few. However, an immature Bald Eagle was seen at Delmar June 3 (SM), and on June 17 a Turkey Vulture was soaring over Vischer Ponds (MF). On the very early morning of June 24 some eight Virginia Rails, four Soras, and a Florida Gallinule were heard at Meadowdale Marsh (RS). A Coot was seen at Collins Lake June 5 and 7 (EH).

A Yellow-billed Cuckoo, a species missed earlier in the spring, was heard in the Karner pine barrens June 2 (EH). There were several reports of the Black-billed. On the evening of June 21 a Horned Owl was heard at Alplaus (AH). A red-phase Screech Owl was seen almost daily at East Chatham from June 4 through June 12. A young bird was also observed on the latter date (ER). Three to five Barn Owls were heard in the Meadowdale area during the night of June 23-24 (RS). This was the first local 1956 record for the species.

A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was seen at Scotia June 2 (EH) A Purple Martin colony, perhaps a new one in the area, was reported at Round Lake (GB). A Brown Creeper was observed at Vischer Ponds June 24 (EH, JM). The Carolina Wren was reported from Scotia on several occasions during the month (EH) and on June 24 a Winter Wren was recorded along the Indian Ladder trail (RS). An albino Robin, complete with pink eyes and all, was among a brood reared in Rexford. The bird left the nest about June 20, but not before being photographed by Mrs. Harry Winne. A delivery-man saw the bird in the neighborhood several days later. On June 16 a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was seen and heard at Vischer Ponds (JM); this is the first local report in several years. The Blue-headed Vireo was seen in Scotia several times (EH).

On June 3 a Blue-winged Warbler was observed near Vischer Ponds (WK); this is the only local report to date this year. Golden-winged Warblers seemed relatively common along the Rexford-Vischer Ponds road. A Cerulean Warbler was seen at Gallupville June 3 (GZ). Another Cerulean and two Worm-eating Warblers were heard at Indian Ladder June 24 (RS). Following a very good May migration, Blackburnian Warblers appeared more common than usual in the Jenny Lake area. Myrtles, however, appeared down in numbers there (GB). A Nashville Warbler was seen near Stony Creek June 10 (SBC). The Blackpoll Warbler was last reported June 2 at Loudonville (MWF). A Prairie Warbler was seen in mid-month at Guilderland Center, not in a habitat normally associated with the species (NVV). Two separate Yellow-breasted Chats were seen in the Meadowdale area June 24 (EH, JM), and one was heard in that vicinity June 29 (JM).

Bobolinks seemed common throughout the area. The Cardinal was again reported from Niskayuna (HE). A single male Evening Grosbeak was at Gallupville as late as June 2 (GZ); three pairs were observed near Jenny Lake June 17 (GB). The species breeds not uncommonly in the Sacandaga Reservoir

area. A pair was reported still coming to a feeder at Kingston (south of SBC territory) as late as mid-June (fide Margaret Fitzgerald). The day may come when the Evening Grosbeak is a regular Schenectady County breeder.

Rudd Stone recorded eight species of sparrows in the Meadowdale area June 24. Included were ten Henslow's but only two Grasshopper Sparrows. A Henslow's Sparrow was heard in Rotterdam June 4 and 5 (GMA), and there were other reports of the species. In contrast to last year, it would appear that Henslow's were more common and Grasshopper Sparrows less common. The White-throated Sparrow was reported near Stony Creek June 3 and 10 (SBC).

Key to observers mentioned above:

<u>G</u> Andrews	<u>M</u> French	<u>J</u> Meritt	<u>N</u> Vvorst
<u>G</u> Bartlett	<u>A</u> Heitkamp	<u>S</u> Madison	<u>G</u> Zimmer
<u>H</u> Eddy	<u>E</u> Hallenbeck	<u>E</u> Radke	
<u>M</u> Foote	<u>W</u> Kaskan	<u>R</u> Stone	

 NEWS AND NOTES IN BRIEF

HUNTING PRESSURE ON TRUMPETER SWANS

The Trumpeter Swan, one of America's rare and endangered species, is being subjected to moderately heavy hunting pressure, a fluoroscopic study of 100 birds on the Red Rock Lakes Migratory Waterfowl Refuge in Montana indicates. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has said that fluoroscopic studies showed 13 of the 100 swans were carrying lead pellets in their tissues, despite the fact that the Trumpeter is on the totally protected list.

The pressure is probably due to mistaking the swan for the snow goose or some other species and not because of deliberate hunting, Service officials believe.

Occasionally a Trumpeter Swan is killed unintentionally or mistaken for another species of waterfowl and shot, even though the bird should be readily identified by its 7-foot wingspread and because it is much larger than any other bird in its range. Service officials know also that the normal winter range of the Trumpeters outside the refuges crosses areas where ducks and geese are being legally hunted and that there is opportunity for the big birds to get shot accidentally. It was to measure this hunting pressure that the fluoroscopic project was initiated.

During the summer months the swans are moulting and thus are flightless because of the loss of their primary wing feathers. Capture of the birds is relatively easy for refuge personnel using air-thrust boats. The work is being conducted on a limited portion of the refuge where there is no interference with the broods.

Red Rock Lakes Refuge is the home of the American flock of Trumpeters which fluctuates in size but approximates 600 birds. Banding results have proved there is some interchange of birds between the Canadian and American flocks, the Canadian flock being "at home" about 850 miles north of Red Rock Lakes. The Copper River country of Alaska also has a flock.



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## TAME CHICKADEES AND NUTHATCHES

Barrington S. Havens

Experience with taming Chickadees at Jenny Lake over the years indicates some interesting conclusions can be drawn. Here are the high lights, for what they are worth:

You have to keep it up. For a few years, when I was consistently maintaining feeding stations, especially during the winter months, the population of relatively tame birds grew until other campers took notice. They found they could feed the birds by hand, and they did so -- and the birds were quick to come to them. But for the past two years, for one reason or another, my consistent feeding activities dropped off, especially during the winter months. As a result, the number of tame Chickadees showed a sharp reduction, and many campers wanted to know what had happened to the tame birds.

Chickadees tame quite readily, but Red-breasted Nuthatches, once tame, assume the dominance in any given situation. The Nuthatches by themselves do not seem to take the initiative, but rather follow the example of the Chickadees. In other words, they see the Chickadees hand feeding and they do likewise. But once they have established the habit, they chase the Chickadees away from the person doing the feeding, and the Chickadees have to await their turns.

Other species, seeing the hand feeding going on, evidently lose much of their normal timidity in the presence of human beings. I have observed Creepers, White-throated Sparrows, Kinglets, and Warblers, among others working all about me and many times looking me over curiously during the period when I was hand-feeding the tame individuals.

The population spreads over a wide territory. After a couple of years of consistent feeding-station activity, plus summer hand feeding with sunflower seeds, one could go almost anywhere within the Jenny Lake camping colony and find tame Chickadees. Presumably, by the usual process of dispersal of maturing broods, the species distributes itself over a relatively wide area.

Both species, once they have eaten their fill, continue to take sunflower seeds, but they hide them away in the nooks and crannies of trees, stumps, buildings, or anything suitable.

Individuals vary considerably in their daring.

**S B C FIELD TRIP REPORTS**Gustave Angst

Field Activities Chairman

Saratoga LakeApril 8

Reference to this trip is only for record purposes. There was a heavy snowfall; only the trip leader reported in; and the trip was cancelled.

Watervliet Reservoir (A)April 15

Twenty participants almost equalled the 28 species for the Watervliet Reservoir trip of April 15. The sky was overcast, the temperature 45°, and the wind from 10 to 20 mph. -- Esly Hallenbeck

Central Park Breakfast (B)April 29

The weather was threatening when 12 persons joined for the pre-breakfast trip in Central Park April 29. Also there was Mr. Schultz of the Union-Star, who prepared a photo-feature page for a following Saturday's issue. The count (31) was very light for the date, but an early Crested Flycatcher was noted. The rain held off until the end of breakfast.

