THE REDSTART

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Named in honor of A. B. Brooks, Naturalist

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1
1978 Foray Bird Report
Seal T. Brooks

This was the seventh time a BBC Foray was held at Camp Pocahontas, formerly Camp Thornwood, near Bartow, Pocahontas County, West Virginia. Until this year, Forays at this location were usually of one week duration. This year, it was for two weeks, June 3 through June 17. This may account for the increase in the number of species reported.

The area covered during this foray (approximately 700 square miles) included parts of Pocahontas, Randolph and Pendleton Counties in West Virginia and a small part of Highland County, Virginia. The altitude varied from about 1800 feet in the Tygart and North Fork Valleys to 4,860 feet on Spruce Knob. Some of the mountain ranges average over 4,000 feet.

It is at these higher elevations that the more northern species are found.

The number of species found at each Foray in this area are as follows:

June 12 - 20 1948 - 107
June 13 - 21 1953 - 118
June 14 - 21 1958 - 114
June 13 - 21 1964 - 123
August 8 - 22 (2 weeks) 1968 - 126
June 9 - 16 1973 - 125
June 3 - 17 (2 weeks) 1978 - 131

As a prelude to compiling this report all of the previous Foray reports for this area were studied so that I could get a feel for abundance of species. When finished, I was overwhelmed by the abundance terms used. There were 31 terms used over the years. There were 16 degrees of the term common and six ways of expressing the term rare. The use of modifiers with a term is particularly difficult to understand, especially the use of "not" such as in "not common" or "not rare."

In the following compilation the terms of abundance are those worked out by George Hall and Chan Robbins. These are listed in the 1975 Foray Bird List by Bell (Redstart Vol. 43: No. 1, January 1976). I hope the use of these terms will be continued in future Foray reports. The bird nomenclature used in this report follows the A.B.A. Checklist of 1976. Following the listing of species seen this year, there is a listing of species previously reported for Pocahontas Forays but not reported in 1978. According to my records, the Foray count for the seven Forays in this area is 144.

1. Green Heron - Uncommon
Several reports were single birds. Most reports originated along the Greenbrier River. Jack Linehan saw three in the Foray area.

2. Wood Duck - Rare
One drake was observed by Dr. Weimer on 6/8 at a beaver cutting area one mile west of Lake Buffalo. An unsigned report placed one flying near Forest Route 17. These are the first reports since 1953.

3. Turkey Vulture - Fairly Common
Usually reported in groups of 2-5. On 6/8 D. Nemanich saw 15 in a flock near Thornwood. Most observers indicated they were seen daily.

4. Black Vulture - Rare
There were two sightings of single birds in the Stony Bottom area on 6/12 and 6/18 by R. A. Lightburn and the Boechers. Larry Davis also saw one near Stony Bottom on 6/12. A single bird was seen by Helen Boecher between Thornwood and the Hermitage over Route 28.

5. Sharp-shinned Hawk - Rare
Single birds reported in four different locations. G. Phillips reported that the entire pre-camp group saw one on 6/12 along the road to Lake Buffalo. Reports this year were more numerous than in the past years.

6. Coopers Hawk - Rare
Four separate reports from different areas by F. Murphy, R. Kletzly, R. Bell, V. Keiley, G. Hurley, K. Anderson and Rob Lightburn.

7. Red-tailed Hawk - Uncommon
Many observers reported sightings totaling 14 birds. Four separate reports were made of Red-tails over the camp. Abundance seems to be about the same as in previous years.

8. Red-shouldered Hawk - Uncommon
Twelve individuals were reported from several parts of the Foray area. G. Hurley reported seeing several during the week. Four were recorded on BBS routes.

9. Broad-winged Hawk - Uncommon
When the various hawk reports are compared, the Broad-winged appears to be the most numerous of the hawk species in the area. Thirteen birds were reported in various areas by eleven observers. In 1953 it was thought to be the most common hawk of the region.

10. American Kestrel - Uncommon
Eleven reports by thirteen observers. This species seems to fluctuate in abundance. In 1953 there was one bird reported. Again in 1973, there were only two reports. In 1964 and 1968, it was considered "not rare." Most of this year's reports mention Back Mt. Road.

Rural scene, Rt. 28 between Durbin and Thornwood, W.V.

Photo by A. R. Buckelew, Jr.
11. Ruffed Grouse - Uncommon
Adults with young reported by the McGrews, Jay Buckelew and others (eight reports). 1978 seems to have been an "up" year for Grouse since only 4 or 5 broods were observed in 1964, 1968 and 1973.

12. Common Bobwhite - Rare
Two reports. One was heard at top of Timber Ridge Road by V. Johnson and G. Hutton. This species was reported as being common or plentiful in 1953 and 1958. None reported on BBS routes.

13. Wild Turkey - Uncommon
There were eight reports. No broods. The reports came mostly from "road to Gaudininer" and top of Allegheny. Reports by N. Laitsch, E. Reichelderfer, V. Kelley and others. Population appears to be cyclical. However, the wariness of this species may account for the lack of sightings.

14. Killdeer - Fairly Common
There were several reports covering each day of Foray. E. Reichelderfer saw six or more on the way to Greenbank on 6/10. G. Eddy saw four in Gladys on 6/6. Four of the eleven BBS routes reported a total of 13.

15. Spotted Sandpiper - Uncommon
Evidently more common than in previous years. None were reported in 1973, and only five in the three preceding Forays. Individuals were seen by D. Nemanich, V. Kelley, G. Hurley and J. Caperton. One was seen at Shaver's Fork by G. Mayfield. It was also seen at Lake Buffalo and on a farm pond near Greenbank by C. Ruddell, L. Harper and J. Phillips.

16. American Woodcock - Uncommon
Was seen on four different days. An adult with young was seen on 6/4 by G. Hall on Shaver's Mt. Mark Mayfield flushed one on Spruce Knob on 6/6. Bob Richardson saw one on Allegheny Mt. on 6/16.

17. Common Snipe - Accidental
Since there have been none reported in previous years, this species has been given an "accidental status" for the Thornwood Foray area. R. Bell reports that John Weiner, who has hunted snipe and knows them, "probably" found one at Lake Buffalo during the first week of Foray.

18. Rock Dove - Rare
1968 was the first year the Rock Dove was included in the Foray reports for Thornwood. Only five were reported this year. This may be due to minimal birding being done in towns. However, three observers commented that none were seen.

19. Mourning Dove - Uncommon
Most observers commented, "not common," "occasional," "uncommon." Others reported seeing one or two individuals. C. Conrad reported seeing two "on the back road to Cass." H. Ball and the Perkins saw one at Boyer on 6/13. Seven were reported on 4 of the 11 BBS routes.

20. Yellow-billed Cuckoo - Uncommon
This species appears to be subject to drastic changes in numbers. A study of the previous Foray reports indicates this species to be "rare" to "surprisingly common." This year's reports show it to be uncommon. G. Phillips reported two during the second week and R. Bell heard two during the first week. E. Reichelderfer reported six. Harold Boecher heard one in the Little River area. Linehan's recap of BBS survey showed thirteen reports on 7 of 11 routes; the same as in 1968.

This species was listed as "fairly common" in 1973. This year they were reported a few times. R. Bell reported three on the Arbovale BBS route. E. Reichelderfer heard six or more during the second week. G. Hurley thought them to be "uncommon." A total of seven were reported on the BBS routes.

22. Screech Owl - Rare
In 1968, there were five reports and there were no reports in 1973. One was reported this year on BBS Route #10. The writer made two late night trips to Burner Mt. and Middle Mt. and did not get any response to a Screech Owl tape. C. Conrad said there were none reported to him.

23. Great Horned Owl - Rare
There were three reports during the two weeks. Libby Chandler and P. Perkins heard one calling near camp on 6/11 and 6/14 respectively. One was reported on BBS Route #2. In 1973, there was one report for the period.

24. Barred Owl - Uncommon
This owl was seen or heard at six locations in the area. Most of the reports were of the owl calling just north of the camp area. N. Laitsch and E. Reichelderfer both saw this species. One was reported on BBS Route #7.

25. Whip-poor-will - Rare
A. Pyle reported one heard on a BBS Route. Both G. Hutton and E. Reichelderfer reported that they had heard none. C. Conrad and J. McGrew heard one near Mr. Eye's home near Boyer. C. Ruddell, C. Harper and G. Phillips heard one at Wesley Chapel east of Greenbank. One evening trip to Burner Mt. was not productive.

26. Common Nighthawk - Rare
Three reports. G. Hutton heard one of the first week. E. Reichelderfer saw one at the Sinks of Gandy. C. Conrad flushed one at Spruce Knob.

27. Chimney Swift - Fairly Common
Reports for every day and most areas, including the men's dorm - Jay Buckelew, H. Ball, P. Perkins and N. Wilder saw several on Bald Knob. G. Eddy commented that they were well distributed in both wooded and open areas. There were 26 reported on 7 BBS routes.

28. Ruby-throated Hummingbird - Uncommon
This species was evidently down in 1973 as there were only two reports. This year, besides the active nest in camp and one other nest with eggs, most observers reported seeing at least one bird. Z. Stewart saw one near Thornwood. L. Davis saw one at Stoney Brook. N. Laitsch saw one or more each day. G. Hurley saw three during the second week.

29. Belted Kingfisher - Uncommon
Reports indicate that this species was observed mostly along the East Fork of the Greenbrier between Camp and the Hermitage. N. Wilder and S. Brooks saw one on Back Mt. Road. Three were reported on the eleven BBS routes. Several observers reported seeing only one during the week. Possibly there has been a decrease in abundance since 1973.

30. Common Flicker - Fairly Common
D. Nemanich reported seeing 12-15 the first week. R. Bell thought they were "fairly common" in the southern portion of the area. G. Hurley thought they were "regular, but not common." V. Johnson reported a "family" at the top of Timber Ridge Road. There were several other reports. There were a total of 27 reported on 9 of 11 BBS routes.
31. Pileated Woodpecker - Uncommon
One was heard near Riverton by Z. Stewart. C. Conrad saw one flying at Snowy Mt. Road on 6/5 by Z. Stewart and party. Jeanie Anderson saw one on 6/8 at the junction of Rts. 28 and N533. It was reported on one of the BBS routes.

32. Red-bellied Woodpecker - Uncommon
Only four reports. Both R. Bell and E. Reichelderfer reported "none." The Chandlers saw one on the Burner Mt. study area on 6/13. One was seen on Snowy Mt. Road on 6/6 by Z. Stewart and party. Jeanie Anderson saw one on 6/8 at the junction of Rts. 28 and N533. It was reported on one of the BBS routes.

33. Hairy Woodpecker - Uncommon
Bob Hostottle reported one on Back Mt. Road. J. R. Smith saw one on the road to Spruce Knob about two miles from Rt. 28 and another on the road to Lake Buffalo. The Boechers saw one at Middle Mt. Cabins. There were several other reports. However, R. Bell, C. Conrad and E. Reichelderfer reported seeing none.

34. Downy Woodpecker - Uncommon
Reporting was about the same as for the Hairy. Two observers reported seeing none. D. Nemanich reported them as "scarce." Others reported single birds, except G. Hurley who saw two at the church near Arbovale. Two were reported on the BBS routes. George Hall comments that Downy Woodpeckers are usually less numerous than Hairy Woodpeckers at high elevations.

35. Eastern Kingbird - Common
Reported by twenty-four observers in almost as many locations. Reports indicate the bird is not as common in the proper habitat. R. Bell pointed out that ten were observed on the Arbovale BBS routes. It should be noted that on these routes only two others for a total of 12 were reported.

36. Great Crested Flycatcher - Fairly Common
Most observers thought this species to be "fairly common." G. Eddy found it to be "distributed throughout the area." E. Reichelderfer heard it in "every suitable habitat." A. Pyle, who made five BBS route runs, heard it on each run. It was recorded on 10 of the 11 BBS surveys for a total of 46. Z. Stewart thought it to be "quite abundant."

37. Eastern Phoebe - Fairly Common
G. Hurley thought they were "regular but not common." R. Bell considered them "fairly common." Others thought they were "common." There was no noticeable change from 1973. Thirty-six were reported on 10 of 11 BBS routes.

38. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher - Rare
G. Mayfield documented finding this bird. I will quote his write-up. "6/8 suspicious bird found in swamp 2 1/2 miles from Gladly on Durbin Road. All green back and breast with hint of yellow in mid-breast. 6/9 Returned to Swamp in A.M. Found bird again with Alders that were brown backed and white breast by comparison. Heard Chebunk note many times, never given in series like Least Flycatcher. 10-20 seconds apart or longer." 6/9 p.m. Returned with Edgar Smith and Jack Linehan who saw the bird. Finally tape was played in habitat. Green bird came quickly to top of tree above taped call, giving both whistled and chebunk notes. We were all convinced of the record then." During the second week this bird was to be found in the same bog. It was recorded by G. Hutton on 6/14 and observed by several campers.

39. Acadian Flycatcher - Uncommon
BBC'ers may be reporting the flycatchers more than in previous years. In 1958, 1964 and 1968 this species was considered rare. In 1973 it was "occasional" with eight reported on 10 BBS routes. This year there were 15 reported on the routes. E. Reichelderfer heard several. E. D. Chandler heard it occasionally but commented it was "not common." G. Hutton found three the first week of Foray.

40. Willow Flycatcher - Uncommon
This species was separated by song from the Alder Flycatcher many times. Excellent recordings were made of both species by G. Hutton. R. Bell reported "about 10" during the first week. N. Laitsch saw and heard five the same week. G. Phillips reported it near Durbin. R. Bush reported one near Bartow on 6/7 and another near the Sinks of Gandy on 6/6. There were several other reports the first week. Five were reported from two of the 11 BBS routes. Prior to 1968 the Flycatcher then called Traill's had been reported as rare in 1953, 1958 and 1964!

41. Alder Flycatcher - Fairly Common
All reports indicated that this species could be found in good numbers, but it was localized in mountain bogs. N. Laitsch counted eight singing birds in about 1/4 of a mile behind the gate at the intersection of Middle Mt. Road and Little River Trail on 6/4 and 6/5. Two more were found in Cattail Bog 2 1/2 miles SW of Gladly on Durban Road. There were also reports, in varying numbers, by R. Mayfield, G. Phillips, D. Conrad, E. Smith and E. Reichelderfer. Esther paced off the distance between birds on the Little River Trail. The distance varied from 320 to 690 paces.

