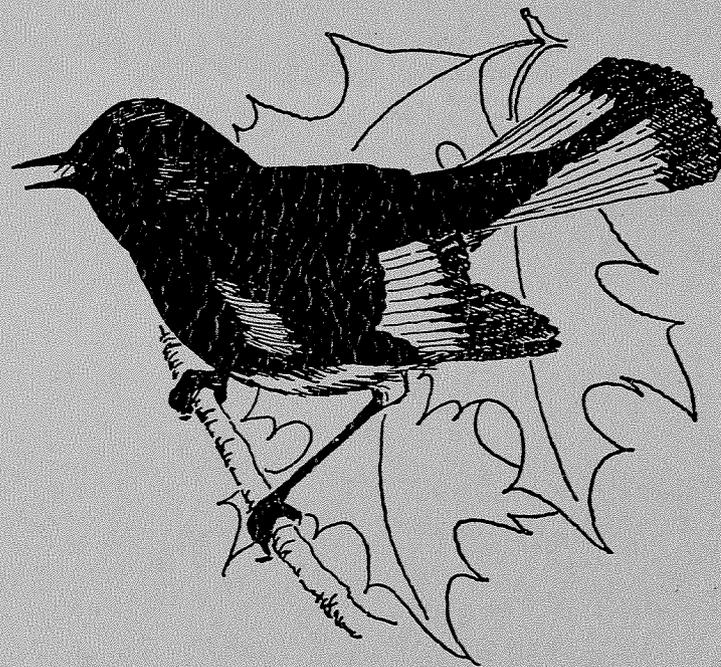


*The* REDSTART

VOLUME 39—NUMBER 3

JULY, 1972



PUBLISHED BY THE BROOKS BIRD CLUB

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FOUNDED SEPTEMBER 1932

Named in honor of A. B. Brooks, Naturalist

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# The REDSTART

VOLUME 39—NUMBER 3

JULY, 1972

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THE REDSTART is published quarterly in January, April, July and October by Harless Printing Company, St. Albans, West Virginia. The official organ of the Brooks Bird Club, it is mailed to all members in good standing. Non-member subscription price is \$2.50. Individual copies cost \$0.50 except the Foray issue which is \$1.00. Changes of address and inquiries concerning back issues should be mailed to club headquarters, 707 Warwood Avenue, Wheeling, West Virginia. All articles for publications and books for review should be mailed to the Editor.

## Some Observations On A Wintering Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker

Mrs. John Laitsch

We, in our region, have little opportunity to observe sapsuckers except for a few days in the Fall as they migrate southward to their wintering grounds, and again in the Spring on their passage back to their breeding grounds.

The main flight of the eastern race of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker spends the winter in the Southern states, Central America and the islands South of North America. A few may remain nearly as far north as the southern limits of their breeding range, which is in the Canadian Life Zone and the upper part of the Transition Life Zone from Alberta to Cape Breton Island and southward along the Appalachian highlands. It is considered a rare winter resident in Pennsylvania and an uncommon winter resident in Ohio. It does winter regularly in the lowlands of West Virginia, particularly in the southern part of the state. During the winter the sapsucker is not a bird of obtrusive nature. It is rather inconspicuous and adopts such solitary habits that it is likely to be overlooked.

Temperature does not appear to be a factor in the winter survival. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was observed throughout the winter of 1911 at Fairfield Center, Maine. Although the temperature fell to 33 degrees below zero it survived. Apples formed a considerable part of this particular bird's diet. Beyond that, I found little information on the winter diet requirements of sapsuckers.

As the name implies, sap from trees which it has tapped comprises a great part of the sapsucker's food. An exhaustive study of sapsuckers was made by W. T. McAtee. He learned from stomach examinations that it consumed cambium and bast for 16.71 percent of its diet. He had no record of how much sap was consumed but concluded that cambium, bast and sap are depended upon by sapsuckers as a staple diet. Fruits, nuts and berries are also part of its fare, as are beetles, wasps and various other insects. Practically no wood-boring larvae are included in their diet as the tongue of the sapsucker is not designed, as is that the other woodpeckers, to capture wood-boring insects. The sapsucker is also an adept flycatcher, taking food on the wing as expertly as any true flycatcher. Thus we know that the diet of the sapsucker is quite variable.

The following observations were made during the winter of 1966-67 which was considered a reasonably mild one. A male Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was seen regularly during October and November in our yard at East Liverpool, Ohio and in adjoining Thompson Park. On December 9 it was observed drilling a hole in a utility pole about one foot from the top. The following day it was seen drilling at the same spot. It was not seen at the hole again but examination of the hole showed it to be egg shaped and hen egg size.

During the remainder of December he was seen and heard regularly, either in the yard or in the eastern portion of the park. This section of the park affords some large trees, vines, poison ivy, small fruits and berries and some old apple trees. I was most often alerted to his presence by a call that resembled that of a Red-shouldered hawk, usually given as he alighted on a large tree. Another call heard occasionally was not unlike that of a Blue Jay. The mewing or whining cry was not

heard until spring migrants arrived. Although he was seen frequently in the yard he was not observed at the feeder until January 2.