Four hardy souls spent another two hours in intermittent showers, and added four species to the early morning list. -- Roy E. Hunt

Vesper Singers (C)May 9

Seven observers along the Rosendale and Vly Roads from 7 to 9 p.m. on May 9 identified the songs or calls of 14 species, despite unfavorable weather conditions -- it was cloudy, with some rain; and the wind was from 15 to 20 mph. The temperature was about 50°. The Whip-poor-will was not heard, but the Woodcock was. -- Walter E. Kaskan

Wolf Hollow (D)May 13

The Wolf Hollow trip of May 13, with 50 species listed, had good weather -- 72°, wind of 2 mph, and overcast -- for the seven observers. The eastern ridge of the ravine was covered, following a walk through the ravine. There seemed to be a concentration of warblers throughout the area, but the six Louisiana Waterthrushes were a lower count than usual. By including the hemlocks of the ridge area, the Footes increased the species count by 15. -- Dr. L. S. Hill

Meadowdale - Indian Ladder (E)May 20

The Meadowdale and Indian Ladder territory produced a list of 67 species for the 19 participants on the May 20 trip. The temperature was 38° at the start, and the wind was strong, but it gradually waned.

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Meadowdale and the railroad tracks yielded several varieties. Before 10 a.m. the group started from the base of the old Coach Road up the Helderberg and stopped at Mrs. Anderson's, where there were many warblers and field birds in the warmer, protected area. Here was sighted the Mourning Warbler. The group crossed the creek and went up the cliff to the top.

Warblers were especially easy to see -- many were on the ground, and close. Also, the foliage was late.

The Black-billed Cuckoo was a dead bird -- freshly killed by a car on New Scotland Road near Slingerlands. Its breast feathers were loose, so the museum did not make it into a skin.

A fine morning -- the season was definitely late, and the warbler harvest especially good. -- Lucille C. Grace

### Mt. McGregor (F)

May 26

Mt. McGregor had good hunting for the 16 observers on the trip of May 26 -- 13 species of warblers, four of vireos, five of flycatchers, and a total of 44 species. The sky was hazy, the temperature 45°, and wind absent.

-- Elizabeth A. Feldhusen

### Karner Pine Barrens (G)

May 30

The only thing really unusual about the Karner Pine Barrens trip on Memorial Day was the weather -- a veritable monsoon. No Pine Warblers were seen. The best finds were six Prairie Warblers and a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. There were six persons on the trip. -- Brother E. Austin, F.S.C.

### Stony Creek (H and I)

June 3 and 10

On the regularly scheduled SBC field trip to Stony Creek, on June 3, there was a light rain, intermittent. The participants decided to repeat the trip the following week. The weather was even worse, with thunder and pouring rain. A few drenched birds allowed themselves to be counted. Salamanders were very happy, and out in large numbers.

Eight participants found 51 species on the June 3 trip (Column H in the summary); seven participants found 39 species on the June 10 trip (I). -- Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Foote

### Pleasant Valley Sanctuary (J)

June 17

About 20 observers were on hand for a most enjoyable visit to Pleasant Valley Sanctuary, Lenox, Mass. on June 17. The weather was partly cloudy and rather humid. Alvah Sanborn, the sanctuary director, led the group on late morning and early afternoon hikes along a few of the wooded trails.

An Ovenbird's nest with four eggs was seen along one of these trails, and the group was also shown the nesting site of a pair of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers. The headquarters museum was enjoyed by all. A round of thanks to Mr. Sanborn for his hospitality!

-- James K. Meritt

TRIP	ABCDEFGHIJ	TRIP	ABCDEFGHIJ
Green Heron	e j	Ruby-cr. Kinglet	bcd
Blk-cr. Night Heron	c	Cedar Waxwing	e ij
American Bittern	e	Starling	ab defghij
Mallard	a e hi	Yellow-thr. Vireo	d f h
Black Duck	a e g	Solitary Vireo	b def hi
Blue-winged Teal	e	Red-eyed Vireo	f hij
American Merganser	a e	Warbling Vireo	f h
Red-shouldered Hawk	j	Blk. & Wh. Warbler	b de h j
Marsh Hawk	e	Worm-eating Warbler	d
Osprey	a	Golden-wing. Warbler	j
Sparrow Hawk	e j	Tennessee Warbler	f
Ruffed Grouse	j	Nashville Warbler	de i
Ring-necked Pheasant	b d	Parula Warbler	d
Killdeer	a de h	Yellow Warbler	efg j
Woodcock	c	Magnolia Warbler	def h
Mourning Dove	ab de g	Cape May Warbler	f
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	j	Blk-thr. Blue Warb.	def
Black-billed Cuckoo	e	Myrtle Warbler	b ef
Chimney Swift	hi j	Blk-thr. Green Warb.	def hi
Ruby-thr. Hummingbd.	e h j	Cerulean Warbler	e
Belted Kingfisher	ab d f	Blackburnian Warb.	def
Flicker	ab ef hi	Chestnut-sided Warb.	def hij
Yel-bellied Sapskr.	ab j	Bay-breasted Warbl.	d
Downy Woodpecker	ab def h j	Prairie Warbler	g
Kingbird	de ij	Oven-bird	def hij
Crested Flycatcher	b d f hij	No. Water-thrush	e
Phoebe	ab def h j	La. Water-thrush	d
Yel-bel. Flycatcher	g	Mourning Warbler	e
Alder Flycatcher	ij	Common Yellowthroat	efghij
Least Flycatcher	def hij	Black-capped Warb.	e
Wood Pewee	ef hij	Canada Warbler	def
Olive-sided Flyctchr	f	Amer. Redstart	def hij
Tree Swallow	a e hij	House Sparrow	ab e ghi
Bank Swallow	h	Bobolink	de
Rough-winged Swallow	e	Meadowlark	ab de h
Barn Swallow	b def hij	Red-winged Blckbd.	abcdef hij
Cliff Swallow	h	Baltimore Oriole	defghij
Blue Jay	ab defghij	Purple Grackle	abcde ghij
Crow	ab efghij	Cowbird	ab defghij
Blk-cap. Chickadee	ab efghij	Scarlet Tanager	efgh
White-br. Nuthatch	ab ef h j	Rose-br. Grosbeak	ef h j
Red-br. Nuthatch	f	Indigo Bunting	d f j
Brown Creeper	a	Purple Finch	fg i
House Wren	de j	Amer. Goldfinch	b de ghij
Long-b. Marsh Wren	e	Red-eyed Towhee	bcd ghij
Catbird	c efghij	Savannah Sparrow	d
Brown Thrasher	b d g	Vesper Sparrow	b
Robin	abcdefghij	Slate-col. Junco	ab f h
Wood Thrush	cdef h j	Tree Sparrow	a
Hermit Thrush	b d h j	Chipping Sparrow	bcde ghi
Olive-backed Thrush	de hi	Field Sparrow	bcde ghij
Gray-cheeked Thrush	d	White-crown Spar.	d
Veery	cde hij	White-thr. Sparrow	bc hij
Bluebird	a g	Swamp Sparrow	e j
		Song Sparrow	abc e ghij



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## "A HILL FARM YEAR"

S B C seldom has the opportunity to speak about a book written by one of its members. "A Hill Farm Year" is such a book; Lansing Christman is the author of this collection of prose-poems.

From his hill farm in the Helderbergs, along the Bozenkill, he has chronicled the color, odor, summer warmth and winter brilliance of a countryman's year. Among the many enthusiastic comments about this collection of nature essays are those of Dr. Louis C. Jones, director of the New York State Historical Association and Farmers' Museum. Dr. Jones has written:

"One man, a countryman living on a stony upland, wooded farm, writes here of each season's change, each daily, hourly shifting of nature's countenance. He watches and he understands, as only a poet can, the brook that flows through his acres, the bird catching the sun's glint on her feathers, the soft, rich falling of a February snow. Understanding, he loves the country life and with tender, modulated lines he gives new and deeper meanings to his reader's journey 'round the seasons."

