



The Redstart

Published Monthly by the Brooks Bird Club
Oglebay Park, Wheeling, W. Va.

Vol. III, No. 10

Edited by J. W. Handlan

July, 1936

WATERFOWL ON FOUR ALLEGHANY LAKES

by
Maurice Brooks

During the school year of 1935-36, in connection with field courses in Ornithology given at West Virginia University, a group of us have been making special studies of four mountain lakes in West Virginia and western Maryland. Since these lakes are all artificial, and of comparatively recent origin, it has seemed a matter of interest to check carefully the effect they are having on migrant and resident waterfowl.

It has been recognized for some time that one of the major flyways of waterfowl in Eastern North America has its beginnings at the Eastern end of Lake Erie and the Western end of Lake Ontario. It has been assumed that migrating birds make the jump from the lakes to tidewater at the other end of the fly-way, Chesapeake Bay and adjacent waters, in a single flight, and that lack of suitable resting and feeding places has prevented their being observed more frequently in the Allegheny mountain area. From these assumptions, it would seem reasonable that, as artificial bodies of water are created, more and more water birds will stop to rest and feed about them. We believe that observations herein recorded will shed some light on the matter.

The four bodies of water studied are as follows: Lake Lynn (Cheat Lake), lying chiefly in Monongalia County, West Virginia; Lake Terra Alta, in Preston County, West Virginia; Deep Creek Lake, in Garrett County, Maryland; and Mountain Lake, at Mountain Lake Park, Garrett County, Maryland.

Of these four, Lake Lynn and Deep Creek Lake are quite extensive, being formed for electrical power production. Lake Terra Alta and Mountain Lake are much smaller, having been created, chiefly, for recreational purposes.

Lake Lynn, formed by a dam at Lake Lynn, Pennsylvania, is about sixteen miles long and is quite narrow, the greatest width scarcely reaching a mile. Its surface has an elevation above sea-level of about 900 feet, but it is surrounded by heavily wooded mountains that reach a height of 2500 feet. Hemlock and Rosebay Thododendron are characteristic species. The water is quite deep and there are very few shallow arms where aquatic vegetation would find suitable habitats. It seems a fair assumption that waterfowl will use this body of water chiefly as a resting place, since food is limited and breeding places practically nonexistent. Observations, so far, tend to bear this out. Lake Lynn is now about ten years old. Only observations made in West Virginia are noted.

Deep Creek is also long, but it is characterized by a large number of shallow arms where vegetation of an aquatic nature is rapidly appearing. It lies on that portion of the Alleghany Plateau known locally as the Alleghany Tableland, and has an elevation of approximately 2700 feet above sea-level. The lake has a shore line of about 80 miles, subject to wide variations as water is drawn off for power production. These diversions, during periods of dry weather, make many arms of the lake unsuitable as breeding places for waterfowl. There is, however, a considerable quantity of food available, and our observations tend to show that birds stay here longer during migration.

Lake Terra Alta and Mountain Lake both are located on the "Alleghany Tableland" at elevations around 2600 feet. Both are quite small, but have the advantage of a fairly constant supply of water, so that the shore lines do not fluctuate so much as those of the larger bodies. They are well supplied with some types of aquatic vegetation, but lack the Wild Rice, Wild Celery and Duck Weeds in quantities which would make them really good feeding spots. Nevertheless, there are occasional breeding ducks on these two lakes.

Our systematic observations this year have been supplemented with observations made over a series of years but, unless otherwise noted, all records below are referable to 1935-36.

Messrs. James T. Handlan, jr., Abe S. Margolin, Karl Haller, Lloyd Poland and the author have been regularly engaged in these observations, and we have been joined, at times, by Messrs. W. H. Waldron, jr., I.B. Boggs, and Charles Sites, and Miss Anne Fromme and Mrs. Brooks.

1. Gavia immer immer. Common Loon.

Lake Lynn: Nov. 6, 1935 (3); Nov. 13, 1935 (2); Nov. 20, 1935 (2);
Nov. 23, 1935 (1); Nov. 27, 1935 (2); Dec. 3, 1935 (3);
Dec. 5, 1935 (1); Dec. 6, 1935 (4); March 3, 1936 (1);
March 7, 1936 (1); March 22, 1936 (3); March 26, 1936
(2); March 31, 1936 (1); Apr. 2, 1936 (4); Apr. 4, 1936
(1); April 12, 1936 (2); April 13, 1936 (2); April 15,
1936 (1); April 18, 1936 (4); April 20, 1936, (1);
April 28, 1936 (2); May 3, 1936 (2); May 6, 1936 (2)
May 9, 1936 (2).