We use nylon mesh onion bags filled with suet and hung on a wire for feeders. Nearby are small logs with holes drilled and filled with peanut butter. We also use box type feeders for sunflower and small seeds. In mid morning on January 2 the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was seen on the suet feeder. It perched there in a fashion quite different to Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers which are regular visitors. Its feet appeared to be too near the front of its body as it leaned backward and away from the suet arching its neck and surveying the situation. Presently it began to nibble at the suet. It fed briefly then dropped from the feeder and glided to a nearby tree. It returned to the suet in the afternoon and was watched for some time. It assumed the same position—feet forward, body leaning backward, and stretching its neck to reach the food. This seemed a most impractical way to feed especially when we could see crumbs of suet falling and building up on its breast. A few minutes later we were amused when with arched neck it deftly removed every crumb from its breast without changing position. This was done with a sideways manipulation of its bill, moving it across its breast to scoop up the crumbs rather than picking them off with the point of the bill. The breast formed an effective apron and not a crumb was lost. This act was observed many times afterward.

We were away from home several days during January so no further observations were made until January 14 when the bird was seen feeding again in the same manner just described. It turned quite cold on January 15. Birds were feeding heavily when the sapsucker arrived and dived furiously at two Downy Woodpeckers that were on the suet. He then settled into his usual routine of feeding, interrupting it only when another bird attempted to light on the suet. It was evident that he had staked a claim on a feeding territory as he defended the suet vigorously each time he fed.

Feeder observations were limited during the next fifteen days due to my absence from the house during much of the daylight hours. The presence of the sapsucker in the park was duly noted in the early morning and he may have attended the feeder during the daytime. On February 2 rain turned to snow and the following day the sapsucker was observed in its regular routine at the suet. On February 5 more snow fell and the over-night temperature dropped below zero. On checking the thermometer at 8 a.m. February 6, I found the sapsucker on the peanut butter feeder which is attached to the window beside the thermometer. He was motionless and appeared to be sleeping. He remained in this position for more than an hour, then suddenly shook out his feathers and flew directly to the suet. The suet was frozen solidly and he appeared to have some difficulty dislodging it and no crumbs fell on its breast. Observations ended at ten o'clock. Another zero night followed. The early morning check of the feeders disclosed the sapsucker on the suet in the same position he had been on the peanut butter log. Again he was motionless and could have been asleep. He was observed at the feeder throughout most of that day. Hourly checks found him absent only twice. A Carolina Wren attempting to feed on suet was promptly driven away.

A warming trend developed February 9 followed by rain. Feeder notes disclose nothing unusual except that the sapsucker was seen taking water from a container which had been provided for the birds. This was done by sliding the bill forward

into the water then tilting it sideways to scoop it up. This was repeated five times before he flew away.

A cold spell started on February 22 and persisted until early March. By now we knew that our bird spent considerably more time at the feeder on very cold days. His plumage was somewhat soiled but he appeared well fed and healthy.

As the days warmed in March his appearance was no longer noted at the feeder. He made only one more recorded visit and that was briefly on March 23, a cold, cloudy day with snow in the air. On subsequent days in late March, a male sapsucker was seen in a clump of red and scotch pines not far from our home. The trees are about 30 feet high and are well drilled by sapsuckers. It was here that I approached the bird very closely and heard utterances of short notes that resembled those of a contented nuthatch.

In conclusion, it is my opinion that the winter territory of this particular Yellow-bellied Sapsucker wasn't much more than twenty-five acres. And that while berries and apples were available, suet comprised a greater portion of its solid diet.

References consulted: Life Histories of North American Woodpeckers by Arthur Cleveland Bent; Birds of Western Pennsylvania by C. E. Clyde Todd; A Checklist of West Virginia Birds by Maurice Brooks; A Checklist of Winter Birds in Ohio by Lawrence E. Hicks and the Redstart, July 1966.—MC 21, East Liverpool, Ohio.

**Editor's Note:** This was presented at the paper session of The Brooks Bird Club at the 1968 mid-winter meeting.

### A Tough Old Bird

The July 29, 1971 issue of the weekly newspaper, The Greenbrier Independent, carried an account of a wild Turkey gobbler wearing wing tag No. 1417 that was shot by Conservation Officer Ronald Dillon on the Fork Creek Public Hunting Area, Boone County, during the past spring gobbler hunting season.

This Turkey was netted on October 26, 1963 on the Watoga State Park, Pocahontas County, and released along with 13 other native wild turkeys on the Big Ugly Public Hunting Area, Lincoln County, about 200 miles away. Thus the point of recovery was about 17 miles from the point of release.

This recovery is proof of the wandering and life span of this particular bird. It is also proof that the W. Va. Department of Natural Resources was on the right track when it gave up the release of thousands of so called "wild" turkeys raised in captivity and resorted to trapping small numbers of native wild turkeys and releasing them on former wild turkey range. Very little if any benefit resulted from the release of "wild" turkeys raised in captivity, whereas the bird has now been established in sufficient numbers to warrant hunting on several areas where the live trapped native wild turkeys were released.

Charles O. Handley, Sr.  
Former Chief, Game Division  
W. Va. Department of Natural Resources

## 1970 Bird Population Studies at Oglebay Park

Glen Phillips

This is one of a series of studies to document winter and summer resident species of birds in Oglebay Park. This year's site is a continuation of the area studied during 1968 and 1969.

**Location:** In Oglebay Park, Ohio County, West Virginia. Part of the northern drainage of Waddel's Run. Beginning at the eastern terminus of the 1969 Oglebay Park study plot (Redstart 36:66-69 and 37:66-68) behind Camp Russel's cabins 13 and 14 and following the bridge trail and Brooks Trail to the Children's Center including the wooded deer pen.

