



The Redstart

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Oglebay Park, Wheeling, W. Va.

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Edited by J. W. Handlan

November, 1939

PROGRAMS AND FIELD TRIPS SCHEDULED FOR THE BROOKS BIRD CLUB
by
Harold Olsen

Programs for monthly meetings of The Brooks Bird Club and special field trips and other activities of that organization for the ensuing year have been formally approved by the membership. For monthly meetings of the club subjects for papers have been assigned to various members who have not previously presented papers before the organization. Older members will present papers upon subjects of their own selection. The program of meetings: -

| <u>Dates</u> | <u>Papers by:</u> | <u>Subjects</u> |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Nov. 24 | Russell West | Optional |
| Dec. 29 | PUBLIC MEETING WITH SPECIAL PROGRAM | |
| Jan. 26 | George Breiding | Distribution of Birds |
| | Mabel Horwood and Helen Dunlap | Bird Migrations |
| | Karl Haller | Optional |
| Feb. 23 | Elizabeth Etz | Voices of Birds |
| | John and Polly Handlan | Optional |
| Mar. 29 | PUBLIC MEETING WITH SPECIAL FEATURES | |
| Apr. 26 | Bernard Kain | The Nesting Season |
| | Charles Conrad | Optional |
| May 31 | Arthur and Walter Rybeck | Plumages of Birds |
| | Harold Olsen | Optional |
| June 28 | PUBLIC MEETING WITH SPECIAL FEATURES | |
| July 26 | Bernard Waterman | Food of Birds |
| | Bertha Quantz | Optional |
| Aug. 30 | Beth Ann Waddell | Feeding of Birds |
| | Harold Bergerer | Optional |
| Sept. 27 | ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION | |

Preliminary chapters in Chapman's "Handbook of the Birds of Eastern North America," are suggested as basic material for the reading of those who present assigned subjects. This material may be supplemented, of course, by additional reading or observations of the member to whom the paper is assigned.

Special field trips and an informal social event are listed in the following schedule:

| <u>Dates</u> | <u>Vicinity</u> | <u>Principal Objective</u> |
|--------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Dec. 9-10 | Linesville, Pa. | Winter Birds of Pymatuning Lake |
| Dec. 24 | Oglebay Park | Christmas Census |
| Jan. 21 | Pittsburgh, Pa. | Bird Collections, Carnegie Museum |
| Feb. 17-18 | Wheeling, W.Va. | Brooks Bird Club "Open House." |
| Mar. 31 | Cadiz, Ohio | Birds at Tappan Reservoir |
| Apr. 27-28 | Slippery Rock, Pa. | S.R.S.T.C. Nature Meeting |
| May 26 | Pleasants Co., W.Va. | Birds of the Scrub Pine Area |

Specific information about any of these field trips may be secured by addressing the Brooks Bird Club headquarters, 113 Edgewood Street, Wheeling, W.Va.

Editorial work of The Redstart is to be sub-divided in future, with J. W. Handlen continuing as editor and Harold Olsen responsible for the assembling of material for each issue. In addition, a number of individuals strategically located in ornithological areas of interest, have been invited to serve as Contributing Editors. Invitations have been extended to the following, many of whom previously have contributed considerable material to The Redstart. William Lunk, Fairmont, W.Va., Area; Lloyd Poland, Eastern Panhandle Area; Clyde P. Upton, Charleston, W.Va., Area; Leroy Black, Pittsburgh Area; Judge John G. Worley, Cadiz, Ohio, Area; William Bierer, Morgantown Area.

The Club has decided to adopt bird banding as a club project. Steps are in process to secure official permission for the start of the work which will be carried on throughout the year.

Elm Grove
Wheeling, W.Va.

WEST VIRGINIA NATURE ASSOCIATION ADOPTS "DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE"

The Brooks Bird Club is not officially affiliated with the West Virginia Nature Association. Nevertheless, many of the same individuals are active in both organizations and The Brooks Club always has cooperated with the West Virginia Nature Training Schools, annually sponsored by the Nature Association. Recent reorganization of the Nature Association is of especial interest to members of The Brooks Bird Club who previously have attended one or more of the Nature Schools.

Among actions by the new board of directors was adoption of a resolution to the following effect:

1. That the Directors of the West Virginia Nature Association are withdrawn as the "Nature Activities Committee" of Oglebay Institute;
2. That permission must be obtained from the Directors of the Nature Association to use the name "West Virginia Nature Association" upon any exhibits, stationery or other official records of any organization;
3. That the Nature Association stands ready to cooperate with any organization in projects of mutual interest when terms of the cooperation are in writing and have the approval of official representatives of the cooperating organizations.

Election of officers resulted in choice of Russell West, President, Harold J. Bergner, vice-president, Miss Carolyn Conrad, secretary, and Ted Frankenberg, treasurer. Those four and the following constitute the new Board of Directors: Charles Conrad, Ralph Bergner, Elizabeth Etz, Mrs. Lewis McC. Steenrod, George Kossuth, S. A. Rybeck, I. J. Koehnline, Jim Handlan, A. B. Brooks, Harold Olsen, and John Handlan.

Plans for Association activities, including plans for the 1940 session of the Nature Leaders Training School, are in process of formation.

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

FIELD NOTES

Common Tern at Wheeling, W.Va.:— I have had many opportunities to observe birds on the Ohio River from the Warwick China Co. plant in Wheeling, W.Va. The plant, where I am employed, is in center Wheeling opposite the south end of Wheeling Island, with the main channel of the Ohio River between. Fellow employes, knowing my interest in birds, often call my attention to opportunities for observation which I might otherwise miss. On May 14, 1938, others told me of birds over the river and I investigated. The forked tail, black cap, orange-colored feet and bill tipped with black immediately identified the birds as Terns. I identified them as the Common Tern, Sterna hirundo with 52 birds of that species present. The birds appeared to be following North along the river.