Lansing Christman is a man with a varied career. A farmer, poet and essayist, he has spent 22 years in the news field. He had started working in news as a sideline even while attending high school. Thirteen years later he joined the newsroom staff of Stations WGY and WRGB, and is today Director of News Broadcasting for those stations.

Mr. Christman has been doing creative writing since he was a boy. His nature essays have attracted attention nationally and overseas. He has been a regular contributor to "The Christian Science Monitor" since 1938. His writings have also appeared in "The New York Times," "The Washington Post," "Nature Magazine," and "Household Magazine."

Lansing Christman's farm is well known to SBC and Hiking Club members as the Christman Sanctuary. It is the same family farm where his father before him spent his entire lifetime. The century-old, 100-acre farm is, for the most part, growing trees instead of grain. It has long been a bird and wild-life sanctuary and most of its thin hilly acres have been planted to pine, spruce and larch.

\* \* \* \* \*

A HILL FARM YEAR, by Lansing Christman. Clothbound, 100 pages, illustrations from American Folk Art Collection. Taylor-Powell Press, Cooperstown. \$3.00

**BRIEFING THE RECORD**

James K. Meritt

July weather conditions paralleled those of June in the Schenectady area. The average temperature was 70.1 degrees, 2.6 below normal. Precipitation was 3.17 inches, about half an inch below normal. The high temperature was 91 on July 1. The low was 52, on July 17 and 30.

An unusual summer record is that of a Common Loon seen at Mohawk's Lock 7 July 22 (SBC). American Egrets did not put in an appearance locally until the 15th, when two were seen at Vischer Ponds (JM). A few others were recorded later in the month, but numbers were small. An American Bittern was seen along the Mohawk on the 22nd (SBC), and three others were seen that day in a marshy pond near Stony Creek Reservoir. Wood Ducks with young were reported from both Collins Lake and Vischer Ponds late in the month. A Blue-winged Teal was seen at the Ponds July 29. As is usual during the summer months, hawk reports were scanty. There were several reports of the Florida Gallinule, but apparently no Rails were recorded. A Coot was seen at Collins Lake July 15 and again on the 17th (EH).

The only item of interest in the shorebird line is the Upland Sandpiper, seen near Scotia July 22 (MB, EH), and another at Delmar (WS). Both species of cuckoos were recorded, with the Black-billed somewhat more common (or less rare). The scarcity of Yellow-bills is puzzling. Throughout the northeast this species has been rarely reported this year. Our first local 1956 report was not until early June.

Two Pileated Woodpeckers were observed flying over Vischer Ponds July 22 (MB, EH, JM). One or two Olive-sided Flycatchers were heard in the Warrensburg area July 14 (SBC). Although most of our swallows are common Schenectady County breeders, it is only recently that I have heard of two small separate nesting sites of the Purple Martin in the northern part of the county. The birds were present at at least one of these sites, and very probably both, last year. A Brown Creeper was noted at Vischer Ponds July 15 (JM).

The Carolina Wren was again present throughout the month at Collins Lake (EH). There has been no evidence of the species breeding there, however. On July 17 an albino Robin, the second reported this year, was seen at Delmar (SM). At Burnt Hills young Bluebirds were in the nest late in the month (MF).

Two pairs of Golden-winged Warblers were observed near Niskayuna July 22 (SBC). A Worm-eating Warbler and a Cerulean Warbler were heard at Indian Ladder July 7 (MB, EH, JM). Both these species had been recorded there in the spring.

The only Cardinal report submitted was from Niskayuna, where a male was present throughout the month (HE). A Grasshopper Sparrow was seen and heard in the highlands south of Altamont July 7, and another heard near Scotia the following day. Henslow's Sparrows were quite widely reported during the month.

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 Editor: Guy Bartlett, 1053 Parkwood Blvd.



August weather was quite close to normal. The average temperature in the Schenectady area was 69.9 degrees, just a half degree below normal. Rainfall totalled 2.59 inches, which was 0.68 inch below normal. The high of 90 degrees was recorded on Aug.9, and the low of 49 on the 26th.

The outstanding find during the month was an immature Little Blue Heron, first seen at Watervliet Reservoir on August 19 (SBC). Those observers who participated on that scheduled field trip had ample opportunity to study this rare summer visitor at close range through the scope. The bird was still present Aug.26 (EH). The Little Blue Heron had last been reported locally in August, 1952, when a single individual was seen at Vischer Ponds. On Aug.12 some 32 American Egrets, including a compact group of 28, were seen at the Ponds (EH, JM); numbers declined sharply, however, later in the month. Ten Blue-winged Teal were seen at Watervliet Reservoir on the 19th.

A Broad-winged Hawk was seen at Vischer Ponds Aug.26 (EH). An Osprey was seen at Stony Creek Reservoir Aug.5 (MF), and another at Watervliet Reservoir on the 19th. On Aug.8 a Peregrine Falcon was observed at the Schenectady County Airport (GB). Two or three Virginia Rails were seen at the Ponds Aug.5 (MF). On the 12th two adult Florida Gallinules with several young were seen there (EH, JM). A Lesser Yellow-legs and a Pectoral Sandpiper were among the shorebirds observed on the Watervliet Reservoir trip (SBC). Two Wilson's Snipe were present at Vischer Ponds Aug.12 (EH, JM). Thirty-five Nighthawks were counted passing over Albany on Aug.27(AB).

A Black-billed Cuckoo was recorded on the Watervliet Reservoir trip, but no Yellow-bills were reported during the month. A Pair of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers put in an appearance in Niskayuna late in the month (HE), and on the 29th an Olive-sided Flycatcher was seen at Burnt Hills (MF). On Aug.19 some twenty Purple Martins were seen in Scotia; this is apparently the last date they were recorded here. On three occasions during the middle of the month the Carolina Wren was reported from Collins Lake (EH). Another was heard at the Delmar Game Farm (WS). On Aug.5 a Short-billed Marsh Wren was seen and heard at Vischer Ponds (MF); this species is a rare summer resident locally.

Warbler reports were few. Other than the expected appearance of the Northern Water-thrush (first report Aug.5), there was little evidence of any southerly flight. By the latter part of the month, however, Bobolinks had congregated in the fields near Vischer Ponds preparatory to their fall migration. A male Cardinal was again present throughout the period in Niskayuna (HE).

Key to observers mentioned above:

ABenton	MBrown	MFoote	SMadison	WSabin
GBartlett	HEddy	EHallenbeck	JMeritt	



## STATE FEDERATION NEWS



The 10th annual convention of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc., will be held at Schenectady next year. Dr. Minnie B. Scotland is local chairman.

May 24- 26 are the dates, and the Hotel Van Curler will be the headquarters.

As was true when the fifth Federation Convention was held here in 1952, there will be plenty of opportunities for all SBC members to participate in the preparations and in the week-end activities themselves.



### NEWS AND NOTES IN BRIEF



#### AUDUBON CONVENTION

The 52nd annual convention of the National Audubon Society will be held in New York City November 10-13. Registration will be at Audubon House, 1130 Fifth Avenue. Saturday afternoon's program, at the New York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West, will emphasize Audubon Junior Club programs, and a slide-illustrated talk by Roger Tory Peterson about "Impressions of Wild Spain." The program will be followed by a reception at Audubon House, with an exhibit of paintings and drawings by Don Eckelberry a special feature.

Sunday's program, for only delegates and representatives of Audubon branches and affiliates, includes trips to either Roosevelt Memorial Sanctuary at Oyster Bay or to Audubon Center at Greenwich, Conn.

The general subject of the Monday morning session at the Historical Society is "Capitalizing on the Audubon Program." That afternoon, also at the Historical Society, there will be discussions of "Pollution Control in Relation to Wildlife" and "Pesticides in Relation to Wildlife" and a progress report by Alexander Sprunt on the Corkscrew Sanctuary.

