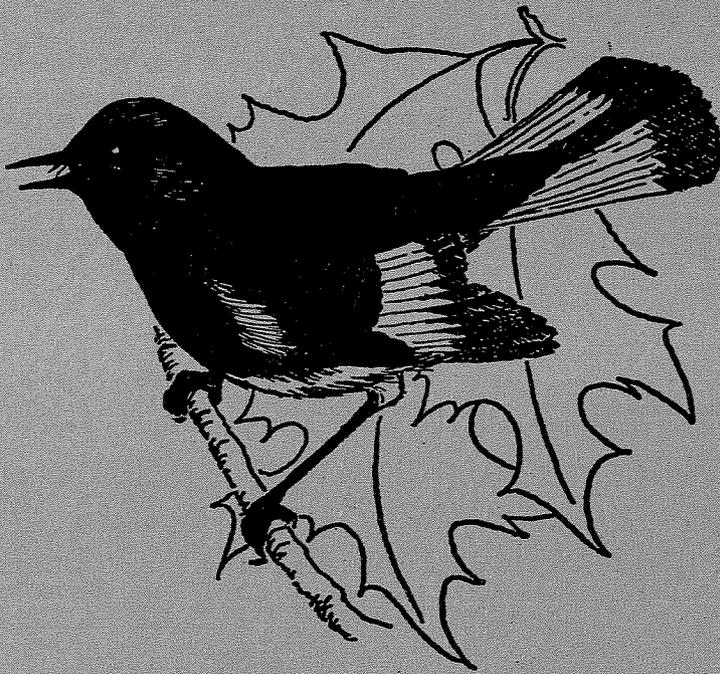


The REDSTART

Volume 32—Number 3

July, 1965



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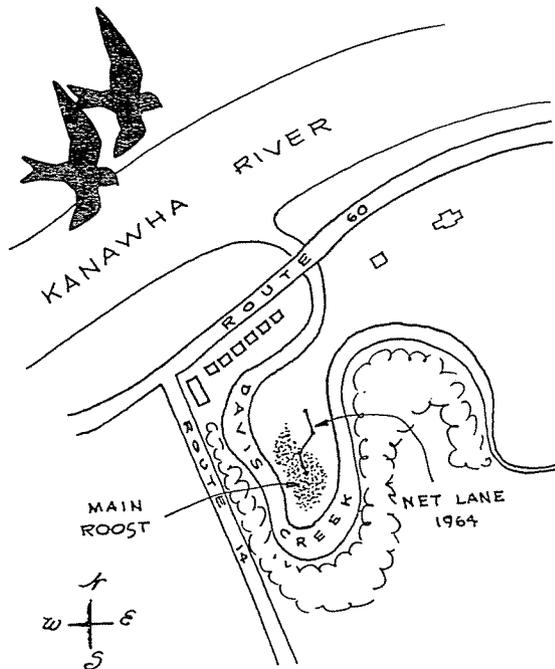
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PURPLE MARTIN ROOST IN SOUTH CHARLESTON

Norris Gluck



General

Occasionally an innocent bystander gets stuck with an assignment for which he is unprepared. So it was that I received the task of reporting on the South Charleston Purple Martin Roost. The principal characters in this story are Anne Shreve, the discoverer of the roost, or at least the one whose curiosity and determination initiated the project and kept it moving; Charles Handley, Sr., who helped explore the area and has served as chief consultant in the solution of various and sundry problems; and Connie Katholi, whose ideas and efforts have had an important influence on the

activity to date. Last but not least are the Greenlees, Art and Betty, George Koch, who assisted in the installation of the trap, George and Ruth Ballentine, who worked as banders, the Kiffs, George Hurley and the Armbrechts, who assisted the banders. I was vice-president in charge of banding poles, flashlights, and dispenser of mosquito and bug repellants. I also served as a roost for the birds in times of extreme confusion.

In August, 1963, Anne, who lives near the roost and often traveled by it, observed a large concentration of Purple Martins in the sky. She located the roost which was only a short distance from Route 60. The only action taken in 1963 was several nightly observations of bird movements and flight patterns overhead and into the roost; also, a cursory daytime examination of the roosting area. It was estimated that the flock had reached, by the middle of August, a maximum number of 25,000. This aroused much interest and considerable reflection on the part of the local bird people, especially the banders, who felt much could be learned from banding a representative sample of the roosting flock. The two principal problems seemed to be: (1) What effect would the presence of banders in the roosting area at night have on the birds, and (2) What banding techniques could be used successfully.

Much thought was given to these problems after the migration season of 1963 and by July, 1964, Anne and Connie had devised a large rectangular screen-wire trap, containing branches for perches, open at the top with a window shade-like door. The door was to be closed by pulling a string from a point outside the roosting area. This trap was elevated to the tree tops, by pulleys, to be used as roosting quarters by cooperating Purple Martins. For some unknown reason, the

Martins failed to cooperate and this idea was abandoned. The next idea was to place nets on long poles at tree-top level. This proved to be an effective way to capture birds and considerable success was experienced. However, the migration season was so far along by this time, that much of the banding operation for 1964 had to be charged off to experimentation. It is planned to use this same technique in 1965 with certain improvements, along with other techniques which will provide more detailed information about individual members of the flock. In this connection we have just obtained permission from the Banding Office to color-mark individual birds as they are banded. A harmless, plastic spray paint will be used on the Martin's underparts. This will make sight-records possible as they fly overhead.

Description of Roosting Area

The roost is located on a low flat bottle-like peninsula (see sketch) formed by the lower part of meandering Davis Creek. The creek makes almost a complete circle around the peninsula before flowing into the Kanawha River, approximately 500 feet from the roosting area. Back-water from the Kanawha extends up the creek bed past the roost. The entire peninsula-like area is less than 750 feet long and not more than 375 feet at the widest point, tapering back to less than 100 feet at the narrowest point, where the circuitous channel of the creek almost cuts through the neck of the bottle. Backwater often overflows the lower area, under the trees where the birds roost, creating much silt with resulting lush vegetation. Box elders and silver maples, approximately 15-30 feet tall, are the principal roosting trees and grow around the perimeter of the peninsula. These trees surround an open area covered with tall weeds, briars and blackberry vines. Tall Joe-Pye weeds, growing in profusion, were often used as roosts. It was in this open area that banding operations were performed and it was the focal point for the birds as they dropped from the sky into the roosting area. Thus the roosting area provides good cover. It is located within the city limits of South Charleston, approximately 300 feet from the main highway and within a few hundred feet of a residential section and a city playground.

Flocking and Flight Patterns

The number of birds overhead and at the roost were as follows during the 1964 season:

July 8	About 5,000
July 20-30	15,000
August 1-30	25,000 to 30,000
August 30	Maximum Number
August 31	About 1,000
September 2	5
September 3, 4	None

The following is a description of the behavior of the flock during mid-August when the roost was at its peak of approximately 25 to 30 thousand birds.

