

# THE REDSTART

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Edited by Tom Shields

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## ANNUAL MEETING

The Brooks Bird Club's annual meeting will occur on September 27 at Oglebay Park, 8:00 p. m. At this meeting, reports of officers and committee will be read. This will include reports of the President, Chairman of the Executive Committee, Secretary-Treasurer, Corresponding Secretary, Librarian and Editor.

Officers for the new year, beginning October 1, will be elected. The following persons were nominated at the August meeting and are to be voted upon in the coming meeting:

President - - - - -	John W. Handlan
Secretary-Treasurer - -	Helen McGill Carolyn Conrad
Executive Committee - -	Russell West Charles Conrad Harold Bergner Tom Shields
(vote for three)	

Additional nominations may be made at the September meeting. Active Members who are unable to be present at this meeting may send their votes to the Secretary and they will be counted, provided the votes are in her hands no later than September 26.

Also, the winner of the 1935 Project Contest will be announced, and will read the winning paper. Four papers were submitted in this contest, the entrants being John W. Handlan, Russell West and Harold Bergner. Dr. Lawrence E. Hicks, Secretary of the Wilson Ornithological Club, is grading the papers.

A PHENOMENAL CONCENTRATION OF SHORE BIRDS  
IN CENTRAL WEST VIRGINIA

By reason of its topography and geographical situation, central West Virginia is far from noted as a good territory for the observation of shore birds. But a phenomenal concentration of birds of this general type occurred in Barbour County, West Virginia, on September 5 and 6, 1935 and fortunately for the record, Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Brooks, Morgantown, W. Va., were on hand to observe it.

In a letter to the writer, Mr. Brooks remarks that five days of heavy rainfall had flooded low meadow lands along the state road near Volga, Barbour County. On September 5, he and Mrs. Brooks drove their automobile past the flooded region and noted great numbers of shore birds investigating the wet fields.

To the utter detriment of street clothing, these two enthusiasts waded about in the wet lands for two hours and brought others back to the site the next day for observations which include apparent new records for the state. A numerical list of birds observed in the area during the two days is as follows:

Green Heron	- - - - -	6	White-rumped Sandpiper	--	11
Least Bittern	- - - - -	2	Least Sandpiper	- - - - -	6
Blue-winged Teal	- - - - -	6	Dowitcher	- - - - -	200
Yellow Rail	- - - - -	1	Laughing Gull	- - - - -	1
Semipalmated Plover	- -	30	Black Tern	- - - - -	1
Black-bellied Plover	- -	2	Cliff Swallow	- - - - -	15
Killdeer	- - - - -	15	Migrant Shrike	- - - - -	2
Upland Plover	- - - - -	2	Mockingbird	- - - - -	1
Solitary Sandpiper	- -	125	Bobolink	- - - - -	300 plus
Lesser Yellow-legs	- - -	4	Savannah Sparrow	- - - -	1
Pectoral Sandpiper	- - -	2			

Mr. Brooks writes that "the Black-bellied Plovers were studied within twenty feet with good glasses.---The Black-bellies are new to the state; there is one record for the White-rumped Sandpiper; one for Dowitchers; and a very uncertain one for the Yellow Rail."

He adds that only those species recorded as positively as sight permits were included in his list and hints that some even greater rarities for this state probably also were present, but in the absence of a specimen he declined to list them.

The dates immediately preceding the observations were those on which a tropical hurricane lashed Florida and swept on up the coast.

J. W. Handlan  
Wheeling, W. Va.

## WILSON'S PHALAROPE RECORDED AT BEECH BOTTOM

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While paying a visit to Beech Bottom Swamp, Beech Bottom, West Virginia, on Saturday, May 4, 1935, Clyde Upton and the writer were very fortunate in listing a rather rare shore bird for the state of West Virginia, Wilson's Phalarope, Steganopus tricolor.

Although we were unable to collect this Phalarope, we did have the opportunity to observe it for fully fifteen minutes through a 20-X telescope and 6-X binoculars. There was only one of these birds present, and it was a female. Careful notes were made by both Mr. Upton and the writer, who also made a sketch of the bird with notes and colors listed. A separate check-up for identification was made and it was agreed that the subject was a Wilson's Phalarope.

~~case~~ Charles Conrad  
Wheeling, W. Va.

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## THE SPORTSMEN REORGANIZE

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Once more the sportsmen of the nation make a bid for a united front by the organization of the American Wild Life Institute, formed August 14, 1935 and chartered in the District of Columbia. As planned, the Institute is to be "cooperative rather than operative, a medium through which all forces interested in wild life may be mobilized to assure a productive wild life policy. Emphasis is to be on restoration, not restriction. And that means the management of wild life and its habitat to assure maximum results." The quotation is from an editorial by the Institute's secretary, Mr. Seth B. Gordon, in FIELD AND STREAM. (Vol. XL, No. 6, p. 17, October 1935.)

Coincidentally with the appearance of this editorial, appeared an article by H. P. Shelton, of the United States Biological Survey, in the New York Times for Sunday, September 15 (Section 10, p. 1). Mr. Shelton says: "There are two fundamental requirements to the wild-life program: first, the studied regulation and restriction of shooting so as to keep the annual kill at a point well below the annual production; and second, to restore as extensively as conditions will permit, the natural habitat essential to the production and protection of wild life. Each is essential--the neglect of either one ruins the effectiveness of the other."

