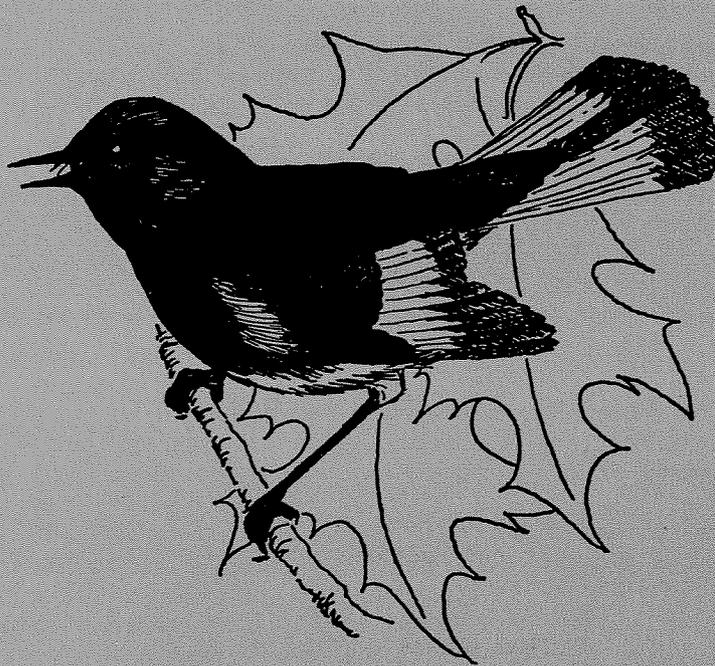


*The* **REDSTART**

**VOLUME 43, NUMBER 3**

**JULY, 1976**



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 Named in honor of A. B. Brooks, Naturalist

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# Birds of the West Virginia Northern Panhandle

Albert R. Buckelew, Jr.

Forty two years ago George Miksch Sutton published an article on the birds of the West Virginia Northern Panhandle (Sutton, 1933). It is my purpose to bring Sutton's list up-to-date and provide a bird finding guide for this region.

There have been a number of interesting changes in the avifauna of the W. Va. Northern Panhandle since the nineteen thirties. Blue Jays and Pileated Woodpeckers, rare previously, are now common, while birds known to breed in Sutton's Bethany days, such as the Lark Sparrow, Dickcissel and Bewick's Wren, are now rarely, if ever, seen. Some of the changes are due to the extensive reforestation of this part of the country, which has occurred as a result of a decline in agriculture. Some are due to the elimination of habitats which were at one time highly productive of unusual species. The best example of the latter is the destruction of the Beech Bottom Swamp, where Sutton and Haller obtained so many interesting specimens (Haller, 1961). A number of birds, accidental or casual in this area, have been added to our list in the intervening years. Exciting finds, some of which stand as state records, include the Red-necked Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Hudsonian Godwit and Red Phalarope. The Bobolink, American Woodcock and Brown Creeper are now known to breed in the Northern Panhandle. The Vermillion Flycatcher is a new state record.

## GEOGRAPHY

The W. Va. Northern Panhandle consists of four counties: Marshall, in the south, Ohio, Brooke and Hancock in the north. The western and northern boundaries are formed by the Ohio River, which is part of West Virginia to the Ohio state shoreline. The eastern boundary is the Pennsylvania line. The main body of the state lies south of Marshall County. Major towns and cities include Moundsville, Wheeling, Wellsburg, Follansbee, Weirton, New Cumberland, New Manchester (formerly known as Pughtown) and Chester. The Panhandle is about sixty miles long and varies from five to eighteen miles in width.

The climate is humid and continental. It is characterized by marked seasonal differences in temperature. The average daily maximum temperature is 63 deg. F, and the average daily minimum is 42 deg. F. The average annual minimum temperature is -3 deg. F, while the average annual maximum temperature is 95 deg. F. Precipitation is adequate and evenly distributed. The annual precipitation is 38.57 inches. There is an average of 24 days per year with snow cover of 1 inch or more. The average depth of snow on days with snow cover is 2.9 inches.

The land in farms is declining in the three northern counties. About 38% of the land was in farms in 1964, compared with 31% in 1969. Woodland occupies 93,000 acres or about one-half of the area of the three northern counties (Ellyson et. al., 1974). These trends are also evident in Marshall County.

There are several lakes in the Northern Panhandle: Bear Rocks Lakes,

Castleman's Run Lake, Schenk Lake and Tomlinson Run Lake. All of them are man made. There are also numerous farm ponds and several small lakes which hold water impounded by navigational locks on the Ohio River in Hancock County. Swampland is largely absent due to the extremely hilly, well-drained character of the land. Small cattail swamps can be found at the inlets to Castleman's Run Lake and Tomlinson Run Lake. Most of the hills are about 1100 feet in altitude while some rise to almost 1600 feet.

## ANNOTATIONS

Numbers to be expected in the appropriate habitat and in season are indicated as follows:

**Accidental**—Species for which there are fewer than four or five records.

**Casual**—Species which cannot be expected every year or even in a period of several years.

**Rare**—One to ten can be expected most years.

**Uncommon**—One to five can be seen daily.

**Fairly Common**—Five to ten per day.

**Common**—10-50 per day.

**Very Common**—50-200 per day.

**Abundant**—More than 200 per day.

The season one would expect to see a species is indicated by the following designations:

**Permanent Resident**—A species which is found throughout the year.

**Summer Resident**—A species which breeds in the Panhandle, but migrates out of the area in winter.

**Summer Visitor**—A species which is found in the summer, but is not known to breed.

**Migrant**—A species which is observed in the migration season.

**Winter Visitor**—A species which nests elsewhere, but is found during the winter in the Panhandle.

Extinct and exotic species are not included.

## CLASSIFICATION AND NOMENCLATURE

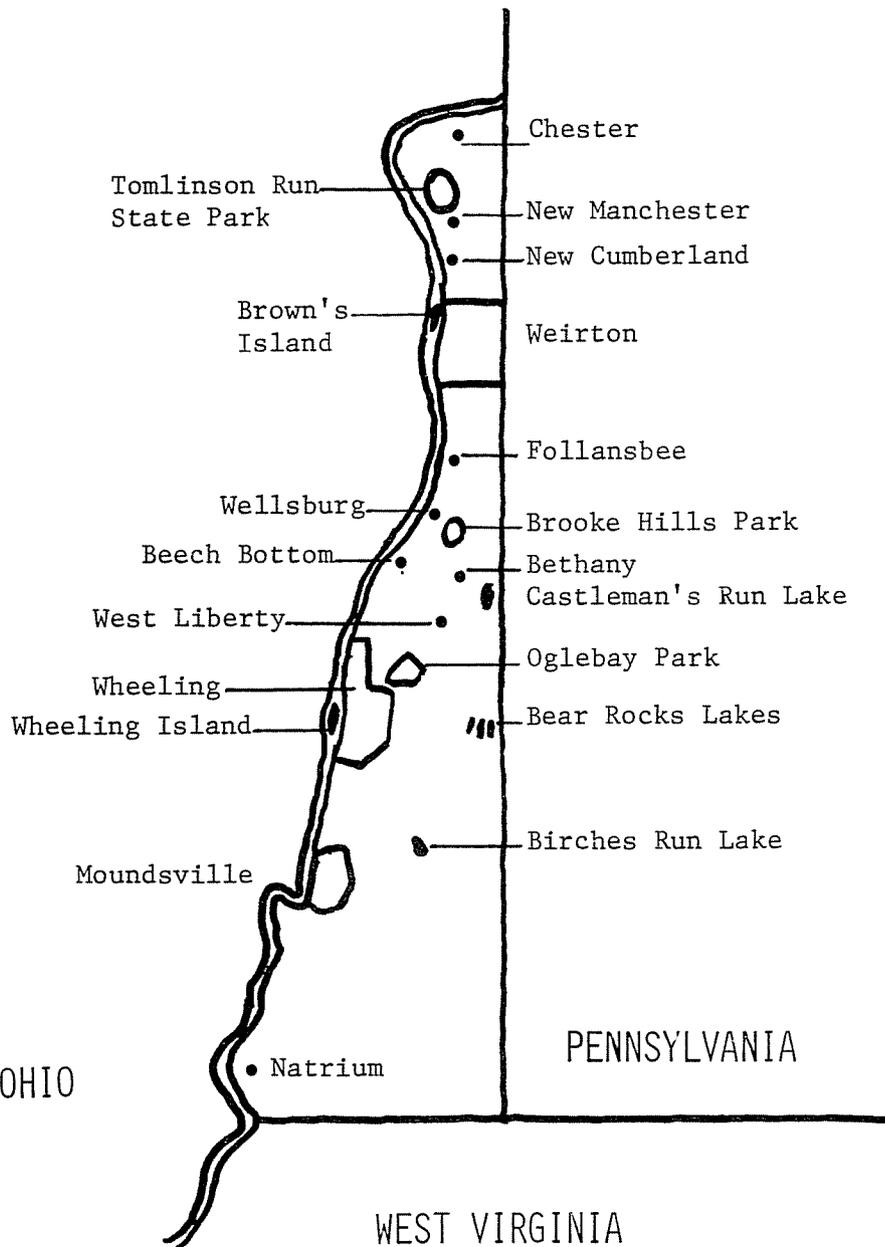
The A.O.U. Check-list of North American Birds (1957) and the Thirty-second Supplement to the A.O.U. Check-list (1973) are the standards used for classification and nomenclature.