Each evening Purple Martins would first assemble on wires into subgroups at a number of locations throughout the area. By 6:45 EST Martins could be seen overhead in scattered groups of 50 to several hundred at St. Albans, Davis Creek, Nitro, Coal River, Alum Creek, Charleston's West Side and Loudon Heights. All of these locations are less than 10 miles from the roosting area. All Martins, at this time of day, then started heading directly toward the roosting area. At about

7:15 EST the entire sky and horizons, within a radius of a mile or two, were widely and thickly speckled with Purple Martins, all churning, in rather circular patterns, but gradually moving toward the roost. The flock reached its peak about 7:40 P.M. and at this time waves of several hundred birds began to drop into the roost. As the numbers became more concentrated directly over the roost, the flight appeared to become faster and more frenzied; an occasional fight would occur in the sky. As the first group dropped into the roost, others starting to follow the pattern, would veer off and rejoin the overhead flock. By 8:10 P.M. nearly all the birds were down, and the remaining 2,000 or more, would climb higher and higher into the air, apparently drawn by the light. At about 8:15 P.M., these remaining birds would drop into the roost, sometimes, in one great swoop. If a storm hastened darkness as much as an hour, the Martins went to roost at that time, using much less time to descend to the roosting area. One evening a storm came at 7:15 P.M. and all 30,000 birds came down within 10 or 15 minutes.

Behavior In The Roost

From outside the roosting area, it appeared that the Purple Martins dropped straight down, grasping the first branch available and remained in that position for the night. This was disproved on the first visit to the roost. Constant movement continued until long after the birds were in the roost. On moonlit nights, this activity continued until past 9:30 P.M. The Purple Martins alighted upon the very smallest tips of branches, preferring box elders and silver maples, always with the sky overhead and never down into the trees under the canopy of branches. Roosting was between four and eighteen feet above the ground. When one bird appeared to be settled, several others would immediately join it, then others, until the branch would be blanketed with birds like huge drifts of deep snow.

The roost was extremely noisy. A distant sharp sound would bring silence throughout the roost for about 30 seconds. At 8:30 one evening, a plane broke the sound barrier overhead. Complete silence, for more than a minute, settled over the roost and hardly a movement by a single bird took place during this time. After such a silence, a wave of notes would begin at some distant edge of the roost and sweep across its mass in a few seconds.

We had hesitated to go into the roost at night for fear of driving the birds away but soon found we could move around among and beneath the branches without disturbing them in the least. Only clapping hands, shaking the trees or waving a flashlight beam toward them, caused them to fly. By getting behind the birds just after they had settled it was possible by hand clapping to drive considerable numbers toward and into the nets. Attempts at plucking them from the roost by hand were unsuccessful, except for one bird which was caught by focusing the flashlight beam on it. One bird, when disturbed after darkness one night, lit on my cap.

Banding Results

Most of the 1964 banding operation was an experiment to determine the best method for capturing the birds. The main problems were: What is the best height above the ground for locating the nets. By observation this seemed to be about 10-15 feet. How to raise the nets to this position and remove the birds from the nets when located this far above the ground. There was, also the problem of how to obtain sufficient and proper light at night for banding the birds and for identification purposes, that is, for determining sex, age, etc. It is hoped that

some of these problems can be overcome, prior to the 1965 migration, by installation of permanent banding poles, equipped with pulleys for raising and lowering the nets.

The birds were banded and released immediately at the banding station which was only a few paces from the nets. Banding time covered only 20 to 30 minutes each night except in a few instances when attempts were made to drive some of the birds into the nets.

The following are the results of the 1964 banding, for seven (7) nights, between August 14 and 31:

Purple Martins	138 (92.6%)
Barn Swallows	9 (6.0%)
Bank Swallows	2 (1.4%)

Other Species Banded in the Roost or Observed in the Vicinity

Robin—22 banded. About 500 gathered on the south side of the creek each evening about 6:30 EST and went to roost just before the Martins, at a location on the eastern end of the peninsula where there were a number of wild cherry and apple trees. The removal of these birds from the nets, at a time when the Martins were ready to drop into the roost, probably resulted in loss of several Martins.

Carolina Wren—Two banded. Single male could be heard occasionally.

Yellowthroat—One Banded. One heard singing.

Song Sparrow—One banded.

Starling—A roost one mile west, on the Dunbar Bridge. Starlings gathered around the Martin Roost at 6:30 P.M. each evening and departed for the Bridge before the Martins descended to the roost.

Grackle and Redwing—About 30 to 40 of each species followed the Starling pattern and appeared to go to roost with them.

Mourning Dove—A pair roosted regularly across creek to the south.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo—A single male in roost during Martin season.

Green Heron—Two or more seen over roost or along creek during season.

Nighthawk—Flock of 20 overhead on August 27.

Duck—One unidentified.

Screech Owl—One and possibly two in roosting area.

Kestrel—Heard and seen several times in roost and overhead.

Cooper's Hawk—Seen working on the Starlings and Martins during two evenings.

Wood Thrush—One heard.

Future Studies

It was not long after we became involved in this operation that we found there was much information we needed but could not find on Purple Martin roosts, their flocking habits and their migration. R. E. Stewart and C. S. Robbins had reported in "Birds of Maryland and District of Columbia", a count of 100,000 Martins during the third week of July, 1947. J. J. Murray in his "Check List of Birds in Virginia" has, also, referred to a report of 30,000 birds occupying a roost at Washington, D. C. in a single night. Bent's "Life Histories" had much enlightening information in a report by Dr. Sprunt on the habits of Martins and refers to an excellent report on a typical roost at Cape May, N. J., by Witmer Stone in 1937. This report would be very helpful if we could locate a copy. But there are many questions which we have been unable to answer. The following are some which we would like to explore further. Some of these we have already answered, in part, and many we cannot answer by confining our study to the South Charleston Roost only.

How is a roost selected? What determines its location and what attracts the

Purple Martins to a particular roost? Where are the birds from? Is the flock made up of families, colonies, birds from all Eastern United States? What other species flock and roost with the Martins? How early in the season do birds first arrive at the roost? When do last ones leave? What birds arrive first? Young birds? Adults? Unmated? Non-breeding? How long do they stay? Several days, or are new birds arriving and leaving each day? Do old males leave first? Young birds later? What is age distribution at various times during roosting period? Immatures vs adults. What is the sex ratio? How does the time of day, of arrival at roost, vary with: Temperature? storms? Amount of light each day (cloudiness)? Distance travelled from feeding area? How many birds are killed at the roosting site? How? Compared to individual roosts? do communal roosts give additional protection from predators? Other dangers? Do Martins exercise any rights to the roosting area? Is there any organization within the flock? How far away does the flock forage each day? Where are Martin colonies located in the Charleston area? When do the young leave the nest? How many broods each year?

Based on some of these questions and the information we have available we hope to develop a few hypotheses for future studies, realizing that our study procedures have many limitations. We know that the roosting area will be destroyed within a few years by an inter-state highway, so our study time may not be long enough to get all the answers. We would appreciate any information from members of the Brooks Bird Club on this subject, including any references to information which is now available.

1424 Kanawha Blvd., East
Charleston, W. Va.

ARTICLES of INTEREST in CURRENT ORNITHOLOGICAL JOURNALS

Clark Miller

An article on Cowbirds in the January 1965 issue of the *Condor* by Robert Payne is titled "Clutch Size and Numbers of Eggs Laid by Brown-headed Cowbirds." This fifteen page article is somewhat technical but very informative. It points out many things that one should observe and record when in the field. The distribution of the Cowbird is universal in our area and it may be that we are missing some worthwhile information by ignoring the Cowbird. The study of this bird was made in lower Michigan.

