



# The Redstart

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J. Harold Olsen, Editor

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## THE 1940-41 PROGRAM FOR THE BROOKS BIRD CLUB

by

John W. Handlan

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Two principal departures from routine will mark the 1940-41 program of the Brooks Bird Club, adopted recently by active members of the organization upon the recommendation of the club's executive committee.

First of these is that the organization will conduct a number of its dozen regular meetings with the express purpose of ascertaining, first hand, details of other nature study, or allied, programs in the general area of Wheeling. In the second place, the club will insist upon brief original reports of field work by members at each meeting.

For example, the club's first meeting under the new plan, scheduled for November 29th at the Y. M. C. A., Wheeling, will take the form of a panel discussion by official representatives of Greater Wheeling organizations dedicated to youth activities in nature work. This program is intended to give the club not only a definite idea of work done by other organizations but to present, also, suggestions as to if, and/or how, the club can fit itself into the nature study plans of the respective groups contributing to the program.

At the same meeting, three members of the club assigned to the work will present brief field notes of their personal observations in bird study, these later to be included in the "Field Notes" section of THE REDSTART.

Generally speaking, the club's meetings will include these themes: Nature Programs of Youth Organizations; Wildlife Conservation; The Legal Aspects of Wildlife Conservation; Wild Waterfowl; West Virginia State Parks; Wood Warblers; and a series of social and semi-social activities. These latter will include a Christmas party, a post-Foray party, two public campfire programs, at Tomlinson Run State Park and at Cadiz, Ohio, respectively, in addition to the annual meeting in September 1941.

A general Bird Club calendar arranged by Chairman Charles Conrad of the Executive Committee and reproduced in this issue of THE REDSTART provides specific information concerning dates and times of meetings and of field trips, of which the club plans a considerable number.

All meetings of the Brooks Bird Club are open to the general public and corresponding members of the organization, particularly, are invited to take part. Details of a special series of lecture-demonstrations open to Bird Club members, only, still are in process of formation and will be announced in the December issue of this journal. Any additional events will be announced at the regular meetings and in THE REDSTART.

-- 91 Lynwood Ave.,  
Wheeling, W. Va.

#### STOMACH CONTENTS OF A FEW WATER BIRDS

by

J. Lloyd Poland

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The following is a report of the stomach contents of a few water birds, some of which I collected myself and some of which came to me in various ways. There was no specific problem or plan to the work. Rather, it has been a mere utilization of the materials available, and as a result it is not particularly significant.

The problem of identifying fragments found within the stomachs was met with in the only practical way, i.e., tabulating the items in the lowest possible phylogenic category of which I could be sure. As a result, specific identifications were rare, and, probably half of the material examined was beyond recognition and had to be recorded as "debris".

In some cases percentages have been approximated and where this has been done it must be remembered that they represent the diet ratio of items. Weight or volume percentages were not attempted.

All of the birds were shot at the Federal Fish Hatchery at Leetown, Jefferson County, West Virginia. The "rearing-ponds" there have supplied many fingerling fish and minnows. Another factor was that during August and September, the period when nearly all of these birds were taken, these ponds are drained. It was a common occurrence at that time for fish to be trapped in puddles of receding water and thereby become unusually accessible to herons and other fish-eating species of birds.

These factors may, or may not, account for the numbers of fish eaten, but it is rather certain that they altered the normal diet of the birds. The numbers which represent individual birds in the following tabulations serve only as index numbers in my catalogue.

While this report may not prove to be of any great value, it might serve to indicate the intensity of interest that is aroused in any individual who is working along a specific line of inquiry.

## EASTERN GREEN HERON

Butorides virescens virescens

## #4 - August 2, 1938

- 2 - Back-swimmers (Notonectidae)
- 14 - Dragon-fly adults (Anisoptera)
- 1 - Dragon-fly nymph
- 1 - Spider? (Arachnida)
- 3 - Water-striders (Gerridae)
- Debris

## #25 - June 6, 1939

- 1 - Tadpole (*Rana* sp.)
- 1 - Insect (Neuropteroid?)
- Debris

## #26 - June 8, 1939

- 1 - Insect (Neuropteroid)

## #37 - August 5, 1939

- 14 - Fish or minnows (Teleostei)
- 10 - Back-swimmers
- 1 - Dragon-fly

## #38 - August 5, 1939

- 4 - Fish or minnows
- 1 - Water-bug (Belostomatidae)
- 2 - Dragon-fly nymphs
- 1 - Back-swimmer
- 3 - Damselflies (Zygoptera)
- Algae & debris