42. Least Flycatcher - Fairly Common
G. Eddy reported hearing five the first week as did G. Hutton. N. Laitsch thought they were not as common as in the past two Forays. R. Bell had six on the Thornwood-Dunmore BBS route. G. Phillips heard one all week in the camp area. A total of 41 were reported on eight of the 11 BBS routes.

43. Eastern Pewee - Fairly Common
Comments on abundance of this species varied. G. Eddy thought they were not common, but were well distributed. The Boechers reported a bird incubating eggs at Nottingham Hollow on 6/12. Phillips and Hurley listed them as "occasional." R. Bell, N. Laitsch, D. Nemanich and E. Reichelderfer thought they were "fairly common." The Chandlers listed them on the Burner Mt. Study Area. They were listed on every BBS route with a total of 88.

44. Olive-sided Flycatcher - Rare
Reported on the Virgin Spruce census plot on 6/4 by N. Laitsch. On 6/5 it was heard on the Blister Pine census plot by E. Reichelderfer and G. Hutton. Leonard Teuber, not a Foray member, reported this species "in a marsh near Gaudineer." In previous Foray reports it was listed in 1948 and 1953.

45. Henslow Lark - Uncommon
Two were seen at the Sinks of Gandy on 6/6. One was carrying food. R. Bell also saw two along Rt. 28 north of Dunmore on 6/9. J. Rieffenberger saw one on top of Allegheny Road. D. Caperton, G. Hurley, V. Keiley and G. Mayfield reported this species from the Sinks of Gandy. None were reported on BBS routes.

46. Tree Swallow - Uncommon
Most reports were from the Hermitage - Durbin area by A. Llewellyn, V. Stanley, J. Anderson, D. Nemanich and R. Bell. P. Murphy and B. Kletzly saw one along Rt. 28 north of Frost. Three were reported on BBS routes.

47. Bank Swallow - Rare
G. Mayfield saw one in Gladly and E. Reichelderfer saw one at intersection of Rts.
28 and 250. Two reported that none were seen. One was reported on the BBS routes. This is only the second Thornwood Foray to report Bank Swallows.

48. Rough-winged Swallow - Uncommon
This species could be seen during the two weeks of Foray near the Hermitage - C. Conrad and G. Eddy, F. Murphy, Kletzley and R. Bell reported seeing one north of Frost and another near Boyer on 6/9. The Boechers reported them at the bridge over Greenbrier at Cass. Two adults with young were reported.

49. Barn Swallow - Common
Reported as the most common Swallow by most observers. Sixty-six were reported on seven of the 11 BBS routes.

50. Cliff Swallow - Rare
One nest in a barn near Bartow. This is the same place they have been found since 1953. N. Laitisch reported them in three locations. This is indeed good news. George Hall saw several at the Beard Farm, across the bridge from the Hermitage in late May.

51. Purple Martin - Accidental
Only an occasional report since 1948. P. Perkins saw a female near the Hermitage on 6/12.

52. Blue Jay - Common
N. Laitisch pointed out that this is their "quiet time." Most observers reported hearing only an occasional Jay. Reichelderfer reported seeing six to ten the first week of Foray. Two were seen on Snowy Mt. Road by Z. Stewart and party. The Chandlers reported hearing them occasionally, but that they were not common. Twenty were reported on BBS routes.

53. Northern Raven - Fairly Common
It is difficult to apply an abundance term to this species. Although they were reported every day, in many areas, their status does not meet the "common" criteria. In 1973, they were reported as "common." This year, considering the Hall-Robbins abundance terms, they are "fairly common." The writer will remember G. Hurley "calling in" two Ravens high over Little River and bringing them down to look us over. Seventeen were reported on five BBS routes.

54. American Crow - Common
All observers listed this species as common. BBS routes reported 225.

55. Black-capped Chickadee - Fairly Common
This species may be decreasing in numbers in this area. The BBS route produced 52, whereas there were 68 in 1973 and 91 in 1968. G. Hurley saw three during the 2nd week and thought they were uncommon, as did C. Conrad. R. Bell and N. Laitisch reported hearing several and seeing one nest on 6/7. The Boechers saw five feeding along River Road.

56. Tufted Titmouse - Uncommon
Most reports were of single birds. Reports were from all sections of the area. E. Reichelderfer, G. Eddy, C. Conrad and the Chandlers thought them uncommon. They were reported on all of the BBS routes for a total of 43.

57. White-breasted Nuthatch - Uncommon
On 6/6 N. Laitisch saw two along Rt. 28. R. Bell saw one during the first week, as did G. Hutton and C. Conrad. G. Hurley thought them to be very uncommon. On 6/15, Jay Bucklew reported one near Arborvale Church. Another was heard in the Virgin Spruce on Gaudineer by N. Wilder, C. Conrad, and S. Brooks. Five of the 11 BBS routes produced 11. There were none reported on BBS routes in 1973.

58. Red-breasted Nuthatch - Uncommon
Most reports came from the high areas, particularly the Blister Pine Swamp area by K. Bush, N. Laitisch, G. Hutton, B. Burtt, and E. Reichelderfer. G. Phillips thought they were fairly uncommon.

59. Brown Creeper - Uncommon
Seven observers reported seeing some 20 birds, all from higher elevations. Three were reported on two BBS routes. There were none reported on BBS routes in 1973. There was one nest building report. Several were seen at relatively low altitude at Seneca State Forest.

60. Winter Wren - Common
Located at higher elevations. G. Mayfield reported one on Shaver's Fork River near Bemis. E. Reichelderfer reported three or more on 6/13 on Gaudineer. Eleven reported on two of the 11 BBS routes indicate good numbers.

61. House Wren - Common
Considered by most reporters to be common or very common. Several persons commented that they were more plentiful than in former years. There was a decrease from 86 in 1973 to 53 this year on the BBS routes.

62. Carolina Wren - Uncommon
On 6/9 R. Bell and party reported one along Rt. 28 north of Frost. E. Reichelderfer heard three during the two weeks of Foray. D. Conrad and Libby Chandler heard none. Other observers reported single birds. Two were reported on the BBS routes.

63. Northern Mockingbird - Uncommon
Reports very limited. C. Conrad, D. Conrad, and the Werners all reported a single bird on Back Mt. Road on 6/14. Z. Stewart, Bob Richardson and party saw three on Snowy Mt. Road on 6/15. One was reported on 11 BBS routes.

64. Gray Catbird - Fairly Common
All reports omitted numbers and classified this species as common or fairly common. Eighty were reported on 11 BBS routes, down from 101 in 1973 and 132 in 1968.

65. Brown Thrasher - Fairly Common
Reports indicate that this species is considered fairly common. N. Laitisch and A. Eddy observed that there were more thrashers than catbirds." Bell considered them fairly common but not singing much. E. Reichelderfer found them nesting on Back Mt. Road.

66. American Robin - Common
All observers reported this species in large numbers. R. Bell thought they were much more common in the southern portion of the region. It was the fourth most common species on the BBS routes with 243. This represented a 33% decrease from the 1973 report.

67. Wood Thrush - Common
G. Phillips thought they were "about as abundant as on other Forays." Hutton heard "some" every day. The Chandlers and A. Eddy thought they "not common." BBS routes reported 180. This is also a 33% decrease from 1973 report. Three active nests were found.

68. Hermit Thrush - Uncommon
There were only a few reports, all from higher elevations. C. Conrad and E. Reichelderfer heard several at Snowshoe. N. Wilder and the Boechers heard one at Middle Mt. Cabins. From previous Foray reports we find the Hermit Thrush...
population fluctuating sharply. The high years have been 1953 and 1968. Three were reported on the BBS routes.

69. Swainson's Thrush - Uncommon
C. Conrad heard several during the first week. G. Hutton heard them at three different locations. G. Phillips found it to be "fairly common" at higher elevations. Reports on BBS routes increased from five in 1973 to nine this year.

70. Veery - Common
By far the most common of the spotted-breasted thrushes. On 10 of the 11 BBS routes, 161 were reported. This is up from 1973 and 1968. D. Conrad thought they were "more common than in previous years." Four were on the Burner Mt. study area according to the Chandelers. Phillips thought them to be common at altitudes lower than those normally inhabited by the Swainson's and Hermit Thrushes.

71. Eastern Bluebird - Uncommon
Certainly a changing population as indicated by numbers reported since 1958. In 1958 and 1973, they were down. In 1964 and 1968, they were fairly common. This year reports indicate it to be uncommon but regular at lower elevations throughout the area. Three families of young were reported. Z. Stewart found them to be "scattered but regular."

72. Blue Gray Gnatcatcher - Uncommon
There were eight separate reports. On the BBS routes, 23 were reported, (16 on Rt. 1). In 1973, 12 were reported. A good increase in this area is indicated.

73. Golden-crowned Kinglet - Uncommon
Most reports were from the virgin spruce area on Gaudineer. G. Hutton heard them each day that he was in the area. K. Bush and N. Laitisch reported several in the same area. E. Reichelderfer thought they were not common. G. Hall reports that numbers are greatly reduced from the peak population of 1976 by two successive hard winters. BBS routes had four on three of the eleven routes. This is about the same as 1973 and 1968.

74. Cedar Waxwing - Common
Comments were "plentiful," "seems more numerous," "plentiful all over." Eight nests were noted. H. Ball and party found a nest approximately 35' high in a white pine. They also nested in camp - Conrad. However, the BBS routed count of 66 were down 40% from 1973.

75. Loggerhead Shrike - Rare
K. Bush saw one about 1 mile east of the Hermitage on a telephone wire over Rt. 28. In 1964, a family of shrikes were found in this area. Pete Chandler reported that the Finnegans saw one on 6/16 (no location was given).

76. European Starling - Common
All observers listed this species as common in inhabited areas. However, the BBS counts were about 35% lower than they were in 1973. In 1973 they were 208, this year 138.

77. White-eyed Vireo - Uncommon
Only scattered reports. From Arborvale Cemetery there were five reports of at least two birds. None were reported on BBS routes.

78. Yellow-throated Vireo - Uncommon
Seven reports over the two week period. Most observers saw or heard only one bird. R. Bell heard two the first week.

79. Solitary Vireo - Fairly Common
G. Hurley thought this species to be the most common Vireo after the Red-eyed.

Ann Pyle heard many. Pete Chandler thought them to be common all over the area. G. Phillips thought them to be much more numerous than they were five years ago. N. Laitisch heard them in camp and in the Virgin Spruce study plot.

80. Red-eyed Vireo - Very Common
All observers agreed it was to be found everywhere. It was the most abundant bird found on the BBS routes with 572. In 1973 it was second in abundance to the Red-winged Blackbird.

81. Warbling Vireo - Rare
On 6/7 three were found near Circleville by A. Llewellyn, V. Stanley, and others. During the second week, C. Ruddle, G. Phillips and J. Linehan also reported this species at Circleville. There were no other reports.

82. Black and White Warbler - Uncommon
Most observers listed this species as occasional or fairly common. G. Hutton said that he heard very few the first week. A. Pyle had a nesting record along the road to Thornwood. D. Nemanich thought they were "fairly common."

83. Worm-eating Warbler - Rare
There were scattered reports of single birds seen or heard. D. Nemanich reported that he had heard a few. Six were reported on the BBS routes.

84. Golden-winged Warbler - Fairly Common
N. Laitisch, G. Mayfield and D. Conrad thought them rather common. G. Phillips reported hearing one singing its summer song. A. Eddy reported six on Back Mt. There were 56 reported on the BBS routes; up from 31 in 1973.

85. Nashville Warbler - Accidental
N. Laitisch and D. Conrad saw and heard this species in Arborvale Cemetery on 6/6. This is the first time this species has been reported for the Thornwood Foray.

86. Northern Parula - Uncommon
D. Conrad thought they were "not very common." Hutton heard two the first week. The Chandelers heard them in scattered areas. C. McCullough and M. Kiff saw a singing male near camp on 6/12. This same bird was reported by D. Conrad and Phillips.

87. Yellow Warbler - Fairly Common
All reports indicate this species to be fairly common in suitable habitat. Libby Chandler said she saw one or two on every trip. 41 were reported on the BBS routes.

88. Magnolia Warbler - Fairly Common
A. Pyle heard several while on BBS routes. G. Hutton thought them to be common at higher elevations. Most reports indicate they were fairly common.

89. Black-throated Blue Warbler - Uncommon
This species appeared to be decreased in numbers from 1973. Several observers thought them not common or occasional. There were only five reported on the BBS routes, whereas there were twenty-two in 1973 and sixty in 1968. G. Mayfield found it about every quarter mile during a canoe trip on Shaver's Fork.

90. Yellow-rumped Warbler - Accidental
First record for a Thornwood Foray. At least two males were observed near the fire tower on Gaudineer. Strangely, no notes were recorded on the comment cards for this species. On 6/12 the writer saw two. Also present were N. Wilder, G. Hurley, K. Anderson and E. Hutton. (See G. Phillips elsewhere in this issue.)

91. Black-throated Green Warbler - Fairly Common
Bell thought them "plentiful" in good habitat. The Chandelers had three pairs on...
the Burner Mt. study area. Sixty four were found on nine of 11 BBS routes. This was down 30% from 1973.

92. Blackburnian Warbler - Fairly Common
Most observers reported these to be fairly common especially in the Gaudineer area. The bird singing in the camp area was the bird that received the most reports on the comment cards. G. Mayfield said they were "frequently seen in spruce habitat at high elevations." Twenty six were reported on six of 11 BBS routes.

93. Chestnut-sided Warbler - Common
Abundance estimates given ranged from "not too common" to "very common." D. Nemanich reported seeing 20-30 during the first week. G. Hutton and G. Phillips thought them to be common in cut-over areas. No observers noted that the numbers may be down. However, on the BBS routes only 60 were reported; down from 165 in 1968 and 82 in 1973.

94. Pine Warbler - Uncommon
This species was first recorded in this Foray area in 1973. This year, four were recorded at four different locations; Sheets Road, Arbovale Cemetery, road to Lake Buffalo and near Frost. None were recorded on BBS routes.