A very interesting article about the return of displaced sparrows is in the November 13, 1964 issue of *Science*. L. Richard Mewald of San Jose State College, San Jose, California made the study of the homing ability of three species of sparrows. These were the Golden-crowned Sparrow, *Zonotrichia acricapilla*, and two races of the White-crowned Sparrow, *Z. leucophrys gambelii*, and *Z. pugetensis*.

During the winter of 1961-62, 411 sparrows were taken from San Jose to Baton Rouge, Louisiana by jet aircraft. Twenty six of these were recaptured at the San Jose banding station during the following winter. During the period from October 1962 to April 1963 660 birds were similarly transported from San Jose to Laurel, Maryland. Twenty two of these birds were ones that had previously been transferred from San Jose to Baton Rouge in 1961-62 and recaptured in San Jose the winter of 1962-63. Of the 660 birds displaced, 15 were known to have returned to San Jose during the 1963-64 winter season. Of greater significance was the return of 6 of the 22 birds displaced to Laurel which had previously returned from displacement to Baton Rouge.

NESTING BARN OWLS IN PRESTON COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

Larry Schwab

Although the American Barn Owl (*Tyto alba pratincola*) is known to nest in West Virginia, surprisingly few nesting records exist for this species within the borders of our state. This circumstance may be attributed to the birds almost strictly nocturnal activity and secretive habits. Even though Preston County offers an abundance of suitable nesting sites and adequate food, this bird is apparently at best a sporadic nester, and the following somewhat unusual nesting record is thought to constitute the only report of nesting Barn Owls in Preston County and is one of the few State records.

On July 18, 1963, a group of picnickers at Reedsville, West Virginia (elevation—1500 feet), accidentally discovered five young owlets in the belfry of an abandoned Presbyterian Church. At the time of discovery the largest bird was about six weeks old, the smallest about four weeks old. Thus the three siblings were "stepping-stone" in size and age. After the birds were discovered, the owner of the old church, who was using the building as a woodshop, removed all five owlets and confined them to a small wire cage at the steps of the church on the ground. For five days the owlets attracted numerous curiosity-seekers and interested spectators. While the young owls were in the cage, the adult birds faithfully brought wild food nightly to the cage and placed it on the ground beside the wire mesh. On the night of July 22, 1963, thirteen meadow mice were brought to the young owlets. On another occasion a young rabbit and a Meadowlark were brought to the cage during the night. The church owner would then place the prey in the cage every morning. Part of this natural food was consumed by the owlets, but it was never eaten in the presence of a human being. Most of the artificial food offered to the birds was refused. Both adults could be spotlighted easily during their visitations to the cage as both parents were active hunters. Finally, on July 23, 1963, the church owner was persuaded to return the five grotesque youngsters to the belfry. The owlets were then successfully reared by their parents and the last nestling left the belfry in late September, 1963.

The nesting site was a 6' by 6' church belfry sixty feet above ground level in a grove of trees. Human habitation was within fifty yards of the nesting site, inasmuch as the church is located in the community of Reedsville, West Virginia.

Forty-eight pellets were recovered from the nesting site on July 23, 1963. These contained a total of thirty-three skulls. With the assistance of Pervis C. Major, Medical Technologist of The Ohio State University and the Division of Mammals of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C., the skulls were identified and counted as the following:

Meadow Mouse (<i>Microtus pennsylvanicus</i>)	27
Red-winged Blackbird (<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>)	3
White-footed Mouse (<i>Peromyscus leucopus</i>)	1
Short-tailed Shrew (<i>Blarina brevicauda</i>)	1
Hairy-tailed Mole <i>Parascalops breweri</i>)	1

The owls did not return to nest in 1964, and there has been no evidence of Barn Owls in the area since October, 1963.

169 Main Street, Kingwood, W. Va.

BOOK REVIEW

The Bird Watcher's America by Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr. Published by McGraw-Hill Book Company, 441 pages, 5½x8½ inches, price \$7.50. It would be hard to be too enthusiastic about this book. Bird watchers will grab it on sight and they will not be disappointed. It is written for them and it is a veritable feast—a gourmet's delight.

The concept for this book developed out of Mr. Pettingill's ideas for a sequel to his Guides to Bird Finding east and west of the Mississippi. He invited forty-four of the leading naturalists to write informally about some of the best birding areas in the United States and Canada. Each author has contributed a hitherto unpublished piece in his own style complete with personal recollections and humorous anecdotes. No two articles follow the same format but all are imbued with the infectious enthusiasm of a birder writing about his favorite spot. The stellar names include Allan D. Cruickshank, Alexander Sprunt, Jr., Herbert Krause, George M. Sutton and Roger Tory Peterson. The editor has written the preface and introduced each chapter with a biographical sketch and personal reminiscences of the author. These include teachers novelists, business men, a newspaper columnist and three housewives all of whom enjoy finding and studying birds.

BBC'ers will be particularly interested to note that Maurice Brooks is represented with a chapter entitled "High Cheat in West Virginia." Dr. Brooks has done an excellent job in the presentation of his material, covering the geography, geology and ecology of the region as well as the birds to be found there.

The selections take the reader from the rugged cliffs of Bonaventure Island off the coast of Quebec, along the shadowy canals of the Great Dismal Swamp in Virginia, to the Florida Everglades, up the valley of the Rio Grande in Texas, over the snowy heights of the Rockies in Colorado, through the prairies and to the shores of the Pacific. The tour also includes Alaska. Rare birds are discovered in remote places and common ones in exotic places. Large colonies of nesting sea birds and great concentrations of wintering birds are described. One section of six chapters entitled "Migration Spectacles" is probably the most spectacular of all. It covers the throngs as they converged on Pt. Pelee in the spring and on Block Island in the fall. It treats the thousands of geese moving up the Missouri in April and the effortless flights of hawks moving down the ridges of Hawk Mountain in Pennsylvania and the bluffs of Duluth, Minnesota in the fall.

Many of these essays invoke an irresistible urge to rush off to see for ones self the drama depicted. The passages describe the habitats so that one can feel the heat of the sun and the coolness of the breeze off the water; smell the pines and the honeysuckle; see the blue and green of the sea; and hear the myriad voices of the birds everywhere. The book is suitable for the savoring of several pages or a chapter at a time. Each article is complete in itself and needs to be enjoyed separately. The pen and ink drawings of John Henry Dick adequately illustrate the text and the birds treated there.

It is both a stimulating and a discouraging book. One gets aspirations which may never be satisfied. The Pribilof Islands, the Aleutians and the Arctic regions of Alaska are inaccessible to most of us. But the goals can be set and vacations planned with some of the places in mind. It should be mentioned that explicit directions for finding birds are not given. One must continue to rely on Mr. Pettingill's earlier volume.