## #40 - August 23, 1939

- 1 - Fish or minnow

## #41 - August 5, 1939

- 1 - Insect (Odonata)
- 2 - Isopoda
- 1 - Insect
- Debris

## #42 - August 18, 1939

- 1 - Grasshopper (Locustidae)
- 2 - Isopoda
- 13 - Fish or minnows
- 2 - Dragon-flies
- 1 - Dragon-fly nymph
- 3 - Back-swimmers
- 1 - Arthropoda

## #43 - August 6, 1939

- 2 - Fish or minnows
- 2 - Arthropoda
- 1 - Insect (Neuropteroid)

## #44 - August 10, 1939

- 12 - Fish or minnows

## #45 - August 10, 1939

- 2 - Fish or minnows

## #46 - August 9, 1939

- 2 - Back-swimmers
- 1 - Insect
- 1 - Damselfly
- 1 - Dragon-fly

## #47 - August 12, 1939

- 3 - Back-swimmers
- 3 - Fish or minnows
- 2 - Water-bugs
- 1 - Dragon-fly nymph

## #48 - August 12, 1939

- 2 - Dragon-flies
- Debris

## #49 - September 5, 1939

- 1 - Dragon-fly nymph
- 1 - Damselfly

## #50 - September 8, 1939

- 3 - Fish or minnows
- 2 - Grasshoppers
- 1 - Damselfly
- Debris

## BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON

Nycticorax nycticorax hoactli

## #21 - June 5, 1939

- 1 - Fish or minnow
- 1 - Crayfish (Crustacea)
- Debris

## #22 - May 28, 1939

- 1 - Garter Snake Thamnophis sirtalis
- 1 - Fish or minnow

## #24 - June 5, 1939

- 1 - Fish or minnow
- 1 - Insect

VIRGINIA RAIL - Rallus limicola limicola

## #27 - August 3, 1939

- 5 - Snails (Gastropoda)
- 1 - Dragon-fly nymph
- Debris

SORA - Porzana carolina

## #39 - August 5, 1939

- 3 - Snails
- Unidentified seeds

## EASTERN BELTED KINGFISHER

Megaceryle alcyon alcyon

## #7 - August 6, 1939

- 1 - Fish or minnow

SUMMARY OF STOMACH CONTENTS OF SIXTEEN GREEN HERONS TAKEN AT LEETOWN HATCHERY

(Column headings:)

A - Backswimmers  
 B - Dragon-flies  
 C - Damsel-flies  
 D - Water-striders

E - Water-bugs  
 F - Grasshoppers  
 G - Neuropteroid insects  
 G - Insects

I - Arachnida  
 J - Isopoda  
 K - Arthropoda  
 L - Fish or minnows  
 M - Amphibia

Index Number	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
4	2	15		3					1				
25							1						1
26							4						
37	10	1										14	
38	1	2	1		1							4	
40												1	
41							1	1		2			
42	3	3				1				2	1	13	
43							1				2	2	
44												12	
45												2	
46	2	1	1					1					
47	3	1			2							3	
48		2											
49		1	1										
50			1			2							
Totals	21	26	4	3	3	3	7	2	1	4	3	54	1
Occurrence	6	8	4	1	2	2	4	2	1	2	2	9	1
% of Occurrence	37½	50	25	6½	12½	12½	25	12½	6½	12½	12½	56½	6½

CONDENSED SUMMARY OF OCCURRENCE

Items	Occurrence	Percent
Insects	13	81.25
Other Arthropods	4	25.00
Fish or minnows	9	56.25
Amphibia	1	6.25