In the two articles the writers each recognize and deplore the tendency of politicians to use what Mr. Shelton calls a "fragile, destructible resource producing a billion dollars a year," as a political football. Potentially, the Institute would point the efforts of some twenty millions of sportsmen in activities which will result in the presence of game to be killed every shooting season. Should such an extensive organization be effected, the sportsmen will be armed with the nation's most potent political bludgeon. That this bludgeon may be fashioned, backers of the Institute have underwritten the sum of \$30,000.00 annually for five years.

No one deplores more than the writer the fact that wild-life conservation too often is in ignorant, political hands. If-- and it is a large "if"--the writer could be assured that sportsmen are to be safely entrusted with the care of wild-life which is owned by ALL the people, no one would rally more enthusiastically to the cause.

The dismal failure of the waterfowl gunners to accept expert testimony in the recent and futile agitation over the closing of the waterfowl gunning season, is fresh in mind. The persistent, unfair and stupid destruction of "vermin" continues despite any and all expert advice to the contrary. And there is a sinister note in Mr. Gordon's editorial. "Emphasis" of the Institute is to be placed on "restoration, not restriction."

It is to be noted that Mr. Shelton states plainly the need for "studied regulation and restriction" of shooting.

There must be willingness by the sportsmen to play fair with wild-life, if only for their own personal desires for a limit bag every year. There must be a willingness by the sportsmen to listen to those who leave guess-work to the gunners and have worked out wild-life problems with the cold, unbiased eyes of science. There must be co-operation with state and federal conservation agencies by the sportsmen, and an insistence by the latter that paid conservation officials know the ground upon which they essay to walk.

When these conditions are met, the millions of outdoors people who enjoy wild-life without killing it can well afford to cast their lot with the sportsmen and work together for the common good. Until such a time, we need to watch carefully the activities of such potentially good organizations as The American Wild-Life Institute.

-- J. W. Handlan  
Wheeling, W. Va.

## BOOK REVIEW

THE HAWKS OF NORTH AMERICA, by John B. May. National Association of Audubon Societies, \$1.25

In spite of the fact that there always has been a tremendous interest in Hawks, this is the first book of real worth to be written on that subject, since Dr. A. K. Fisher contributed: "The Hawks and Owls of the United States in their Relation to Agriculture" in 1893. The American people have been in need of a volume like this for a long time, as very little is generally known about Hawks. Even among bird students, it is not often that one finds an expert in the identification of this order of birds, or one who knows a great deal about their food habits.

The Audubon Societies have shown remarkable foresight in publishing this book at such a low price. This will enable many people, who are potential conservationists, to purchase it, and will probably make such persons friends of our Hawks instead of enemies of these birds. It is hoped that sportsmen will also read this work, and that some of them will change their minds about "vermin".

The Introduction written by Dr. May is worth the attention of bird students. There are many helpful aids to identification in this part of the book, as well as in the articles about the various species covered by the work. If one reads the entire volume, he should be able to identify most of the Hawks which he sees.

The common names of each species are augmented by other names which are sometimes assigned to them, and this should be helpful to persons not very well versed in ornithology. Flight habits and call notes may also be useful, and these are well scattered throughout the book. The plates by Major Allan Brooks are representative of his usual fine work, and will enable the reader to become familiar with the appearances of the various Hawks. In addition, Roger Tory Peterson's plates are excellent examples of what the birds look like when they are seen from below.

The writer recommends this book to anyone interested in Hawks, and is certain that those who read it will receive much information from it, regardless of whether they be ornithologists, sportsmen, conservationists or laymen.

T.E.S.

## CORRESPONDING MEMBERS

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Although but two new members were added to the list of Corresponding Members since the last report, they represent a new state and the first Province of the United States to be on our mailing list. One membership was received from Mrs. Dennis Scott, Phillipine Islands, U.S.A., while the other came from Mr. T. L. Engleby, Roanoke, Virginia.

This makes a total of 12 states and the District of Columbia, and one Province to which THE REDSTART is now mailed. An inquiry has been received from Quito, Ecuador, South America.

One renewal, that of Miss Hilma True of Ohio, was received.

---Charles Conrad,  
Corresponding Sec'y.

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With this issue, the writer bids farewell to THE REDSTART readers, in the capacity of Editor. However, he shall continue to help with the activities of the Brooks Bird Club, and to aid this journal in any way he can.

It has been a privilege and a pleasure to have served as Editor of this bulletin. Much of ornithological value has been learned, and many journalistic helps have been secured from this association. The writer wishes to thank all of the people who so kindly aided him in his work, and hopes that the same help will be given to whomsoever is appointed to fill his position.

He is particularly indebted to Mr. A. B. Brooks and Mr. John W. Handlan. To Mr. Brooks, for getting him interested in ornithology and for teaching him so much about birds. To Mr. Handlan, for giving so freely of his editorial knowledge which was acquired through long periods of journalistic work.

Lastly, he hopes that THE REDSTART will continue to contain articles of ornithological value, and that it will keep the place it has acquired in West Virginia ornithological history.

---Tom Shields