Deep Creek Lake: Nov. 3, 1935 (2); Nov. 14, 1935 (3); Nov. 27, 1935
(3); Dec. 3, 1935 (1); Dec. 15, 1935 (1); April 12,
1936 (4); April 19, 1936 (4); April 25, 1936 (3);
April 26, 1936 (4); May 9, 1936 (2).

Lake Terra Alta: Nov. 3, 1935 (1); Nov. 10, 1935 (1); Nov. 14,
1935 (2); Nov. 27, 1935 (1); Dec. 3, 1935 (3); April
12, 1936 (1); April 25, 1936 (3); May 3, 1936 (1).

2. Gavia stellata. Red-throated Loon.

Lake Lynn: Nov. 20, 1935 (3); April 8, 1936 (1); April 17, 1936
(2); April 18, 1936 (1); April 22, 1936 (1); April
29, 1936 (2); May 1, 1936 (1).

Deep Creek Lake: April 19, 1936 (2); April 25, 1936 (1);
April 26, 1936 (2).

3. Colymbus grisegna holboelli. Holboell's Grebe.

Lake Lynn: Nov. 13, 1935 (1); March 24, 1936 (1).

4. Colymbus auritus. Horned Grebe.

Found on all four bodies of water in varying numbers from
October 12, 1935 to Dec. 3, 1935, and from March 29, 1936 to
May 7, 1936.

5. Podilymbus podiceps podiceps. Pied-billed Grebe.

Found in small numbers on all four bodies of water from October
12, 1935 to Dec. 15, 1935, and from March 20, 1936 to May 7, 1936.

6. Phalacrocorax auritus auritus. Double-Crested Cormorant.

Lake Lynn: April 5, 1936 (1); April 25, 1936 (1) (I.B. Boggs).

7. Ardea herodias herodias. Great Blue Heron.

Lake Terra Alta: April 18, 1936 (1).

Deep Creek Lake: April 26, 1936 (1).

8. Butorides virescens virescens. Eastern Green Heron.

Common about all four bodies of water until about Oct. 1, 1935, and after April 19, 1936. The species breeds.

9. Botaurus lentiginosus. American Bittern.

Deep Creek Lake: April 25, 1936 (1).

10. Ixobrychus exilis exilis. Eastern Least Bittern.

Mountain Lake: April 18, 1936 (1). No evidence that this species breeds at any of the four bodies of water, although it has been found breeding in West Virginia.

11. Branta canadensis. Canada Goose:

Lake Lynn: March 7, 1936 (38); March 8, 1936 (9); March 14, 1936 (24).

Lake Terra Alta: March 28, 1936 (8).

12. Anas platyrhynchos. Mallard.

Lake Lynn: April 14, 1936 (4).

Deep Creek Lake: April 19, 1936 (7).

Lake Terra Alta: March 28, 1936 (23); April 8, 1936 (8); April 9, 1936 (3); April 18, 1936 (11); April 19, 1936 (5).

Mountain Lake; April 4, 1936 (4); April 18, 1936 (4); April 19, 1936, (2); April 25, 1936 (2); April 26, 1936 (2); May 3, 1936 (2).

This species has nested within recent years at Lake Terra Alta, Deep Creek Lake, and Mountain Lake.

13. Anas rubripes. Black Duck.

Lake Lynn: October 19, 1935 (9); March 10, 1936 (8); March 24, 1936 (3); April 5, 1936 (6); April 29, 1936 (1).

Deep Creek Lake: April 18, 1936 (27); April 25, 1936 (18); April 26, 1936 (5); May 2, 1936 (8); May 7, 1936 (4).

Lake Terra Alta: October 12, 1935 (3); Nov. 15, 1935 (15);
March 28, 1936 (40); April 8, 1936 (7); April 18, 1936 (2);
April 25, 1936 (3).

Mountain Lake: April 4, 1936 (2) April 18, 1936 (2).

Individuals with very red legs, corresponding to A. r. rubripes, were noted a number of times. Other individuals whose legs were distinctly not red were noted. These, presumably, are referable to A. r. tristis.

14. Chaulelasmus streperus. Gadwall.

Deep Creek Lake: April 14, 1936 (6); April 19, 1936 (4); April 25, 1936 (2).