That evening, at the American Museum of Natural History, James Fisher of England will present a color film "Birds in Britain" and Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson will conduct a discussion of "Federal Hunting Regulations in Relation to Migratory Laws." Also to be shown will be a color film "The Land the Glaciers Forgot" by Rev. Howard Orians.

Tuesday morning's program will include: "What Next for the Whooping Crane" by Dr. W. Winston Mair, Robert P. Allen and others; "The Mill Grove Audubon Shrine" by J. D'Arcy Northwood; "New Features and Developments of the Audubon Society of Canada" by John A. Livingston; and "Mission 66 in Relation to Wildlife" by Conrad L. Wirth.

Following buffet luncheon at the Audubon House, the annual meeting of members will be held that afternoon. At the annual dinner that evening at the Roosevelt Hotel, Murl Deusing will show "Adventure in Africa," photographed in the big-game areas of that continent.



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## PTARMIGAN

Lillian C. Stoner

Ptarmigans can be seen in the U.S.A. Yes, White-tailed Ptarmigans were seen by ornithologists on a field trip in Colorado on September 8, 1956. This was one of two field trips scheduled in connection with the 74th stated meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union, held September 4-9 at the Denver Museum of Natural History and the University of Colorado, Boulder.

### Atop Mt. Evans

Unfortunately the writer was not able to go on this trip to the high country, but participants who did go reported seeing six of these partially white birds (as they were not in their winter plumage) at a point about 100 feet from the top of Mt. Evans, which is 14,259 feet above sea level. The birds when first seen were not far from the road and were not especially frightened for of course there are no great numbers of people or any hunting up at this high point. One bird was quite easily caught and carried down to a lower level; some of the cars had stopped at about the 10,000-foot level. The observers encountered a little snow but on the whole the road was good, and all cars made the climb and descent with very little difficulty.

It may be of interest to SBC members to know that in summer there is a one-day Mt. Evans bus trip of about 150 miles, at a nominal fee. Mt. Evans is one of some 35 peaks in Colorado that are 14,000 feet or higher.

### Some New, Some Old

The one-day mountain trip was followed by a day on the plains. It is estimated that the composite list of birds recorded on these two days was over 100. Of course, many were strictly western birds, and different from what we see here, but it was interesting that four of the heron family are on our own SBC list: Great Blue and Black-crowned Night Herons, and American and Snowy Egrets.

Quite a few hawks were noted, including a large flock of Swainsons. Hundreds of Nighthawks were seen by several observers as they returned to town. These two last-named birds evidently were in larger groups like those often seen in migration. Also recorded was Clark's Nutcracker, a bird

closely related to the Magpie, Crow and Jay (There was an excellent picture of this western bird in the film shown by William H. Wagoner, Jr., in this year's first local Audubon Screen Tour on October 10). Several of the western Jays were listed, but not many members of the warbler family. Included in the sparrow group were Chipping and White-crowned.

### Burrowing Owls Scarcer

On the plains trip the White-faced Glossy Ibis was of interest because it is not often observed in that locality. Burrowing Owls were noted; they are often seen in or near the prairie dog burrows, but are becoming scarcer as civilization moves in.

At this season the Common House Finch was not so numerous and conspicuous in town. Several years ago the writer was in Denver in June, and the House Finch was seen in numbers about down-town buildings much like we see Starlings and House Sparrows here. In early summer their pleasant little song and chatter was heard daily near the state capitol and other city buildings.

### At Denver, and Boulder

This year the three-day paper sessions were held in two cities as the first and third day meetings were in the Natural History Museum in Denver and the second day meeting in Memorial Union Building of the University of Colorado, 27 miles away at Boulder. The 39 papers were presented by many members from Colorado, western and southern states, Canada, and other U.S. and foreign areas.

Lars von Haartman of Zoological Institute, University of Helsingfors, Finland, presented an interesting paper on adaptations in hole-nesting birds. He said that hole-nesters tend to have unspotted eggs but some, nesting in more open holes, have spotted eggs.

William H. Partridge, Argentine Museum of Natural Sciences, Buenos Aires, told of the rediscovery of the Brazilian Kerganser in Argentina. This duck was thought to be extinct but in 1947 and later years was found rather frequently in certain areas.

M. D. F. Udvardy, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, gave a most comprehensive paper on "Ecological and Distributional History of Certain North American Bird Groups."

### 129 Years Ago

The birds of one of the first and main Hudson's Bay Company fur-trading posts in western Canada was the subject of the paper "The Birds of Fort Carlton -- In 1827, 1858, and 1956" presented by Stuart Houston of Saskatchewan. A period of 129 years had elapsed between the first recording of 189 birds in this area and the study of the present year.

In 1953 the Cattle Egret was first seen in Puerto Rico. It is now fairly common all over this island. Virgilio Biaggi, Jr., of College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts,

Mayaguez, P.R., told this with the subject "Distribution, Feeding Habits, and Food of the Cattle Egret in Puerto Rico." There the bird is not always found feeding near cattle but often in grassy areas, so it is sometimes designated as a grassy egret. The first published record of Cattle Egrets on North American mainland was in 1952 and here, too, it is growing rapidly in numbers.

George J. Wallace, formerly with the Pleasant Valley Sanctuary near Lenox, Mass., and now of the Department of Zoology at Michigan State University, gave "Notes on the Singing and Nesting Cycle of *Brachospiza capensis*." This very common bird in city parks and country at altitudes to 11,000 feet was heard singing much of the year by the Wallaces while they spent their sabbatical year in Colombia.

### Dr. Bailey's Sparrow

Dwain W. Warner, Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota, told of a Mexican sparrow, *Xenospiza Baileyi*, that is closely related to the Song Sparrow. While there were a few skins of this sparrow in U. S. museums, it was not identified until Dr. Alfred M. Bailey sent a specimen a number of years ago to a well known ornithologist for identification, so that explains the name of the bird. Dr. Bailey, director of the Natural History Museum of Denver, is the Audubon Screen Tour lecturer at our March 6 meeting. Dr. Bailey and his daughter Patricia Witherspoon presented respectively the motion pictures "Birds of Canton Island" and "Birds of Western New South Wales" at the evening meeting in the Denver Museum. After these excellent movies, which had been made on the recent museum expedition to Canton Island and Australia, the audience en route to the reception had an opportunity not only to see the permanent exhibits in the museum but also to see, in one room, about ten live hawks of several species which had been brought from Alaska by airmen located near Denver and which were being trained for falconry.

Dr. Hildegard Howard, Los Angeles County Museum, told of a gigantic fossil toothed bird which had recently been found in California. She is known for her studies and work on the fossil birds which come from the famous tar pit in Los Angeles.

### State Federation Speaker

The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc., was represented on the program by Robert Arbid, Jr., who told of the proposed state bird book. His paper was titled "The New York State Standards for Recording Abundance, Frequency, and Seasonal Occurrence of Birds."

An unscheduled picture was presented by Mrs. F. M. Hamerstrom of Plainfield, Wisc., on "Courtship of Prairie Chickens." This was on work she and her husband had carried on. Topics of still other papers included records obtained on a visit to Chile, experimental studies of bird repellants, and many other kinds of bird work.

The writer ends this account of the paper sessions by

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 FEATHERS

telling of Robert Galati of Duluth, Minn., whose talk and excellent pictures on "Nesting Behavior of the Golden-crowned Kinglet" showed much work. He and his wife had experimented with food and with changing the location of the nest, among other experiments. None of them seemed to bother the birds too much.

Dr. Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr., of the University of Michigan Biological Station, was the speaker at the annual dinner, at Boulder. His subject was "The Shags of the Falkland Islands." Dr. Pettingill will be the speaker at our Audubon Screen Tour lecture of November 26. Each family had a souvenir to take home from the dinner -- a small plaster figure of a white Ptarmigan mounted on a greenish base.