**Size:** 15 acres; rectangular; measured longitudinally and estimated laterally.

**Topography:** The plot is situated on the east-facing slope of a hollow, which runs generally north-south at an elevation of approximately 1000 feet. The slopes of the hollow are steep (30 to 45 degrees) and eroded by a small stream which is included in the study area.

**Description of Area:** The surface is about 95% second growth hardwoods and 5% open. The open portion is mowed and maintained as an access to the Children's Center, which contains some animal pens. The wooded area is such as is found in many hollows in Ohio County. The dominant species is Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*) to 24 inches D.B.H., about 35%. Other significant canopy trees are: Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*) 11 to 24 inches, Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) to 8 inches, probably planted. Scattered and fewer in numbers are: Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*) 20 to 28 inches, Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) to 12 inches, White Ash (*Fraxinus americana*) to 36 inches, Linden (*Tilia americana*) to 14 inches, Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*) to 6 inches, Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*) to 14 inches and Scotch Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) to 18 inches. Some representative plants of the ground cover include: Spring Beauty (*Claytonia virginica*), Cutleaf Toothwort (*Dentaria laciniata*), Common Blue Violet (*Viola papilionacea*), May Apple (*Podophyllum peltatum*), Smooth Sweet Cicely (*Osmorhiza longistylis*), Bedstraw (*Galium aparine*), Jewelweed (*Impatiens* sp.), White Snakeroot (*Eupatorium rugosum*), Clearweed (*Pilea pumila*), Wingstem (*Actinomeris alternifolia*), Leafcup (*Polymia canadensis*). Scientific names from *Flora of West Virginia* by Strausbaugh and Core.

### WINTER CENSUS

**Winter Weather:** Precipitation for the period totaled 5.89 inches, some as rain in early December, but mostly in the form of light to moderate snows after mid-December. The ground was covered for about eight weeks of the twelve-week study period. Morning (7 A.M.) temperatures varied from -6 to +40 degrees.

**Winter Coverage:** Dec. 3, 1969 to Feb. 28, 1970. Twenty trips were made to the area varying from 7:40 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. E.S.T. and totaling about 16 party hours.

**Remarks:** Of the 27 species seen during the study, three (Downy Woodpecker, chickadee, and Cardinal) were seen on each trip. Tufted Titmouse and White-breasted Nuthatch were seen on 19 of the 20 trips. Four species (Red-breasted Nuthatch, Belted Kingfisher, Cedar Waxwing and Goldfinch) were seen on only one trip, while Blue Jay and Tree Sparrow were seen on only two trips. One large flock of crows

flying over the area late in the evening were considered to be enroute to a nearby roost and not residents of the study plot. All data was collected by the group participation method. Observations made to determine the effect of "Bird Feeding Parties" on the winter population were inconclusive, but the average number of birds found per trip this year was double that of last year. Since the feeders of the Nature Education Center were adjacent to the boundary of this year's study plot, we tend to believe that occasional feeding has little effect upon the winter-long population, while continued feeding attracts and holds birds in an area. Noteworthy, also, was that song sparrows and cardinals seemed to start singing in earnest about the middle of February.

**Study Participants:** Earl Vanscoy, Ruth Weller, Mrs. Edward Vossler, George Lippert, Arthur Dunnell, Charles Conrad, Robert DeGarmo, Elizabeth DeGarmo, Dolores Devaul, Dorothy Broensen, and Glen Phillips.

**WINTER COUNT**

Species	Average Count	Birds per 100 acres
Chickadee . . . . .	8.6 . . . . .	60
Cardinal . . . . .	4.1 . . . . .	27
Downy Woodpecker . . . . .	3.25 . . . . .	20
Tufted Titmouse . . . . .	3.2 . . . . .	20
White-breasted Nuthatch . . . . .	2.4 . . . . .	13
Starling . . . . .	2.1 . . . . .	13
Slate-colored Junco . . . . .	1.9 . . . . .	13
Carolina Wren . . . . .	1.65 . . . . .	13
House Sparrow . . . . .	1.35 . . . . .	10
Common Crow . . . . .	1.35 . . . . .	10
Robin . . . . .	1.25 . . . . .	7
Golden-crowned Kinglet . . . . .	0.95 . . . . .	7
Hairy Woodpecker . . . . .	0.8 . . . . .	7
Brown Creeper . . . . .	0.7 . . . . .	7
Song Sparrow . . . . .	0.65 . . . . .	7
White-throated Sparrow . . . . .	0.55 . . . . .	4
Red-bellied Woodpecker . . . . .	0.45 . . . . .	+
Pileated Woodpecker . . . . .	0.35 . . . . .	+
Ruffed Grouse . . . . .	0.3 . . . . .	+
Tree Sparrow . . . . .	0.2 . . . . .	+
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker . . . . .	0.15 . . . . .	+
Blue Jay . . . . .	0.15 . . . . .	+
Yellow-shafted Flicker . . . . .	0.15 . . . . .	+
Goldfinch . . . . .	0.1 . . . . .	+
Cedar Waxwing . . . . .	0.05 . . . . .	+
Belted Kingfisher . . . . .	0.05 . . . . .	+
Red-breasted Nuthatch . . . . .	0.05 . . . . .	+
<b>Totals . . . . .</b>	<b>36.80 . . . . .</b>	<b>231.0</b>

**SUMMER CENSUS**

Summer Coverage: May 28 to June 1, 1970. Fifteen trips (twelve party hours)

were made to the area, concentrated morning and evening, from 5:05 A.M. to 7:50 P.M. E.S.T.