## FINDING GUIDE

It is hoped that this list will help students new to the study of birds find new species, and that it will provide aid for experienced enthusiasts who move into the Panhandle from other parts of the country. Wherever appropriate a convenient public park or equally accessible area is noted where each species can be observed in the proper season. The general habitat or exact location for viewing a species is also supplied when such information is considered helpful.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to many people who made valuable suggestions and comments after reading an early draft of this article. I especially thank William H. Beatty, Charles Conrad, George A. Hall, Nevada Laitsch, Glen Phillips, Robert Rine, and Pat and Fritz Temple. Also Wilda Jennings.



THE WEST VIRGINIA NORTHERN PANHANDLE

Scale: One inch equals about 15 miles.

LIST OF SPECIES

Family Gaviidae

Common Loon [*Gavia immer*]*—*Rare migrant along the Ohio River. More common in winter. Very casual inland. A specimen at Bethany College was taken along Castleman's Run (Sutton, 1933).

Red-throated Loon [*Gavia stellata*]*—*Casual migrant. One observed by the Temples in eight years of observation at Warrenton Inlet on the Ohio side of the Ohio River. (Temple and Temple, 1974).

Family Podicipedidae

Red-necked Grebe (Holboell's) [*Podiceps grisegena*]*—*Accidental. One found frozen by breast feathers to the ice on the Buffalo Creek, Feb. 17, 1934, was identified and mounted by William Montagna (Weimer, 1935).

Horned Grebe [*Podiceps auritus*]*—*Uncommon migrant and winter visitor. Most often seen along Ohio River. Occasionally seen on Castleman Run Lake.

Eared Grebe [*Podiceps nigricollis*]*—*Accidental. Tom Shields observed one closely at Wheeling Island on Feb. 12, 1955 (Shields, 1955).

Pied-billed Grebe [*Podilymbus podiceps*]*—*Uncommon migrant and winter visitor. Observed along the Ohio River and occasionally on small lakes inland.

Family Phalacrocoracidae

Double-crested Cormorant [*Phalacrocorax auritus*]*—*Accidental. Dead specimen found at Warwood, Oct. 22, 1951 (Brieding, 1953).

Family Ardeidae

Great Blue Heron [*Ardea herodias*]*—*Fairly common summer visitor. Easily observed at Tomlinson Run Lake. Some stay into December. Usually recorded on the Hancock County Christmas Count (Laitsch, 1971). Are found in winter on the north end of Brown's Island opposite Weirton. Despite much industrial construction on the island, the herons have remained. The best place to observe them is from the Ohio side of the river in Toronto.

Green Heron [*Butorides virescens*]*—*Common summer resident. Nests along small streams. Readily observed at Castleman's Run Lake and ponds along Rt. 2 in Hancock County.

Little Blue Heron [*Florida caerulea*]*—*Casual summer visitor. Usually the white, immature birds are seen.

Cattle Egret [*Bubulcus ibis*]*—*Accidental. Nevada Laitsch reports one in Hancock County, May 12-14, 1974 (Laitsch, 1974).

Great Egret [*Casmerodius albus*]*—*Casual summer visitor. I observed one in a tree overlooking the Bethany sanitation pond in June, 1973.

Snowy Egret [*Leucophoyx thula*]*—*Accidental. Pat and Fritz Temple observed one at Warrenton Inlet on a Century Day count, May 1975.

Black-crowned Night Heron [*Nycticorax nycticorax*]*—*Casual migrant. Sometimes observed in large flocks.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron [*Nyctanassa violacea*]*—*Accidental. A. B. Brooks examined a specimen taken near Wheeling (Brooks, 1944).

Least Bittern [*Ixobrychus exilis*]*—*Casual migrant. May have nested formerly at Beech Bottom Swamp (Sutton, 1933). Swamps at Tomlinson Run Park and Castleman's Run Lake should be checked carefully for this species and the next.

American Bittern [*Botaurus lentiginosus*—Rare migrant. May have nested formerly at Beech Bottom Swamp (Sutton, 1933). Charles Conrad saw 9 in the air at once over Beech Bottom Swamp in September 1934.

Family Anatidae

Mute Swan [*Cygnus olor*—Accidental. A feral specimen was taken at Wellsburg, December 13, 1934 (West and Shields, 1935).

Whistling Swan [*Olor columbianus*—Casual migrant. Rarely observed in numbers along the Ohio River.

Canada Goose [*Branta canadensis*—Uncommon migrant. Seen on the Ohio River and lakes. Occasionally stays through winter when fed. Large flocks can be heard passing over at night in some years.

Snow Goose [*Chen caerulescens*—Casual migrant. Sometimes seen on Bear Rocks Lakes, Castleman's Run Lake and Tomlinson Run Lake. The Blue Goose, a dark morph of the Snow Goose, is seen less frequently.

Mallard [*Anas platyrhynchos*—Fairly common migrant and permanent resident. Seen along larger streams, ponds, and the Ohio River. A flock of 100 or more can be seen on Big Wheeling Creek at Elm Grove.

Black Duck [*Anas rubripes*—Fairly common migrant and winter visitor. Ohio River and lakes inland. Breeds in Hancock County where E. R. Chandler has observed it throughout the summer on the Tomlinson Run fishing ponds.

Gadwall [*Anas strepera*—Casual migrant. Ohio River, lakes and larger streams.

Pintail [*Anas acuta*—Rare migrant. Ohio River.

American Green-winged Teal [*Anas crecca*—Casual migrant. Ohio River.

Blue-winged Teal [*Anas discors*—Uncommon migrant. Rare summer resident. Has nested at Bear Rocks (Laitsch, 1964).

American Wigeon [*Anas americana*—Uncommon migrant. Mostly along the Ohio River.

Northern Shoveler [*Anas clypeata*—Rare migrant. Ohio River, larger streams and lakes.

Wood Duck [*Aix sponsa*—Fairly common migrant and uncommon summer resident. Nests by ponds near Brooke Hills Park, Tomlinson Run Lake and along the Buffalo Creek. Breeding pairs probably can be found along all major streams and on lakes in the more remote areas.

Redhead [*Aythya americana*—Rare migrant and winter visitor. Ohio River.

Ring-necked Duck [*Aythya collaris*—Rare migrant along the Ohio. One wintered on Schenk Lake, Oglebay Park, 1973-74.

Canvasback [*Aythya valisineria*—Casual migrant along the Ohio.

Greater Scaup [*Aythya marila*—Casual migrant on the Ohio.

Lesser Scaup [*Aythya affinis*—Casual migrant on the Ohio, but when present it can occur in large numbers. Rafts of 50 or more have been seen. Less common on lakes and larger ponds.