### Officers for 1957

The 1957 officers are:

President	Ludlow Griscom, Harvard University
Vice President	Ernst Mayr, Harvard University
Vice President	George H. Lowery, Louisiana State Univ.
Editor	Robert W. Storer, University of Mich.
Treasurer	Charles G. Sibley, Cornell University
Secretary	Harold F. Mayfield, Toledo

George H. Lowery, Jr., received the Brewster Medal for his work on studies of night migration. Many S B C members well remember how all night we watched and counted the birds that were seen by telescope as they crossed the moon; these records were later sent to Dr. Lowery for his studies.

### Dr. Palmer Honored

Ralph S. Palmer, New York State Museum, was the only Fellow elected as there was only one vacancy on this limited (50) type of membership. Dr. Palmer, one of our SBC members, was further honored by election to a three-year term on the Council, which will involve considerable future work.

Dr. Alexander Wetmore of Smithsonian Institution, Washington, who heads the committee for the revision of the AOU Check-list of North American Birds, announced that the new edition should be ready for sale next summer; the last edition was published in 1931.

Special credit should go to Alfred Bailey and his committee which included, among others, Robert J. Niedrach and E. M. Kalmbach who did so much to make the entire meeting a great success and one long to be remembered.

### Cape May Next Year

Let us all keep in mind the date and place of the next annual meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union. It will be held at Cape May, N.J., starting September 9, 1957, it was announced by Alden H. Miller, outgoing president of A. O. U.



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## ALBANY'S CEILOMETER-- KILLER OF MIGRANTS

Guy Bartlett

Thousands of migrating birds were attracted by the powerful mercury beam of the Albany Airport ceilometer during the night of September 15 - 16, 1956 --- and for hundreds of the birds the beam of light was their death warrant. Eighteen species of warblers were identified among the birds killed; with vireos, tanagers, grosbeaks, thrushes, and flycatchers also included in the 25 identified species.

Early evening in the city had been warm and hazy, with a misty rain at times. At 1:30 a.m. daylight time I heard migrants calling in low flight. A telephone call to the U. S. Weather Bureau station at the airport confirmed the hunch -- the ceiling was low, there were fog and sky glow, and birds could be seen in the ceilometer beam.

It was 2:30 a.m. before I reached the airport. In the meantime I had gone to an all-night service station, State and Brandywine, for a supply of flashlight batteries. That corner is brightly illuminated. The number of call notes indicated some attraction of migrants. Occasional ones of warbler size could be seen, but not in circling flight. On the way to the airport, via Route 7, occasional light patches of ground fog were encountered.

Birds could be seen flashing in the ceilometer beam while I was still a quarter mile away. It quickly became apparent that the birds were fewer than on other occasions, and were lower than before -- mostly between 50 and 150 feet above ground.

The two-strip concrete road leading to the airport buildings is illuminated all night with lighting units placed alternately on hollow-spun aluminum poles. Along the 600 feet of the road closest to the ceilometer, and particularly the middle 150-foot stretch, the pavement showed dozens of dead birds, many of which had been run over.

Three thrushes, 34 warblers and a vireo were recognized among the birds picked up from the road itself. There were many more that could not be identified. The road was moist, and the grass in the fields to each side wet. Between the road and the ceilometer the grass was about knee-high, but across the road much shorter.

Birds were fluttering in the grass on both sides of the road. By far the majority of them would fly readily, for

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short distances, when I approached. Some would run along the ground. Others would merely flounder, or not move from their perches on weed stalks or grass stems. There were even some roosting with head under wing and covered with drops of mist, and able to fly when touched. On the ground were more dead birds.

All indications were that the ceilometer had already taken its toll. At 2:30 a.m. the beam ceiling was 1100 feet, with the "usual" primary and secondary lighting effects of hazy nights. Birds were calling constantly -- not only in the beam itself but at least 1000 feet out in all directions. The count of flying birds was relatively low -- about 500 in view in the beams themselves (There were 15,000 at once in October, 1954). They were dominantly of warbler size, with vireos and thrushes recognizable at times. Only a few were more than 100 feet above ground, or lower than 20 feet. Compared to 1954, the birds were more vociferous, although this may have seemed the case because they were lower.

An inspection of the airport buildings, runways, parking areas, and other lighted sections showed birds in low flight. No dead or injured birds were seen in those areas. Many warblers, however, were perched on window sills, fence rails and shrubs, but all seemed able to fly.

### Collision Victims

I collected the dead birds, and left all those that showed life, even though death seemed certain. Most of them showed no evidence (in the dark and rain) of how they met death, but some did. Most usual was a skull injury, causing a popped eye on one side. Some had blood on the bill, or a broken neck. Injured birds, facing my strong flashlight, could be picked up easily. They showed these same injuries and also broken or dragging wings.

For three hours, in increasingly heavy rain, I covered the area within a radius of 1000 feet. The birds were mostly to the south and east, and within 300 feet of the ceilometer. Pockets of a hunting jacket served for collecting, with the birds then spread on newspapers to dry off in the car trunk.

Practically all of the time I was alone; there was very little highway traffic. For more than a half hour I had company, a red fox -- with white-tipped tail -- that refused to be scared away. It stayed about 50 yards away, trotting much of the time and repeatedly facing the flashlight beam. Occasionally it stopped and fed on a bird picked up from the ground. The animal remained from about 5 a.m. until shortly before dawn an hour later.

At various times I saw birds fly to the concrete road from the grass, or walk to it. On my approach most of them returned to the grass or flew to the guard rail along the road.

BIRDS KILLED OR INJURED at the Albany Airport Ceilometer on the night of September 15-16, 1956. Identifications of Dead Specimens by Dr. Allen H. Benton, New York State College, Albany.

	Collected dead	Additional dead counted	Handled alive during night	Seen alive Sunday a.m.	Totals
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	2				2
Flycatcher (Empidonax sp?)	2		1		3
Olive-backed Thrush	10	3	2		15
Gray-cheeked Thrush	1				1
Yellow-throated Vireo				1	1
Red-eyed Vireo	10		6	1	17
Black and White Warbler	4				4
Tennessee Warbler	6		15	1	22
Parula Warbler	1				1
Magnolia Warbler	24		10		34
Cape May Warbler	1				1
Black-throated Blue Warbler	4		2		6
Myrtle Warbler	1				1
Black-throated Green Warbler	8				8
Blackburnian Warbler	11		10		21
Chestnut-sided Warbler	5				5
Bay-breasted Warbler	43		30		73
Black-poll Warbler	1				1
Oven-bird	14		6		20
Northern Waterthrush	1				1
Common Yellowthroat	11		10		21
Black-capped Warbler	4				4
Canada Warbler	4		2		6
Redstart	5		2		7
Warbler (sp?)		34			34
Scarlet Tanager	1		1		2
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	2				2
25 species (plus 2 sp?)	176	37	97	3	313

By 5 a.m. the merry-go-round flight was lessening, and the rain was fairly heavy. Dawn was apparent at 6:05 a.m. At 6:15 there were only occasional birds in the beam, mostly at 1000 to 1500 feet up. By 6:25 there was enough daylight for fair visibility, and the air became clear of birds. Chip notes could still be heard in the grass in all directions, and an occasional bird was seen in fluttering flight out of, just over, and back into the grass. At 6:35, still in the rain, I headed for home. The birds were now silent.

#### One Death Witnessed

I witnessed the death of only one bird. There was a loud metallic "ping" and then a dull rustle of the grass beside me. Almost at my feet was a dead Rose-breasted Grosbeak that had flown against the aluminum lighting pole beside me. The pole was about 200 feet from the ceilometer.

On two occasions a bird was seen to alight on the upper edge of the ceilometer, each time a Red-eyed Vireo (and perhaps the same bird). The first time the bird sat facing out

from the edge. Light from the intense beam reached both its eyes. I had no difficulty in picking the bird from its perch. Upon release it flew normally. Within two minutes there was again a vireo on the rim, but this time sitting tangent to it. Its left eye faced the beam, and its right eye was toward me. Again I approached slowly with my hand, but the bird could see the motion, and flew before I could touch it.