95. Prairie Warbler - Uncommon
Recorded at several locations. However, the comments indicate them to be scattered and in low numbers. D. Nemanich heard only one during the first week. G. Hutton and E. Reichelderfer heard three.

96. Ovenbird - Uncommon
Certainly a noticeable decrease in numbers. Considered common since 1958, this year most observers listed the Ovenbird as "uncommon." K. Anderson considered them "very much reduced in numbers over 1968." BBS routes had 63. In 1973 the routes had 117.

97. Northern Waterthrush - Uncommon
Only found in limited habitat, such as the Blister Pine Swamp. G. Hurley heard "several." Other reports were scattered. Only one recorded on BBS routes indicates a further drop in numbers since 1973 and 1968.

98. Louisiana Waterthrush - Fairly Common
The Chancers and G. Phillips found them usually in stream ravines. D. Nemanich heard about 20 the first week. This is one of the few Warblers that had a reported increase in numbers on the BBS routes.

99. Kentucky Warbler - Rare
Most observers reported "none." However, G. Phillips and V. Johnson found one on Timber Ridge Road out of Circleville. C. Ruddle and Phillips went back to this area on 6/15 and heard this species. This may be the same area in which two were reported in 1973.

100. Mourning Warbler - Uncommon
This species seems to be holding fairly level in abundance. BBS routes reported nine. Most observers reported hearing them. G. Phillips thought they were more plentiful than in 1973. Nine were recorded on four of 11 BBS routes.

101. Common Yellow-throat - Fairly Common
Most observers found them in proper habitat. BBS routes had 66, the same as 1973.

102. Yellow-breasted Chat - Uncommon
Only three reported on BBS routes. This was down drastically from 1973 and 1968.

Several observers reported that they did not hear any. N. Laitsch heard three over a five day period.

103. Hooded Warbler - Rare
Five were reported during the two weeks. Two were reported on BBS routes.

104. Canada Warbler - Fairly Common
There were many reports of this species. The Boechers saw and heard three singing males on River Road near Durbin. G. Mayfield said they were very frequent along Shaver's Fork. G. Hutton found them frequently along the Greenbrier River. This species showed an increase over 1973 on the BBS routes.

105. American Redstart - Uncommon
G. Phillips found them infrequently at lower elevations. N. Laitsch thought they were normal for the area. R. Bell found only seven on his three BBS routes.

106. House Sparrow - Common
Reported as common and in flocks around farm buildings. Otherwise uncommon. Bell reported 14 on his three BBS routes. There were 34 reported on ten of 11 BBS routes.

107. Bobolink - Uncommon
R. Bell heard and saw five males near the Ginks of Gandy. Others reported seeing this species at the Sinks. It was also reported there in 1973. It was also reported in the fields north of Rt. 28 near the Hermitage. None were reported on BBS routes.

108. Eastern Meadowlark - Common
Reported as being common by most observers. E. Reichelderfer and R. Bell thought they were common in the southern part of the area. Seventy one were reported on eight of 11 BBS routes.

109. Red-winged Blackbird - Very Common
Most observers thought this species to be very common or abundant. On the BBS routes it was second in abundance after the Red-eyed Vireo. However, this was down from 496 in 1973 to 313 this year.

110. Orchard Oriole - Rare
Very few reports. J. Linehan had one in Circleville on 6/14. D. Conrad and N. Laitsch reported one on Back Mt. Road on 6/8. R. Bell and Doc Murphy saw one on Rt. 6 south of Arbovale.

111. Northern Oriole - Uncommon
Scattered Reports of seeing one to four in a week. Nearly all reports placed this species in farm areas. C. Miller said that he saw "very few." G. Hutton and party had a nesting bird at the H. Nottingham farm on River Road.

112. Common Grackle - Common
G. Phillips and G. Hutton thought them common. The Boechers reported them from higher elevations. There were 291 reported on eight of 11 BBS routes. This is less than half of the number reported on the same routes in 1973.

113. Brown-headed Cowbird - Fairly Common
A. Eddy said that they were well distributed throughout the area. The Chancers, A. Pyle and G. Phillips found them to be fairly common.

114. Scarlet Tanager - Fairly Common
N. Laitsch and A. Eddy indicated that they were not very common. C. Miller said they were well distributed, but few in numbers. A. Pyle saw and heard "many" on BBS routes. G. Phillips thought them to be about the same as in recent years. Ninety two were found on the BBS routes.
115. Northern Cardinal - Fairly Common
    Several reports of one or two birds each week. G. Hurley saw only four the second
    week. E. Reichelderfer saw two the second week. R. Bell, who reported 17 on his
    three BBS routes, thought them to be "more common than most people think;
    they sing better in early morning."

116. Rose-breasted Grosbeak - Uncommon
    Four observers, all present in the area, commented that they had declined. C.
    Conrad and K. Bush reported only one. Hutton heard three or four. On BBS
    routes only 13 were reported, down from 39 in 1973.

117. Indigo Bunting - Common
    This species was third in abundance on the BBS routes with 291. This was higher
    than in 1973 and 1968. Most observers noted them common at all altitudes.

118. Purple Finch - Fairly Common
    The Purple Finches in the camp area were noted by many observers. G. Hutton
    said he heard and saw them each day in spruce habitat. The Chandlers noted that
    they were fairly frequent. E. Reichelderfer said that she heard them often.

119. House Finch - Accidental
    Four were seen and heard on Back Mt. Road on 6/7 by N. Laitshc, A. Eddy and B.
    Hostottle. This is the first report of this species for the Thornwood Foray.

120. Pine Siskin - Rare
    Only two reports and none on BBS routes. R. Bell and C. Conrad saw one over a
    spruce area on road to Spruce Knob on 6/6. E. Reichelderfer heard one near
    Circleville on 6/10.

121. American Goldfinch - Fairly Common
    Reports indicate that they were regular but not common. G. Phillips "did not see
    many." BBS routes had 68, down from 148 in 1973.

122. Rufous-sided Towhee - Common
    Reports say it was common. The BBS routes reported 165, down from 395 in 1968
    and 204 in 1973.

123. Savannah Sparrow - Uncommon
    G. Mayfield, K. Bush and others reported as many as five at the Sinks of Gandy
    on 6/6 and 6/15. Others were reported at scattered locations.

124. Grasshopper Sparrow - Rare
    Evidently a few in area. K. Bush saw three between camp and Circleville on 6/7.
    Four reports from Arborvale Cemetery by G. Hutton, K. Bush, G. Mayfield and
    E. Reichelderfer. Other observers commented that they did not see or hear this
    species.

125. Vesper Sparrow - Uncommon
    Seven reports in the two weeks. D. Conrad heard two on 6/6 on Sheets Road. One
    was seen and heard on top of Allegheny Road by H. Ball, C. Ruddle and G.
    Phillips. One was seen near Frost by B. Kletzly, F. Murphy and R. Bell.

126. Dark-eyed Junco - Fairly Common
    Six observers commented on the decline in numbers the Eddys and G. Hutton saw
    them consistently at higher elevations. The BBS routes reported 52; down from
    137 in 1973. G. Hall reports that the "Carolina" Juncos which are non-migratory
    have suffered major winter mortality in the last two winters.

127. Chipping Sparrow - Common
    Every report indicated that this species was common. The count on BBS routes
    was 124.

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**THE REDSTART — JANUARY, 1979**

128. Field Sparrow - Fairly Common
    Reports were of one or two birds, usually in fields at higher elevations. R. Bell
    had 18 on his three BBS routes. Jo Wood saw one carrying food near the top of
    Whitetop. A. Pyle thought them not too common.

129. White-throated Sparrow - Rare
    Bill Athey heard one in camp on 6/10 about 10:00 a.m. This was confirmed by G.
    Mayfield and sons, J. Linehan and C. Conrad. This is the second report since
    Forays were begun in this area in 1948.

130. Swamp Sparrow - Uncommon
    G. Mayfield heard and saw two in Gladys Swamp on 6/9. N. Laitisch counted five
    on the road behind the gate at Little River Road on 6/5. These were the only
    locations reported except Shaver's Fork River where G. Mayfield saw two on 6/5.

131. Song Sparrow - Common
    The Werners and Chandlers reported several around Lake Buffalo. Both A. Pyle
    and G. Phillips found them common in the proper habitat. There were 132
    reported on the BBS routes.

The following species complete the list of birds reported for the Camp Pocahontas
(formerly Camp Thornwood) since the first Foray there in 1948. These species were not
reported this year (1978).

1. American Bittern
   Two were seen by J. Reiffenberger on 6/20/68 between Bartow and Thornwood.

2. Mallard
   M. Kiff and E. Reichelderfer flushed one from the overflow below Spruce Knob
   Lake on 6/15/68.

3. American Black Duck
   In June 1968, one was reported on BBS route #1 (north of Frost) by E. D.
   Chandler, C. Miller and M. Thacker.

4. Blue-winged Teal
   Two seen at the Sinks of Gandy Swamp on 6/16/68 by B. Greenlee and E. R.
   Chandler.

5. Lesser Scapac
   An adult male was observed on 6/19/68 on Spruce Knob Lake by G. Koch. C.
   Rudy saw the same bird (?) on 6/21. Possibly an injured bird.
   (Compilers note) It is interesting that the above four ducks were all observed
   during the 1968 Foray. Only one other duck, the Wood Duck has been recorded at
   the Thornwood Foray.

6. Red-headed Wpoopecker
   In 1953 this species was reported as "rather numerous."

7. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
   In 1968 they were reported as "not rare." In 1973, they were listed as occasional.

8. Bewick's Wren
   In 1968, it was reported from seven location. In 1973, eight adults and four young
   were reported.

9. Short-billed Marsh Wren
   One was reported in the Blister Pine Swamp during the 1964 Foray.

10. Blue Grosbeak
    Reported in 1953 near Circleville.

11. Red Crossbill
    Reported each Foray since 1953. In 1973, they were classified "not rare."

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**THE REDSTART — JANUARY, 1979**
12. Henslow’s Sparrow
There were three reports in 1953 and two reports in 1968.

13. Fox Sparrow
Two were reported in 1964 and one in 1973.

I wish to thank everyone who helped me make this report. The comments on the Foray comment cards were very helpful in estimating abundance. Your verbal comments to me during the second week helped me understand the bird-life of the area. When one reads the comment cards, it is surprising to estimate the time taken by the “faithful” to make their notes on these cards. In all, 66 names appear on the comment cards. Both Jack Linehan and Norris Gluck made the BBS route records and the nesting records respectively, available to me. Without the effort by so many persons, a report on the birds for the 1978 Foray would not be possible. May I add that the detailed reports usually submitted by Mary Moore Rieffenberger were greatly missed. (She became ill during Foray).

Finally I would like to thank Jay Buckelew for his patience in waiting for this manuscript from a Delaware procrastinator, and George Hall and Charles Conrad for carefully reading the manuscript.

Following are those persons that contributed remarks on the comment cards:

1978 Foray Singing Male Population Studies

Glen F. Phillips

Population studies at the 1978 Foray marked the seventh time, at approximately five-year intervals, that four of the plots have been observed. The other two plots were first studied in 1968, making this the third time for each of these. Since it is a rather stable vegetative community, the Virginia Spruce tract has understandably shown the least change in thirty years of observation. The contrasting Young Spruce was formerly populated by numerous Magnolia Warblers whose presence has declined to one resident this year. Thirty years ago the Burner Mountain plot was characterized by Black-throated Green Warblers, Veerys and Ovenbirds. After it was selectively timbered about 1955, the resident species included Towhees, Chestnut-sided and Mourning Warblers. Now the plot population is approaching its former composition.

Probably the most significant work done by the population study group at this year’s Foray was completing the vegetation surveys on all six plots. This now makes information on the plots available in an internationally accepted form. Burner Mountain plot keys out to Maple-Oak-Beech Forest, and the plot formerly called Young Hardwoods, is now called Red Maple-Beech Forest. Titles of the other plots remain recognizable.

Most work on the study plots was done during the first week of the Foray, generally under rainy, unfavorable conditions. The effect of inclement weather on the results really can’t be determined. However, 48 species of birds were reported from the study plots including, for the first time, the Yellow-rumped Warbler. (See Hall, G. A. 1978 Yellow-rumped Warbler summers in West Virginia. Redstart 45:127 - 128).

Most heavily populated was the Virginia Spruce, and the least numbers were found in the Young Hardwoods area. Black-throated Green Warblers and Dark-eyed Juncos were the only species to appear on all six plots.

Many thanks to all, both new and experienced students, who labored so diligently in the rain to complete these studies.

YOUNG SPRUCE FOREST

Location: West Virginia; Pocahontas and Randolph Counties; five miles north of Durbin; 38° 37' 05 N, 79° 50' 44 W Durbin Quadrangle, USGS.


Size: 6.07 ha = 15.0 acres (rectangular, 110 x 660 yards, measured longitudinally and estimated laterally).

Description of Plot: See The Redstart vol. 41, pg. 17. The dominant canopy trees are Red Spruce (Picea rubens). Most prominent in the understory are Mountain Laurel (Kalmia latifolia) and Rhododendron (Rhododendron maximum). The ground cover is primarily Mosses and Liverwort (Bazzania trilobata). A quantitative survey of the vegetation gave the following results: Trees 3.5 inches in diameter and over, based on six 0.1 acre circular samples, 1090/acre; total basal area 185 sq. ft./acre. Species comprising 99.6% of the total number of trees: Red Spruce 1000, 92, 94, 100; Dead Trees 87, 8, 6, 100; where figures represent number of trees per acre, relative density, relative dominance and relative frequency in that order. Trees by diameter size class: A (3-6 in.) 484, 74, 81, 44; B (6-9 in.) 147, 22, 74, 40; C (9-15 in.) 23, 4, 30, 16. Figures for each class represent: trees per acre, relative density, basal area in square feet per
Composite of portions of Wildell and Durbin Quadrangle USGS Map, showing location of Singing Male Census Studies.

acre and relative basal area in percent. Shrub stems/acre 1358; ground cover 74%; canopy cover 80%; average canopy height 41 ft. (range 34 - 50). Plant names are from Flora of West Virginia by Strausbaugh and Core.

Edge: A continuous uniform habitat except for an access road through the center, parallel to the long dimension, and extending about two thirds of the length from the north end.