Common Goldeneye [*Bucephala clangula*—Casual migrant on the Ohio and lakes and streams inland. When present can occur in large numbers.

Bufflehead [*Bucephala albeola*—Rare migrant on the Ohio and lakes.

Oldsquaw [*Clangula hyemalis*—Casual migrant on the Ohio. The Temples observed one in 8 years at Warrenton Inlet (Temple and Temple, 1974).

White-winged Scoter [*Melanitta deglandi*—Rare migrant along the Ohio River.

Ruddy Duck [*Oxyura jamaicensis*—Rare migrant along the Ohio

Hooded Merganser [*Lophodytes cucullatus*—Fairly common migrant. Observed along the Ohio River. Also seen on small ponds and on larger streams and lakes.

Common Merganser [*Mergus merganser*—Uncommon migrant and winter visitor.

Red-breasted Merganser [*Mergus serrator*—Rare migrant on the Ohio River.

Family Cathartidae

Turkey Vulture [*Cathartes aura*—Common migrant and fairly common summer resident. Most certainly nests, but I am not familiar with a nest record for this area. Often observed over open country.

Family Accipitridae

Goshawk [*Accipiter gentilis*—Casual winter visitor. I saw one in Bethany on Dec. 12, 1974.

Sharp-shinned Hawk [*Accipiter striatus*—Uncommon migrant and winter visitor. Rare summer resident. Nests are recorded from Oglebay Park (Brooks, 1938) and near Bethany (Sutton, 1933). This and the next species will sometimes take birds from feeders.

Cooper's Hawk [*Accipiter cooperii*—Uncommon permanent resident. Has nested in Oglebay Park and Bethany College Forest.

Red-tailed Hawk [*Buteo jamaicensis*—Fairly common summer resident. Much less common in winter. Many nests, which are large and obvious, have been found throughout the Panhandle in rural areas.

Red-shouldered Hawk [*Buteo lineatus*—Casual migrant and winter visitor.

Broad-winged Hawk [*Buteo platypterus*—Rare migrant and summer resident. More common in Hancock County where it is seen as often as the Red-tailed Hawk. Casual in winter. Mrs. Edward Vossler found a nest in the Forest Hills section of Wheeling.

Rough-legged Hawk [*Buteo lagopus*—Casual winter visitor. One observed by several members of the George Sutton Audubon Society during December 1974 near Bethany.

Bald Eagle [*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*—Casual migrant, two records. One specimen, an immature female, is on display at Bethany College (Montagna, 1940). Charles Conrad saw one over the Ohio north of Wheeling on Dec. 30, 1964 and another on July 30, 1966.

Marsh Hawk [*Circus cyaneus*—Rare migrant and winter visitor. Sometimes observed in low, wet fields along the Buffalo Creek.

Family Pandionidae

Osprey [*Pandion haliaetus*—Casual migrant. Has nested at Tomlinson Run State Park and Bear Rocks in recent years (Laitsch, 1969b).

Family Falconidae

Peregrine Falcon [*Falco peregrinus*—Casual migrant. More common formerly. Observed by this author once in 7 years.

American Kestrel [*Falco sparverius*—Fairly common permanent resident. Less common in winter. Often observed on power lines or hovering with rapidly beating wings over fields in rural areas. Formerly called Sparrow Hawk.

Family Tetraonidae

Ruffed Grouse [*Bonasa umbellus*—Fairly common, permanent resident in wooded areas. Subject to cyclical fluctuations in numbers. Look for it on steep slopes with heavy underbrush.

Family Phasianidae

Bobwhite [*Colinus virginianus*—Fairly common permanent resident. Frequents agricultural land and old fields on the hilltops around West Liberty, where it can be heard on most summer evenings.

Ring-necked Pheasant [*Phasianus colchicus*—Fairly common, permanent resident of agricultural land.

Family Meleagridae

Turkey [*Meleagris gallopavo*—Rare permanent resident. This former native has been re-established in this area, probably from turkeys stocked here or in nearby Pennsylvania.

Family Rallidae

King Rail [*Rallus elegans*—Casual migrant. One found dead at Follansbee, Brooke County in September 1935 (Montagna, 1940).

Virginia Rail [*Rallus limicola*—Rare migrant and possible summer resident. Charles Conrad found a nest at Beech Bottom in 1936. Has been observed in late spring in the swamp at Castleman's Run Lake and at Bear Rocks Lakes.

Sora Rail [*Porzana carolina*—Rare migrant.

Yellow Rail [*Coturnicops noveboracensis*—Accidental. One record from Ohio County (Brook, 1944).

Common Gallinule [*Gallinula chloropus*—Accidental. Two were seen at Bear Rocks Lakes on May 7, 1955 (Phillips, 1957).

American Coot [*Fulica americana*—Uncommon migrant along the Ohio and lakes inland.

Family Charadriidae

Semipalmated Plover [*Charadrius semipalmatus*—Casual migrant. Shores of Ohio, ponds and streams inland.

Killdeer [*Charadrius vociferus*—Common migrant and summer resident. Rare in winter. Can be seen on Bethany College Athletic fields. Nests in gravel, sometimes on flat roof tops.

Black-bellied Plover [*Pluvialis squatarola*—There are several May records for Hancock County.

Ruddy Turnstone [*Arenaria interpres*—Accidental. Pat and Fritz Temple have two records at Warwood.

Family Scolopacidae

American Woodcock [*Philohela minor*—Fairly common migrant and early summer resident. Thought to move north after breeding. Often observed in early spring and fall on brushy hillsides.

Common Snipe [*Capella gallinago*—Uncommon migrant along the Ohio and larger streams.

Whimbrel [*Numenius phaeopus*—One record at Bethany, July 24, 1933 (Sutton 1934).

Upland Sandpiper [*Bartramia longicauda*—Rare migrant and summer resident. Sometimes heard at night in rural areas. Has nested in Hancock County.

Spotted Sandpiper [*Actitis macularia*—Fairly common summer resident. Nests along streams in rural areas.

Solitary Sandpiper [*Tringa solitaria*—Uncommon migrant and summer visitor. Greater Yellowlegs [*Tringa melanoleucus*—Casual migrant.

Lesser Yellowlegs [*Tringa flavipes*—Somewhat more common than the preceding species. Seen along the shores of the Ohio and larger streams. Especially partial to shallow ponds and mudflats.

Willet [*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*—Accidental. Charles Conrad observed one at Beech Bottom Swamp in the spring of 1935.

Pectoral Sandpiper [*Calidris melanotos*—Rare migrant. Prefers open marshes and mudflats which are both scarce habitats in the Panhandle.

White-rumped Sandpiper [*Calidris fuscicollis*—Accidental. One record (Haller, 1961).

Baird's Sandpiper [*Calidris bairdii*—Accidental. One record at Beech Bottom (Brooks, 1944).

Least Sandpiper [*Calidris minutilla*—Casual migrant. Prefers mudflats.

Dunlin [*Calidris alpina*—Casual migrant.

Semipalmated Sandpiper [*Calidris pusillus*—Casual migrant. The West Virginia record was established at Beech Bottom Swamp on Sept. 4, 1933 (West and Shields, 1935). Observed at Bear Rocks Lakes by Glen Phillips (Phillips, 1957).

Short-billed Dowitcher [*Limnodromus griseus*—Casual migrant. There were numerous spring reports from Beech Bottom Swamp in the 1930's.

Stilt Sandpiper [*Micropalama himantopus*—Accidental. One captured and photographed on Wheeling Island on Aug. 10, 1952 (Yenke, 1952).

Hudsonian Godwit [*Limosa haemastica*—Accidental. This is a rare species which migrates along the Mississippi Valley in spring. The West Virginia record was established by Charles Conrad at Benwood, Marshall County (Conrad, 1968).

Family Phalaropodidae

Red Phalarope [*Phalaropus fulicarius*—Accidental. George Breiding found a dead specimen in Oglebay Park, Nov. 4, 1961 (Breiding, 1962a).