**SUMMER COUNT**

Species	Territorial Males	Males per 100 acres
House Wren . . . . .	6 . . . . .	40
Acadian Flycatcher . . . . .	4 . . . . .	26
Catbird . . . . .	4 . . . . .	26
Cardinal . . . . .	4 . . . . .	26
Eastern Wood Pewee . . . . .	3 . . . . .	20
Carolina Chickadee . . . . .	3 . . . . .	20
Wood Thrush . . . . .	3 . . . . .	20
Rufous-sided Towhee . . . . .	3 . . . . .	20
Downy Woodpecker . . . . .	2 . . . . .	13
Tufted Titmouse . . . . .	2 . . . . .	13
White-breasted Nuthatch . . . . .	2 . . . . .	13
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher . . . . .	2 . . . . .	13
Red-eyed Vireo . . . . .	2 . . . . .	13
Cerulean Warbler . . . . .	2 . . . . .	13
House Sparrow . . . . .	2 . . . . .	13
Chipping Sparrow . . . . .	1.5 . . . . .	10
Yellow-shafted Flicker . . . . .	1 . . . . .	7
Great Crested Flycatcher . . . . .	1 . . . . .	7
Robin . . . . .	1 . . . . .	7
Starling . . . . .	1 . . . . .	7
Yellow-throated Vireo . . . . .	1 . . . . .	7
Yellow Warbler . . . . .	1 . . . . .	7
American Redstart . . . . .	1 . . . . .	7
Baltimore Oriole . . . . .	1 . . . . .	7
Common Grackle . . . . .	1 . . . . .	7
Indigo Bunting . . . . .	1 . . . . .	7
Song Sparrow . . . . .	1 . . . . .	7
Hairy Woodpecker . . . . .	0.5 . . . . .	3
Carolina Wren . . . . .	0.5 . . . . .	3
Screech Owl . . . . .	+ . . . . .	-
Chimney Swift . . . . .	+ . . . . .	-
Pileated Woodpecker . . . . .	+ . . . . .	-
Red-bellied Woodpecker . . . . .	+ . . . . .	-
American Crow . . . . .	+ . . . . .	-
Brown-headed Cowbird . . . . .	+ . . . . .	-
American Goldfinch . . . . .	+ . . . . .	-
Scarlet Tanager . . . . .	+ . . . . .	-
Field Sparrow . . . . .	+ . . . . .	-
<b>Totals: 36 species . . . . .</b>	<b>57.5 . . . . .</b>	<b>383</b>

Visitors: Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Barn Swallow, Brown Thrasher, Swainson's Thrush, Black-and-white Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Kentucky Warbler, and Canada Warbler.

**Remarks:** The nest of the one pair of starlings was located and the chimney swifts were nesting in the nature center building. Three species were observed feeding young out of nest: White-breasted Nuthatch, House Sparrow and Robin. Nuthatches, Titmice, Downy Woodpeckers and Chickadees were wandering through the area in groups suggesting that they had hatched a brood and were feeding as families. The one Indigo Bunting was occupying an opening at the junction of two trails. The vegetation at this junction was further retarded by a late frost that damaged the foliage of several black walnut trees. Feeders are maintained at the Nature Center. Although the Louisiana Waterthrush was expected to be a resident of the area, it was heard only once and considered a visitor. We considered Swainson's Thrush, Blackpoll Warbler and Canada Warbler to be late migrants since they are not known to nest locally and were present only briefly. Three studies—1968, 69 and 70 covered the Brooks Trail with these results: total number of species seen in winter—33; number of nesting species—45 plus an additional 13 species that were identified during the studies but considered visitors. When one considers that the studies were made during periods when migration was at a minimum, it is small wonder that the trail is a favorite "bird walk" for many visitors to Oglebay.

**Census Participants:** Mrs. Edward Vossler, Dorothy Broemsen, and Glen Phillips—Compiler.  
—Triadelphia, W. Va.

### Shorebirds Recapture Operation

Several species of shorebirds will be marked with yellow feather dye on the underparts, and yellow streamers attached to the leg, in the 1972 fall migration. Sanderlings will be marked only with leg streamers. Birds will be caught on the Magdalen Islands (Gulf of St. Lawrence).

Reports of sight records of any birds so marked should include the locality, date, species, name and address of observer (s). Please weigh the bird and read the band number if taken alive.

Information should be sent to:

Raymond McNeil  
Centre de Recherches Ecologiques de Montreal  
4101 est, rue Sherbrooke  
Montreal 406, Que  
Canada

Cooperation of BBC members is requested by Mr. McNeil in reporting any birds marked as noted. Ed.

### About A Northern Shrike

Merit B. Skaggs

Both the Northern and Loggerhead Shrikes are of infrequent occurrence in the Cleveland-Willoughby, Ohio area although the latter has been known to breed and does appear in spring migrations. The Northern Shrike is, of course, usually seen in the winter time. Some years ago, I saw several Northern Shrikes in Trumbull and Ashtabula Counties.

The following account is of interest from both a birdwatching and a bird-banding viewpoint.

January 25, 1971, was a sunny, winter day with the temperature in the mid 30's so that some of the snow cover of some 2 to 4 inches melted. Shortly after noon, I received a telephone call from a friend and while talking, I glanced out the kitchen window and noticed that an American Goldfinch was fluttering about in one cell of a two-cell Potter type trap. A few minutes later, I was horrified to see a large bird clinging to the far side of the trap and trying to get at the Goldfinch! My first thought was—"Blue Jay"—but not so, this bird was a light gray with black marks on the head and wings. It was a Shrike!