Topography: A nearly flat mountain top.

Elevation: High point 4445 ft.
Composite of portions of Durbin and Thronwood Quadrangle USGS Map, showing location of Singing Male Census Studies.

**Edge:** Forest continues on all sides.

**Topography:** Centerline starts at 4050 feet, slopes to 4000 feet at third point and continues level. East Exposure. Lateral fall 20 to 100 feet across plot.

**Weather:** Fair to partly cloudy, warm, rain one morning before census.

**Coverage:** June 4 to June 9, 1978. Thirteen trips between dawn and 07:45 and two trips in the evening.

**Census:** Numbers in parentheses are number/sq. km. and number/100 acres. Black-throated Green Warbler, 7 (115, 47); Golden-crowned Kinglet, 5 (82, 33);

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Young Spruce Forest

Solitary Vireo, 4 (66, 27); Blackburnian Warbler, 4; Black-throated Blue Warbler, 3 (49, 20); Dark-eyed Junco, 3; Brown Creeper, 2; Winter Wren, 2; Red-eyed Vireo, 2; Black-capped Chickadee, 1.5; Magnolia Warbler, 1.5; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Swainson's Thrush, 1; Hermit Thrush, 0.5; Scarlet Tanager, 0.5; Chimney Swift, +; Am. Robin,++; Wood Thrush, +; Purple Finch, +.

**Total:** 19 species; 38 territorial males (626/sq. km, 254/100 acres).

**Visitors:** Blue Jay, Com. Raven, Canada Warbler.

**Remarks:** The nest of a Brown Creeper was found.

**Census participants:** Nevada Laitsch and George Koch (compilers), Elwood Fisher, Virginia Johnson, Edgar Smith, Bob Hostottle, Dick Diener, Howard Heimerdinger, Sue Weimer, Jo Woods.

**BIRCH—SPRUCE—FIR FOREST**

**Location:** West Virginia; Randolph County, 4 miles N of Durbin; the centerline starts 38°36'09"N, 79°51'11"W, Durbin Quadrangle, USGS and extends Northwest.

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THE REDSTART — JANUARY, 1978

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THE REDSTART — JANUARY, 1979
Size: 6.07 ha = 15.0 acres (rectangular, 110 x 660 yards, measured longitudinally
and estimated laterally).

Description of Plot: See The Redstart vol. 36 p. 20 and vol. 41 p. 24 under Title
Fir-Spruce-Swamp. The dominant canopy trees are red Spruce (Picea rubens) and
Yellow Birch (Betula lutea). Most prominent in the understory are Mountain Laurel
(Kalmia latifolia) and Mountain Maple (Acer spicatum). The ground cover is primarily
Sedge (Carex sp.) and Ferns (Thelypteris sp.). A quantitative survey of the vegetation
gave the following results: Trees 3-inches diameter and over, based on six circular
samples, 339/acre; total basal area 132.2 sq. ft./acre. Species comprising 90% of the
total number of trees: Red Spruce, 88, 26.1, 20, 83; Black Birch (Betula lenta), 17, 4.9, 17.3, 50; Balsam Fir (Abies balsamea), 70, 20.7, 15.8, 100; Hemlock (Tsuga canadensis), 15, 4.4, 8.7, 67; Red Maple (Acer rubrum), 13, 3.9, 1.0, 33; Serviceberry (Amelanchier sp.), 13, 3.9, 1.0, 33; dead trees, 33, 9.8, 12, 83. Trees by diameter size class: A (3-6 in.) 197, 58, 11.8, 14.9; B (6-9 in.) 68, 20, 12.3,
15.5; C (9-15 in.) 47, 14, 22.4, 28.3; D (15-21 in.) 22, 6, 23.4, 29.5; E (21-27 in.) 5, 1, 9.3, 11.7. Shrub stems/acre 2133; ground cover 50%; canopy cover 67%; average
canopy height 47 ft. (range 38 - 60). Plant names are from Flora of West Virginia
by Strausbaugh and Core.

Edge: Similar habitat continues in all directions except for an open marsh at one end
and a Beaver pond adjacent to one side for a third of its length.

Topography: Level bog forest with mucky areas and a small meandering stream.
Elevation: 3660 ft.

Weather: Cool and damp.

Coverage: June 4, 1978 to June 7, 1978. All trips between dawn and 0730 hours or
1930 and 2030 hours. Total party hours: 10.

Census: Northern Waterthrush, 6 (100, 40); Magnolia Warbler, 4.5 (74, 30); Winter
Wren, 3 (49, 20); Golden-crowned Kinglet, 3 (49-20); Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2.5;
Blackburnian Warbler, 2.5; Brown Creeper, 2; Purple Finch, 2; Black-throated Blue
Warbler, 1.3; Dark-eyed Junco, 1.5; Black-capped Chickadee, 1; Black-throated Green
Warbler, 1; Canada Warbler, 1; House Wren, 0.5; Red-shouldered Hawk, +; B; red
Owl, +; Chimney Swift, +; Blue Jay, +; Com. Crow, +; Com. Raven, +; Veery, +; Solitary Vireo, +; Total 25 species; 32 territorial males (527/sq. km, 213 per 100

Remarks: The changes in habitat since the area was first described in 1968 are
natural: uprooted fallen trees from a storm in 1972 and the Beaver pond built adjacen
to the plot since the second census was taken in 1973. Census takers: Kyle Bush, E. E.
Hutton, Jr., Esther Reichelderfer, Bob Kletly, Ann Pyle, Anne Eddy, Bob Hostottle,
George Koch, Jean Anderson, Bill Smith (compiler).

RED MAPLE - BEECH FOREST
(Formerly called young hardwoods)
Location: West Virginia; Randolph Co.; 1.5 miles north of Gaudineer Knob; 38°38'01"N, 79°51'08"W (extends WSW) Wildell Quadrangle USGS.

Size: 6.07 ha. = 15.0 acres, (rectangular, 110 x 660 yards, measured longitudinally
and estimated laterally).

Description of Plot: See The Redstart Vol. 41 p. 23. The dominant canopy trees are
Red Maple (Acer rubrum) and Beech (Fagus grandifolia). Most prominent in the
understory are seedlings of the canopy trees, Hobblebush (Viburnum alnifolium) and
Blackberry (Rubus canadensis). The ground cover is primarily Ferns (Dryopteris sp.)
and Canada Mayflower (Maianthemum canadense). A quantitative survey of the
vegetation gave the following results: Trees 3-inches diameter and over, based on six
0.1 acre circular samples, 542/acre; total basal area 153 sq. ft./acre. Species
comprising 95% of the total number of trees: Red Maple, 177, 33, 43, 100; Beech, 150,
28, 20, 83; Black Cherry (Prunus serotina), 30, 5, 12, 83; Yellow Birch (Betula lutea),
75, 14, 11, 100; Dead Trees, 73, 13, 9, 100. Figures following species name represent:
No. of trees/acre; relative density; basal area in square feet per acre; and relative basal
area in percent. Shrub stems/acre 5033; ground cover 650%; canopy cover 86%; average
canopy height 59 ft. (range 50 - 76). Plant names are from Flora of West Virginia
by Strausbaugh and Core.

Location: West Virginia; Randolph Co.; 1.5 miles north of Gaudineer Knob; 38°38'01"N, 79°51'08"W (extends WSW) Wildell Quadrangle USGS.

Size: 6.07 ha. = 15.0 acres, (rectangular, 110 x 660 yards, measured longitudinally
and estimated laterally).

Description of Plot: See The Redstart Vol. 41 p. 23. The dominant canopy trees are
Red Maple (Acer rubrum) and Beech (Fagus grandifolia). Most prominent in the
understory are seedlings of the canopy trees, Hobblebush (Viburnum alnifolium) and
Blackberry (Rubus canadensis). The ground cover is primarily Ferns (Dryopteris sp.)
and Canada Mayflower (Maianthemum canadense). A quantitative survey of the
vegetation gave the following results: Trees 3-inches diameter and over, based on six
0.1 acre circular samples, 542/acre; total basal area 153 sq. ft./acre. Species
comprising 95% of the total number of trees: Red Maple, 177, 33, 43, 100; Beech, 150,
28, 20, 83; Black Cherry (Prunus serotina), 30, 5, 12, 83; Yellow Birch (Betula lutea),
75, 14, 11, 100; Dead Trees, 73, 13, 9, 100. Figures following species name represent:
No. of trees/acre; relative density; relative dominance and relative frequency in that
order. Trees by diameter size class: A (3-6 in.) 290, 54, 29, 19; B (6-9 in.) 168, 31, 51,
33; C (9-15 in.) 77, 14, 61, 40; D (15-21 in.) 7, 1, 12, 8. Figures for each class represent:
Trees per acre, Relative density, Basal area in square feet per acre, and relative basal
area in percent. Shrub stems/acre 5033; ground cover 65%; canopy cover 86%; average
canopy height 59 ft. (range 50 - 76). Plant names are from Flora of West Virginia
by Strausbaugh and Core.
Birch - Spruce - Fir Forest

Edge: Plot is bordered by like vegetation on all sides.
Topography: The ridge slopes from east to west toward Cheat River.
Coverage: June 3, 1978 to June 9, 1978, 14 trips between dawn and 7:05 hours. Total party hours: 7.1.
Census: Black-throated Green Warbler, 6 (99.40); Solitary Vireo, 3 (49.20); Red-eyed Vireo, 1.5; Am. Robin, 0.5; Ruffed Grouse, +; Great Crested Flycatcher, +; Black-capped Chickadee, +; Golden-crowned Kinglet, +; Rose-breasted Grosbeak, +. Total 9 species; 11 territorial males (182/sq. km, 73 per 100 acres). Visitors: Swainson’s Thrush, Veery, Black-and-white Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Purple Finch and Dark-eyed Junco.
Remarks: The excessive rain and difficulty of access to this plot made the study a chore, but enough trips were made to assure thoroughness. The lack of Juncos was noticeable but was reflected in the entire area. The dense ground cover of ferns was the most significant physical feature. Finding a robin holding territory in unbroken woods seemed unusual, but the species was encountered throughout the area.

MAPLE-OAK-BEECH FOREST

Location: West Virginia, Pocahontas County, Monongahela National Forest, on top of Burner Mountain, 5.5 miles NW from Durbin, starts at 38° 35' 59" N, 79° 45' 15" W, Durbin Quadrangle, USGS, extends NNE.
Continuity: Established 1948, five intermittent years listed under title "Cutover Mature Hardwoods" Redstart: Vol. 41 p. 22.
Size: 6.07 ha. = 15 acres (rectangular, 110 x 660 yards, length measured, width estimated).

Red Maple - Beech Forest
Description of Plot: A hardwood forest selectively cut over in 1955 now canopied over. The dominant canopy trees are Sugar Maple (Acer saccharum) and Red Oak (Quercus rubra). Striped Maple (Acer pennsylvanicum) and Black Birch (Betula lenta) dominate the understory. In the ground cover, Lady Fern (Athyrium filix-femina), New York Fern (Dryopteris novaboracensis) and Mayapple (Podophyllum peltatum) are the most prominent. A quantitative vegetation survey of six 0.1 acre samples gives: Trees 3 in. dbh and over, 208/acre; total basal area 189.2 sq. ft./acre. Species comprising 92% of the total number of trees: Sugar Maple 87, 42, 44, 100; Red Maple (A. rubrum), 28, 14, 12, 50; Red Oak, 20, 10, 30, 67; Am. Beech (Fagus grandifolia), 23, 11, 5, 83; Black Birch, 8, 4, 1, 33; Dead Trees, 25, 12, 4, 67. Trees by diameter size class: A (3-6 in.) 63, 30, 6.3, 3; B (6-9 in.) 38, 18, 11.5, 6; C (9-15 in.) 57, 27, 45.3, 24; D (15-21 in.) 35, 17, 63, 33; E (21-27 in.) 10, 5, 31, 16; F (27-33 in.) 2, 1, 8.2, 4; G (33-40 in.) 3, 2, 23.6, 13. Shrub stems/acre 1950; ground cover 41%; canopy cover 91%; average canopy height 61 ft. (range 53-88).

Edge: The forest continues on all sides.

Topography: A generally level, broad, "hogback" ridge at an elevation of 4080 to 4020 ft.

Weather: Cool, some rain in first week, foggy and clearing later.

Coverage: The tract was censused on two consecutive weeks by two different parties: June 3-7, 1978 and June 11-13, each party making 14 trips for a total of 6 party hours each, or 12 party hours beginning at daylight (5:30 a.m. DST) until 7:30 a.m. with 2 mid-morning trips and 2 evening trips.

Census: Red-eyed Vireo, 5 (83, 34); Veery, 3 (50, 20); Black-throated Green Warbler, 3 (50, 20); Ovenbird, 2; Woodthrush, 1; Mourning Warbler, 1; Dark-eyed Junco, 1; Red-bellied Woodpecker, +; Scarlet Tanager, +; Indigo Bunting, +.

Totals: 10 species, 16 Territorial males, 264 per sq. km, 107 per 100 acres.


Remarks: In general the forest has recovered from selective timbering done between the 1953 census and 1958. A number of trees had been damaged or blown down by a severe storm in the spring of this year; however, the area had a closed crown of trees except in one small area. The census showed a return to the number and types of bird species listed in the two early surveys, particularly Red-eyed Vireo, Black-throated Green Warbler and Veery. The first census group noted a few birds which were not present in the second week and we assumed that breeding territories had not been established.


UPLAND BLACK CHERRY FOREST

Location: West Virginia, Pocahontas County, Monongahela National Forest, 6.5 miles NE from Durbin, starts at 38° 36' 41" N, 79° 43' 34" W, Thornwood Quadrangle, USGS, extends south.


Size: 6.07 ha. = 15 acres (rectangular, 110 x 660 yards, measured longitudinally and estimated laterally).
Since 1973 the following changes have been made: A clear cut of about 50 acres, with second growth 6-8 ft. in height, 200 yards off the NW corner of the plot; 100 yards to the NE a seeded road parallels the plot; To the SE, 150 yards directly off the end of the plot, there is a seeded 10 acre clear cut. The forest continues in like habitat on the SW side, as it does beyond the above-mentioned disturbed areas.