It is, in the last analysis, a wish book for birders. It is the seed catalog in

January, the travel poster in March. It is the lure of faraway places and the call of adventure. Every reader will have his favorite chapter. Whether the essays are too specialized in their heavy slant toward ornithology to appeal to the general public, I do not know. However, there is an ever increasing army of bird watchers whose appetites will be stimulated. —Constance Katholi

The Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife is publishing a comprehensive book on waterfowl under the title "Waterfowl Tomorrow." This informative work is the result of the cooperation of 103 authors and wildlife resource experts representing 42 public and private conservation agencies in the United States, Canada and Mexico. It is a hard bound book containing 784 pages, has 194 photographic illustrations, and 80 pieces of art work by the well known wildlife artist Bob Hines. It is available for sale by the Supt. of Documents, Washington D. C. 20240.

Chuck Conrad

ALBINO SNOWBIRD

Constance Katholi

Junco hyemalis #108-81847 is a partial albino. I first observed him feeding on the front lawn with a flock of normal juncos late on the windy afternoon of April 14, 1964. My impression was that they showed some hostility toward him. Because of the high wind the net which I hastily erected acted like a trampoline with the result that I failed to capture him. On the following morning, however, when to my delight he appeared again, I was able to flush him into a net immediately.

His appearance was startling—not to say comical! His plumage was over all an even, slate gray, not darkening on the head, nor lightening on the rump, with no buffy feather edges anywhere, which may have been an indication of positive adulthood. The gray portions were identical to those on normal juncos (with one exception, as we shall see) and furthermore the lower breast, abdomen, and undertail coverts were the normal unmarked white. The wings, too, were gray. In the tail, however, while the outer two pairs of rectrices were white as usual, additionally, on the right side only, feathers numbered 7, 6, and 5, were also white toward the base, and slightly barred throughout. A few flecks of white occurred over the nape and crown. The bill was a pronounced pinkish-red and the legs and feet were pink. The eyes were reddish brown.

The unusual albino marking was roughly in the shape of a four-leaf clover which could be appreciated best when viewed head-on. The first "leaf" was generally the area of the forehead, with the white curving upward in a petal shape; the second and fourth "leaves", those on each side of the head, included the annular and malar regions, the white extending backward and downward from back of the eye, then curving forward and upward to the hind margin of the jaw opening. Gray malar stripes like the "moustaches" of the song sparrow separated these two from "leaf" #3 which included the chin and part of the throat, being very similar in appearance to the "throat-patch" of the White-throated Sparrow. Narrow white and then gray stripes above the eyes completed the delineation of the strange pattern. Seen from the front with the red bill centered in this white clover-leaf, he presented a fantastic, clown-like appearance.

I observed him again on April 16, but after that he apparently continued his northward journey.

930 Woodland Ave., South Charleston, W. Va.

THE PASSENGER PIGEON IN WEST VIRGINIA

John L. Smith

Every bird student has heard or read the fabulous stories about the passenger pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*). Even persons having no knowledge, or interest in bird study are acquainted with this bird that stands as the classic example to show no species is indestructible. Many bird students are familiar with Audubon's vivid description of the merciless slaughter of the bird at roosts on the Green River in Kentucky. Nearly everyone has heard of the flight of over two billion pigeons Alexander Wilson saw near Frankfort, Kentucky, in 1810. Earlier he saw flocks of them while traveling down the Ohio River. Audubon saw a flock nearby three years later which numbered exactly half of Wilson's calculation.

What about the former occurrence of the bird in West Virginia? Did it occur here in great numbers as it did elsewhere? Even though records are lacking and seem so meager, as is so often the case with species now extinct, the information that has come down to the present day is as equally unbelievable as the observations of Audubon and Wilson. As to the nesting of the bird in the State, Brooks (5) writes, "We have accounts of extensive nesting areas in the Ohio and Little Kanawha River Valleys." The bird also passed over in phenomenal numbers and roosted at a number of places in West Virginia on its way to and from vast breeding grounds farther north.

In **W. Va. Place Names** (7) this writer found references to four streams either presently, or formerly, with names relating to the passenger pigeon. A branch of the Right Fork of Stone Coal Creek in Upshur Co., is called Pigeon Roost Fork. In regard to this roost, we have what may be the earliest reference to the bird in West Virginia. McWhorter (8) writes, "In April, 1781, Matthais, Simon, and Michael Schoolcraft visited a pigeon roost on Stone Coal Creek where Passenger Pigeons congregated in vast numbers. This was perhaps on a small stream, known as Pigeon Roost, which, however, as claimed by a local resident, did not acquire its name until during the Civil War. While returning to the fort (Buckhannon), they were fired upon by Indians, Matthais was killed and the other two were taken prisoners."

McWhorter adds further, "There were many pigeon roosts throughout the mountain region of (West) Virginia. Men and boys would go to these roosts at night and by the light of torches slaughter the birds by the thousands. The last great flock of pigeons occurred in 1873. I well remember this never repeated scene, as they passed over the little valley (Buckhannon Run) where my father then lived. One autumn morning a deep roar was suddenly heard, and a great cloud of pigeons swept over the wood-crested hills on the north. For an hour, with brief intervals, the sky was darkened in every direction as flock after flock, in countless myriads, poured southward."

In Braxton Co., a branch of the Sleith Fork is called Pigeon Roost Fork. An additional note in **Place Names** reads that the **Clarksburg Exponent** for May 30, 1937, stated; "Pigeon Roost in Braxton Co., was the stopping off place for thousands of pigeons in their memorial exodus of 1874." Concerning the bird in central West Virginia, Sutton (10) writes, "Persons who have visited the pigeon roosts say they were never quiet; that limbs of trees were constantly breaking and often whole trees are crushed to the ground by the weight of the birds. It was dangerous to go under the roosts on account of the falling timber. When a limb would break or a tree fall, thousands of pigeons would become dislodged and

flutter around, thus disturbing others, and the roost would be in movement all night. Parties have been known to visit the roosts and gather sack loads of pigeons. The meat of the wild pigeon is of poor quality. They were often cooked and made into 'pot pie' and greatly relished by the natives." As to the location of the Braxton Co. roosts, he writes, "There was once a pigeon roost on the mountain between the Little and Big Birch Rivers. How many seasons they occupied that locality, we have no definite knowledge, but the land was very fertile. There was another roost on a branch of Fall Run in Braxton, now called Pigeon Roost."

In Geary District, Roane Co., there is a Pigeon Run, and a post office which took its name from the stream. Bishop (1) says, "Some three or four places and small streams of this county bear the name 'Pigeon Roost' because of having been used as a general roosting place by these birds on their migrations."

Bishop relates the experience of a Thomas Tanner who visited one of these roosts in 1854. "We got there about nine o'clock at night; on nearing the place it sounded just like a windy rain storm in the woods; they were so crowded on every branch of some two or three acres of trees, that here and there, every once in a while, a branch would break, bringing to the ground most of its load of birds; these joined those yet searching for an alighting place, filled the air all about our heads; one had to shout loud if he had anything to say to his nearest companion; they made a noise like a roaring in the head, they were so thick about us! All we had to do was to reach out and grab them on the fly and stick them in the bag; this we did, breaking their necks or heads with thumb and finger; one scamp was caught biting their heads off with his teeth; we drove him out of the company." On the disappearance of the bird from Roane Co., he adds, "But only a few years after the year just mentioned, this migration of such interest and beauty ceased to come; twenty years later many said it ceased all at once; which was not quite correct, but it ceased altogether by the year 1885."