Family Laridae

Great Black-backed Gull [*Larus marinus*—Accidental. Seen by Charles Conrad over the Ohio River on April 9, 1957 and by Tom Shields at Oglebay Park on May 11, 1955.

Herring Gull [*Larus argentatus*—Fairly common migrant along the Ohio River. Often seen with the next species during storms and unsettled weather.

Ring-billed Gull [*Larus delawarensis*—Common migrant along the Ohio River.

Bonaparte's Gull [*Larus philadelphus*—Uncommon migrant along the Ohio River.

Common Tern [*Sterna hirundo*—Rare migrant along the Ohio.

Caspian Tern [*Hydroprogne caspia*—Casual migrant along the Ohio.

Black Tern [*Chlidonias niger*—Casual migrant along the Ohio and on lakes.

Family Columbidae

Rock Dove [*Columba livia*—Very common permanent resident. Nests on architectural features of buildings, in old barns and under bridges. Often a serious

pest.

Mourning Dove [*Zenaidura macroura*—Common, permanent resident. Often seen in large flocks in winter on agricultural lands and at feeders.

#### Family Cuculidae

Yellow-billed Cuckoo [*Coccyzus americanus*—Fairly common summer resident.

Black-billed Cuckoo [*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*—Uncommon summer resident in Hancock County; less common south.

#### Family Tytonidae

Barn Owl [*Tyto alba*—Rare summer resident. Less common in winter. Nests in empty buildings, barns and hollow trees.

#### Family Strigidae

Screech Owl [*Otus asio*—Common permanent resident. Found in woods, orchards and towns. More common than generally believed. Thirty three individuals were counted in Ohio and Brooke Counties in one night, Dec. 22, 1974 by Greg Eddy and Andy Hoffman using a tape recorder.

Great Horned Owl [*Bubo virginianus*—Uncommon permanent resident of more remote woodlands, especially along streams.

Snowy Owl [*Nyctea scandiaca*—Casual winter visitor. Seen infrequently during "invasion years." Most often perched on a fence post or other low object in open country.

Barred Owl [*Strix varia*—Uncommon permanent resident of remote, upland woods.

Long-eared Owl [*Asio otus*—Casual migrant and winter visitor. Casual summer resident. George Breiding found a nest at Oglebay Park in 1955 (Breiding, 1955a). Likes to roost in thick evergreens. Is often gregarious in winter. Prefers extensive pine forests, a habitat mostly lacking in the Panhandle.

Short-eared Owl [*Asio flammeus*—Casual migrant and winter visitor. There are several records for the Bethany area, occurring in November and late December in open fields.

Saw-whet Owl [*Aegolius acadicus*—Accidental. Reported in Ohio County in late summer by Tom Shields.

#### Family Caprimulgidae

Whip-poor-will [*Caprimulgus vociferus*—Formerly a fairly common summer resident of heavy woods (Sutton, 1933), this species must now be listed as a casual migrant and a rare summer resident. Has been observed in Tomlinson Run Park during recent summers by Nevada Laitsch.

Common Nighthawk [*Chordeiles minor*—Fairly common fall migrant and uncommon summer resident in large towns and cities. Nests on gravel roofs. Often heard at night in Moundsville, Wheeling and Wellsburg.

#### Family Apodidae

Chimney Swift [*Chaetura pelagica*—Common summer resident. Nests in chimneys and large hollow trees. Seen in flight over towns.

#### Family Trochilidae

Ruby-throated Hummingbird [*Archilochus colubris*—Fairly common summer resident. Nests in woods. Often feeds on flower nectar in gardens around homes. Can become common when fed regularly.

#### Family Alcedinidae

Belted Kingfisher [*Megaceryle alcyon*—Fairly common summer resident, less

common in winter. Nests in long burrows made in banks near streams. Moves south when streams freeze.

#### Family Picidae

Common Flicker [*Colaptes auratus*—Common summer resident. Rare in winter.

Pileated Woodpecker [*Dryocopus pileatus*—Fairly common permanent resident of mature woods. Much more common than formerly. Sutton reports never seeing this species in the Panhandle prior to 1933 (Sutton, 1933). It is not included on the 1938 list of birds of Oglebay Park (Brooks, 1938), but it can be observed there now. Often seen in the Bethany College Forest and Brooke Hills Park.

Red-bellied Woodpecker [*Centurus carolinus*—Fairly common permanent resident of woods, parks and towns. Often seen at suet feeders in winter.

Red-headed Woodpecker [*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*—Rare permanent resident. Has nested recently near West Liberty, and at Tomlinson Run Park. Absent from most of the Panhandle.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker [*Sphyrapicus varius*—Uncommon migrant and winter visitor. Encircling patterns of holes on tree trunks indicate the presence of this bird. Sometimes visits suet feeders.

Hairy Woodpecker [*Dendrocopos villosus*—Fairly common permanent resident of large tracts of woods.

Downy Woodpecker [*Dendrocopos pubescens*—Common permanent resident of wooded areas. Often comes to suet feeders.

Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker [*Picoides arcticus*—Accidental. One seen by E.R. Chandler near Chester in 1962 and another by E.R. Chandler and John Laitsch eight miles north of Chester in Columbiana County, Ohio on December 14, 1974. (Hurley, 1962; Laitsch, 1975)

#### Family Tyrannidae

Eastern Kingbird [*Tyrannus tyrannus*—An uncommon summer resident of rural areas.

Great Crested Flycatcher [*Myiarchus crinitus*—Fairly common summer resident of higher woods. Its "creep" call can be heard in May in the Bethany College Forest, Oglebay Park, Brooke Hills Park and at Tomlinson Run Park.

Eastern Phoebe [*Sayornis phoebe*—Common summer resident. Arrives in early spring, often building its nest under a bridge, waterfall or cliff overhang. Rare winter visitor.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher [*Empidonax flaviventris*—Uncommon migrant. Seen more often in the fall. Often in willows along streams.

Acadian Flycatcher [*Empidonax vireescens*—Common summer resident of steep wooded hillsides. Perhaps less common in Hancock County.

Willow Flycatcher [*Empidonax traillii*—Rare summer resident. May be observed at Bear Rocks Lakes (Phillips, 1973), and at Tomlinson Run Park. During migration it is confused with the more northern Alder Flycatcher, *E. brewsteri*, which is identical in appearance, differing only in song.

Alder Flycatcher—see above.

Least Flycatcher [*Empidonax minimus*—Uncommon migrant. Rare summer resident in the northern part of the Panhandle. Sutton listed this species as

nesting in Hancock County, but there are no recent records (Sutton, 1933).  
Eastern Wood Pewee [*Contopus virens*—Common summer resident of woodlands.

Olive-sided Flycatcher [*Nuttallornis borealis*—Casual migrant.

Vermillion Flycatcher [*Pyrocephalus rubinus*—Accidental. One seen by Mrs. Richard Jennings for several days at her home near Brooke Hills Park before and after May 12, 1956. Verified by the late Joe Wilkinson, then vice-president of the Western Pennsylvania Audubon Society and several other experienced observers. This is the only state record.

#### Family Alaudidae

Horned Lark [*Eremophila alpestris*—Fairly common permanent resident of large grassy hilltops. Easily observed at Waterford Downs, Brooke Hills Park and Ohio County Airport. Some wintering individuals may be the more yellow-faced Northern Horned Lark, *E. a. alpestris*.

#### Family Hirundinidae

Tree Swallow [*Iridoprocne bicolor*—Rare migrant. Most often seen over lakes.

Bank Swallow [*Riparia riparia*—Rare migrant.

Rough-winged Swallow [*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*—Common summer resident. Nests in banks above the Buffalo Creek, sometimes utilizing old Kingfisher burrows.

Barn Swallow [*Hirundo rustica*—Common summer resident. Nests in barns, and under eaves and porches of houses in towns.

Cliff Swallow [*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*—Casual migrant.

Purple Martin [*Progne subis*—Uncommon summer resident. Can be seen on or about Martin houses on Gertie's Point Road in West Liberty.