Topography: The area starts 250 yards SE from Forest Route 14, at elevation 3800 ft. and as it extends SE, rises to 3900 ft. about mid-way, then down to 3875 feet at the end. The centerline follows a seeded, seldom-used forest access road along the top of a ridge, a spur of Burner Mountain extending SE. the ridge is wide and almost level laterally. Near the end, where the entire area is to the left of the crest, there is an elevation difference of about 25 feet across the 110 yard width.

Weather: Cool, raining and windy the first six days, with the last five days being clear and cold. Temperature range 32-60 degrees.
Breeding Bird Records For 1978 Foray

Norris Gluck

Seven times we have "forayed" into the beautiful mountains of Pocahontas County - the land of the snowshoe rabbit, the panther, the black bear, the young scientists, etc. It is always an exciting place to visit. The 1978 Foray produced 101 (35 species) breeding records, far below the record of 437 (72 species) of 1964 but twice as many as 1973. Fifty-six breeding observations were reported during the first week and forty-five during the second week. Forty-seven people reported observations. Among the rarer finds, Nevada Laitisch found a Brown Creeper building a nest and Dave Jones reported a Blackburnian Warbler nest.

An annotated list of the breeding birds follows. An asterisk (*) has been used to designate the breeding records prepared during the second week of Foray.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird on nest at Camp Pocahontas

Photo by A. R. Buckelew, Jr.

Annotated List Of Breeding Birds

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<td>4-Y</td>
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Mammal Report For The 1978 Foray

The study of mammals in the area of the 1978 BBC Foray did not receive sufficient attention. In fact, the degree of niche (environmental profession) competition between birds and mammals would merit a rather detailed index of resident mammals, whereas we only casually keep a log of incidental sightings with no conscious effort to analyze the level or diversity of the population.

Mammalian groups, such as the carnivores, often prey on certain bird species. Furthermore, they compete with hawks and owls for prey. Several small rodents feed largely on seeds, thus are in conflict with certain seed-eating birds. Also, one individual Red Squirrel may eat as many as 200 birds per season, as well as competing for seeds and fruits. Bats could potentially reduce the items in the diet of swallows and other birds that feed on the wing. Moles and shrews eat largely insects, as do many birds. The Tufted Titmouse, and other nut-eaters, compete with squirrels. These few examples of potential bird-mammal food conflicts will illustrate the need for a more careful assessment of the mammals in the Foray areas, especially in our "Bird

Populations Study Plots." Let us make it a goal at future Forays to do a better job on the mammal study.

The list below reflects a qualitative representation rather than a quantitative one, as knowledge of the degree of duplication was not attempted. In other words, individuals of the same species may have been counted more than once. The location of the sightings was not generally recorded.

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<th>Latin Name</th>
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<th>1st Week</th>
<th>2nd Week</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulpes fulva</td>
<td>Red Fox</td>
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<td>Urocyon cinereoargentus</td>
<td>Gray Fox</td>
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<td>Woodchuck</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>Tamias striatus</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tamiascurus hudsonicus</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Didelphmis marsupialis</td>
<td>Opossum</td>
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</table>

During the first week a total of 73 individuals representing 15 species were recorded. Reports of the second week total 40 individuals and 14 species. The fortnight count is 20 species and 113 individuals. This does not consider the Homo sapiens, the most abundant mammal regularly observed at and about the Foray area.

Elwood Fisher,
James Madison University,
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801

The Dragonflies of Pocahontas County, West Virginia

Paul D. Harwood

Several collectors have obtained 63 species from Pocahontas County, but others are doubtlessly endemic. Probably, additional records exist in collections unknown to me, for this mountain county is popular among naturalists. Many of the available records were made by others, as follows: Raymond Schultz, Robert W. Cruden (1961). G. M. Kutchka, G. K. MacMillan, Mrs. G. M. Netting (specimens credited to the last three names are in the Museum of Carnegie-Mellon University), Robert C. Lighthurn, James G. Needham, and Howard V. Weems whose specimens are in the Arthropod Collection of Florida University. Also Carl G. Olson lists the records of N. B. Green,

THE REDSTART — JANUARY, 1979

34
and Harwood (1971) a synopsis of Needham’s unpublished manuscript. The first collector of a species in Pocahontas County is identified by his initials immediately after the common name in the list below. My initials are omitted, however, followed by a comma and the common name.

The following list is arranged by families, placing the suborder, Anisoptera, or true dragonflies first and the Zygoptera, or damselflies, second. Under each family, the alphabetical order of the genus. The technical name is placed first; immediately followed by a comma and the common name.

List of the Dragonflies (Odonata) taken in Pocahontas County:

**Anisoptera:**
- Cordulegastridae, the biddies: *Cordulegaster diastatops*, part-edged biddie RWC; *C. maculates*, spotted biddie RWC; *C. obliquus*, hastate biddie.
- Gomphidae, clubtails: *Dromogomphus spinosus*, spiny clubtail JGN; *Gomphus brevis*, short clubtail; *G. descriptus*, Bank’s clubtail; *G. exils*, wandering clubtail; *G. fratermus*, brother clubtail; *G. lividus*, livid clubtail; *G. quadricolor*, 4-colored clubtail; *G. spicatus*, spiked clubtail RS & RCL; *G. vastus*, vast clubtail JGN; *G. villospes*, hairy-footed clubtail; *G. viridifrons*, green-faced clubtail; *Lanthus albistylus*, white-styled clubtail; *L. parvulus*, small clubtail; *Ophiogomphus mainensis*, Maine clubtail RCL; *O. rupinsulensis*, rock clubtail JEG.
- Aeshnidae, darners: *Aeschna umbrosa*, cloudy darner JGN; *Anax junius*, green darner; *A. longipes*, fire-tail (sight record); *Basaeschna janata*, spring darner; *Boyeria grajiana*, Graf’s brown darner; *Boyeria vinosa*, common brown darner.

**Zygoptera:**
- Coenagrionidae, small damselflies: *Amphicrius saucium*, red damselfly JGN; *Anomalagrion hastatum*, odd fork-tail HWV; *Argia apicalis*, tipped damselfly; *A. moesta*, silver dancer GMN; *A. sedula*, diligent dancer RWC; *Argia transilata*, black darter; *Argia violacea*, violet dancer RWC; *Chromagrion conditum*, hidden yellow spot; *Enallagma antennatum*, orange-faced bluet; *E. expersum*, rough bluet RWC; *E. civile*, common bluet JGN; *E. cyathigerum*, cup bluet; *E. excisula*, the exile RWC; *E. hageni*, Hagen’s bluet RWC; *Ischnura posita*, exclamation fork-tail; *I. verticalis*, common fork-tail RWC.

*The asterisk precedes the name of seven species, which are newly recorded from West Virginia. The distribution within the state of each of these species is detailed as far as present records allow.*

The spiked clubtail was first collected by RS and RCL near the Middle Fork of the Greenbriar River about 16 miles above Durbin, West Virginia, on 13 June 1978. Two days later, additional specimens were taken about five miles north of Durbin. As only males were seen, females may not have been sexually active. This may be the southern limit of spiked clubtail distribution in northeastern North America.

The Pacific skimmer is a large dragonfly colored black with yellow markings. It seems to be very rare despite its wide distribution. Needham and Westfall (1958) list collection records from eight states between Nevada and Ohio. A large nymph of an undetermined species was taken from the North River in Hampshire County, 26 May 1973. It transformed at Ashland, Ohio, and the species was determined from the adult. Comparison of the last molted skin with a nymph taken from the Greenbriar River at Clover Lick, 22 May 1972, shows its presence in Pocahontas Co.

The sun skimmer occurs in eastern United States and northward into Canada. Available West Virginia records are: Gilmer County, a letter dated 25 May 1969 to Ms. Loretta Gartman from R. A. Restifor mentions taking the species; Hardy County, a male taken over the Lost River about 10 miles south of Baker; Hampshire County, a male was taken over the North River at Ice Mountain, 10 June 1971; Jackson County, Olson (1971) reports taking two nymphs; Nicholas County, two nymphs were taken at the Woodbine Recreation Area, 5 August 1972; Pocahontas County, nymphs were taken from the Greenbriar River at Clover Lick on 18 October 1970 and 26 May 1974; Randolph County, Harold White in a personal letter reported taking a specimen over Shaver’s Fork near Cheat Bridge; Tucker County, a nymph was taken from the Dry Fork 13 May 1973; and Tyler County, two nymphs were taken from Middle Island Creek south of Conoway, 7 August 1972.
Weems captured two males of the elongate ringtail at a black light he operated in the Cranberry Glades, 31 July 1966, and one of each sex of the forcipate ringtail, 13 August 1959. Needham wrote (see Harwood, 1971) that he had taken nymphs of the elongate ringtail from the Greenbrier River near Marlington and that Paul R. Musgrove had taken nymphs from the headwaters of the Cheat River, Randolph County, 1930. Because nymphs of Somatochlora are difficult to determine specifically, I eliminated this record from the synopsis of Needham's unpublished paper. Because Weems' records establish the elongate ringtail in Virginia, I am pleased to recognize Needham's earlier records. I photographed and collected adults of the elongate ringtail at a beaver pond near Spruce on 7 August 1971. One male was taken in the Dolly Sods area of Tucker County each summer from 1971 through 1973. One male was taken over Twin Runs near Cranberry Camp in Webster County. I collected a female of the forcipate ringtail that was laying eggs in a shallow pool among moss hillocks in Red Creek swamp, Tucker County, 20 July 1971. Needham has proposed the common name "ringtail" for the genus, Somatochlora, because several of the northern species of the genus have conspicuous white rings encircling abdominal segments. His common name is used here although none of the ringtails reported from Virginia as yet have the white rings.

The cup bluet is a circum-polar species that was first described from Europe, but it is found in northern Asia and North America as well. A southern race in North America shows clear differences in color pattern from the species that may be collected in northern Canada, and at high elevations in the United States. However, structural differences between the forms are trivial. Whether these two races are mere geographical strains unworthy of distinguishing names, are two sub-species, or represent different species has not yet been ascertained. The problem is being studied scientifically by an individual in central Pennsylvania. As these two forms have been regarded as one species heretofore, that practice is continued here. I have taken the cup bluet repeatedly in Pocahontas County and in the Dolly Sods area of Tucker County. The most southern record is Spruce, Pocahontas County, 7 August 1971. The cup bluet is an early season species, and adult males were taken near Durbin 14 and 15 June 1978.

I reported the twilight skimmer from Raleigh County in 1976. The single nymph was taken from a stone in about a foot of water. Walker and Corbet (1975) indicate that this nymph is found clinging to stones in water of considerable depth. I found many nymphs of a twilight skimmer clinging to wood in very shallow water of the Greenbrier River near Clover Lick and Anthony, Greenbrier County. As the dorsal hooks of these nymphs were very low — mere ridges on each abdominal segment — they could not be identified with the twilight skimmer. Fortunately, a nymph taken from the Greenbrier at Anthony, 1 September 1976, transformed in an aquarium the following January. It was male of the twilight skimmer, N. yamaskanensis. The habits and ecology of this nymph appear to be variable.

Literature Cited


Fern Report 1978 Foray

John T. Laitsch and Michael A. Breiding

As might be expected, the Foray area for 1978 turned out to be excellent for fern hunting. The combination of high elevation, plentiful rainfall, rich deciduous and coniferous forest and accessible outcrops of shale, sandstone and limestone produced a total of 44 species, 2 hybrids, and 5 varieties and forms for both weeks.

Perhaps the most significant "find" was the Slender Rock Brake (Cryptogramma stelleri). This fern was first discovered by Edgar T. Wherry in 1938 and is still the only...
known population in the State of West Virginia. The exact locality was never released by Wherry, and it was not known if it still survived in the state. However, meticulous searching on the outcrops in the area finally turned up around a dozen plants of the Slender Rock Brake. Special thanks go to Ephe Oliver for his assistance in helping the authors locate this rare fern.

### True Ferns

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<td>A. tri chomanes L.</td>
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### Fern Allies

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<tr>
<td>Ground Cedar</td>
<td>L. tristachyum Pursh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meadow Spikemoss</td>
<td>Selaginella apoda Fernald</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Trees, Shrubs and Woody Vines

**1978 Foray**

Ephe Olliver, Editor

**Trees and Shrubs**

- Taxus canadensis Marsh.
- Tsuga canadensis (L.) Carr.
- Picea abies (L.) Karst
- Larix decidua Mill.
- Pinus strobus L.
- Pinus virginiana Mill.
- Pinus rigida Mill.
- Pinus resinosa Ait.
- Thuja occidentalis L.
- Salix nigra Marsh.
- Ostrya virginiana (Mill.) K. Koch
- Carpinus caroliniana Walt.
- Betula lenta L.
- Betula alleghaniensis Britt.
- Alnus sp.
- Pagus grandifolia Ehrh.
- Castanea dentata (Marsh.) Borkh.
- Quercus alba L.
- Quercus prinus L.
- Quercus rubra L.
- Quercus coccinea Muench.
- Quercus velutina Lam.
- Ulmus rubra Muhl.
- Ulmus americana L.
- Magnolia fraseri Walt.
- Magnolia acuminata L.
- Sassafras albidum (Nutt.) Nees

**American Yew**
- American Yew
- Hemlock
- Norway Spruce
- European Larch
- White Pine
- Scrub Pine
- Pitch Pine
- Red Pine
- Arborvitae
- Black Willow
- Hop Hornbeam
- American Hornbeam
- Sweet Birch
- Yellow Birch
- Alder
- American Beech
- Chestnut
- White Oak
- Chestnut Oak
- Red Oak
- Scarlet Oak
- Black Oak
- Slippery Elm
- American Elm
- Mountain Magnolia
- Cucumber Tree
- White Sassafras

**Field Horsetail**
- Field Horsetail
- Stiff Club moss
- Running Club moss
- Ground Pine
- Bog Club moss
- Shining Club moss
- Tree Club moss (flat)
- Tree Club moss (round)
- Ground Cedar
- Meadow Spikemoss

540 Elmina St.
Morgantown, W. Va. 26505
Lindera benzoin (L.) Blume
Hydrangea arborescens L.
Hamamelis virginiana L.
Platanus occidentalis L.
Physocarpus opulifolius (L.) Maxim.
Pyrus arbutifolia (L.) L.F.
Pyrus americana (Marsh.) DC.
Amelanchier sanguinea (Pursh) DC
Crataegus sp.
Rubus sp.
Prunus pensylvanica L.F.
Prunus serotina Ehrh.
Prunus virginiana L.
Robinia pseudo-acacia L.
Rhus typhina L.
Ilex montana T. & G.
Acer spicatum Lam.
Acer pensylvanicum L.
Acer saccharum Marsh.
Acer nigrum Michx. f.
Acer rubrum L.
Acer negundo L.
Tilia americana L.
Nyssa sylvatica Marsh.
Cornus florida L.
Cornus alternifolia L.F.
Rhododendron maximum L.
Rhododendron calendulaceum (Michx.) Torr.
Rhododendron nudiflorum (L.) Torr.
Rhododendron roseum (Loesel.) Rehd.
Kalmia latifolia L.
Gaylussacia sp.
Vaccinium Sp.
Fraxinus americana L.
Viburnum alnifolium Marsh.
Viburnum prunifolium L.
Sambucus canadensis L.
Sambucus pubens Michx.