Near Princeton, Mercer Co., there is a Pigeon Creek. Straley (9) writes, "When I was a small child their annual roosting place was in a swamp between Princeton and Augusta and between the old baseball park and A. M. Sutton's residence. This section, then, was heavily timbered. I think I do not exaggerate when I state that I have seen pigeons by the thousands (possibly millions) in autumn afternoons flying to this roost. Their numbers were such that the light of the sun would be obscured. Large oaks would crash to the ground from the weight of the birds. Princeton always turned out en masse, at night, with sacks and pine torches, for a raid on the pigeon roost." Straley had this to add about the size of the flocks, "To indicate the immensity of these flocks of birds, during the last season that the passenger pigeon roosted in Mercer Co., my old friend R. F. Karnes, states that one afternoon, while standing on the bank of Rich Creek, above Spanishburg, a flock of pigeons passed. He estimated this flock to be one mile in width and it was forty-five minutes in passing one point, flying with the rapidity of an arrow, and absolutely obscuring the heavens."

Even though McWhorter has written that 1873 was the year of the last great flight, if Brown's (6) recollection is correct, there was no absence of pigeons in Nicholas Co. three years later. He recalls witnessing the flight of pigeons near Pool in the Wilderness District in the autumn of 1876 and writes, "On several days about an hour before sunset the sky was completely covered by a vast multitude

of pigeons pouring into the roost with the roar of wings like a heavy windstorm. Trees were broken down at the roost by the weight of the birds, and foxes and other wild animals feasted on the wounded birds falling to the ground. The land where the roost was located was enriched by the droppings of the birds."

In a review of A. W. Schorger's *The Passenger Pigeon* (1955), Maurice Brooks has this to say concerning a little-known habit of the bird, "This volume contains much information which is not, I believe, known to most bird students. Let me cite an example. When I was a small boy I remember my father's receiving a letter from a mountain hunter in which the writer was positive that he had seen a flock of about twenty 'wild pigeons' (this would have been around 1909). The 'cracker' or punch-line was properly reserved for the last: he concluded that one reason he thought they might not be wild pigeons was that they flew down and alighted on Elk River. I have told this story many times, and no hearer has told me that the writer was within the bounds of possibility. On page 24 of Dr. Schorger's book I learned that Passenger Pigeons regularly alighted on bodies of water."

The last passenger pigeon in the Kanawha Valley was shot by A. Sidney Morgan near Winfield in 1895, but Morgan goes on to report seeing a few after that date. The specimen has been lost, but a portrait of the bird, painted by Morgan's mother, hangs in his museum. E. A. Brooks (3) writes that Cecil Coburn saw a flock of thirty near French Creek, Upshur Co., in March of 1897. 1909, the year that Brooks relates that the hunter saw a flock of twenty alighting on Elk River, is a remarkably late date for the bird to still be present. An unusual report, and one that seems in almost certain error about the date, is where McWhorter writes of reading in the "local press" where a flock of 500 were seen hovering over the treetops near Addison (near where Webster Springs is now located) in October 1907. What makes this so unusual is that the last known bird died in the Cincinnati Zoo in 1914 and a flock that large surviving so late seems most remarkable.

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DEATH BY MISADVENTURE

Constance Katholi

In November I received a telephone call from a new neighbor, a young Norwegian woman, who said that she had found two dead banded birds. Because of the bands, she had felt an obligation to report their deaths to the proper authorities. The Department of Natural Resources of West Virginia which she contacted referred her to me. It was, consequently, only because of my banding activities that I learned of the following strange story.

The birds were wearing my bands; one, an adult chickadee, had been originally banded a year earlier in November 1963; and the second, a titmouse, had been banded as an immature in August of this year (1964). In our telephone conversation I had difficulty understanding the cause of the tragedy, so was considerably

surprised and dismayed to discover that the birds had met death in the interior of a child's backyard swing or gymnasium set! Their bodies had been found when the equipment was moved for winter storage and indications were that the birds had been dead varying lengths of time.

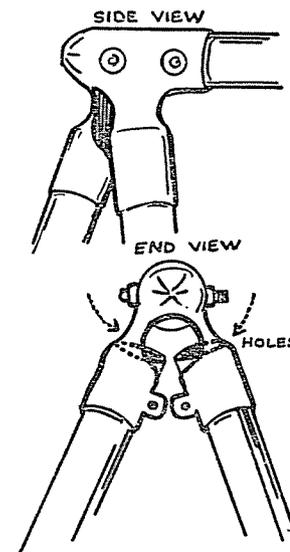
This particular outfit which has numerous adaptations for swings, rings, and a slide is **not** a home-made affair but a standard commercial product. The apparatus consists of four open-ended steel tubes, each 2¼ inches in diameter, forming a pair of "A" frames, which support a sealed horizontal member to which the swings, etc., are attached. (See accompanying diagram). The holes at the top of the "A" frames invite curious, shelter-seeking birds to enter—those birds which would use nesting holes anyway—and on proceeding down the diagonals, whether by intent or accident, are unable to retrace their paths.

I was told that a **third** bird of unknown species had been fatally trapped, but being unbanded, it had not been saved for my examination. A **fourth** bird had been trapped in the same manner the previous summer. Luckily, this bird was still alive when found by children playing in the yard, who heard it fluttering in the pipe. The bird was rescued by tilting off the ground the supporting leg in which it was imprisoned.

Unfortunately, the holes at the top of the frames were **not** immediately plugged with rags or paper—as they are now. This is a simple home remedy to be sure, but one which should not be necessary if the outfit had been properly designed in the first place. Many of these swings are currently in backyards and playgrounds all over the country.

A little publicity on this subject, coupled with an appeal to manufacturers to cap the hollow tubes in the factory, could save many birds in the future.

Footnote: In talking to a retailer of these products, I learned that the manufacturer of another brand of different construction which **has** open ends on its horizontal member supplies elastic caps to cover them. I am told, however, that these are not very satisfactory, as they tend to deteriorate or are misplaced. The



designer in this case would seem to have recognized the possible hazard. Furthermore, the retailer mentioned that locally this past summer another serious problem had developed with the open pipes, as they proved a haven for yellow jackets.

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HOW CAN I TEACH CONSERVATION TO BEGINNERS

George Ballentine

Many of the Brooks Bird Club members are giving bird programs to Scout and 4H groups and to school children. Are we taking advantage of this opportunity to teach conservation?

Recently I gave a program to a 4H group of 30 boys and girls. There were over 100 slides, including 40 species of birds; calling attention to habitat, food, nestlings, identification of species, age, sex, trapping and banding. The program lasted about an hour and was followed by nearly a half hour of questions. The program was stopped by the leader who reminded us that next day was a school day and some still had lessons to prepare.

One question stumped me; "What can we do in our back yard to aid in the conservation of birds." The program had held the interest of every child and they wanted to know more. But it had been sadly lacking in purpose because it had no climax. I had told them about my hobby but could not answer "What can I do."