PERCENTAGE DIET TOTAL FOR ALL SIXTEEN INDIVIDUALS

Insects	52.27%
Other Arthropoda	6.06%
Fish or minnows	40.90%
Amphibia	.75%

BIRD CLUB CALENDAR

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>MEETING PLACE</u>	<u>GUIDES OR PROGRAMS</u>
Nov. 30	( Weekend	( Cheat Lake	Harold Olson
Dec. 1 )	( Field Trip )	( Morgantown )	
15	Sunday 2:30 P. M.	West Liberty	Chuck Conrad
" 22	" 9:00 A. M.	Club Rooms	Christmas Census
* 27	Friday 8:15 P. M.	Handlan Residence	Movies and Party
29	Sunday 2:30 P. M.	Welty's Farm	John Handlan
Jan. 5	Sunday 2:30 P. M.	Triadelphia	Dorothy Neuhard
12	" " "	Bethany	Mike Haller
19	" " "	Dunlap Residence	Encil Hawkins
26	" " "	Gist Farm	Russell West
* 31	Friday 8:15 P. M.	Y. M. C. A.	Conservation
Feb. 2	Sunday 2:30 P. M.	Club Room	Harold Bergner
9	" " "	West Liberty	Mabel Hopwood
16	" " "	Olsen Residence	Harold Olsen
23	" " "	Short Creek	Charles Conrad
* 28	" " "	Y. M. C. A.	Who Owns Wildlife
Mar. 2	Sunday 2:30 P. M.	Conrad Residence	Dorothy Conrad
9	" " "	Beech Bottom Swamp	Russell West
16	" " "	Big Wheeling Creek	George Breiding
23	" " "	Tappan Dam, Cadiz	Judge Worley
* 28	Friday 8:15 P. M.	Y. M. C. A.	Wild Waterfowl
30	Sunday 2:30 P. M.	Gist Farm	Carolyn Conrad
Apr. 5-6	Saturday - Sunday	Pymatuning	Spring Round-up
13	Sunday 7:00 A. M.	Club Room	Spring Migration
20	" 6:30 A. M.	Club Room	Spring Migration
* 25	Friday 8:15 P. M.	Y. M. C. A.	W. Va. State Parks
27	Sunday 6:00 A. M.	Club Room	Spring Migration
May 4	Sunday 5:00 A. M.	Club Room	Spring Migration
11	" 5:00 A. M.	Club Room	Spring Migration
18	" 6:00 A. M.	Pleasants Co.	Club Field Trip
* 23	Friday 8:15 P. M.	Club Room	Wood Warblers
25	Sunday 5:00 A. M.	Club Room	Spring Migration
30	Friday -----	Terra Alta, W. Va.	Club Field Trip
June		1941 Bird Club Foray	Date & Place to be announced.
June		Post Foray Party	" "
July	Leader, Judge Worley	Cadiz, Ohio	Public Campfire
Aug.	Leader, E. R. Chandler	Tomlinson Run St. Park	Public Campfire
Sept.		Club Room	Annual Meeting

\* Regular Monthly Meeting of Brooks Bird Club

GENERAL NOTESAudubon's America - A Recommendation:

Even if not interested in Audubon the artist or the writer, this reviewer could recommend "Audubon's America" for sheer readability and entertainment.

In his opinion, shared by many others, this volume edited by Donald Culross Peattie really does embrace the best of Audubon in every field. In his introductory remarks, Mr. Peattie clearly states the purpose of the volume: to bring Audubon forward as one who knew river captains and roustabouts, pioneers and men of letters and Indians and scientists without slighting his natural history writings. The whole work representing the America of Audubon's day as he, and possibly only he, knew it.

Mr. Peattie's biographical notes set at rest to the satisfaction of this reader, the preposterous claim that Audubon was none other than the lost Dauphin, Louis XVII. All the thousands of words written on this point can be cut short by a fact denied by no biographer: that the Bourbon prince had a deformed ear. Audubon's ears were both quite normal.

Of particular interest were Audubon's accounts of a "coon hunt" and of meeting Daniel Boone, long a favorite of this reviewer, and the description of the Kentuckian's management of a rifle. The barking of squirrels, snuffing of candles at night were so vividly written as to be easily pictured in the reader's mind.

An entire chapter is devoted to Audubon's meeting and resultant three weeks of companionship with the eccentric naturalist, Rafinesque.

---J. H. O.

"Bi-Illogical Poetry":

Dr. Bernal R. Weimer, head of the biology department, dean of the faculty at Bethany College, Bethany, W. Va. and known well by the active members of the Brooks Bird Club, will publish soon a collection of humorous biology poems. "There won't be a serious thought among them," commented Dr. Weimer, and added that there would be from eighty to ninety poems in this book of nature's songs in verse. He has given it the title "Bi-Illogical Poetry" and it will be released from the Waverly Press, Baltimore, Md., sometime in December.

Robert Murray, corresponding member of this club has supplied a dozen or more illustrations for some of the poems, and from the comments of those who have seen them, did very well.