The only other record for this species which comes to hand at the present time is that listed by Dr. George M. Sutton in his "Birds of the West Virginia Panhandle" in The Cardinal, Vol. 5, January, 1933. This record states: "There was a specimen of this species in the old Bethany College collection. The words 'Wellsburg, W.Va.' appeared on the label but no other datum."

--- Charles Conrad
Wheeling, W.Va.

Repetitions of a Whip-poor-will's Song:- On the evening of May 28, 1939, I was engaged in the act of sawing down a dead tree at the camp site of the Nature Leaders Training School, Terra Alta, W.Va. and became conscious of the absence of the usual chorus of Whip-poor-wills, Antrostomus vociferus. Shortly afterward a bird of that species began calling from the adjoining hills and I decided to attempt to count the number of calls from this one source without a break. With slight variations in volume, only, the song was repeated continuously at least 969 times.

--- Charles Conrad
Wheeling, W. Va.

Pileated Woodpecker in Wetzel County:- Mrs. Martha Hillbury, of McMechen, my aunt, found a large bird dead in the road near Jacksonburg, W.Va. in Wetzel County on November 9, 1939. She brought it to me and I in turn took it to Miss Mabel Hopwood, my biology teacher at Union High School, Benwood, W.Va. Miss Hopwood identified the specimen as a Pileated Woodpecker, Ceophloeus pileatus.

--- Helen L. Dunlap
McMechen, W. Va.

Some Birds of Tyler County, W.Va.:- In preparing these notes, the writer recalled the article by Maurice Brooks, published in The Redstart for January, 1937, in which he wrote of the Eastern Lark Sparrow, Chondestes grammacus grammacus:- "In view of the scarcity of this species in the state at present, it is almost impossible for bird students to realize that, twenty years ago, it was common to abundant" (*)

In the early morning of July 16, 1939, Mr. Russell West and the writer found three Lark Sparrows on a hilltop near Middlebourne, in Tyler County, W.Va. As we approached the hilltop we saw a flock of birds in a growth of trees, blackberry bushes and other undergrowth along an all-but-abandoned roadway. Across the road was an old pasture, a deserted farmhouse and large fields of weeds and seedlings.

The Lark Sparrows were feeding in company with Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Poliioptila caerulea and Field Sparrows, Spizella pusilla, and, as we came near, they flew to the apple orchard at the rear of the farm house. We watched the three Lark Sparrows for ten minutes and determined that one was an adult male and that one appeared to be a juvenile. The other was not so closely observed. On July 20, the writer returned to the place with Mr. Karl Haller, but found no trace of the Lark Sparrows.

In the course of both trips, Mr. A.V. Parker, proprietor of a gasoline station on Route 18 between Sistersville and Middlebourne, opened his taxidermy workshop for our inspection of birds he had collected and mounted. Among numerous Hawks, Owls and game birds, we found a specimen of Snowy Owl, Nyctea nyctea. Mr. Parker said birds of this species are "not uncommon" Winter visitors in Tyler County, and that the specimen at hand was taken near Wirt, W.Va., in 1938.

We found a number of species of birds in Tyler County not common in the Panhandle Counties, including Pileated Woodpeckers, White-eyed Vireos, Summer Tanagers and Ruffed Grouse. This suggests that the county might be an interesting territory for future investigations by the Brooks Bird Club.

--- Harold Olsen
Wheeling, W.Va.

(*) Brooks, Maurice, 1937, "Recent West Virginia Additions to the 1931 A.C.U. Check-list," THE REDSTART, Vol. IV, No. 4, pp. 21-23.

EDITORIAL NOTES

The Nature Association Reorganization:- The note in this issue which briefly relates recent action of the West Virginia Nature Association does not reflect the intense interest which this action germinated in the vicinity of the Association's headquarters at Wheeling. As the note in this issue explains, the Brooks Bird Club has officially nothing to do with the West Virginia Nature Association beyond a friendly, cooperative interest. Nevertheless, there have been numerous inquiries from Brooks Bird Club members concerning the reorganization activities. Since the writer of these editorial notes happens, also, to be the author of the resolution he feels justified, here, in a brief explanation. In this he speaks for himself and not for the West Virginia Nature Association.

Briefly, the Association had not held a meeting for two years until October of 1938. In that time, considerable activity had been carried on, including financing of two sessions of the Nature Training School and two winter series of public lectures. In fairness to officials, held over automatically in their offices when an annual meeting was not held, active members of the Nature Association requested and held an annual meeting. Election of directors, and subsequent choice of officers by the Directors, followed.

The much-mooted resolution seems, on the surface, to be directed at Oglebay Institute. Actually, the Institute happens to have been the only organization which claimed official connection with the Nature Association. Minutes of the Nature Association nowhere recognize such a connection, "Withdrawal" of the Nature Board as the "Nature Activities Committee of Oglebay Institute" meant no resignation. No official connection actually existed at any time. There has been a tendency in the Institute leadership to centralize control of such activities as those relating to nature, arts and crafts, music, etc. The Nature Association resolution simply establishes the Association as a free and independent agency, on its own feet, and ready and willing to cooperate with any organization, including Oglebay Institute, when opportunities present themselves.

Any fear that the Association is aiming its fire at Mr. A. B. Brooks, Oglebay Institute naturalist, in its recent actions is sheer rubbish! Under the reorganization Mr. Brooks becomes an active Director of the Nature Association with privilege of vote, which he never before has had. In the letter of transmittal which accompanied the copies of the resolution to Oglebay Institute officials, one paragraph specifically expresses appreciation for Mr. Brooks' work in the past and the Nature Association's hope for a continuance of his cooperation with its work,

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

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