I have thought a great deal about an answer to that question. The children have nesting boxes and feeders as do many of the homes in most towns. The feeding of birds is usually little more than entertainment. If the children could become thoroughly familiar with the habits of every species of bird in their back yard they would have a desire to protect those birds. That would be a good start in the direction of conservation. Suppose we ask the student to select one species out of the eight or ten that come to the feeder. It should be a bird that is in the yard summer and winter—a permanent resident, and one that is easy to recognize. Suppose the Cardinal is chosen. It is the State Bird of West Virginia and is peppy and attractive. He would study the habits and characteristics of the Cardinal for several months. From personal observation, he might find answers to questions such as the following;

- 1—What sort of a bill do they have.
- 2—What is the color of body, wings and tail of male and female.
- 3—What do they like best to eat.
- 4—Do they like to eat on the ground or high up.
- 5—What natural food, found in your yard, have you seen them eat.
- 6—Do they spend most of their time on the ground or high in a tree.
- 7—Do they preen their feathers and keep them neat.
- 8—Do they chase other birds from the feeder.
- 9—Does the male chase the female or vice-versa.
- 10—How many calls or songs do they have.
- 11—Are these calls common to both sexes.
- 12—During courtship what special attention does the male give the female.
- 13—Does the male have a special song at nesting time.

- 14—Where is the nest built.
- 15—What material is used for nest building; what is the construction.
- 16—Do both sexes incubate the eggs; does the male feed the female during incubation.
- 17—Which sex feeds the young.
- 18—Do the young birds have to be taught to fly.
- 19—Do the parents take feed from the feeder to the young.
- 20—Do the adult birds ever lose their feathers.
- 21 How long do the young birds stay with the adults.
- 22—Do the male and female stay together after the young leave the nest.

These questions are just suggestions for a beginner. The student will observe many more things. Then, another species can be selected and the process repeated.

He will soon become aware that birds are not mechanized puppets with colored feathers but are living things that experience fear, hunger, curiosity and even affection. He will begin to think of their real needs such as a place to live where they can find their own food and nesting places. He will want to do something about it; he has become a conservationist.

268 Oakwood Road,
Charleston, W. Va.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER DESTROYS NEST

Leon P. Wilson

On July 4, 1964 while taking an early morning bird walk in the group camping area of Kentucky's Carter Cave State Park, Maxine and Ben Kiff and I observed an unusual incident which may be of interest to others. We had discovered an Acadian Flycatcher nest in the fork of a small maple tree about twelve feet above the ground. Both flycatchers were making a fuss about our intrusion, when a Red-bellied Woodpecker which had been moving up a nearby snag, flew to the limb on which the nest was located and began inching its way along the limb toward the nest accompanied by much diving and bill snapping on the part of the flycatchers. When we realized that the woodpecker's intention was to destroy the nest, we took action and scared it away, then we moved back to observe the flycatchers. In approximately five minutes the woodpecker returned, flew directly to the nest, quickly punctured the eggs and incidently tore a hole in the bottom of the nest through which the broken eggs dripped. It finally impaled an egg with its bill and flew away before we could do anything but yell.

This is the only experience I have ever had of any "predator instinct" in a woodpecker, nor have I found any reference to such actions in books I have read. Perhaps this was an isolated case, but it surely proved that there is always something to be learned from our wild neighbors.

Box 105, Ona, West Virginia

CORRECTION

The Editor learned recently that the article, "Insects Collected at the 1964 Foray" found on page 70 of the April, 1965 Redstart (volume 32) was written by Leon Wilson and not Maxine Kiff. While the mistake was unintentional, the Editor is sorry that it was made.



FIELD NOTES

Mrs. Nevada Laitch, Editor
MC 21, East Liverpool, Ohio

Contributions Due

Summer Season (June 1-Aug. 31) . Sept. 15
Fall Season (Sept. 1-Nov. 30) . . . Dec. 15
Winter Season (Dec. 1-Feb. 28) . . Mar. 15
Spring Season (Mar. 1-May. 31) . . June 15

The Spring migration period was ushered in by a cold wet March followed by varied weather in April when there were cold and rainy spells but rainfall was still below normal. It ended with a very warm and a very, very dry May.

Migrants were not far off schedule and the waterfowl flight appeared to be the best in several years. No great waves of land birds were reported. Several reporters commented that migrants sang more than usual.

Loons, Grebes and Herons—**Common Loons** were considered scarce in the Morgantown, W. Va. area for the second straight year (GAH). Eight were seen on Lake White, Pike County, Ohio April 11 (MT) and twenty-three were on Guilford Lake near Lisbon, Ohio on the same date (ERC-NL). A **Red-throated Loon** was seen on Cheat Lake near Morgantown, W. Va. April 25 (GAH). Both species of **Grebes** seemed scarce. A **Common Egret** was in the Scioto River bottoms near Portsmouth, Ohio March 25 (MT) and a **Snowy Egret** was in the same vicinity on April 9. **Green Herons** were common in the Charleston, W. Va. area by April 13 (AS). A **Black-crowned Night Heron** was seen frequently from March 28 until mid-May near Portsmouth, Ohio (MT) and one was observed at Lake Terra Alta in Preston County, W. Va. on May 9 (GAH). A **Least Bittern** was recorded at Altona Marsh, Jefferson County, W. Va. on May 23 by the BBC group.

Waterfowl—In spite of the lack of reports from several important waterfowl areas enough observations were made to be certain of a good flight. On March 21 a severe snow squall occurred throughout most of the region. Good numbers of ducks appeared on Guilford Lake, Lisbon, Ohio, Cheat Lake, Morgantown, W. Va. and on Lake of the Woods in Preston County, W. Va. On April 3-4 a party of BBC members visited Pymatuning Lake near Linesville, Pa. and found a heavy concentration of geese and ducks. Ten days later Merit Skaggs reported on his trip to the same area where he found 14 species of ducks on the Pennsylvania side of the lake. **Whistling Swans** were on Cheat Lake, Morgantown, W. Va. on March 14 and one was on Lake of the Woods, Preston County, W. Va. March 21 (GAH). One remained at Herrington Manor Park in Garret County, Md. until April 11 (LS). **Canada Geese** staged a very good northward flight. Three **Snow Geese** and six **Blue Geese** were observed at Pymatuning Lake, Pa. on April 3 (NL). There was a good flight of **American Widgeon** peaking about the first of April. A **European Widgeon** found on a small lake at Farmington, Pa. (on U.S.40) March 14 (GAH) was very unusual. **Pintails** were in good numbers. Both **Green-winged**

and **Blue-winged Teal** appeared scarce. **Shovelers** were seen on Pymatuning Lake, Pa. on April 3 and April 14. **Wood Ducks** seemed plentiful. There was a very good flight of **Redheads** beginning first week in March and peaking about March 27. **Ring-necked Ducks** also showed good numbers. Two were seen at Guilford Lake, Lisbon, Ohio as late as May 9 (ERC&NL). **Canvasbacks** were seen at Pymatuning Lake, Pa. on April 4 and April 14 and several were on Guilford Lake, Lisbon, Ohio on April 11. The **Scaup** flight was very heavy, peaking about mid-April. Fifty were seen on a small lake near East Liverpool, Ohio on May 1 (NL). An **Oldsquaw** was recorded near Portsmouth, Ohio on March 16 (MT); a male **Oldsquaw** appeared on Cheat Lake near Morgantown W. Va. on March 28 (GAH) and a female was seen at Pymatuning Lake, Pa. on April 14 (MS). A flock of 27 **Ruddy Ducks** were on the Kanawha River near Charleston, W. Va. March 19 (NG). **Goldeneyes** and **Buffleheads** appeared in good numbers. The **Merganser** flight was about on time and seemed good. A small flock of **Red-breasted Mergansers** was seen at Morgantown, W. Va. as late as May 9 (GAH).