#### Family Corvidae

Blue Jay [*Cyanocitta cristata*—Fairly common summer resident and winter visitor. Winter birds are probably from further north. Much more common now than prior to about 1960. First nesting record for Ohio County was established in 1959 (Breiding, 1959).

Common Raven [*Corvus corax*—Accidental. At least three sight records exist (Conrad, 1960; Laitsch, 1969a; Laitsch, 1975).

Common Crow [*Corvus brachyrhynchos*—Common permanent resident of rural areas. Abundant in some places. There are three large roosts around Warwood.

#### Family Paridae

Black-capped Chickadee [*Parus atricapillus*—Probably a rare winter visitor. Sutton collected one specimen near Bethany on Oct. 12, 1932 (Sutton, 1933). Very few Black-capped Chickadees have been banded in Ohio and Brooke Counties. The two species are very difficult to tell apart in the field. The two notes of *P. atricapillus*' song contrasts with a four-note song of *P. carolinensis*. Forrest Buchanan informs me that *P. atricapillus* is found only in the glaciated parts of adjacent Ohio.

Carolina Chickadee [*Parus carolinensis*—Common permanent resident. Ours belongs to the northern race, *P. carolinensis extimus* named by Todd and Sutton from a type specimen taken at Bethany (A.O.U. Check-list, 1957). Often seen in family groups after the breeding season. Frequents woodlands.

Tufted Titmouse [*Parus bicolor*—Common permanent resident. Breeds in woodlands, moves into towns in winter where it is seen at feeders along with Chickadees and Nuthatches.

#### Family Sittidae

White-breasted Nuthatch [*Sitta carolinensis*—Common permanent resident of woodlands.

Red-breasted Nuthatch [*Sitta canadensis*—Uncommon migrant and casual winter visitor. Usually more common in the fall.

#### Family Certhiidae

Brown Creeper [*Certhia familiaris*—Fairly common migrant. Rare winter visitor and rare summer resident. Nests in Ohio County (Vossler, 1967) and Hancock County (Laitsch, 1969). Since this species is observed into late May and June in Bethany, nests should be found in Brooke County as well.

#### Family Troglodytidae

House Wren [*Troglodytes aedon*—Common summer resident.

Winter Wren [*Troglodytes troglodytes*—Uncommon migrant and winter visitor. Frequents tangles of fallen branches and vines in woodlands where its beautiful song can sometimes be heard in the winter and early spring.

Bewick's Wren [*Thryomanes bewickii*—Casual migrant. Formerly an uncommon summer resident (Sutton, 1933).

Carolina Wren [*Thryothorus ludovicianus*—Common permanent resident of woods and brushy fields.

Long-billed Marsh Wren [*Telmatodytes palustris*—Casual migrant. Haller collected several at Beech Bottom Swamp where it may have nested (Haller, 1961).

Short-billed Marsh Wren [*Cistothorus platensis*—Casual migrant. Sutton collected a specimen at Bethany in September 1936 (Sutton, 1937).

#### Family Mimidae

Mockingbird [*Mimus polyglottos*—Fairly common summer resident. Rare winter visitor. Breeds near ponds east of Brooke Hills Park (Jennings, 1954) and on hilltops south of West Liberty.

Gray Catbird [*Dumetella carolinensis*—Common summer resident of shrubbery in towns, farm yards, and hedge rows. Casual in winter (Laitsch, 1966).

Brown Thrasher [*Toxostoma rufum*—Fairly common summer resident of brushy edges.

#### Family Turdidae

Robin [*Turdus migratorius*—Very common summer resident. Uncommon winter visitor. Abundant in migration. Resident of towns and other open, mixed habitats.

Wood Thrush [*Hylocichla mustelina*—Common summer resident of dark woods.

Hermit Thrush [*Catharus guttatus*] Uncommon migrant and casual winter visitor.

Swainson's Thrush [*Catharus ustulata*—Uncommon migrant.

Gray-cheeked Thrush [*Catharus minima*—Rare migrant. The smaller Bicknell's Thrush, *C. m. bicknelli* also occurs. There is a specimen of each from Ohio County in the Oglebay Institute collection.

Veery [*Catharus fascescens*—Casual migrant.

Eastern Bluebird [*Sialis sialis*—Fairly common permanent resident of rural areas. Often seen about small towns in winter.

Family Sylviidae

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher [*Polioptila caerulea*—Common summer resident of woodlands and parks.

Golden-crowned Kinglet [*Regulus satrapa*—Fairly common winter visitor. Prefers large stands of evergreens.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet [*Regulus calendula*—Fairly common migrant and uncommon winter visitor.

Family Motacillidae

Water Pipit [*Anthus spinoletta*—Casual migrant. Usually seen in spring. Sutton reported a flock of over 100 in a field near Bethany in April 1934 (Sutton, 1935).

Family Bombycillidae

Cedar Waxwing [*Bombycilla cedrorum*—Fairly common but irregular permanent resident. May be less common than in the past.

Family Laniidae

Loggerhead Shrike [*Lanius ludovicianus*—Casual migrant.

Family Sturnidae

Starling [*Sturnus vulgaris*—Abundant permanent resident.

Family Vireonidae

White-eyed Vireo [*Vireo griseus*—Uncommon summer resident of brushy ravines, old fields and roadsides.

Yellow-throated Vireo [*Vireo flavifrons*—Fairly common summer resident of open woods. Breeds 3 mi. up Middle Wheeling Creek.

Solitary Vireo [*Vireo solitarius*—Uncommon migrant.

Red-eyed Vireo [*Vireo olivaceus*—Common summer resident of woodlands.

Philadelphia Vireo [*Vireo philadelphicus*—Uncommon migrant.

Warbling Vireo [*Vireo gilvus*—Fairly common summer resident in towns and along roads and streams.

Family Parulidae

Black and White Warbler [*Mniotilta varia*—Uncommon summer resident of woodlands.

Prothonotary Warbler [*Prothonotaria citrea*—Casual migrant (Phillips, 1957; Laitsch, 1974)

Worm-eating Warbler [*Helminthos vermivorus*—Uncommon Summer resident of heavy woods.

Golden-winged Warbler [*Vermivora chrysoptera*—Rare summer resident in Hancock County.

Blue-winged Warbler [*Vermivora pinus*—Common summer resident of brushy fields. More common than in the past. Brewster's Warbler, a hybrid of the Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warbler, has been observed several times. One established a territory near West Liberty two years in a row in 1974 and 1975 (Beatty, 1975). No nest was found in spite of an intensive search.

Tennessee Warbler [*Vermivora peregrina*—Common migrant.

Orange-crowned Warbler [*Vermivora celata*—Casual migrant. Charles Conrad recalls a specimen found dead in Woodsdale in May 1937.

Nashville Warbler [*Vermivora ruficapilla*—Fairly common migrant.

Northern Parula Warbler [*Parula americana*—Uncommon migrant.

Yellow Warbler [*Dendroica petechia*—Common summer resident of towns, parks and farm yards.

Magnolia Warbler [*Dendroica magnolia*—Fairly common migrant.

Cape May Warbler [*Dendroica tigrina*—Fairly common migrant and casual winter visitor.

Black-throated Blue Warbler [*Dendroica caerulescens*—Uncommon migrant.

Yellow-rumped Warbler [*Dendroica coronata*—Common migrant and uncommon winter visitor. Our subspecies is the Myrtle Warbler.

Black-throated Green Warbler [*Dendroica virens*—Common migrant.

Cerulean Warbler [*Dendroica cerulea*—Common summer resident of woodlands.

Blackburnian Warbler [*Dendroica fusca*—Uncommon migrant.

Yellow-throated Warbler [*Dendroica dominica*—Uncommon migrant. May breed. Glenn Phillips and I observed two territorial males from May 29-July 14, 1970 in a spruce and pine woods in Bethany (Buckelew, 1971).

Chestnut-sided Warbler [*Dendroica pensylvanica*—Fairly common migrant.

Bay-breasted Warbler [*Dendroica castanea*—Rare migrant.

Blackpoll Warbler [*Dendroica striata*—Rare migrant.

Pine Warbler [*Dendroica pinus*—Rare migrant.