Upon reaching home I spread out and counted 148 dead I had collected. An hour later the count was reduced by one, for a Redstart recovered -- and before noon was released even though it still showed an eye injury.

Jim Keritt stopped at the house, took along the five cardboard trays of collected birds, and with Allen Benton returned to the airport in mid-morning. There they collected 29 more specimens and saw a few more. To Allen fell the task of identifying them. Five species of warblers accounted for 75% of the recovered birds, and the total of 18 kinds of warblers for 86% of the count. Bay-breasted alone were 41% of all; Magnolias were next with 14%.

\* \* \* \* \*

On the following Monday morning the newspapers featured an announcement that the powerful beacon atop New York City's Empire State Building was being turned off until November 1, because of crashing birds in previous years.

(An earlier episode at the Ceilometer was described in FEATHERS, Vol. 14, No. 11, November, 1952, pages 61 - 66; and information about ceilometer protection in Vol. 17, No. 12, December, 1955, page 77.)

## S B C FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Gustave Angst

Field Activities Chairman

### The Glen, Upper Hudson (A)

July 14

Only three members made the trip to the Voghts' camp on Saturday, July 14. The start from Palmer Avenue was delayed with the hope of more birders, making for a late arrival at camp. The walk through the Park was after lunch. Included in the 32 birds listed was a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak feeding milkweed flowers to a young bird. A female hummingbird made many trips to its feeders.

It was disappointing that more members didn't make the trip and enjoy a very pleasant outing -- and the good coffee and cake which the Voghts served. -- Esly Hallenbeck

### Niskayuna Wide Waters (B)

July 22

A rather small group of two covered the Lock 7 - Wide Waters area on Sunday, July 22. The sky was overcast and the early morning air was quite cool and damp. Later the air warmed and became slightly humid. Some species of birds were quite active, while some others sulked under cover.

TRIP	ABCDE	TRIP	ABCDE
Common Loon	b	Catbird	abc
Great Blue Heron	bcd	Brown Thrasher	b
American Egret	b d	Robin	abc e
Little Blue Heron	c	Wood Thrush	ab
Green Heron	bcd	Veery	b
Black-crowned Night Her.	c	Bluebird	e
American Bittern	bc	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	e
Black Duck	b d	Cedar Waxwing	a c
Blue-winged Teal	c	Starling	b e
Sparrow Hawk	b e	Solitary Vireo	e
Florida Gallinule	b	Red-eyed Vireo	a
Killdeer	bc	Warbling Vireo	ab
Spotted Sandpiper	abc	Black & White Warbler	c
Lesser Yellow-legs	c	Golden-winged Warbler	b
Pectoral Sandpiper	c	Nashville Warbler	e
Herring Gull	b d	Yellow Warbler	bc
Mourning Dove	bc	Myrtle Warbler	e
Chimney Swift	b	Blk-thr. Green Warbler	e
Ruby-thr. Hummingbird	abc	Oven-bird	b
Belted Kingfisher	bcd	Common Yellowthroat	ab
Flicker	ab	American Redstart	ab
Hairy Woodpecker	b e	House Sparrow	bc e
Downy Woodpecker	abc	Bobolink	b
Kingbird	ab	Meadowlark	b e
Phoebe	b e	Red-winged Blackbird	ab d
Yellow-bellied Flyct.	e	Baltimore Oriole	bc
Wood Pewee	ab	Purple Grackle	b
Olive-sided Flycatcher	a	Cowbird	ab
Tree Swallow	abc	Scarlet Tanager	b
Bank Swallow	ab	Rose-br. Grosbeak	ab
Rough-winged Swallow	bc	Indigo Bunting	ab
Barn Swallow	abc	Purple Finch	b
Blue Jay	ab e	American Goldfinch	abcd
Crow	abcde	Red-eyed Towhee	b
Black-capped Chickadee	bc e	Vesper Sparrow	e
White-br. Nuthatch	bc	Slate-colored Junco	a
Red-breasted Nuthatch	a	Chipping Sparrow	ab
Brown Creeper	e	Field Sparrow	ab
House Wren	abc	White-thr. Sparrow	a e
Long-billed Marsh Wren	b	Song Sparrow	abc e

The Rosendale Road - Lock 7 area produced most of the warblers and other song birds. Lock 7 also had the Herring Gulls and Common Loon. The Egrets, Great Blue and Green Herons were at the Wide Waters. No Killdeers were at the beach. In fact, only one Spotted Sandpiper was in residence to represent the shorebird clan. By this time of day, as with most summer days, the birds had become quite inactive.

We had the pleasure of seeing a young William Tell, perched on the bow of a slowly moving rowboat, let fly with an arrow and land an 8-pound carp. This incident took place right in front of us, only about 30 yards from shore.

Long-billed Marsh Wrens called from two cattail areas. The fields above Mohawk View produced more noisy Red-wings and two sought-after Meadowlarks. The total for this trip was 59 species.

-- Robert Yunick

Watervliet Reservoir (C)August 19

August 19 was a cloudy, humid morning with a little rain to greet the SBC group of seven at Watervliet Reservoir. A feature for the day was an excellent close-up view of an immature Little Blue Heron. The pure white of the young could not be misleading, and we saw the bird several times during the trip. No Red-wings, or Grackles, or Marsh Wrens were in the cattails. It was a disappointing morning for shorebirds. The list for the trip showed a count of thirty species.

-- Nelle VanVorst

Hudson below Albany (D)September 16

A heavy gray sky and a continuing copious rain all the time made observation difficult and driving hazardous on this year's Stoner Bird Trip. After 14 miles the leader decided to quit. Two other couples continued to Stockport in their car. Only 9 species were listed.

-- Pauline Baker

Crawford Road (E)September 29

Dense fog covered the valleys, but high up on Crawford Road the sky was blue and the sun shone brilliantly on the changing autumn foliage. Fall migration of small land birds was definitely underway, but the hoped-for movement of hawks overhead was not observed on this, the day assigned for the local Hawk Count. The total -- 21 species; and the leader was a lone observer.

-- G. Malcolm Andrews

**BRIEFING THE RECORD**

James K. Moritt

September temperatures in the Schenectady area averaged an even 59 degrees, 2.8 degrees below normal. This was the third consecutive month with below-average temperatures, a fact which prompted many to comment on the "missing" summer of 1956. The month's high was 86 degrees, on the 1st and 5th. The low of 36 was recorded Sept. 21. This was a record low for that date. Precipitation totaled 3.77 inches, about half an inch above normal.

The height of the land-bird migration was undoubtedly the period September 15 to 19. During the night of Sept. 15-16 over 300 birds, mainly warblers, crashed at the Albany County airport ceilometer (Page 57). Most were killed outright.

The American Egret was last observed Sept. 16, when two were seen along the Hudson below Albany (SBC). An American Bittern was at Vischer Ponds Sept. 30 (JM). In contrast to last September and in spite of the relatively cool weather, there were apparently no reports of waterfowl species other than those that breed locally. At East Chatham, southeast of Albany, two Turkey Vultures were observed on the 7th, and on the 15th no less than seven were observed there (ER). No Ruffed Grouse were reported.

A Florida Gallinule was seen at Vischer Ponds Sept. 15, and on the 3rd a Virginia Rail was heard there (EH, JM). The

Wilson's Snipe was reported from the Ponds on two occasions, and on Sept. 9 a Greater Yellow-legs was observed near Stony Creek Reservoir. There was a nice grouping of shorebirds at Tomhannock Reservoir Sept. 23. Included were six Red-backed Sandpipers, two Sanderlings, a Pectoral Sandpiper, and several Yellow-legs of both species (EA,BH). The Red-backs were the first reported locally since 1952, and the Sanderlings the first since 1953. Also, the Pectoral was the first seen this year.