Vultures and Hawks—**Turkey Vultures** appeared on time and were plentiful. Several Charleston, W. Va. observers reported a heavy migration of **Broadwing Hawks** over the city on April 11. Five **Rough-legged Hawks** were seen in the Pymatuning Lake, Pa. vicinity the week-end of April 3-4 and a pair was seen near Lisbon, Ohio on May 9 (ERC&NL). Two **Bald Eagles** were found at a nest in the Pymatuning, Pa. region on April 4 (NL). **Sparrow Hawks** appeared to be about normal during migration.

Rails and Gallinules—**Virginia Rails** were on their breeding ground near Lisbon, Ohio on May 9 (NL) and were found at Altona Marsh in Jefferson County, W. Va. on May 23 (BBC). **Soras** were also found there the same day. **Soras** were also found near Lisbon, Ohio May 9 (NL). **Coots** were considered fairly common by most observers.

Shorebirds—The shorebird flight did not seem good. However, this may have been due to lack of observation from the areas where most of our shorebirds occur. **Killdeer** were considered plentiful by most reporters with an exception of Morgantown, W. Va. where they were scarce (GAH). **Woodcock** figured in most of the reports and seemed plentiful. **Common Snipe** were found in Jefferson County, W. Va. on May 23 (BBC). **Upland Plovers** were found at Clarksville, (Greene County) Pa. on April 7 and 4 pairs were located there later in the Spring (RKB). Two records of **Willetts** in the mountain regions was unusual. One was found on a pond at the headwaters of the Williams River in Pocahontas County, W. Va. on May 5 by Wayne Bailey fide (COH). On May 9 one was at Herrington Manor State Park in Garret County, Md. (GAH).

Gulls—**Ring-billed Gulls** appeared more common than usual. Fifty **Bonaparte's Gulls** were near Morgantown, W. Va. April 11 (GAH) and "many" were seen at Guilford Lake, Lisbon, Ohio on the same date (ERC&NL). Several were seen at Charleston, W. Va. on April 19 (CK).

Cuckoos and Owls—Both **Yellow-billed** and **Black-billed Cuckoos** were late in arriving and were considered very scarce. The remains of a **Snowy Owl** was found in the South Hills section of Charleston, W. Va. on April 1 (COH). The bird had been dead for several days and it could not be determined whether it had been killed or died of starvation. A **Long-eared Owl** was banded at Clarksville, Pa. on March 25 (RKB). This was the first one Bell had ever seen.

Swifts and Woodpeckers—The first arrival date for **Whip-poor-will** was April 11 at Charleston, W. Va. (PH). **Chuck-wills-widow** was recorded at Lake Adams,

Adams County in southern Ohio on May 30 (MT). **Common Nighthawks** and **Chimney Swifts** appeared on time and seemed plentiful. **Red-bellied Woodpeckers** appeared more plentiful than usual in the East Liverpool, Ohio area (NL) and **Red-headed Woodpeckers** seemed to be increasing in the Charleston, W. Va. locality (AS). A good migration of **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** passed through East Liverpool, Ohio on April 17 (NL).

Flycatchers and Swallows—**Kingbirds** had arrived in good numbers in most localities by May 1. The first date for **Great-Crested Flycatchers** was April 22 at Charleston, W. Va. (NG). They were listed at East Liverpool, Ohio on April 27 but not until May 2 at Morgantown, W. Va. **Traill's Flycatchers** are increasing in the Morgantown, W. Va. area (GAH) and although they were late at East Liverpool, Ohio and Chester, W. Va. the population appeared normal. **Least Flycatchers** did not arrive until May 1 in the northern part of the region and were considered scarce. The April 24 date for **Wood Pewee** at Morgantown, W. Va. (GAH) was an early one. **Tree Swallows** were found at Pymatuning Lake, Pa. April 3 (NL). Large flocks of **Bank Swallows** were seen near East Liverpool, Ohio April 24 and at Morgantown April 25. **Rough-winged Swallows** were at Clarksville, Pa. April 12 (RKB) and were listed at Charleston, W. Va. April 30 (AS). April 7 was earliest date for **Barn Swallows** (RKB). **Purple Martins** were first listed at Charleston, W. Va. on March 22 (AS) and at Clarksville, Pa. on March 28 (RKB).

Nuthatches and Wrens—**Red-breasted Nuthatches** and **Brown Creepers** were rare during migration. **House Wren** arrival dates averaged April 20. A pair of **Bewick's Wrens** were at Morgantown, W. Va. for the first record there in some years (GAH). **Long-billed Marsh Wrens** were found near Lisbon, Ohio April 25 (NL) and at Altona Marsh in Jefferson County, W. Va. May 23 (BBC).

Mimics and Thrushes—**Catbirds** were at Charleston April 22 (COH) and had arrived in other localities by April 29. April 5 was the first date for **Brown Thrasher** at Charleston, W. Va. (CK). The arrival date at Clarksville, Pa. was April 9 (RKB). The earliest date for **Wood Thrush** was April 6 at Charleston, W. Va. (CK). **Hermit Thrush** was seen at East Liverpool, Ohio occasionally between April 9 and 23 (NL) and at Charleston, W. Va. April 18 to 20 (CK). There was, apparently, a good **Swainson's Thrush** flight throughout the region and an unusual amount of song. A **Veery** remained at East Liverpool, Ohio until the end of the period and was heard singing on June 7 (NL). **Bluebirds** appear to be increasing in most localities and their numbers have greatly increased in the Greensburg Pa. area (VO).

Gnatcatchers, Kinglets and Pipits—First date for **Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher** was at Greensburg, Pa. on April 7 (VO). They appeared late in Morgantown, W. Va. where they were not found until April 21. **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** migrated through Charleston, W. Va. in good numbers the third week in April. The peak at East Liverpool, Ohio was between April 29 and May 2 when they were abundant and in full song (NL). **Golden-crowned Kinglets** appeared scarce. A heavy flight of **Water Pipits** was observed near Lisbon, Ohio on March 21 during the worst weather of the Spring (NL).

Vireos—**White-eyed Vireos** are expanding their range and increasing in numbers. They had arrived at Charleston April 11 (AS) and at Clarksville, Pa. April 12 (RKB). There were many more than usual at Morgantown, W. Va. and the number was greatly increased in the East Liverpool, Ohio area. The first date for **Yellow-throated Vireos** was April 15 at Charleston, W. Va. (NG). Generally their numbers appeared below normal. **Warbling Vireos** arrived at Charleston, W. Va. April 20 (NG). **Solitary Vireos** were rare during the period.