Telling my caller I had an emergency, I dashed outside but too late to save the Goldfinch even though the trap was on a garden stool only 20 feet from our back door. The little bird bore no bloody wounds that I could see, but was dead. While I was examining the Goldfinch, the Shrike flew to a perch about 2 feet above the ground and only 30 feet away, and watched me.

Deciding to see if the predator would return, I placed the Goldfinch back inside and reset the trap. In less than two minutes, the door was down and I had in one trap cell a dead Goldfinch and a very live Northern Shrike, the first one I had ever handled!

In my gloved hand, the hawk-like upper mandible looked formidable. Then, I was amazed to see that the bird was banded with band Number 702-27606. After photographing the Shrike, placed back in the trap, I grasped it in my left hand and noted the fine barring on the breast which distinguishes this species. When I held the dead Goldfinch close to the Shrike, it was quickly seized, whereupon I released the Shrike, which flew to a large spruce tree nearby.

Remembering that Mrs. Richard Flanigan, a new bander who lives about 3/4 of a mile away, had banded a Northern Shrike recently, I called her and she stated that the band number was the one she used and that she had banded the bird on December 7, 1970. She also said that she had not seen the bird since that time.

One thing is hard for me to understand and that is how the Shrike was able to kill the Goldfinch by working from the outside of the trap and the trap was made of 1/2 inch by 1 inch mesh hardware cloth!

In the 22 years that we have lived at this place along the Chagrin River, this had been the first record of our seeing the Northern Shrike on the property. I shall not feel sad if it does not return. —Willoughby, Ohio

Addendum:

On February 21, 1971, another Northern Shrike appeared. This one was in the brownish plumage that identifies the immature. The bird had pounced upon a

Goldfinch and killed the little bird by tearing at its throat. The Shrike then flew off, carrying the Goldfinch in its bill. Distance from the house was not over 20 feet. —M.B.S.

### Osprey Preys on Cardinal

There are few records of the Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) taking avian prey. In a brief search of the literature I found the following birds included as prey: Mallard (Kuser, 1919), Lapwing (Swaine, 1947) and Cardinal (Sindelar and Schluter, 1968). There also exist two dubious records of Osprey preying on chickens (Clark-Kennedy, 1874 and Harvie-Brown, 1868). To these records may be added the following. On 8 April 1969, Charles H. Schwartz, Pamela P. Petrovic and I observed an Osprey carrying a bright red bird (believed to be a male Cardinal, *Richmondia cardinalis*) as it flew across a field just south of Dyer Road, Columbus, Franklin County, Ohio. The Osprey came from the northwest, landed in a tree and picked at the prey for a few minutes and then flew off with the prey in a southeasterly direction. It was a bright, clear day and identification was made with the aid of 10 x 50 binoculars at a distance of about 150 feet. The apparent paucity of reliable records seem to indicate that Ospreys infrequently prey on birds. Continued observations of a similar nature may reveal more information on seemingly unusual Osprey food habits.

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Clive A. Petrovic, F. T. Stone Laboratory, The Ohio State University, Put-in-Bay, Ohio 43456.

### Dove Behavior

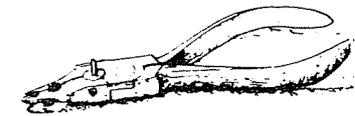
For centuries, the dove has been a symbol of peace, and the Mourning Dove is usually a rather timid bird, flying away at the least indication of danger. But, on May 1, 1970, I saw a dove feeding on the grain scattered for the birds on the ground about 15 feet from our kitchen window. Suddenly three Common Grackles descended from the nearby trees and started to feed within two feet of the dove. I was amazed to see the dove chase one after the other away—marching toward each bird with its wings raised slightly—and the grackles left!

After a minute or so, a Blue Jay dropped down to feed. This time, there was no contest, the Mourning Dove was afraid and flew away.

The Doves have reason to fear the Blue Jays as we found the Dove's eggs on the ground near the evergreen tree in which the nest was located; bill marks such as a Blue Jay might make, indicated the predator guilty of eating the egg contents.

—Merit B. Skaggs

## The Gathering Cage



Constance Katholi, Editor  
930 Woodland Ave.,  
South Charleston, W. Va.

**Hudson, Maine**—Very few birds visited my feeder this winter. I had hoped to work on an Evening Grosbeak project, but I banded only two or three all winter. There seemed to be lots of grosbeaks in town, but very few came out my way. With so little to report I think this would be a good time to discuss some of the more interesting recoveries of the past year.

On March 19, 1971 I caught a female Evening Grosbeak that had been banded on February 14, 1970 by J. H. Carter III, near Aberdeen, North Carolina. The interesting part of this recovery was that the bird had spent the winter of the preceding year some 900 miles south of here,—although we were having a very mild, open winter. Then the next winter, when I caught her, we were having one of the worst winters that this area had experienced in years. The snow cover in the woods was about four feet thick.

The next bird I heard of was a Tree Swallow that I had banded as a nestling the preceding summer near Old Town. It was shot near Orlando, Florida. Why would anyone shoot a Tree Swallow? This bird was either shot on its wintering grounds, or as it was moving north. It was downed on the ninth of January.