Dr. Weimer suggests that if any of the readers of this journal would like to have a copy of the book, which will retail at \$1.50, they should contact him directly and receive his immediate attention.

--- J. H. O.

## EDITORIALS

Another Year of Activity:

At the annual meeting in September, the Brooks Bird Club completed the eighth year of activity and with the issue for that month, the seventh volume of THE REDSTART. Throughout the seven years, the subscription list has remained constant and this fact should indicate that the journal has met with the approval of the members.

Some of us are prone to forget, however, that this is a bird club; organized to assist the members in their studies of bird life and the recording of observations for their own and other's use. Writing of the long-cherished hope that THE REDSTART would become a really state-wide publication, Maurice G. Brooks in a communication to this club in October, 1938, said: "in the last analysis, it must rest on the group around Wheeling to do the editorial work of the publication and to carry on with the fine spirit in much of the activities of the Brooks Bird Club in West Virginia as well as the most loyal and important contributors to this monthly journal."

That statement, in the editor's opinion, speaks for itself. It is indeed, encouraging to note the list of proposed field trips and week-end expeditions planned for and by the members of the club for the coming year. If the enthusiasm shown already will last throughout the coming months, this the 1940-41 year, will be the most intensive and far-reaching program ever attempted by the group.

Club members will help the editor very much if they will send to him field notes as well as longer articles. Don't hesitate to send the smallest bit of bird lore, for even if presumed to be of no especial importance, it may prove interesting to some reader, or group of readers.

Preparation of the indices for the fifth, sixth, and seventh volumes of this journal is nearly finished and the publication of them in mimeographed form is one of the first jobs to receive the attention of the Editorial Committee.

---J. H. O.

Extension Services:

The Public Relations Committee, headed by Miss Dorothy Neuhard, has in its hands arrangements for extension service to the nature clubs and biology classes in schools and colleges in the Ohio Valley. Already included are the Triadelphia and Wheeling High Schools, both within this city's limits, Union High School in McMechen, W. Va. and Bethany and West Liberty Colleges, all in West Virginia. In Ohio, the Martins Ferry High and the Betty Zane Grade Schools of Martins Ferry are to be included.

A four-page mimeographed publication, "Along the Trail" and counsellor assistance has been arranged for the 4-H clubs in Brooke County, W. Va. as an experiment to indicate the scope of the program for next year.

---J. H. O.

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FIELD NOTES

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Excerpts from a Sportsman's Journal:

From my field journal: ".....hunting squirrel in Dallas, Marshall Co., W. Va. on November 12, 1940. I shot a gray squirrel from the top of a large maple tree, and before I could push through the dense brush to retrieve it, a Red-tailed Hawk swooped down to grasp the still wriggling body of the squirrel and struggled up with it.

".....while hunting in Miller's Hollow back of the Triadelphia High School in Ohio County, I found on the ground four Red-headed Woodpeckers and one Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, apparently killed with a shotgun. Two days later I found on the same spot, three additional "red-heads" and several small olive-colored birds. This must be very "sporty" indeed, to some self-termed sportsman.

".....On November 12, along Big Wheeling Creek in Marshall County, I noticed two Wood Ducks feeding along with four Muscovy Ducks. They flew away when I tried to walk closer to them."

--- Don Keyser  
428 National Road  
Wheeling, W. Va.

Another Sportsman's Journal:

Saturday, November 2, 1940 at the Izaak Walton Camp on Big Wheeling Creek, Marshall County, W. Va.: ".....As I climbed the steep side of the heavily wooded hill, a hawk that had been perched on the branches of a tall, dead tree, and unseen by me, took flight and circled about. I decided to try to imitate his call for I was sure it was a Red-tailed Hawk, and wanted to observe the actions of the bird and the apparent success of my imitation. It showed a definite interest, and as I continued my shrill calling, the bird folded its wings and darted from high in the air, straight toward me. As it neared, I moved and shouted, causing it to fly away."

---George Breiding,  
National Road, Fulton  
Wheeling, W. Va.

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THE REDSTART is published monthly by and for the members of the Brooks Bird Club. Corresponding Membership may be obtained upon payment of \$1.00 which includes a twelve-month subscription to THE REDSTART. Members are invited to send in for publication, pertinent field notes. These are subject only to editing to insure the greatest possible accuracy and consistency with editorial policy. Memberships, field notes and correspondence should be addressed to the Brooks Bird Club, 113 Edgewood St., Wheeling, W. Va.

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