Spicebush
Wild Hydrangea
Witch-hazel
Sycamore
Ninebark
Red Chokeberry
Mountain-Ash
Roundleaf Serviceberry
Hawthorn
Blackberry, Raspberry
Fire Cherry
Wild Black Cherry
Choke Cherry
Black Locust
Staghorn Sumac
Mountain Holly
Mountain Maple
Striped Maple
Sugar Maple
Black Sugar Maple
Red Maple
Boxelder
Basswood
Black Gum
Flowering Dogwood
Alternate-leaved Dogwood
Great Laurel
Flame Azalea
Pinxter Flower
Rose Azalea
Mountain Laurel
Huckleberry
Blueberry
White Ash
Hobblebush
Black Haw
Black Elderberry
Red Elderberry

Woody Vines

Greenbrier
Dutchman’s Pipe
Poison Ivy
Virginia Creeper
Grape

Smilax sp.
Aristolochia macrophylla Lam.
Rhus radicans L.
Parthenocissus quinquefolia (L.) Planch.
Vitis sp.

Herbaceous Flowering Plants - 1978 Foray
Betty Fisher, Zette Stewart and Bob Richardson

This list includes the flowering plants not found in the Thornwood area on previous Forays. Grasses, sedges and rushes are not listed. A good list of these may be found in the 1958 Foray report.

1. Arisema dracountium L.
2. Amianthus muscaetocticum Walt.
3. Lilium philadelphicum L.
4. Erythronium americanum Ker.
5. Camassia scilloides Raf.
6. Habenaria viridis L.
8. Polygonatum canaliculatum Muhl.
9. Liparis liliifolia L.
10. Asarum virginicum L.
11. Tovara virginiana L.
12. Scleranthus annuus L.
13. Thlaspi arvense L.
14. Erysimum cheiranthoides L.
15. Waldsteinia fragarioides Michx.
16. Baptisia tridentata L.
17. Lupinus perennis L.
18. Melilthus officinalis L.
20. Medicago lupulina L.
22. Lespedeza cuneata Dumont
23. Vicia americana Muhl.
24. Polygala pascifolia Willd.
26. Malva moschata L.
27. Oenothera biennis L.
28. Hydrocotyle americana L.
29. Conium maculatum L.
30. Tenuidium integrifolia L.
31. Angelica atropurpurea L.
32. Heracleum maximum Bartr.
33. Apocynum medium Greene
34. Myosotis lara Lehmann.
35. Satureja acinos L.
36. Physalis subrubra Mack.
37. Scrophularia marilandica L.
38. Pedicularis lanceolata Michx.
40. Helopogon scabra Dunal
41. Rudbeckia laciniata L.
42. Heliopsis scabra
43. Aster acuminatus

210 Graham St.
Elkins, W. Va. 26241

Rt. 2 Box 231
Summersville, WV 26651
### Weather Record for the 1978 Foray

**Jerry McGrew and Harold Boecher**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Temp. %</th>
<th>Rel. Hum.</th>
<th>Weather Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sat. June 3</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>Cloudy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun. June 4</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Rain 0.15 in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun. June 4</td>
<td>6:00 a.m.</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>Clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. June 5</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Sunny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. June 5</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Scattered clouds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. June 6</td>
<td>6:00 a.m.</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. June 6</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Partially cloudy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. June 6</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Cloudy, light rain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed. June 7</td>
<td>6:00 a.m.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>Fog, cloudy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed. June 7</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>Scattered clouds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed. June 7</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Cloudy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs. June 8</td>
<td>6:00 a.m.</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Rain showers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs. June 8</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Cloudy, rain 0.2 in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs. June 8</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>Rain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri. June 9</td>
<td>6:00 a.m.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>Rain, 0.4 in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri. June 9</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Cloudy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri. June 9</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat. June 10</td>
<td>6:00 a.m.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat. June 10</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Sunny, wonderful day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat. June 10</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Clear, light breeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun. June 11</td>
<td>6:00 a.m.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun. June 11</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Scattered clouds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun. June 11</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Hazy, light breeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. June 12</td>
<td>6:00 a.m.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Cloudy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. June 12</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Sunny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. June 12</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Light showers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. June 13</td>
<td>6:00 a.m.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>Scattered clouds, wintry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. June 13</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Scattered clouds, wintry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. June 13</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Scattered clouds, wintry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed. June 14</td>
<td>6:00 a.m.</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Clear, wintry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed. June 14</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Clear, wintry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed. June 14</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Clear, wintry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs. June 15</td>
<td>6:00 a.m.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>Overcast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs. June 15</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Sunny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs. June 15</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Cloudy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri. June 16</td>
<td>6:00 a.m.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Overcast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri. June 16</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>Overcast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri. June 16</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>Overcast</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The summer could be recorded as wet but mild. Although precipitation varied over the region, most localities received about three inches rainfall during June and eight to ten inches during July. August was drier and warmer. There were no major storms to disrupt nesting, so most species enjoyed a good nesting year.

Little excitement was generated among the persons reporting notes, so only a faithful few contributed their findings.

The most unusual finds were made at Foray and will be fully discussed in that report. Suffice it to say here that it is unusual to find oneself in the presence of Yellow-rumped Warblers, Olive-sided and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers in West Virginia during the summer.

Loons, Grebes and Herons - There was a Common Loon sighted in Rockingham Co., Va. from June 8-12. It could have been an injured bird, but remember the one on Warden's Lake, Hardy Co., W. Va. during last year's foray? Great Blue Herons seemed reduced in numbers in the Virginia area (KF), but many were seen nesting in central Ohio. Conversely, Green Herons seemed plentiful in Rockingham Co., Va. but the population at Sutton Lake, Braxton Co., W. Va. seemed way down (HG). A Great Egret was reported near Harrisonburg, Va. July 25-27 (KF). Waterfowl - A Canada Goose was seen on Sutton Lake, Braxton Co., W. Va. at close range July 25 (HG). Mallards and Wood Ducks, which normally nest in the region, had a good year. A male Bufflehead was seen on a pond ten miles west of Franklin, Pendleton Co., W. Va. during June and July and a female was seen there Aug. 2 (KF).

Vultures and Hawks - George Breiding reported Red-tailed Hawks seen less frequently during 1978. Broadwings were more plentiful in Hancock Co. than in previous years (EEC). More unusual are two separate reports of Bald Eagles. Kathleen Finnegan reported two flying high in N. W. direction July 30 in Rockingham Co., Va. Carolyn Ruddle observed a single bird perched near Franklin, W. Va. July 25 and Lorraine Harper saw it a week later in the same area.

Gallinaceous and Shorebirds - Ruffed Grouse populations are reported lower this season. Although occasional Bob-white Quail are seen, they seem to suffer extensively from the past two inclement winters. A Common Gallinule was seen at Shenandoah Lake, Rockingham Co., Va. July 8-12 (KF). Killdeer were reported "scarce" by more than one observer. The Chandlers recorded three Woodcock this summer in comparison to one or none in previous years in Hancock Co., W. Va. Two Common Snipe were reported north of Harrisonburg, Va. July 24-25, (KF). Possibly migrants? Upland Sandpipers were seen in Rockingham Co., Va. through the nesting season, and one was seen near Lewisburg, W. Va. Aug. 13, where they had nested until about 1940. None had been seen for several years (CH). Spotted Sandpipers were reported migrating Aug. 13 (CH) while Solitary Sandpipers were moving by July 18 (KF). Lesser Yellowlegs were also reported from Rockingham Co. July 29 and 30.

Gulls through Owls - Mourning Doves were reported flocking and plentiful by July 22 (CH). Both species of Cuckoos were more plentiful with the greater gain apparently made by the Yellow-billed. No report of Barred Owls on Ralph Bell's farm in Greene Co., Pa. emphasizes the decline of this species. Great Horned Owl fledglings were calling the last two weeks of June (KF). Most comments on Screech Owls were of their
absence, but E. E. Oliver saw the rare (for our area) Long-eared Owl just west of Elkins, Randolph Co., W. Va. June 20.

Goatsuckers through Woodpeckers - Hullet Good noted that Whippoorwill were down this season. The Nighthawlk migration started about Aug. 20 and was noted to the end of the period with 500 or more seen by Oliver Johnsen (L.B.S.) Aug. 26-27. Chimney Swifts had a good year. Hummingbirds appeared to be less common than last year. Belted Kingfishers are still not up to normal. The only species among the Woodpeckers that appeared to be more plentiful was the Common Flicker. Red-headed Woodpeckers with young were reported from Harrison Co., O. (MF).

Flycatchers - the Flycatcher family furnished the most excitement at the Foray with the presence of both and Olive-sided and a Yellow-bellied. Details will be published in the Foray report. Eastern Phoebes appear down in numbers while Acadian Flycatchers are still plentiful. Great Crested Flycatchers were noted as absent from some of their usual haunts. Willow Flycatchers seem to be increasing.

Swallows - Ralph Bell reports the third record of Tree Swallows nesting in Greene Co., Pa. There, and in Rockingham Co., W. Va., the swallows were using boxes put out for Bluebirds. Bank Swallows were reported from Fossner, Hardgrass, Va. They were found during the 1977 Foray (CL). C. H. Handley Jr. noted many Cliff Swallows migrating Aug. 13, but the ones near Terra Alta July 29 were still feeding young. Purple Martin reports were mixed. They are doing well in some areas, but generally are slow in recovering from the disaster of 1972.

Chickadees through Wrens - A majority of reporters thought Chickadees were down in numbers along with Tufted Titmice and White-breasted Nuthatches. There were reports of Bewick’s Wrens from Waynesburg, Pa. (RB) and from Morgan Co., W. Va. (GB). Carolina Wrens are still in trouble and absent from many familiar places.

Mimics-thrushes and Kinglets - With the ongoing eradication program for multiflora rose, could the Mockingbird be contracting its range even to the limits maintained before introduction of the plant? Ralph Bell reports none on the B.B.S. routes in Greene Co., Pa. and Marshall Co., W. Va. Yet the Chanters found them in three places this summer as opposed to one place last year. Oliver Johnson reports “Gray Catbirds by hundreds” at a commercial Blueberry planting in Princeton, Mercer Co., W. Va. July 12. Brown Thrasher reports were down. Robins seemed to be everywhere this summer, even in deep woods. Wood Thrushes were still singing near Wheeling at the end of the period. Hermit and Swampthrushes seemed normally plentiful in the Foray area. A Veery sang on territory and could have been nesting near Mingo Park, Washington Co., Pa. (RMH). Eastern Bluebirds appear to be still increasing slowly. C. H. Handley Jr., noted migrating Blue-gray Gnatcatcher July 22 near Lewisburg, W. Va., but they were still present at Wheeling at the end of the period. Golden-crowned Kinglets were in noticeably lower numbers this summer. Cedar Waxwings were observed nesting in Summers Co., W. Va. (OJ). Loggerhead Shrikes seemed less plentiful in their normal range, the southeastern part of our region.

Vireos - Vireos had a good year. Ralph Bell reports White-eyed Vireos increasing in Greene Co., Pa., and the Chandlers reported an increase in Hancock Co., W. Va. This is additional evidence of their northward expansion. Bell also reports Warbling Vireos at an all-time high on two B.B.S. routes. There were two reports of the elusive Philadelphia Vireo from Washington Co., Pa., in August (RMH); these could be migrants.

Warblers - Some Warbler species appeared to have had a good year while others are definitely losing numbers. Ralph Bell reports Blue-winged Warblers at an all-time high in Greene Co., Pa., while Yellow-breasted Chats and Cerulean Warblers are decreased in numbers. Reports from other places confirm these findings and add Yellow and Prairie Warblers to the list of declining species. A bright spot seems to be the expansion of Yellow-throated Warblers, with several reports from Greene Co., Pa., and Charleston, W. Va., areas. One was seen at Ohio Pyle, Pa. by the Terra Alta campers July 29. The Warbler migration started about the same time as last year with the usual sightings reported the last half of August and net captures at A.F.M.O. similar to last year.

Blackbirds and Tanagers - Most reporters felt that Red-winged Blackbird populations were still increasing while both Orioles are decreasing in numbers. Summer Tanagers have been heard occasionally by those who have visited Ralph Bell, but nesting in Greene Co., was confirmed this year when Jim and Bonnie Baird found a nest near Waynesburg. This may possibly be the first nest for western Pennsylvania. Grosbeaks and Finches - Reports showed Cardinal populations down. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was noted in Greene Co., Pa., July 27 (RB), and a pair spent the summer near my home in Ohio Co. Both male and female were seen frequently. While Indigo Bunting numbers remained high, there appeared to be less than last year. Purple Finches were noted in Washington Co., Pa., from Aug. 1 to 31 (RMH). House Finches are still increasing. They may be hatching two broods per season. Mary Ford noted them on the Harrison Co. court house lawn for the first time this summer. Kathleen Finnegan reports Red Crossbill sightings from June 12 thru July 27 in Pocahontas and Pendleton Counties, W. Va., and Rockingham Co., Va. Rufous-sided Towhee populations were reported from normal to increasing.