Warblers—**Black and White Warblers** were at Charleston, W. Va. April 11 (AS). **Swainson's Warbler** was listed April 22 at Charleston, W. Va. (NG) and were considered common there this Spring (AS). **Golden-winged Warblers** were found Charleston, W. Va. April 24 (PH) and at Morgantown, W. Va. May 2 (GAH) with numbers appearing normal. **Blue-winged Warblers** were common around Charleston, W. Va. after May 1 (AS) and a **Brewster's Warbler** sang throughout May in the Berry Hills section of Charleston (AS&CK). Both **Tennessee** and **Nashvilles** staged good flights. **Parulas** appeared in increased numbers. Listed at Charleston April 13 (AS) and Morgantown first on April 25 (GAH) **Yellow Warblers** arrived April 13 at Charleston, W. Va. and about ten days later in the northern areas. **Magnolia Warblers** seemed scarce during migration but were found common at Cranberry Glades, Webster County, W. Va. (AS) and the Cheat Mountain breeding grounds (GAH). Large numbers of **Myrtle Warblers** were noted in the Kanawha River Valley April 27-29 (NG). The usual great numbers of **Myrtles** did not appear this spring in the East Liverpool, Ohio area. There was a good migration of **Black-throated Green Warblers** through Morgantown, W. Va. April 22 (GAH) and East Liverpool, Ohio on the same week-end. An early date for **Cerulean Warbler** was April 12 at Charleston, W. Va. (AS). The **Blackburnian** migration was good enough through Charleston, W. Va. and they were at East Liverpool, Ohio in good numbers May 6 and 10. A few were still present in the eastern panhandle of West Virginia May 22-23 (BBC). **Yellow-throated Warblers** arrived at Charleston, W. Va. on April 6 (AS) and were very plentiful. The first record for Monongalia County, West Virginia was established on April 24 when one was at Morgantown, (GAH). Listed near East Liverpool, Ohio on April 30 (NL). They were found near Harpers Ferry, W. Va. by BBC Sutton Seekers on May 22. The following week Oliver Johnson found them abundant around the West Virginia bridge at Harpers Ferry over the Shenandoah river and the Maryland bridge over the Potomac river. **Blackpolls** were on time and in good numbers. **Ovenbirds** and **Kentucky Warblers** were in the southern parts on April 24 and were in the northern areas a week later. **Yellow-breasted Chats** and **Hooded Warblers** arrived early (April 25) at Morgantown, W. Va. for the second consecutive year (GAH). **Canada Warblers** did not seem plentiful. **Redstarts** arrived at Charleston April 22 (PH) and in the northern region by May 1.

Blackbirds, Orioles and Tanagers—**Bobolinks** were in southern Ohio April 24 (MT) and were on their normal breeding grounds in good numbers the second week in May. **Eastern Meadowlarks** and **Red-winged Blackbirds** were in the northern part of the region on March 1. **Orchard Orioles** were reported at Charleston, W. Va. April 24 (PH) and one was banded at Morgantown, W. Va. on the same date (GAH). **Baltimore Orioles** were plentiful and generally distributed by the first of May. Many reporters deplored the ever increasing populations of **Grackles**. **Brown-headed Cowbirds** were too plentiful by mid April. **Scarlet Tanagers** were listed at Charleston, W. Va. April 18 (CK). R. D. Ruff fide (COH) reported that a flock of 50 to 75 **Scarlet Tanagers** and probably 15 to 20 **Summer Tanagers** were seen near Logan, W. Va. on April 27.

Grosbeaks and Finches—A **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** on April 28 at East Liverpool, Ohio was early for that locality (NL). Most reporters considered the migration light. **Indigo Buntings** were on time in normal numbers. **Dickcissel** were at Portsmouth, Ohio April 30 (MT) and one was found at Morgantown, W. Va. May 16 (LS). **Purple Finch** were definitely scarce during migration.

Sparrows—Two **Savannah Sparrows** were listed at Charleston, W. Va. on April

1 (NG). One was at Greensburg, Pa. April 19 (VO). The earliest **Grasshopper Sparrow** reported was at Charleston, W. Va. April 19 (CK). **Henslow's Sparrows** were plentiful on their breeding grounds near East Liverpool, Ohio by mid May. One was found singing at Morgantown, W. Va. on May 16 (LS&GAH). A considerable migration of **Vesper Sparrows** was noted at Charleston, W. Va. March 27-31 (NG). **Slate-colored Juncos** were gone by last week of April. Bell banded his "first" **Oregon Junco** at Clarksville, Pa. on April 2. A **Field Sparrow** was banded at Clarksville, Pa. on March 4 (RKB) but the main migration did not occur until after the first of April. Both **White-crowned** and **White-throated Sparrows** moved through the region in large numbers, lingering longer than usual and singing quite a lot. Many of us heard the full song of the **White-crowned** for the first time. A number of **Fox Sparrows** were at Charleston, W. Va. March 24 (NG) and several were in full song at Willoughby, Ohio from April 10 to 19 (MS). **Lincoln Sparrows** were banded at Morgantown, W. Va. May 1 and 15 (GAH).

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CORNELL NEST CARD PROGRAM

The North American Nest Card Program is winding up the 1965 nesting season and many nest cards have been returned. There are still many cards in the hands of individuals, however, and these should be returned to us as quickly as they are completed. Cornell is preparing the data for transferral to IBM cards and a large bulk is needed for the first run. Please send your completed cards to Headquarters as soon as you have finished collecting the data. We will glean information of interest to the BBC and forward the cards to Cornell.

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Original papers in the field of natural history are published in the Redstart. Papers are judged on the basis of their contributions to original data, ideas, or interpretations. Scientific accuracy is most important and to this end an Advisory Board, selected by the Editorial Staff, will review submitted papers. Papers should be typewritten, double spaced and on one side of the paper only. Clarity and conciseness of presentation are very important.

SUGGESTIONS TO AUTHORS

TITLE. The title should be descriptive and concise, preferably containing not more than ten words. Avoid scientific names if possible.

REFERENCES. References should be listed at the end of the paper in the same numerical order as they are referred to in the text.

TABLES. Keep tables simple and easy to follow so they may be understood without reference to the text.

ILLUSTRATIONS. Illustrations should be suitable for reproduction without retouching. Sharp, glossy prints with good contrast reproduce best. Attach to each a brief legend. Do not write on the back of photographs. Line drawings and diagrams reproduce best if in black ink.

REPRINTS. Authors may request reprints at the time papers are submitted. Cost of reprints will be paid by the author.

The author is responsible for putting his paper in final form for production. This will include corrections suggested by the Advisory Editorial Board.

At the risk of producing stereotyped manuscripts, the following outline is given as one method of arranging material.

INTRODUCTION. Reasons for conducting the research as well as background material relating what others have done.

DATA. The actual results of the investigation along with the methods used for collecting the information.

CONCLUSIONS. Interpretation of the data.

FUTURE WORK. As a result of the investigation, what work remains to be done.

SUMMARY. For longer articles it is desirable to present a brief summary.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Many papers will not fit this type of presentation. Sometimes a simple sequence-of-events arrangement (chronological etc.) will serve. In any event, authors should strive for continuity of thought and clarity of expression.

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