Prairie Warbler [*Dendroica discolor*—Rare migrant. Rare summer resident.

Mrs. Edward Vossler observed a male singing into July and immatures on Aug. 22, 1970 in Wheeling (Laitsch, 1971). Can be observed on the ridge above Wheeling Creek. Probably nests there. Also breeds in Hancock County.

Palm Warbler [*Dendroica palmarum*—Uncommon migrant.

Ovenbird [*Seiurus aurocapillus*—Fairly common summer resident of woodlands. Can be heard in Oglebay, Brooke Hills, and Tomlinson Run Parks. Not found in similar habitat near Bethany.

Northern Waterthrush [*Seiurus noveboracensis*—Rare migrant.

Louisiana Waterthrush [*Seiurus motacilla*—Fairly common spring and summer resident of small, swift streams in woodlands.

Kentucky Warbler [*Oporornis formosus*—Fairly common summer resident of woodlands.

Connecticut Warbler [*Oporornis agilis*—Rare migrant.

Mourning Warbler [*Oporornis philadelphia*—Uncommon migrant.

Common Yellowthroat [*Geothlypis trichas*—Common summer resident of wet fields.

Yellow-breasted Chat [*Icteria virens*—Fairly common summer resident of old fields.

Hooded Warbler [*Wilsonia citrina*—Fairly common summer resident of woods. Oglebay and Tomlinson Run Parks. Does not nest near Bethany.

Wilson's Warbler [*Wilsonia pusilla*—Uncommon migrant.

Canada Warbler [*Wilsonia canadensis*—Uncommon migrant.

American Redstart [*Setophaga ruticilla*—Fairly common summer resident of woodlands. Oglebay, Brooke Hills and Tomlinson Run Parks. Rare in the Bethany area.

Family Ploceidae

House Sparrow [*Passer domesticus*—Common permanent resident of towns, cities and farm yards.

Family Icteridae

Bobolink [*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*—Uncommon summer resident in Brooke and Hancock Counties. Migrant only further south. Can be seen during May and June in fields near the swimming pool at Brooke Hills Park. The first nest in West Virginia was found by Robert Murray in Hancock County.

Eastern Meadowlark [*Sturnella magna*—Common summer resident of hayfields and pastures. Casual winter visitor.

Yellow-headed Blackbird [*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*—Accidental. Sutton reported seeing an adult male fly over Bethany on July 16, 1914. (Sutton, 1933).

Redwinged Blackbird [*Agelaius phoeniceus*—Common summer resident of wet fields, cultivated alfalfa and pond margins. Abundant in migration. Casual winter visitor. *A.P. arctolegus*, the Giant Redwinged Blackbird, also occurs as a winter visitor and migrant (Haller, 1961).

Orchard Oriole [*Icterus spurius*—Uncommon summer resident of towns, orchards and parks. Has recently extended its range into Hancock County.

Northern Oriole [*Icterus galbula*—Common summer resident of towns and parks. Casual at feeders in winter. Ours is the Baltimore Oriole subspecies.

Rusty Blackbird [*Euphagus carolinus*—Rare migrant.

Common Grackle [*Quiscalus quiscula*—Very common summer resident. Nests in large pines. Abundant in migration. Uncommon in winter.

Brown-headed Cowbird [*Molothrus ater*—Common summer resident. Very common migrant. Casual winter visitor.

Family Thraupidae

Scarlet Tanager [*Piranga olivacea*—Fairly common summer resident of mature woodlands.

Summer Tanager [*Piranga rubra*—Casual summer visitor. There are at least two records: June 21, 1953 in Marshall County (Gorman, 1954) and Aug. 4, 1961 in Ohio County (Breiding, 1962b).

Family Fringillidae

Cardinal [*Cardinalis cardinalis*—Common permanent resident of edges and woodlands.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak [*Pheucticus ludovicianus*—Fairly common migrant. Rare summer resident. Nests in Tomlinson Run Park and less frequently to the south.

Blue Grosbeak [*Guiraca caerulea*—Rare migrant.

Indigo Bunting [*Passerina cyanea*—Common summer resident of roadsides, parks and edges of woodlands.

Dickcissel [*Spiza americana*—Casual migrant. Formerly a rare summer resident.

Evening Grosbeak [*Hesperiphona vespertina*—Casual winter visitor. Present in large numbers in some years, absent in others. Often seen at sunflower seed feeders.

Purple Finch [*Carpodacus purpureus*—Casual winter visitor often present in

flocks of 30 or more. May breed near Chester where E.R. Chandler observed it throughout the summers of 1974 and 1975.

House Finch [*Carpodacus mexicanus*—No confirmed records of residence in the Panhandle, but this species is expanding its range and is to be expected in towns and cities.

Pine Grosbeak [*Pinicola enucleator*—Casual winter visitor. Montagna found an immature male in Bethany in December 1938 (Brooks, 1944). Small flocks occurred in Oglebay Park during the winters of 1951-52 and 1961-62.

Common Redpoll [*Acanthis flammea*—Casual winter visitor. Flocks of over 100 seen along the Ohio River and fields inland.

Pine Siskin [*Spinus pinus*—Casual migrant and winter visitor. Often present in flocks of 20 or more. Mrs. Edward Vossler banded 33 between March 30 and May 1, 1970 (Katholi, 1971).

American Goldfinch [*Spinus tristis*—Common permanent resident. Nests in late summer in brushy fields and edges. Common at feeders.

Red Crossbill [*Loxia curvirostra*—Casual winter visitor. Often present in flocks of 25 or more.

White-winged Crossbill [*Loxia leucoptera*—Casual winter visitor. The Ohio County record was established by Glen Phillips on November 18, 1954 (Breiding, 1955b).

Rufous-sided Towhee [*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*—Common summer resident of woods and edges. Casual winter visitor. Dr. Gresham observed one at his feeder during the winter of 1970-71 in Bethany.

Savannah Sparrow [*Passerculus sandwichensis*—Uncommon summer resident of upland fields. Can be seen in fields north of West Liberty.

Grasshopper Sparrow [*Ammodramus savannarum*—Common summer resident of pasture fields.

Henslow's Sparrow [*Ammodramus henslowii*—Uncommon summer resident. Breeds in Oglebay Park and Tomlinson Run Park.

Le Conte's Sparrow [*Ammospiza leconteii*—Accidental. Sutton and Haller's two Beech Bottom records from 1936 are the only records for the state (Sutton, 1937).

Sharp-tailed Sparrow [*Ammospiza caudacuta*—Accidental. Haller took three specimens at Beech Bottom Swamp in the fall, 1948 (Haller, 1961).

Vesper Sparrow [*Pooecetes gramineus*—Uncommon summer resident of fields and meadows. Occurs north of West Liberty at Tomlinson Run Park, and at Bear Rocks Lakes (Phillips, 1973).

Lark Sparrow [*Chonestes grammacus*—Formerly a rare summer resident (Brooks, 1944). No recent records.

Bachman's Sparrow [*Aimophila aestivalis*—Accidental. Haller collected a singing male near West Liberty in July 1934 (Haller, 1935).

Dark-eyed Junco [*Junco hyemalis*—Common winter visitor.

Tree Sparrow [*Spizella arborea*—Common winter visitor.

Chipping Sparrow [*Spizella passerina*—Common summer resident of towns and parks.

Field Sparrow [*Spizella pusilla*—Common summer resident of brushy fields. Casual in winter.

Harris' Sparrow [*Zonotrichia querula*—Accidental. I observed one closely in a power line cut on February 26, 1971 at Bethany.

White-crowned Sparrow [*Zonotrichia leucophrys*—Uncommon migrant. More common in the spring.

White-throated Sparrow [*Zonotrichia albicollis*—Common migrant and fairly common winter visitor.

Fox Sparrow [*Passerella iliaca*—Casual migrant and winter visitor.

Lincoln's Sparrow [*Melospiza lincolni*—Casual migrant. Sometimes seen in large flocks. Sutton reported seeing 10-100 daily during September 1936 in Brooke County (Sutton, 1937).

Swamp Sparrow [*Melospiza georgiana*—Rare migrant.