Sparrows - Ralph Bell reported the farmland Sparrows, Savannah, Grasshopper, Vesper, etc., are decreasing and will become scarce with the abandonment of farms and the resulting urbanization or plant growth succession on the lands. Grasshopper Sparrows seemed fewer this year. One of the temporary residents that occupies overgrown fields until the underbrush gets too high, is the Henslow’s Sparrow. Mary Ford reported several of them from Harrison Co., O., and there are still many in evidence at Salt Fork Lake Park, Guernsey Co., O., where conditions seem highly favorable.

Contributors - Ralph Bell (RB), George Breiding (GB), E.R. and Elizabeth Chandler (EEC), A. R. Buckelew (JB), Kathleen Finnegan (KF), Mary Ford (MF), Norris Gluck (NG), Hultt Good (HG), C. H. Handley Jr. (CH), Roger and Margaret Hibbge (RMH), Sarah Hugus (SH), Oliver Johnson (OJ), Charlotte Lanham (CL), E. E. Oliver (EO), and Carolyn Ruddie (CR).

THE REDSTART — JANUARY, 1979
Fringe Benefits of Bird Banding

Merit B. Skaggs

It has been said of both bird-watching and bird-banding: "a person does not have to be crazy to enjoy it, but it helps a lot if you are." To illustrate, I heard about two bird watchers walking across a field near Pymatuning Lake, which is on the Ohio-Pennsylvania line. The farmer who owned the land asked what they were doing. The men replied that they were bird watchers and were enjoying a "safe and sane 4th of July holiday." Whereupon the farmer observed, "I can agree that it is safe but I'll be if I think it is sane."

Fortunate indeed is the bird bander who has his home on a plot of ground that is attractive to resident or migrating birds. Knowledge of habitat preferred by certain birds will help the bander to capture the less common species. After crossing the Cuyahoga River hundreds of times on business trips, I used a hunch to find Prothonotary Warblers nesting along the upper and unspoiled river banks. This resulted in my banding both adult and young prothonotaries.

Bird banding has, over the years, contributed a great deal of knowledge as to migration and populations of birds. One outstanding example is that banding located the winter home of the Chimney Swift. This was determined to be in the upper part of the Amazon River drainage system in South America.

In addition to the pleasure of examining a live bird in the hand, bird banders meet a lot of interesting people. Since the early 1930's, I have enjoyed and gained information from a lot of experts in various fields relating to Natural History. From them, I learned a great deal concerning bird study, banding and ecology. When in doubt, consult an expert; they freely share their knowledge.

At a Wilson Club meeting in 1932, I met a banding enthusiast named Marjory L. Guest, who then lived in Athens, Ohio. She was a sister-in-law of the beloved poet, Edgar A. Guest. Later, my wife and I visited her and saw her banding station. Here are some of the other interesting people that have helped me over the years. Louis W. Campbell - Toledo, Ohio - a fine field man and bander. S. Prentiss Baldwin - Gates Mills, Ohio - a pioneer bander. S. Charles Kendeigh - Gates Mills, Ohio - studied house wrens, etc. John W. Aldrich - Cleveland, Ohio - introduced me to Ecology, 1935. Roger T. Peterson - at Bay Point, Ohio, we saw our first dickcissel! Arthur B. Williams - Cleveland, Ohio - Singing male census method. Don R. Eckelberry - Ohio native - banded barn swallows for me! W. Earl Godfrey - many field trips, we made a Cleveland shore bird key. Harry C. Oberholser - Cleveland - identified a "Schoefield's Junco in the hand, and wrote a plumage description of an imm. Lincoln's Sparrow for me. Hal Harrison - photographer - I showed him his first dickcissel! Lawrence Walkinshaw - Michigan - An expert on cranes, Kirtland Warblers and Prothonotary Warblers. As you can see from the above list of outstanding people, I have benefited greatly in knowing these experts and this is a primary benefit in both bird study and bird banding.

After more than ten years of bird study, I started banding in 1940 at our home near Cleveland, Ohio. My equipment was a funnel trap and a gathering cage. I soon found out about Potter traps and later built two water-drip traps.

Over a period of several years, I made visits to several banding stations. Not only were the operators interesting to talk to but I learned helpful items as to handling birds, keeping records and identification and age tips. Near Canton, Ohio, Howard Braun was using modified Brenckle water-drip traps with excellent results. We saw him process a good many birds, mostly Warblers. Other banders visited were: Fred Scott of Richmond, Virginia; Howard and Marcella Meahl of Ashtabula, Ohio and Ralph Bell of Clarksville, Pennsylvania. All three of these stations used mist nets with good yields of birds.

Some years later, a neighbor of ours, Annette Flanigan of Willoughby, became a bander after visiting our trapping station and the mist nets at Meahls in Ashtabula. Her home property was especially attractive to many types of birds. Using both traps and nets, she did exceedingly well and soon was banding about 100 species and more than three thousand birds a year.
Book Reviews


Recently I took a brand new copy of this key and put it in a bucket of water. The purpose of this bizarre act was to test Schroeder Prints' claim that this book is waterproof. After several hours, I removed the book from the water, smeared it with mud, washed it with soap and water and hung it up to dry. It was hard to tell the washed and dried book from the new condition. There were no stains, no running of colors or blurred print. There is a slight pink tinge on the white backgrounds, but this is hardly noticeable. The guide floats too, which should help prevent loss. In fact the publisher asks that we please not lose this book as it is not biodegradable.

Forty-six species and varieties of ducks, geese and swans are illustrated with clear color drawings by Jack Schroeder. Smaller black-and-white flight silhouettes show important identifying marks. Three simple statements under each illustration give characteristics of flight, food preferences and habitat. Abundance in each of the four flyways is indicated by letters in four boxes. Two pages of wings allow comparison of those duck species that are easily confused.

This field guide should be especially useful for hunters, photographers and other waterfowl enthusiasts who must travel by boat or in wet weather after their quarry. Discount prices for large orders are available.

Owls by Day and Night by Hamilton A. Tyler and Don Phillips. Naturegraph Publishers, Inc., Happy Camp, California 96039, 18 maps, 68 illus., 208 pp. Price paperback $6.95 cloth $10.95. This interesting introduction to the owls of North America is divided into two parts. The first is an intelligent discussion of owl identification, value of predators, pellets, mobbing, how to find owls, owl senses, voice and nesting habits. This section concentrates on "owlness," the authors' word for those qualities common to all owls. There is also a chapter on Indian owl legends.

The second part discusses each of our 18 owl species. The habits of each are described with obvious authority drawn from the personal experience of one or both authors and a very good, though selective, bibliography. There are color plates and many black-and-white drawings by Don Phillips as well as a few good photographs by Esther Phillips and others. I especially enjoyed the chapter on the Spotted Owl and conservation information on this species in the Afterword. The authors comparison of this rare owl with the more familiar Barred Owl and the problems involved in its conservation were particularly interesting.

A Bird Watchers Guide to the Eastern United States by Alice M. Greffen. Barron's Educational Series, Woodbury, N. Y. 1978, 346 pp. paperback, Price $6.95. This book is a handy guide for the traveling birdwatcher, which nicely complements Olin Pettingill's A Guide to Bird Finding East of the Mississippi. Each chapter features one of the 26 eastern states and includes a map showing major highways and locations of nature reserves, nature centers and parks. The traveler can tell at a glance whether his trip will bring him close to a promising birding area. Descriptions of sanctuaries, reserves, nature centers, Audubon sanctuaries and Nature Conservancy preserves include address, telephone number, travel directions, hours, admission fees, programs, description of terrain as well as primary species sighted and nesting species. A list of state parks and forests, also with telephone numbers, follows the main body of each chapter. This book belongs in the glove compartment of every birdwatcher's car.


Most waterfowl hunters use cheap plastic decoys. The few wood decoys we see are decorative items, often found on coffee tables. However there are still a few die-hards who make and use wood decoys. If you are interested in doing the same, George Starr's book will show you how. Step-by-step we learn how to design a decoy, make patterns, carve the body and head, assemble, paint and rig the decoy. Each step is illustrated by one of 271 photographs showing how tools are used to fashion a decoy. Over 90 of the figures show decoys of various design and species with discussion of design and manufacture. Starr also discusses the best materials and tools to use, and tells how to make special tools. This book would make an excellent gift for a sportsman who also enjoys working with wood. Decoy collectors will also enjoy this book because of the many excellent photographs of decoys, some in color, and the discussion of methods used by old-time decoy makers.


Michael Godfrey discusses most of the land birds likely to be seen in our area during the winter. The excellent text includes brief but useful discussion of field marks, size, voice, winter range and habitat of our winter birds except waterbirds and a few rare visitors from the north: Snowy Owl, Crossbills, Pine Grosbeak, Redpoll and Snow Buntings. The only common winter bird of area not described is the Tree Sparrow. Consideration is given to winter diet and behavioral characteristics useful in identification. Throughout, stress is put on natural relationships and the value of predators. The book is arranged in four sections: "At the Feeder," and "Farther Afield," "Birds of Prey," and "Uncommon Birds." There is also a section, "How the Photographs Were Taken," which will appeal to photographers. Watchers at bird feeders will be able to find most of the visitors to their stations described in "At the Feeder."

The 103 exceptionally clear color photographs portray their subjects as they appear in winter. They are very useful for identification. A great amount of time and patience must have involved in Godfrey's effort. For example, two photographs portray a female Purple Finch and House Finch in one and males of each in the other, providing excellent contrast in color and markings of each. How long did he have to wait to get a female of each species in his camera's view-finder? Throughout, the emphasis is on winter birds, so this book may appeal especially to those who do most of their bird watching at feeders. Experienced bird watchers will also find the Winter Birds of the Carolinas an useful addition to their libraries.


About 200 species of spring wild flowers occurring in central Pennsylvania are described in this booklet. The brief descriptions include consideration of meaning of
names, uses, habitats and a more detailed description of the plant itself. Each plant is illustrated with a line drawing by William A. Lunk. There are no keys. This handy compilation of spring flowers should be as useful in northern West Virginia as it is for central Pennsylvania.

A. R. Buckelew, Jr., Editor

Sunbathing Blue Jays
Marion and Merit Skaggs

In our backyard there is a low area where a former owner had a swimming pool. We have been using the scooped out area as a combination compost and bird trapping area. Quite a few birds find some food amidst the leaves and grass clippings. But, two Blue Jays have also been using the compost pile as a sunbathing accommodation!

Several times during June, 1978, we have seen the Blue Jays enjoying a sunbath. First, they selected a sloping side of the grass pile so that the sunshine rays come to them from both overhead and back of the birds. In each case, the jays selected the brownish grass that had been placed there a week or two before. The usual posture was attained by spreading both wings and fanning the tail to the full width. Sometimes the birds remained in this position for as long as 10 to 15 minutes. Once, we saw one bird that fanned out the tail but spread only the left wing.

The explanation of the performance appears to be that the Blue Jays like the warmth of both the sun and the heat generated by the grass clippings as they decompose.

Grackles Eat Onions
Marion and Merit Skaggs

Grackles are well known for their greedy actions at bird feeders. They eat almost any kind of food and tend to drive away other species such as Cardinals, Titmice and Nuthatches. Sunflower seeds are gobbled whole in large quantities.

On June 27 and 28, 1978, we saw at least two Grackles in our backyard garden, and they were eating onions! We have two groups of plants that are known as “winter onions” because the plants are left out all winter. They propagate by developing small “sets” on the top of each tubular branch. If the sets touch the ground or are planted an inch or so in the ground, new plants will develop in the following spring season.

The Grackles not only ate the small seed “sets” on the stem tips but consumed strips of the green stems up to half of the plant height. We do not recall seeing Grackles eating onions in the past and have not seen this food item listed in literature. Have you seen Grackles eating onions?

3808 Daytona Drive
Youngstown, OH 44515

INDEX FOR VOLUME 45

Allegheny Front Migration Observatory, Record for 1977, 78
Allen, Greg, 107
Anatidae, 120, 121
Area Survey, Foray, 1977, 2
Arendt, Wayne J., 113
Avocet, American, 86, 88, 121, 126
in West Virginia, 86
Banding, Bird, Foray, 21
News, 60, 92, 109
Bell, Frank, 102
Ralph, K., 2, 60, 92, 94, 109, 113
Bird Banding 1977 Foray, 21
Bird Kills at a Generating Plant in Ontario, 102
Bittern, American, 135
Rusty, 90, 108, 133, 138
Yellow-headed, 90
Bleakslea, H., 55
Bluebird, Eastern, 8, 17, 48, 52, 58, 80, 90, 94, 107, 133, 138
Bobolink, 59, 88, 138
Bobwhite, 5, 17, 45, 51, 57, 77, 105, 132, 136
Book Review, 94, 115, 139
Brambling, 108
Breeding Bird Records 1977 Foray, 44
Survey Routes, Foray, 1977, 4
Breiding, Michael, 21
Brown Creeper Nesting in the Ohio Valley, 128
Buckelew, A. R., Jr., 2, 12, 23, 44, 86, 94, 117, 128, 136
Bufflehead, 88, 104, 124, 131, 136
Bunting, Indigo, 10, 18, 50, 53, 82, 91, 100, 139
Lark, 139
Snow, 109, 134, 139
Burrell, Bob, 115
Burtt, Harold E., 76
Calidris, 120
Canvasback, 88, 104, 124, 131, 135
Cardinal, 10, 17, 50, 53, 59, 74, 82, 91, 100, 110, 111, 130, 133
Caribird, Gray, 8, 15, 17, 18, 47, 52, 58, 79, 90, 100, 107, 133
Chandler, Elizabeth, 19
E. R., 19
Chat, Yellow-breasted, 4, 10, 17, 44, 59, 74, 81, 138
Chickadee Black-capped, 7, 18, 20, 47, 52, 89, 99, 106, 111, 133, 137
Carolina, 7, 15, 17, 58, 79, 89, 106, 111, 133, 137
Christmas Bird Count, 1977, 130
Chuckwills-widow, 57
Clay-colored Sparrow: A New Accidental Species for West Virginia, 101
Conrad, Charles, 140
Coot, American, 88, 106, 124, 132, 136
Cormorant, Double-crested, 87, 123
Cowbird, Brown-headed, 10, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 59, 75, 81, 111, 133