Lake Terra Alta: October 12, 1935 (1); March 28, 1936 (5); April 8, 1936 (8); April 19, 1936 (2).

15. Mareca americana. Baldpate

Lake Lynn: February 28, 1936 (1); March 5, 1936 (4); March 31, 1936 (15); April 14, 1936 (3); April 28, 1936 (1).

Deep Creek Lake: March 22, 1936 (2); March 28, 1936 (3); April 8, 1936 (7); April 19, 1936 (9).

Lake Terra Alta: March 28, 1936 (20); April 8, 1936 (6); April 18, 1936 (3).

Mountain Lake: April 19, 1936 (1).

16. Dafila acuta. Pintail.

Deep Creek Lake: April 25, 1936 (18)

Lake Terra Alta: April 18, 1936 (6); April 19, 1936 (3); April 25, 1936 (3); April 26, 1936 (1); May 3, 1936 (1).

17. Nettion carolinense. Green-winged Teal.

Lake Lynn: March 29, 1936 (1).

Lake Terra Alta: Nov. 3, 1935 (1); March 28, 1936 (1); April 8, 1936 (3).

18. Querquedula discors. Blue-winged Teal.

Lake Lynn: March 29, 1936 (3); April 3, 1936 (5); April 12, 1936 (2); April 15, 1936 (7).

Deep Creek Lake: April 18, 1936 (11); April 19, 1936 (17); April 25, 1936 (8); April 26, 1936 (9); May 3, 1936 (5); May 9, 1936 (5).

Lake Terra Alta: April 8, 1936 (4); April 18, 1936 (9); April 19, 1936 (6); April 25, 1936 (8); April 26, 1936 (5); May 3, 1936 (4).

19. Aix sponsa. Wood Duck.

Lake Lynn: March 31, 1936 (3).

Lake Terra Alta: April 8, 1936 (4).

Editor's Note: The remainder of Mr. Brooks' valuable contribution will be published in THE REDSTART for August, 1936, its length forbidding its inclusion, entire, in a single issue.

FIELD NOTES

The American Egret in Ritchie County, W. Va. I spent the week of July 20-25, 1936, camping on the South Branch of Hughes River, two and one-half miles from Berea, Ritchie County, West Virginia. On the morning of July 25, 1936, I observed two examples of the American Egret, Casmerodius albus egretta, wading in Hughes River at the mouth of Bone Creek. These birds were observed, at close range, for more than an hour. The night of July 24 we had encountered a severe electrical storm with very high winds, conditions which, possibly, impelled the Egrets to rest for a time in the vicinity in which they were noted.

--Clyde B. Upton
Elm Grove, W. Va.

A Nesting Record of the Broad-winged Hawk. Mr. William Forshey, of Ohio County, W. Va., employed at Oglebay Park, near Wheeling, on July 17 brought to the Park nature museum three immature examples of the Broad-winged Hawk, Buteo platypetereus. Mr. Forshey said he had taken three downy young Hawks from a nest at Point Mills, Ohio County, W. Va., not far from his home "more than a month ago," which would be approximately early June. The nest location he described as being "about 75 feet up in a big Beech Tree." He added that an old bird not only remained in the vicinity of the nest, but repeatedly darted at his head before he shot the adult and climbed the tree to secure the three downy young. Mr. and Mrs. Forshey reared the birds at their home until he turned them over to the Park. One of the three was manifestly ill at the time it was received, did not yield to treatment and was dispatched. As this is written, the two survivors constitute tame and interesting pets. They are to be given their freedom when the Park nature museum closes early in September.

--John W. Handlan
Wheeling, W. Va.

Mid-summer Record of the Virginia Rail in Hancock County, W. Va. Late this spring (1936) I observed at my home near Tomlinson Run Park, Hancock County, a bird I believe to have been a Virginia Rail, Rallus l. limicola. On June 26, 1936, Mr. Walter C. Gumbel found a wounded bird which was brought to me. The bird, which subsequently died, was identified by us as a Virginia Rail.

-- Robert Murray
New Cumberland, W. Va.