Inexplicably, Cuckoos were completely unreported. A Screech Owl was heard at East Chatham on three occasions between Sept. 9 and 21 (ER), and on the 3rd one was heard in Scotia (EH). On Sept. 26 a Horned Owl was seen and heard at Burnt Hills (MF). Nighthawks departed early, the last report being Sept. 6 (GB). The only report of the Pileated Woodpecker was from Gallupville Sept. 25 (HE,GZ). There were several observations of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

Two Kingbirds were seen near Rexford on the latish date of Sept. 15, and on the 16th two Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were picked up dead at the Albany airport. An Olive-sided Flycatcher was seen at Vischer Ponds Sept. 3. A group of nine Barn Swallows was observed near Stony Creek Reservoir on the relatively late date of Sept. 15 (JM). The month's only report of the Gray-cheeked Thrush was of a dead bird at the Albany airport on the 16th. The Warbling Vireo and Yellow-throated Vireo were still singing at Vischer Ponds Sept. 15. A Blue-headed Vireo was seen in Scotia Sept. 19, and several were reported from East Chatham the last few days of the month.

Nineteen species of warblers were reported, a count not even approaching that of last spring but a good one for the month, nevertheless. The Nashville Warbler, reported on three occasions from Scotia between the 5th and 29th, was the only warbler not also recorded in the September 16 migratory disaster at the airport. The Nashville was also reported from Loudonville Sept. 13. Reports of the Parula and Cape May Warblers were limited to the airport disaster; one specimen of each species was picked up. As was the case last spring, Bay-breasted Warblers were rather frequently reported. An astonishing total of 73 were either seen alive or picked up dead at the airport. In contrast, Blackpolls were very scarce. One was seen at Loudonville on the 18th (MWF), and another was observed in Niskayuna Sept. 16 (HE). Only one was picked up at the airport. In the Scotia-Glenville Region Tennessee Warblers were reported on several occasions between Sept. 9 and 29. At Loudonville the Black-capped Warbler was observed on four occasions between Sept. 12 and 27 (MWF). A Black-capped was observed at Amsterdam on the 21st (MFitz). The last Black-throated Blue Warbler was seen at Loudonville Sept. 27.

Three Bobolinks, the last of the season, were seen in the Fischers Ferry area Sept. 15 (JM). A small group of young Grackles, apparently just out of the nest, was observed in Schenectady Sept. 10 (GB). A few Rusty Blackbirds were present at Vischer Ponds Sept. 30. A male Cardinal was reported through the period at Niskayuna (HE), and a female was observed at Loudonville on several dates between Sept. 9 and 18 (MWF). The Rose-breasted Grosbeak was observed Sept. 28

at Amsterdam (MFitz). In mid-month two Evening Grosbeaks were seen at Vail Mills, not far from the southern limit of the birds' known local breeding range (fide MFitz). A Purple Finch was seen at Loudonville Sept. 19, and on the 28th an Indigo Bunting was observed there.

The first White-throated Sparrow report in the immediate district was of a lone individual at Loudonville Sept. 11 (MWF). However, it was not until the last few days of the month that the birds were generally distributed, a fact somewhat surprising in view of the relatively cool weather. Juncos, too, were late in arriving, there being no reports for the lowland areas. On Sept. 28 a Lincoln's Sparrow was observed at Amsterdam (MFitz). The White-crowned Sparrow first appeared at Amsterdam Sept. 27, and several were subsequently banded there. Other White-crowns were seen at East Chatham and Vischer Ponds on the last two days of the month.

Key to observers mentioned above:

Bro. EAustin	HEddy	MFoote	BHipple	JMeritt
GBartlett	MFitzgerald	MWFrench	EHallenbeck	ERadke
				GZimmer



## NEWS AND NOTES IN BRIEF

### BY THE TENS OF THOUSANDS

Residents of Burnt Hills were treated to a rare sight, a mass flight of Red-winged Blackbirds on Sunday afternoon, September 21, from 5:40 to 6 o'clock. Estimates varied as to the size of the flock from 50,000 to 250,000. It is my feeling that probably 150,000 would be a good estimate.

One observer saw the flock as stretched out for two miles. The birds were flying approximately to the southeast, and calling as they went. Birders and non-birders alike were thrilled with the sight.

Flights of Purple Grackles were seen between 5 and 5:30 each afternoon on October 20, 22 and 23. This flock was estimated at 1500, and it was the feeling that they were the same birds each day, going to a roost. These birds were first spotted by Guy Bartlett on the 20th, and seen by me on the 22nd and 23rd. -- Marjorie Foote

### CHRISTMAS CENSUS -- SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22, 29

Just a reminder that Schenectady's annual Christmas Count will be made Saturday, December 22. The Troy (Hudson River) count is scheduled for Saturday, December 29. If you have not done so already, contact Gustave Angst, SBC Field-trip Chairman, FR-4-9298, concerning arrangements for your report.

Let him know, too, in advance of any unusual guests you know about at feeding stations -- and of any owls you may be seeing or hearing.

### WATERFOWL CENSUS -- JANUARY 12 - 20

SBC will again participate in the country-wide Waterfowl Census, scheduled for January 12-20.



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## FEW HAWKS ALOFT

Nelle G. Van Vorst

When the trip to Hawk Mountain was announced, 14 members made their plans for the Pennsylvania week-end. Weatherwise the week-end was perfect. The whole landscape was a tapestry of beautiful colors. The drive down the thruway and on through the wooded valleys to Orwigsburg, where most of the members stayed, was like driving through a picture-book.

Friday morning, October 12, was mild and foggy, so no one started early to climb the mountain. About the middle of the morning the path to the lookout was well traveled. The silence was broken only by the calls of Kinglets, Ruby- and Golden-crowned, Towhees and Juncos. A Golden Eagle soon circled over the valley, over the mountains, and away.

The hawks kept to the right of the lookout. For the day, between 200 and 300 were recorded. Sharp-shinned were most numerous, with some Cooper's, Marsh, Red-shouldered, Red-tailed, and Osprey.

Shortly after noon the breeze became almost calm -- and no more hawks. People became restless and many wandered down the road to their cars and drove away. Some stopped at the new auditorium, almost opposite the headquarters, and ate their picnic supper on the terrace.

Saturday was a duplicate of Friday, but with less breeze and warmer, resulting in few hawks -- but it was a beautiful day to spend in the open. Before sunset over 400 people had visited the sanctuary, and over 400 were disappointed, but had hopes for a better flight on Sunday. Maurice Brown showed beautiful and very interesting pictures of Hawk Mountain the year around on Saturday evening. The auditorium was filled.

Sunday, with an attendance of over 600, was calmer and warmer, and again produced almost no hawks.

To those who had interest in the intriguing Pennsylvania Dutch, a chance to drive through their country was enjoyed by some. Most of the SBC members returned home Sunday afternoon with a new idea in mind -- that their next trip to Hawk Mountain would be to the hunting grounds where perhaps they could help in checking the sport of shooting hawks.

Do not let this report discourage your future trip to Hawk Mountain, for there are days when the hawks are aloft in great numbers. It is always a treat to spend a day on the summit with so many people of kindred minds.

**BRIEFING THE RECORD****James K. Meritt, Records Committee Chairman**

October temperatures in the Schenectady area averaged 51.3 deg., a degree above normal. Record highs were set Oct. 15, 16 and 17, with readings of 79, 80 and 78 deg. respectively. The month's low was 28 on Oct. 12. Precipitation was 1.51 inches, over an inch below normal.