The last bird I wish to mention is a Starling that I caught late in the spring, and again several times during the summer. It was a female with a large brood patch, and therefore must have been nesting in the area. It had been banded on December 8, 1968 by Reverend E. B. Anderson near Sharon Station, New York. I had thought that most of the birds in this area migrated down the coast, but this bird must have moved Southwest into New York in 1968. —John W. Morgan

**Columbus, Ohio**—Most published reports of recoveries of banded birds deal with individual cases that involve some notable feature in the way of distance or timing. This is because the percentage of banded birds recovered is too small to warrant much quantitative analysis. With our blackbirds and Starlings, for instance, only 1.5% are recovered. For many species the percentage is even smaller. However, some analysis is warranted on the 1500 recoveries received from the 100,000 birds banded from our decoy trap. We have developed a method of presenting the results in terms of vectors which indicate distance and direction of recoveries in 20-degree sectors around the point of banding. (Cf. *Inland Bird Banding News*, 1969, 41, 13-16).

With Starlings the diagrams clearly show a trend for those birds banded in Columbus to go northeast or southwest. This presumably is a genetic characteristic

developed by their European ancestors where moving northeast and southwest had survival value. In central Ohio there is nothing to select against this trend so it persists. With Cowbirds, likewise, we have many recoveries in the northeast and southwest quadrants, but the vectors are spread more widely through those quadrants and do not suggest a specific genetic factor. It is also probable that the absence of Cowbird recoveries in the southeast is due to the Appalachian escarpment. Being birds of the plains, the Cowbirds tend to avoid the hills.

Redwings, on the other hand, are recovered in the southeast, as well as in the south, and southwest. Surprisingly few of our Redwings get very far north of Columbus. This certainly is not the northern limit for the species because, in another project, we have banded large numbers in the vicinity of Lake Erie. We seem to be dealing with two populations and there is no exchange of birds between the two stations. Why one population has a northern limit is a mystery.

The most notable thing about the Grackle data is the large proportion of recoveries that are local,—70% as against 17% for Cowbirds, 26% for Redwings and 35% for Starlings. This is attributed to topophilia (cf. Gathering Cage, Jan. 1971, p. 22), the tendency to become attached to, or orientated toward, a particular place. This in turn may stem from some as yet unidentified aspect of personality. —Harold E. Burtt

**Hartland, Lewisburg, W. Va.**—I have been very interested this spring watching the doves at my feeder. We feed the doves, grackles and sparrows on a slab of concrete at the head of our driveway. I have counted more than 20 doves there at one time; but now that the breeding season is advanced, they have become antagonistic toward one another, and some of them sit in the driveway while others feed. Unlike many birds (especially the chickens in the poultry yard which exert their authority over one another by pecking—commonly known as “the pecking order”) doves assert their authority through a vigorous slap of their wings, a term which I designate as “the slapping order.” A sound slap produces the same result as would a stout peck. You normally think of the dove or the pigeon as the emblem of peace, but look out as the breeding season approaches: one sound slap from a large strong dove brings respect! Even the large and aggressive grackles have respect for a dove at the feeder, and if a grackle begins to crowd a dove, and the dove stops feeding and just sits there, the grackles keep their distance a foot or more.

This discussion reminds me of an interesting observation I made several years ago of two Black Vultures perched in the top of a wild cherry tree. The two birds were scrapping over which should be allowed to have the highest perch in the tree. The bird on the lower perch approached the other with beating wings and uttered a hissing croak (a sound rarely heard by humans), but the bird on the upper perch fought back and refused to vacate its place. The battle between them continued for several minutes without any change of position. —Charley Handley

**McClintic Wildlife Refuge, Pt. Pleasant, W. Va.**—It has been quite a while since this column carried a report from the McClintic Refuge; this was not for lack of activity there, but rather for lack of a volunteer-author. So your editor will take typewriter-in-hand, and turn reporter. Because many of us who were active there a few years ago have lately been unable to find the time to go, it is a great pleasure

to know that the work we began is being carried on presently by Maxine Kiff, with her able crew of assistants from Huntington, and by Jerie Stewart of Marietta, Ohio. Banding at McClintic is always an exciting combination of long, wearying hours mixed with stimulating camaraderie, a fine spectrum of species-possibilities, and seasoned with the element of surprise. Without this continuance of coverage much of the past work would go for naught, and many “records” would never come to light.

Jerie Stewart has spent parts of four or more weekends at the refuge this spring and the following contains excerpts from her results. As a starter she observed several hundred Evening Grosbeaks there on April 23, but only one of them encountered her nets—for which she says she was thankful. Another single banding was an Orchard Oriole, which may be the sole individual of that species represented on the total combined list of species banded at the “Barn”. Sparrows, White-throated and White-crowned, accounted for some 60% of all the banding for these spring trips. While the biggest catch was on April 23, both species were still on the grounds two weeks later. The fact that White-crowns winter at McClintic in good numbers has always been an incentive to make banding forays while they are still in residence. The fact that this species often completes its pre-breeding molt (especially of the feather tracts on the head) quite late, makes it doubly interesting; i.e. that it is possible to distinguish the SY birds from the ASY birds with migration underway. A single tell-tale brown feather in the black stripe will make this diagnosis possible. The break-down on age groups was as follows: April 23—5 ASY to 4 SY; April 30—4 ASY, and on May 7—2 ASY, to 2 SY. By May 15 positive differentiation by this means was no longer feasible.