Song Sparrow [*Melospiza melodia*—Common permanent resident of brushy edges, towns and parks.

Snow Bunting [*Plectrophenax nivalis*—Casual winter visitor. Flocks seen in Oglebay Park in 1959-60 (Hurley, 1960) and on the Weirton Christmas Count in 1968 (Laitsch, 1969a).

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## Book Reviews

FAMILIAR BIRDS of NORTHWEST FORESTS, FIELDS and GARDENS by David B. Marshall with paintings by the late R. Bruce Horsfall and Zella M. Schultz. 4½ by 7½ inches, 84 pages, 133 species in color.

Food habits and nesting preferences are given as well as other data such as local distribution and unique behavioral activity. The books purpose is stated to be "intended for everyone interested in birds, especially beginners." It should interest people who need more information on the more familiar birds of the area "west of the Cascade Range of northern California and into southern British Columbia exclusive of salt water and alpine species."

A short section on the relation of birds and man with regards to habitat change and use of pesticides is included. Also, sections on plantings, feeders and nesting boxes to attract birds to ones backyard.

It sells for \$2.50 and can be obtained from its publishers, the Portland Audubon Society, Portland, Oregon.

**George Hurley**

BIRDING from a TRACTOR SEAT by Chester T. Flugum

This fascinating book, written by a man whose interest in birds goes back to early childhood, should hold the reader's interest. Mr. Flugum's understanding of the laws of nature is pointed out in his stories, especially the benefits of hawks and owls, the nest robbing by Blue Jays and the cowbird egg laying in other bird's nests.

This is a compilation of stories originally published in the *Flicker*, the Minnesota Ornithological Union's periodical, and from a monthly column written for a Minnesota birding publication. It is especially good when one has short periods available for reading. One or more complete short stories can be read without fear of continuity loss if there is a great time lapse between reading sessions. You might say it is a birdwatchers Readers Digest.

Illustrated by Dr. Walter Breckenridge, retired Director of the James Ford Bell Museum of Natural History in Minneapolis, the book contains 435 pages, costs \$7.95 and can be obtained by writing Box 30038, St. Paul, Minnesota 55175. **Sue Edmonds**

WORDS for BIRDS by Edward Gruson

Does "tree dweller-with-red-spots-on-its-breast-like-chickenpox" give you any clue to the identity of a well known warbler? This is the precise translation from the Greek for the genus and species of the Yellow Warbler. Did you know that cilla is a false "Greek" word used only by ornithologists as a word for tail? However, there is no such word in Greek, or even in Latin. There is a folklore tale that the Least Bittern produces its call by piercing a reed with its beak and blowing through it.

These tidbits are only a fraction of the miscellany which can be found for your favorite bird in *Words For Birds*. Mr. Gruson has compiled an interesting, illuminating and sometimes humorous collection of data which includes "the birds of Hawaii and more recent sightings and collections of Asian species in the Aleutians and Alaska" as well as the American birds north of the Rio Grande.

He has shed some light upon the origin of common and scientific names of birds as well as short biographical sketches of their namesakes. These people, surprisingly, are often wives, friends or scientists in fields other than ornithology. This is a fun book which will interest amateur ornithologists and lexicographers alike.

**Anne Eddy**

## Bird Kill at TV Tower

**Bill Bartolo**

During the period Sept. 18 through Sept. 27, 1975 the WFMJ-TV tower in Youngstown, Ohio was the scene of the death or severe injury of 1057 nocturnally migrating birds. Major kills occurred during the nights of Sept. 18—340, Sept. 23—405, and Sept. 24—213. I covered the same area during Fall 1974 and Spring 1975 without experiencing kills approaching these numbers.

The tower base is at 1033 feet above sea level. The tower is 1085 feet tall and is supported at three levels by tri-radiate guying wire ropes two inches thick. The observation that specimens were found throughout a 15 acre surrounding area indicates that the kills were the result of collision with the guy wires as well as with the tower.

Ovenbirds numbered about 30% of the total kill. Red-eyed Vireo, Magnolia W., Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Catbird, Tennessee W., and Woodthrush aggregated about 50%. Among the remainder were Nighthawk, both Kinglets, Swainson's Thrush, Veery, House Wren, Warbling, Philadelphia, and Solitary Vireos. The warblers included Parula, Black-throated Blue, Blackburnian, Black-throated Green, Yellow-rumped, Canada, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, Chestnut-sided, Cape May, Black and White, Yellow, Palm, Connecticut, Nashville, Hooded, Yellow-throat, Redstart, Blue-winged, and Northern Waterthrush. Bobolink, Indigo Bunting, and Scarlet Tanager brought the species list to 39. The outstanding specimen was a male Scarlet Tanager in full molt, so colorful, and without a blemish.

After recovery, the specimens were sorted out at home on paper toweling to dry preparatory to weighing. (NOTE: Many were not weighed because they were partly eaten by yellow-jackets, ants, slugs, and maggots; some lost members in the collision; and there was evidence of predation and scavenging, the latter mostly by crows.) All were then labeled and frozen in plastic bags.

The frozen specimens have been delivered to the Carnegie Museum, Section of Birds, for identity verification, sexing, judgment of fat content, age determination, and other useful information. They may be used as study skins, as skeletal specimens, or for research projects. Exceptional specimens, if needed for museum displays, may be mounted.

The weather pattern during this ten-day period was characterized by variable winds, light to heavy rains, and low cloud ceilings. It may be only coincidence that hurricane Eloise occurred over this identical time span. A similar major kill was noted at Buffalo, N. Y. but not in the Marietta, Ohio area.

I have had timely and extraordinary help from my mentor Randy Jones; strong encouragement and support from Dr. Kenneth Parkes, Miriam Stern, and BBCer Dr. Mary Clench of the Carnegie Museum, the ultimate in forbearance from Josephine, my spouse, and Betsy, Randy's mother, in allowing the appropriation of freezer space for specimen storage—all of whom I acknowledge gratefully, as well as the WFMJ engineering staff for unlimited access to their facility.

I am amply rewarded for the time and effort of this continuing activity by my contribution to the reservoir of avian knowledge and by an increased empathy with our feathered associates, and would gladly share this by offering what help I can to anyone desiring to undertake a similar project.

**88 Woodview, Youngstown, Ohio 44512**

## Feeding Habits of the Red-Breasted Nuthatch

From October of '75 to April of '76 Red-breasted Nuthatches were common in the Athens, W. Va. area. Since they are rare winter visitors in this section of the state I took every opportunity to observe them. I was especially interested in their various feeding habits.

When they first arrived in the fall they fed in flocks of 12-16 birds. The birds could usually be found in a stand of white pines on the Concord College campus. In early morning the nuthatches could be heard feeding in the crowns of the pines. By late morning they had worked their way down the tree trunks in search of insect eggs and larvae under the bark. They were relatively quiet in the afternoon and evening. This was the general routine through mid-winter.

Then they dispersed into groups of 2 to 5 birds. Also at this time they began feeding in deciduous trees—especially large oaks and maples. At first I thought some of the birds had left the area. When I extended my walks I encountered more of the birds. They had merely extended their feeding range in order to find sufficient food. In March I discovered them feeding on the ground. While on the ground they ate teaberries and insects or insect eggs that they found in rotting logs and stumps.

I spent one afternoon watching the red-breasted nuthatch at a bird feeder near Athens. The owner told me that two birds were the most they saw at one time. While I was there I saw only one bird. He made four trips to the feeder. He would fly in, grab a sunflower seed, and leave as quickly as he arrived. The red-breasted was very compatible with the other members of the mixed winter flock. On only one occasion did I see any conflict. Two nuthatches chased a brown creeper from the tree in which they were feeding.