Two Common Loons, some 46 Horned Grebes, and several Pied-billed Grebes were at Tomhannock Reservoir Oct. 17 (EA). Undoubtedly because of the relatively warm weather in Sept. and Oct. the waterfowl migration was not overly good. The N.Y. State Conservation Dept. reported a 24% decline in Hudson Valley waterfowl. There were several area observations of Canada Geese. On the 10th a flock was heard over Burnt Hills (MF), and on the 17th about 50 were seen over Alplaus (HB). A group of 21 was at Tomhannock Oct. 17 (EA), and on the 18th about 50 at Burnt Hills (VS). Three hundred Black Ducks were at Tomhannock Oct. 17, and a count of about 150 on the Crescent (or Stony Creek) Reservoir SBC trip of Oct. 21. On the 5th 21 Baldpates were at Vischer Ponds, and on the 9th 30 were seen there (HB, MF). A few were at Tomhannock Oct. 17 and at Crescent Reservoir Oct. 21. The only report of the Pintail was a pair at Crescent Oct. 28 (EH). Three Green-winged Teal were at Vischer Ponds Oct. 5, and a Blue-winged was there Oct. 10. A good count of 30 Wood Ducks was made at Crescent Oct. 21. A Surf Scoter was at Tomhannock Oct. 13 (BH, HK). A lone White-winged Scoter and a single Ruddy Duck were there Oct. 17 (EA). Some 10 American Mergansers were at Crescent Reservoir Oct. 9 (HB, MF), and two Red-breasted Mergansers there Oct. 28 (EH).

A Sharp-shinned Hawk was observed in the Berlin area of Rensselaer County Oct. 6 (SBC), and a late Broad-winged near Vischers Ponds Oct. 9 (HB, MF). On Oct. 27 a Rough-legged Hawk was near Rotterdam (CH). Two Ruffed Grouse were in the Berlin area Oct. 6 (SBC). Some 75 Killdeer were at Watervliet Reservoir Oct. 6, and that same day two Lesser Yellow-legs were at Vischer Ponds (JM). A Woodcock was seen Oct. 13 near Delanson (RG). Four Wilson's Snipe were at Tomhannock on Oct. 17 (EA).

On Oct. 3 Game Warden Mark Putman picked up a dead Caspian Tern at Canada Lake, Fulton County. Residents had noticed the immature bird for the two preceding days because it was obviously weak. Identification was by Margaret Fitzgerald and Esly Hallenbeck. The last previous local report for the species was in September, 1944, when two were at Watervliet Reservoir. The Caspian Tern is normally considered a coastal species, but it breeds sporadically at the Great Lakes.

The Cuckoo flight was, as in the spring, poor. There is record of only one, a Black-billed at East Chatham Oct. 14 (ER). A Horned Owl was heard at Alplaus in early Oct. (fide AH). Two Hummingbirds were at Amsterdam Oct. 2, and on Oct. 1 a Pileated Woodpecker was observed there (MFitz). A Pileated was at Vischer Ponds Oct. 7 (EH). No Sapsuckers were reported. Three extremely late Kingbirds were in the Berlin area Oct. 6 (SBC). A Carolina Wren was heard singing at Am-

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sterdam Oct.14(MFitz), and a Catbird was at Tomhannock on Oct.17 (EA). Both species of Kinglets were recorded in good numbers, with a count of some 25 Golden-crowned in the Berlin area Oct.6. Pipits, too, were rather frequently recorded; about 500 were in various groups in fields between Saratoga and Schenectady Oct.20(GB). A Loggerhead Shrike was at Mohawk View Oct.14 (WK).

Two Blue-headed Vireos were in Amsterdam Oct.14(MFitz). Only two warbler species other than the Myrtle were definitely identified. A Black-throated Green was in the Glenville area Oct.5(JM), and there were one or two reports of the Yellow-throat. A huge flight of Redwings was noted Oct. 21 in the Burnt Hills area (MF). This flight, which was over two miles long, took over 15 minutes to pass a given point. Numbers were estimated anywhere from 50,000 to five times that number. On several occasions conspicuous Grackle groupings were reported. Rusty Blackbirds were seen by several observers early in the month. The Scarlet Tanager was last reported Oct.1 at Loudonville (MWF). A late Rose-breasted Grosbeak was in Amsterdam Oct.21, and from the 19th through the 23rd a Dickcissel, the first reported locally this year, was there (MFitz). The Purple Finch was at Amsterdam through the month, but there were few other reports. A male Cardinal was present through the period in Niskayuna (HE), and one was seen Oct. 23 at Loudonville (MWF).

White-crowned Sparrows were quite widely reported, but not in overly large numbers. The last was at Amsterdam Oct. 24(MFitz). The Tree Sparrow was first seen at Amsterdam Oct.20(MFitz) and at Vischer Ponds Oct.21(JM). Two Field Sparrows were at Loudonville Oct.14(MWF). In Niskayuna the Chipping Sparrow was last seen Oct.28(HE). Juncos were late in arriving, and were definitely not present in above average numbers. There were several observations of Fox Sparrows. One was in Amsterdam Oct.14(MFitz); one was in Niskayuna Oct.28(HE); and Scotia had some Oct.29(EH).

KEY TO OBSERVERS mentioned above: BroEAustin, GBartlett, HBundy, HEddy, MFitzgerald, MFoots, MWFrench, RGunderson, EHallenbeck, AHeitkamp, BHipple, CHoward, WKaskan, HMalone, JMeritt, ERadke, VSampson.

## S B C FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Gustave Angst, Chairman

### (A) Taberton-Berlin Area

October 6

It was a lovely, clear day, with a heavy frost. There was a big migration of Robins, several small flocks of both species of Kinglets. White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows and Juncos were seen in several places. One Ruffed Grouse was seen, and one heard clucking and drumming. Seven observers saw 20 species.

-- Allen Benton

(B) Crescent Reservoir

October 21

Water Pipits stole the show from the ducks at Crescent Reservoir Sunday, Oct. 21. Thirty of them flew about the party of 12, affording all an opportunity to observe them well. The comparatively large number of ducks indicates growing interest in the use of this new body of water by waterfowl. It was heartening to observe 30 Wood Ducks.

-- S. R. Madison

(C) Tomhannock-Tamarack

November 4

Any observations about the field trip to Tomhannock Reservoir and Tamarack Swamp area en route are overshadowed by the single main event of discovering a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in the area around the first farm beyond the island in the reservoir. The bird flew across the road, darted around the trees edging a small field, perched for a bit, and then flew off among the trees to the south of the farm.

All but three of the 12 in the party had excellent views of the bird, both in flight and perched. While pursuing insects, the divided and streamer-like tail feathers were displayed unmistakably. For most in the group this astonishing find was a "lifer."

-- Byron T. Hipple, Jr.

(D) Saratoga-Round Lakes

November 18

The annual early-winter Saratoga-Round Lakes trip was made in the first snowstorm of the season. The temperature was 32°, and wind and sunshine both zero. Trees held snow until afternoon. The Red-necked Grebe was outstanding among the 27 species.

-- Minnie B. Scotland

TRIP	ABCD		
Common Loon	cd	Hairy Woodpecker	c
Red-necked Grebe	d	Downy Woodpecker	bcd
Horned Grebe	cd	Kingbird	a
Fied-billed Grebe	b d	Phoebe	a
Great Blue Heron	a c	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	c
Green Heron	b d	Blue Jay	abcd
Mallard	bc	American Crow	abcd
Black Duck	abcd	Black-capped Chickadee	abcd
American Widgeon	bc	White-breasted Nuthatch	b d
Wood Duck	b	Brown Creeper	cd
Ring-necked Duck	d	American Robin	ab
Canvas-back	d	Eastern Bluebird	b
Lesser Scaup	d	Golden-crowned Kinglet	abc
American Golden-eye	d	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	a
Buffle-head	d	Water Pipit	b
White-winged Scoter	d	Cedar Waxwing	d
Surf Scoter	c	Common Starling	abcd
American Merganser	d	Myrtle Warbler	b
Sharp-shinned Hawk	a	House Sparrow	bcd
Red-tailed Hawk	c	Eastern Meadowlark	b
Sparrow Hawk	b	Red-winged Blackbird	bc
Ruffed Grouse	a c	Purple Grackle	b
Ring-necked Pheasant	a	American Goldfinch	abcd
Killdeer	bcd	Vesper Sparrow	b
Herring Gull	bcd	Slate-colored Junco	abcd
Ring-billed Gull	d	American Tree Sparrow	cd
Belted Kingfisher	c	White-crowned Sparrow	a
Yellow-shafted Flicker	abc	White-throated Sparrow	a
		Song Sparrow	ab