Of considerable interest to us who have goodly numbers of McClintic birds on our books is Jerie’s return data. Two birds with fine longevity records were checked in as follows: the first (and oldest), a Yellow-breasted Chat, was banded by Lloyd Kiff 05-26-64 and recaptured 05-07-72. (This compares well with a Chat banded by me 08-03-63 which was recovered in good health on the refuge 05-27-67. This note has, I believe, appeared in this column previously.) The second bird was a Yellow Warbler banded by C. Katholi 05-27-67 (on the occasion of the first Sortie to McClintic) and retaken on 05-14-72. This individual was recaptured in the interim by Maxine Kiff 05-09-70. Other recoveries included one White-crowned sparrow, one Titmouse, two Cardinals and a Brown Thrasher, all after only a two or three year interval. These had all been banded originally by either Maxine or Jerie.

In a letter to me Jerie wrote, “As you have probably noticed the habitat is gradually changing at our banding station at McClintic. The trees and shrubs are growing taller and spreading out so that we can not put up nets in all of the lanes. Paul (the Manager) pruned the autumn olives in the grove by the entrance to the barn and he left large brush piles which the birds use for cover. I caught most of the White-crowned and White-throated Sparrows in nets placed by those trash piles.”

We will plan to continue these reports on McClintic on a regular basis, as the material is provided. Please bear in mind that opinions expressed above are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the banders. —Connie Katholi



## FIELD NOTES

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

### THE WINTER SEASON

DECEMBER 1, 1971 thru FEBRUARY 29, 1972

The Winter Season was reasonably mild. December temperatures were well above normal and very little snowfall occurred. In January both temperatures and precipitation were slightly above normal. February temperatures were a little below normal and snow covered the ground during most of the month but failed to reach any great depths.

The combination of ample natural food supply and the mildness of the winter resulted in record numbers of many species of birds present at the time of the Christmas Bird Counts (CBC). Scarcely had this excitement subsided when attention was focused on the invasion of northern finches which appeared to be one of the most widespread influxes to date.

Loons, Grebes and Herons—**Common Loons** were reported at Seneca Lake, near Barnesville, O. Jan. 1 (C&E) and Washington, Pa. Jan. 19 (SH). **Horned Grebes** were thought to be scarce in the Portsmouth, O. area (MT). 12 were seen on the Kanawha River at Charleston, W. Va. Jan. 30 (NG); 2 at Bluestone Dam, Summers Co. W. Va. Feb. 6 (OJ) and at Seneca Lake, O. The 2 **Great Blue Herons** seen on the Lewisburg, W. Va. CBC was unusual for that area (COH). A **Green Heron** was found at Charleston, W. Va. on CBC for the first time in 25 years (NG).

Waterfowl—Few geese and ducks remained in the region during the winter. Those mostly reported were **Mallards** and **Black ducks**, **Common Mergansers** and **Red-breasted Mergansers**. Johnson found a number of ducks at Bluestone Dam on Feb. 6. Along with **Mallards** and **Blacks** were 49 **Bufflehead**, 186 **Common Goldeneye**, 36 **Common Merganser**, 2 **Red-breasted Merganser**, 5 **Hooded Merganser** and 8 **Ring-necked Ducks**.

Hawks—The **Red-tailed Hawk** was again the most frequently reported hawk during the winter. A **Bald Eagle** was seen at Lake White, Pike Co. O. Jan. 1 (MT). 16 **Sparrow Hawks** were listed on the Youngstown, O. CBC (HOH), 14 on the Greene Co. Pa. CBC (RKB) and Handley considered them fairly common in the Lewisburg, W. Va. area.

Shorebirds and Gulls—Greater than usual numbers of **Killdeer** remained in the

region. A record count of 87 was included on the Charleston, W. Va. CBC and 48 were found in Greene Co., Pa. for the CBC (RKB). A record number of 15 **Common Snipe** was included in the Charleston CBC and 10 were on the Greene Co. Pa. CBC. Unusual was the sighting of a **Jaeger**, species undetermined, at East Liverpool, O. Dec. 1. The characteristic outline and strong flight pattern were well noted as it passed overhead moving northward (NL). Both **Herring** and **Ring-billed Gulls** were seen occasionally on the Ohio River and at Seneca Lake, O. during the period. A few **Herring Gulls** were seen from time to time on the Kanawha River at Charleston (NG).

Doves, Owls and Kingfishers—Record numbers of **Mourning Doves** were reported on CBC and many reporters mentioned large flocks coming to feeders. Few reports of **Screech Owls** were received. A **Snowy Owl** was observed at the airport near East Liverpool, O. on Dec. 25 and was seen nearby the following day (NL). One appeared at Uniontown, Pa. Jan. 27 and remained for 3 or 4 days (RKB). The absence of **Belted Kingfishers** was deplored by some reporters. However 2 to 3 were seen on each field trip in Columbiana Co. O. during the period (ERC).

Woodpeckers and Flycatchers—Good numbers of **Flickers** were mentioned by reporters. Bell reported 12 for the Greene Co. Pa. CBC and numbers on the Charleston CBC were doubled over 1970 (GFH). **Eastern Phoebes** were listed at Clarksville, Pa. Dec. 2 (RKB) and at Pipestem State Park, near Hinton, W. Va. Dec. 21 (OJ).

Mimics—**Mockingbirds** are no longer an uncommon wintering species and are gradually extending their range. One was found for the Youngstown, O. CBC (HOH). The number of **Brown Thrashers** was normal in the Charleston, W. Va. area. One was listed on the Youngstown, O. CBC and one came regularly to a feeder in East Liverpool, O. during February.

Thrushes—Although no large roosts of **Robins** were reported, small flocks were reported in the region during the season. **Eastern Bluebirds** were mentioned by most reporters and several persons commented on excellent numbers.