THE REDSTART — JANUARY, 1978

THE REDSTART — JANUARY, 1979

54

55
Johnson, Virginia, 20
Juncos, Dark-eyed, 2, 11, 61, 91, 98, 101, 108, 111, 130, 134, 139
Kestrel, American, 5, 17, 44, 45, 51, 57, 61, 74, 88, 92, 105, 132, 136
Kiff, Lloyd F., 72
Killdeer, S., 45, 52, 57, 77, 88, 106, 121, 125, 132, 136
Kingbird, Eastern, 7, 45, 52, 57, 78, 137
Kingfisher, Belted, 5, 57, 78, 89, 106, 132, 137
Kingley, Golden-crowned, 90, 100, 107, 133, 138
Ruby-crowned, 90, 100, 107, 133, 138
Koch, George, 18
Kyger Creek Power Plant, Seasonal Occurrence of Water Birds and Shorebirds at, 120
Laitsch, John T., 21, Nevada, 18
Lanham, Charlotte, 101
Lark, Horned, 7, 44, 46, 52, 58, 74, 106, 132
Letters, 95
Longspur, Lapland, 109
Mallard, 3, 4, 56, 87, 104, 120, 123, 130, 131, 135
Mammals of Hardy County, 54
Map of BBC Foray and Sorties, 3
Martin, Purple, 7, 44, 47, 52, 58, 75, 89, 137
Color-marking, 96
Meadowlark, Eastern, 10, 17, 49, 52, 59, 75, 92, 108, 133, 138
Merganser, Common, 124, 131, 136
Hooded, 88, 104, 124, 131
Red-breasted, 88, 124, 131
Merlin, 105, 109, 130, 132
Mockingbird, 8, 44, 58, 75, 89, 107, 133
Mushroom List: Labor Day Weekend 1977, 114
Nighthawk, Common, 6, 57, 74, 88, 137
Northward Expansion of the Yellow-throated Warbler, 84
Nuthatch, Red-breasted, 89, 99, 106, 133, 137
White-breasted, 8, 15, 16, 18, 20, 44, 58, 75, 89, 99, 106, 111, 133, 137
Ohio Valley, Brown Creeper Nesting in, 128
Oldsquaw, 131
Olive, Ephe M., 21, 39
Oriole, Northern, 10, 44, 50, 59, 81, 133, 138
Orchard, 10, 44, 50, 53, 59, 81, 138
Osprey, 4, 105, 130, 132, 136
Our New Cover, 117
Ovenbird, 4, 9, 11, 15, 19, 44, 80, 100, 103, 138
Owls, Barn, 88, 106, 132, 137
Barred, 6, 57, 75, 88, 106, 132, 137
Great-horned, 2, 6, 57, 75, 78, 88, 132, 137
Long-eared, 106, 130, 132
Saw-whet, 57, 137
Screech, 3, 6, 20, 57, 77, 88, 106, 132, 137

THE REDSTART — JANUARY, 1979

Short-eared, 106, 132
Snowy, 106, 132
Parakeet, Monk, 106, 130, 132
Pewee, Eastern, 84, 106, 132
Phalarope, Wilson’s, 121, 126, 136
Pheasant, Ring-necked, 3, 5, 106, 132
Phillips, Glen F., 11, 18, 56, 87, 103, 135
Phoebe, Eastern, 7, 17, 18, 21, 46, 52, 57, 75, 78, 89, 106, 131, 137
Pintail, 87, 104, 123, 131, 135
Pipit, Water, 89, 90, 108, 133, 138
Plover, American Golden, 88, 121, 125
Black-bellied, 125
Piping, 121, 125
Semi-palmated, 88, 106, 125, 130, 132, 136
Wilson’s, 57
Rail, Sora, 136
Rail, Virginia, 130, 132
Raven, Common, 7, 89, 132
Redhead, 88, 104, 124, 131, 135
Redpoll, Common, 60, 91, 108, 133, 139
Hoary, 60
Redstart, American, 10, 15, 16, 19, 44, 59, 81, 100, 113, 138
Reichelderfer, Ester C., 23
Richardson, Orpha, 23
R. L., 23, 39
Riefenberger, Mary Moore, 115
Robin, American, 4, 8, 15, 17, 18, 21, 48, 52, 58, 75, 79, 90, 100, 107, 133, 137
Roscoe, Kathy, 62
Rudy, Carol, 61, 117
Sanderling, 126
Baird’s, 125
Least, 125, 136
Pectoral, 88, 125, 136
Semipalmated, 126, 136
Solitary, 4, 88, 125, 136
Spotted, 4, 44, 75, 88, 125, 136
Upland, 57, 136
Western, 126
White-rumped, 136
Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied, 89, 99, 132, 137
Scap, Greater, 104, 131, 135
Lesser, 88, 104, 124, 131
Scolopacidae, 120
Scoter, Black, 130, 131
White-winged, 104, 136
Seasonal Occurrence of Water Birds and Shorebirds at Kyger Creek Power Plant, 120
Shoveler, Northern, 124, 135
Shrike, Loggerhead, 8, 49, 52, 90, 108, 133
Northern, 108, 130, 133
Siskin, Pine, 60, 91, 108, 133, 139

THE REDSTART — JANUARY, 1979
Skaggs, Merit B., 62, 92
Slack, Harry E., III, 120
Roy S., 96
Smith, J. Lawrence, 84
Richard H., Jr., 105
William H., 16, 115
Snipe, Common, 88, 106, 132, 136
Sorties, BBC Forays and, Map of, 3
Sparrow, Chipping, 11, 15, 17, 21, 50, 53, 59, 82, 91, 101, 134, 139
Clay-colored, 101

A New Accidental Species in West Virginia, 101
Field, 11, 17, 51, 53, 60, 82, 101, 108, 134, 139
Fox, 91, 108, 111, 134, 139
Grasshopper, 4, 10, 44, 59, 75, 139
Harris', 108, 139
Henslow's, 59, 139
House, 10, 49, 52, 59, 81, 130, 133
Lark, 75, 82, 108, 130, 134
Lincoln's, 91, 101, 134, 139
Savannah, 3, 10, 59, 91, 101, 133, 139
Song, 11, 17, 51, 53, 80, 82, 101, 109, 111, 130, 134, 139
Swamp, 59, 91, 101, 109, 134, 139
Tree, 91, 108, 111, 130, 134, 139
Vesper, 11, 44, 59, 82, 139
White-crowned, 91, 108, 134, 139
White-throated, 91, 101, 108, 111, 134, 139
Starling, 4, 8, 17, 49, 52, 75, 130, 133
Stern, Jo Lane, 21
Stewart, Zettie, 23, 39
Swallow, Bank, 7, 79, 137
Barn, 7, 17, 47, 52, 58, 75, 79, 89, 92, 137
Cliff, 4, 44, 137
Rough-winged, 7, 47, 52, 74, 137
Tree, 3, 7, 137
Swan, Mute, 104
Whistling, 87, 104, 131, 135
Swift, Chimney, 4, 6, 44, 57, 75, 78, 89, 137
Tanager, 10, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 44, 59, 76, 81, 90, 100, 138
Summer, 10, 59, 76, 81, 90, 139
Teal, Blue-winged, 87, 124, 135
Green-winged, 87, 123, 131, 135
Tern, Black, 126, 136
Caspian, 126, 136
Common, 57, 126, 136
Thacker, Maxine, 39, 54
Thrasher, 4, 8, 17, 21, 48, 52, 58, 79, 90, 100, 107, 133, 137
Thrush, Gray-cheeked, 90, 100, 138
Hermit, 90, 100, 107, 133, 138
Swainson's, 90, 100, 138
Varied, 105, 107
Wood, 8, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 48, 52, 58, 80, 90, 100, 138

THE REDSTART — JANUARY, 1978

Titmouse, Tufted, 7, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 47, 52, 58, 75, 79, 89, 99, 106, 111, 133, 137
Towhee, Rufous-sided, 10, 15, 17, 18, 20, 50, 101, 59, 82, 111, 133, 139
Trees, Shrubs and Woody Vines, 1977 Foray, 39
Turkey, 2, 5, 45, 52, 57, 88, 132, 136
Turnstone, Ruddy, 121, 125
Van Alstine, Charles, West Virginia Oological Collection of, 72
Veery, 58, 100
Vireo, Philadelphia, 100, 103, 138
Red-eyed, 9, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 44, 58, 80, 100, 103, 138
Solitary, 4, 8, 58, 90, 100, 130, 133, 138
Warbling, 9, 58, 138
White-eyed, 8, 58, 75, 80, 90, 100, 138
Yellow-throated, 4, 8, 44, 58, 75, 90, 100, 138
Vulture, Black, 2, 4, 5, 56, 88, 105, 131, 136
Turkey, 5, 17, 56, 77, 88, 105, 131, 136
Warbler, Bay-breasted, 90, 98, 100, 113
Black-and-White, 4, 9, 11, 15, 44, 58, 80, 90, 100, 113, 138
Blackburnian, 4, 9, 90, 98, 100, 103, 138
Black-poll, 3, 9, 90, 98, 100, 110, 138
Black-throated Blue, 4, 98, 100, 103
Black-throated Green, 4, 59, 90, 98, 100
Blue-winged, 4, 75, 138
Canada, 4, 100, 138
Cape May, 90, 98, 100, 113
Cerulean, 9, 15, 16, 19, 59, 74, 80, 100
Chestnut-sided, 4, 44, 98, 100
Connecticut, 100, 138
Golden-winged, 9, 44, 100, 138
Hooded, 4, 10, 11, 44, 81, 90, 100, 138
Kentucky, 3, 9, 21, 44, 49, 52, 75, 138
Magna, 4, 90, 100, 103, 113, 138
Mourning, 100, 138
Nashville, 3, 9, 90, 100, 138
Palm, 90, 100
Parula, 4, 9, 49, 52, 58, 100, 113
Pine, 2, 4, 9, 18, 75, 90, 100, 130, 133
Prairie, 4, 9, 44, 59, 75, 100, 113
Prothonotary, 58, 113
Tennessee, 90, 98, 100, 138
Wilson's, 100
Worm-eating, 9, 15, 16, 18, 19, 49, 52, 75, 80, 100
Yellow, 4, 9, 49, 52, 59, 80, 90
Yellow-rumped, 90, 100, 103, 108, 127, 133, 138
Summers In West Virginia, 127
Yellow-throated, 3, 9, 59, 84, 90, 113, 138
Northward expansion of, 84
Waterthrush, Louisiana, 9, 19, 20, 21, 49, 52, 81, 138
Northern, 100, 138
Waxwing, Cedar, 8, 49, 52, 58, 75, 90, 100, 108, 133, 138
West Virginia Oological Collection of Charles Van Alstine, 72
Whip-poor-will, 4, 6, 11, 15, 21, 44, 57, 78, 89, 99, 137

THE REDSTART — JANUARY, 1979
Wigeon, American, 87, 104, 124, 131, 135
European, 135
Willet, 136
Wilson, Leon P., 55, 130
Wood, Ken, 55
Woodcock, American, 2, 5, 77, 99, 106, 132, 136
Yellowlegs, Greater, 88, 125
Lesser, 88, 125, 136
Yellow-rumped Warbler Summers in West Virginia, 127
Yellow-throat, Common, 9, 44, 49, 52, 59, 81, 90, 100, 103, 136
Woodpecker, Downy, 7, 16, 18, 19, 45, 52, 78, 89, 99, 106, 111, 132
Hairy, 6, 18, 44, 45, 52, 57, 78, 89, 106, 132
Pileated, 6, 16, 18, 19, 20, 44, 89, 106, 132
Red-headed, 2, 4, 6, 45, 52, 57, 89, 106, 132
Worthley, Jean, 23, 44
Wren, Bewick’s, 8, 44, 47, 52, 58, 75, 79, 89
Carolina, 8, 18, 47, 52, 58, 75, 79, 89, 99, 107, 133, 137
House, 8, 47, 52, 58, 75, 89, 137
Long-billed Marsh, 58, 89, 130, 133, 137
Winter, 89, 99, 107, 133
Wylie, William, 116
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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.

BROOKS BIRD CLUB MEMBERSHIP

The Brooks Bird Club is a non-profit organization whose objective is to encourage the study and conservation of birds and other phases of natural history. Membership includes subscriptions to the REDSTART and MAILBAG and entitles one to all the privileges offered by the Club. Classes of membership are: Student, $3.00; Active, $10.00; Family $12.00: Sustaining, $15.00; Life, $200.00. Checks should be written payable to the Brooks Bird Club and mailed to 707 Warwood Avenue, Wheeling, West Virginia.

1979 Program

The Brooks Bird Club

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Place</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 1-31</td>
<td>BBC Membership Month</td>
<td>Mail to HQ, Wheeling</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 1-28</td>
<td>Write and Article for the Redstart</td>
<td>Blackwater Country</td>
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<td>March 16-18</td>
<td>or letter for the Mailbag</td>
<td>Send results to Redstart</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 8</td>
<td>BBC Early Spring Meeting</td>
<td>Lodge, Ogiebay Park,</td>
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<td>May 6 or 13</td>
<td>Waterfowl Field Trip</td>
<td>Wheeling</td>
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<td>May 18-20</td>
<td>Century Day Count</td>
<td>All Local Groups</td>
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<td>June 1-30</td>
<td>Field Trip - Sutton Seekers</td>
<td>Harpers Ferry, W.V.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 2-16</td>
<td>25-Mile Breeding Bird Surveys</td>
<td>All Local Groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 26-29</td>
<td>BBC Annual Foray</td>
<td>Terra Alta, W.V.</td>
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<td>August 30 to</td>
<td>Field Trip</td>
<td>Terra Alta, W.V.</td>
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<td>September 3</td>
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<td>December 15-31</td>
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SEASONAL FIELD AND BANDING NOTES DUE

(Season ends last day of previous Month)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Place</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 15</td>
<td>Field Notes to: Glen F. Phillips, R. D. 2, Triadelphia, W. Va. 26059</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 15</td>
<td>Banding Notes to: Ralph K. Bell, R. D. 1, Box 229, Clarksville, Pa. 15222</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 15</td>
<td>The dates for the 1979 BBC program were selected as most appropriate for our scheduled activity and place. Some dates and places have not been confirmed at this early date so some changes beyond our control might be necessary. When such is the case, notification will be made as soon as possible in the MAIL BAG.</td>
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