Nesting of the Hooded Warbler in Ohio County, W. Va. On June 19, 1936, on Stratford Hill, near Wheeling, Ohio County, West Virginia, I found a small nest in a fork of a small tree about three feet above ground and containing three white eggs with a few small, brown dots on the large end. The nest was of grape bark, lined with grass. I returned to the place with a friend and together we watched a pair of adult birds at and about the nest. At times these came within five feet of where we sat and we were able to identify them as Hooded Warblers, Wilsonia citrina. Mr. Russell West later was taken to the location and confirmed our identifications of birds and nest.

--John Pattison,
Wheeling, W. Va.

ORNITHOLOGICAL JOURNALS

Auk, The (LIII, No. 3, July, 1936) Aretas A. Saunders writes on "The Relation of Field Characters to the Question of Species and Subspecies," in a way which expresses for many of us who are less articulate, some of the things which occasionally must occur to every field student. Recommended, also, as of especial interest to amateur field students is G. K. Noble's "Courtship and Sexual Selection of the Flicker." An example of the interest to be derived from a study of a single species in a single, limited area is W. Bryant Tyrrell's "The Osprey's of Smith's Point, Virginia." The issue includes the usual longer articles, reviews, field notes, and correspondence. Plates illustrating Noble's and Tyrrell's articles, respectively, are excellent. (American Ornithologists' Union)

Bird-Lore (XXXVIII, No. 4, July-August, 1936) Mrs. Margaret M. Nice discusses the territorialism of the Song Sparrow in an informal way for easy lay understanding. Frank M. Chapman gives us another glimpse of the fascinating birds of Barro Colorado in his "The Composer." As usual, the issue contains much of conservation matters, and considerable, in this connection, about the need for a year's moratorium on waterfowl shooting. Another set of tables is published for all the states comparing sportsmen's numbers with territory within the state and the relation of numbers of sportsmen to total population. Surprisingly enough, we find, purchasers of the duck stamp, the waterfowl hunters, represent about one-quarter of one per cent. of the nation's citizens, only. George M. Sutton has painted the cover for this issue, the figure of an immature Cooper's Hawk. (National Association of Audubon Societies)

Cardinal, The (IV, No. 4, July, 1936) Bayard Christy writes an interesting biographical sketch of the late J. P. Kirtland, M.D., including some Ohio records by Dr. Kirtland which are of unusual interest to present-day students. W.E.C. Todd's "Chickadees of Western Pennsylvania" are exact reproductions of a chapter in his forthcoming "Birds of Western Pennsylvania." The usual interesting

field notes are of especial consequence to amateurs of the tri-state region of Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Recommended, also, is Mr. Christy's review of Dr. George M. Sutton's recent "Birds of the Wilderness." (Aud. Soc. of the Sewickley Valley)

Condor, The (XXXVIII, No. 4, July-August, 1936) Barbara D. Blanchard writes on "The Behavior of the Nuttall White-crowned Sparrow." The "Development of the Bird-Flower," by A. L. Pickens suggests a new field (to this reviewer!) for field observations. Jean M. Linsdale writes a sympathetic and interesting biography of Harry S. Swarth, including a bibliography. "From Field and Study," and "Notes and News" departments are of their usual interest and deal principally with far Western birds and ornithologists. (Cooper Ornithological Club).

Wilson Bulletin, The (XLVIII, No. 2, June, 1936) Joseph Grinnell informally stresses the importance of observations of wild, free birds in ornithology in a short paper on "Trends in Modern Ornithology" A. L. Pickens has some painstaking observations and interesting pen sketches of nesting Hummers. The longer articles in this issue cover an amazingly wide field of ornithological activities, both in the senses of subject matter and area concerned. Field notes, including one by Mr. Merit B. Skaggs concerning the Mute Swan and European Widgeon, in Ohio, are of their usual interest. (Wilson Ornithological Club)

NOTE - The Editor acknowledges receipt of copies of "The Raven," of the Virginia Society of Ornithology, and of "The Prothonotary," of the Buffalo Bird Club, these to be reviewed in the next issue of The Redstart.

The Redstart is distributed, free, to all members of The Brooks Bird Club. Dues of Active Members (elected to membership) are \$1.00 annually. Dues of Corresponding Members (membership upon application) are 50 cents annually.

President --- J. W. Handlan, Oglebay Park, Wheeling, W.Va.
Sec'y-Treas. -Miss Caroline Conrad, 423 Warwood Ave., Wheeling, W.Va.
Chairman, Executive Committee
--Russell West, 133 Edgewood St., Wheeling, W. Va.
Members, Executive Committee
--Harold Bergner, George Flower, Charles Conrad, T. E. Shields.