Waxwings, Shrikes—**Cedar Waxwings** were listed on all CBC received and more wintering flocks than usual were reported. The Greene Co. Pa. CBC included 3 **Loggerhead Shrikes**. One was recorded at Charleston, W. Va. CBC for the first time. One was seen at Barnesville, O. Dec. 12 and one attempted to rob a banding trap at Willoughby, O. Jan. 31 (MS).

Warblers—**Warblers** were extremely rare during the winter period. A **Cape May Warbler** came to a suet feeder in the Forest Hills section of Wheeling, W. Va. from Dec. 18 to Jan. 1 (BV). Most unusual was the occurrence of a **Yellow-throated Warbler** at Youngstown, O. on Dec. 18 (HOH). It was seen by five persons that day and again the following day by several reliable birders.

Blackbirds—**Eastern Meadowlarks** remained in greater than usual numbers and it was the opinion of several reporters that their survival was good. **Red-winged Blackbirds** were reported in most areas during the period. Record numbers remained in the Clarksville, Pa. area (RKB) but Hurley considered populations well below normal at St. Albans, W. Va. A **Baltimore Oriole** was seen several times during December at Forest Hills, Wheeling, W. Va. (BV). It fed mainly on apples and suet. A flock of 64 **Rusty Blackbirds** was seen at Lerona, W. Va. Dec. 22 (OJ) and one was included on the Youngstown, O. CBC. **Brown-headed Cowbirds** were on all CBC received and a few were reported using feeders throughout the period.

Grosbeaks and Finches—Hurley reported **Cardinals** were down about 30% at St. Albans and Gluck did not have the usual numbers at his feeders in Coonskin Park in Charleston. Other reporters considered populations normal. While **Evening Grosbeaks** were included on most CBC and we were aware of their presence in the region, they were not coming regularly to feeders until toward the end of January. Once they appeared at feeders they came regularly and in great numbers. Most reporters felt that they were seeing roving flocks as the composition of the flocks was constantly changing. Few birds were seen wearing bands and banders retrapped few birds. The invasion was widespread and good numbers were still in the region at the end of the period. A **Black-headed Grosbeak** appeared at a feeder in St. Albans, W. Va. Jan. 15-17. This is the same location it had been seen in April 1971 (GFH). **Purple Finches** were numerous in the southern part of the region. The Charleston, W. Va. CBC listed 143 which was the biggest count since 1965 (GFH). Reporters over most of the region mentioned a few coming to feeders. **Common Redpolls** were found in most areas. They were reported in flocks in weed fields and at feeders. Edgerton commented on the large numbers at Barnesville, O. and Olsen fed 40 plus at Greensburg, Pa. from Feb. 11 to March 10. **Pine Siskins** were common in the region during the winter season. They were at feeders in the southern part of the region in December and were reported widespread by mid January. **American Goldfinches** wintered in excellent numbers. Having **Pine Siskins** and **Goldfinches** sharing feeders regularly was a new experience to many observers. **White-winged Crossbills** were listed at Barnesville, O. Jan. 21 (C&E). A small flock was heard in flight several times at East Liverpool, O. and a few were reported in the Charleston, W. Va. and Clarksville, Pa. areas.

**Sparrows**—**Rufous-sided Towhees** remained at Charleston, W. Va. in good numbers. 383 were listed on the CBC and Gluck had 15-20 regularly at his feeders in Coonskin Park. 4 were listed on the Greene Co. Pa. CBC for the most ever (RKB). A **Savannah Sparrow** was observed at the feeder in Greensburg, Pa. Feb. 20 (VO). Greater than usual numbers of **Slate-colored Juncos** wintered at Barnesville and East Liverpool, O. and at St. Albans, W. Va. However Skaggs considered numbers below normal at Willoughby, O. **Tree Sparrows** were thought scarce by all reporters commenting on this species. This was one of the best years for **Field Sparrows** at Charleston, W. Va. 173 were listed on their CBC. A flock of 24 was seen at East Liverpool, O. Feb. 8 and 18. A few **White-crowned Sparrows** were reported in the region especially on CBC. Barnesville, O. was an exception as Edgerton stated that they were found there in greater than ever numbers throughout the period. **White-throated Sparrows** were widely reported in unusually good numbers. A total of 865 were listed on the Charleston, W. Va. CBC. A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was observed at the edge of Oglebay Park, Wheeling, W. Va. on Jan. 8 (NL). Six Swamp Sparrows were included on the Youngstown, O. CBC. **Song Sparrows** were considered plentiful by all reporters.

Contributors—**RKB**, Ralph K. Bell; **ERC**, Everett R. Chandler, **C&E**, Mary Chapman and Mabel Edgerton; **GE**, Greg Eddy; **NG**, Norris Gluck; **COH**, Charles O. Handley, **SR.**; **HOH**, Howard O. Heimerdinger; **SH**, Sarah Hugus; **GFH**, George F. Hurley; **OJ**, Oliver Johnson; **CK**, Connie Katholi; **VO**, Virginia Olsen; **HS**, Harry Sigel; **MS**, Merit Skaggs; **MT**, Marie Trowbridge; **BV**, Betty Vossler. — Mrs. Nevada Laitsch, MC 21, East Liverpool, Ohio 43920

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**REFERENCES.** References should be listed alphabetically by author and referred to in the text by author and year.

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**SUMMARY.** For longer articles it is desirable to present a brief summary of the work.

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Many papers will not fit this type of presentation. Sometimes a simple sequence-of-events arrangement will serve.

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