By mid to late April the birds had gathered into one large flock again—usually 14 to 16 birds. While my observations were of the Red-breasted Nuthatch in and around Athens I did find the birds in three other locations. One was in Pipestem State Park in October and another was on top of East River Mountain in November. These birds, I am sure, were moving through. The third was in Camp Creek State Forest in April. This bird was probably in migration also. I regret not checking this area during the winter as it has many hemlocks and some white pines which could have sustained a winter population of Red-breasted Nuthatches. **Jim Phillips, Rt. 4 Box 4, Princeton, W. Va.**

## Osprey Nests in Wayne County, West Virginia

During the late Spring of 1973 Judge C. W. Ferguson of the 24th Judicial Circuit Court of West Virginia spotted a pair of Osprey [*Pandion haliaetus*] in the East Lynn dam area which he presumed were nesting. The dam is near East Lynn, West Virginia about 25 miles South of Huntington. On June 2, 1973 Mr. Mac Little, the ranger in charge, and the author located the Osprey nest about 30 feet from shore in a live beech tree. Two young birds, near fledgling size, were seen in the nest which was about 60 feet from the ground. Color slides of the young were taken by the author and given to the Corps of Engineers for their files. The young Osprey left the nest about June 5. The birds did not return to the nest area and no evidence of nesting in the vicinity has been noted since then. **Russell Hogg**



## FIELD NOTES

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

Winter Season

December 1975, January and February 1976

The Winter Season can well be described as mild and open. The only period of cold weather occurred in January. February was quite warm with summery temperatures on many days. Christmas Counts reflected the numbers of both species and individuals that remained in the region and early migrants were at least two weeks early.

Northern finches were extremely scarce except for Evening Grosbeaks which appeared in hordes throughout the region. Some reporters described it as an inundation. Feeders were over run with grosbeaks to the point that many people suspended feeding from time to time.

Loons, grebes and herons—Two **Com. Loons** were at Seneca Lake, O. Dec. 14 (C&E), two wintered at Washington, Pa. (SH) and one was included in the Charleston, W. Va. Christmas Count (C.C.). Unusually good numbers of **Horned Grebes** were at Seneca Lake, O. in December and January. They were also seen at Washington, Pa. and Wheeling, W. Va. and a flock of 50 was on the Kanawha river at Charleston, W. Va. Dec. 27 (NG). **Pied-billed Grebes** were mentioned in several reports. **Great Blue Herons** were seen at Seneca Lake, Youngstown, and East Liverpool, O. during the period. 2 were at Clarksville, Pa. Jan. 7 (RKB), 2 were included on the Lewisburg, W. Va. C.C. and at least a dozen wintered at a pond at South Charleston, W. Va. (GFH). The sighting of a **Green Heron** on Coal river near St. Albans, W. Va. Dec. 30 (NG) was unusual.

Waterfowl—15 **Canada Geese** were on a lake near Barnesville, O. Jan. 1 (C&E). They were seen on the Charleston, W. Va. C.C. for the first time when 4 were found on count day. Glen Phillips saw 8 on the Ohio river south of Moundsville, W. Va. Jan. 13 and 3 were at Milton, W. Va. Feb. 15 (HG). A flock of 48 **Canadas** and 2 **Snow Geese** were seen near Lewisburg, W. Va. Dec. 27 (COH). A **Snow Goose**, blue phase, was included in the Charleston C.C. Most reporters found **Mallard** and **Black Ducks** during the period where there was open water. **Blacks** were more numerous. **Redhead Ducks** were reported in good numbers in several places during January and February. **Ringnecked Ducks** also appeared to be in better than usual numbers. **Canvasbacks** were seen at Seneca Lake, O. in December and February. 2 were at Charleston, W. Va. Jan. 20. Smith considered **Goldeneyes** and **Buffleheads** to be well

below normal at Bluestone Lake, Hinton, W. Va. However Ohio reporters found them present in normal numbers during January and February. Noteworthy was the sighting of a small flock of **Oldsquaws**, 2 males and 5 females, at Bluestone Lake Dec. 8 (JLS).

Vultures and hawks—The Lewisburg, W. Va. C.C. had 70 **Turkey Vultures**. They were seen at Athens, W. Va. Feb. 18 (JP) and at Charleston, W. Va. Feb. 26 (NG). 10 **Black Vultures** were included in the Lewisburg C.C. A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** was seen at Lewisburg Dec. 27 and one was seen at Pence Springs, W. Va. Jan. 14 (COH). One was on the Charleston C.C. There were several reports of Cooper's Hawk. The winter population of **Red-tailed** and **Red-shouldered hawks** appeared to be normal. A **Golden Eagle** was reported in Gilmer County, W. Va. in February and a State Game Trapper reported 2 in Pendleton Co. W. Va. during the winter (fide E.O.). 2 **Marsh Hawks** were seen near Clarksville, Pa. Dec. 28 (RKB). An **Osprey** was seen near the Charleston, W. Va. airport Dec. 22 (HG). The **Am. Kestrel** population seemed to be somewhat improved.

Gallinaceous and shorebirds—Small flocks of **Wild Turkeys** were seen in Hancock Co. W. Va. (ERC) and in Brooke Co. W. Va. (BBC) during the winter. A flock of 7 gobblers was seen near White Sulphur Springs, W. Va. Jan. 12 (COH). **Killdeer** were mentioned in most all reports and a record high of 133 were listed on the Charleston, W. Va. CC. **Am. Woodcocks** were seen and heard at Clinton Hills, Wheeling, W. Va. Feb. 17 (BB) and several were found at Seneca Lake, O. the same week. 23 **Com. Snipe** were listed on the Charleston, W. Va. C.C. They were seen at Lewisburg, W. Va. Dec. 27 (COH) and at Youngstown, O. Feb. 24 (WB).

Gulls and owls—Good sized flocks of **Ring-billed Gulls** were seen at Seneca Lake, O., on the Ohio river at East Liverpool, O. and Wheeling, W. Va. and on the Kanawha river at Charleston, W. Va. **Screech Owls** may be more common than we suspect. A total of 71 responded to taped Screech Owl calls played by a group of "owlers" participating in the Wheeling, W. Va. C.C. (WHB). 5 were called in by this method near East Liverpool, O. Feb. 19.

Kingfishers, woodpeckers and larks—There were many reports of wintering **Belted Kingfishers** along with comments that they disappeared during the January freeze up but returned to the same streams as soon as the water was open. Reporters agreed that most species of woodpeckers maintained normal populations. **Red-bellied Woodpeckers** were increasing in some areas and as usual **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were very scarce. Large flocks of **Horned Larks** wintered in Mahoning and Columbiana Counties in Ohio and Edgerton reported that they were back in the Barnesville, O. area after being totally absent for a couple of years.

Chickadees through wrens—**Black-capped Chickadees** moved into the region south of their normal breeding range early in the fall and remained in very good numbers throughout the period. A **Boreal Chickadee** was seen at Washington, Pa. Jan. 5 (AG). It was seen by several birders during the following week. **Tufted Titmice** may be in for a population decline. Comments of "down in numbers" and "very scarce" came from several areas. **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were not uncommon during the period. The Charleston C.C. listed 26 and Jim Phillips saw from 1 to 7 on each field trip in the Athens, W. Va. area. Most reporters considered the **Winter Wren** population to be normal. A **Bewick's Wren** was seen at a feeder at Hinton, W. Va. Jan. 24 (JLS). **Carolina Wrens** remain at a high population level. 2 **Long-billed Marsh**

**Wrens** were seen near Princeton, W. Va. Feb. 14 (JP). A **Short-billed Marsh Wren** was seen at Bluestone Park near Hinton, W. Va. during the Bibbee Nature Club C.C. (OJ).

Mimics and thrushes—Reports of wintering **Brown Thrashers** were confined to the southern portion of the region. Small flocks of **Robins** were reported in many places during December and January. Large flocks of migrants appeared all over the region about Feb. 21. **Bluebirds** wintered in fair numbers.

Kinglets through shrikes—Although most reporters mentioned **Golden-crowned Kinglets**, numbers appeared to be below normal. **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** sightings were limited to the southern part of the region. A **Pipit** was seen in Greenbrier Co. W. Va. Dec. 27 (COH). Small flocks of roving **Cedar Waxwings** appeared in most places. Flocks of 30-40 were found at Clarksville, Pa. and a flock of some 60 birds roosted in evergreens and holly at East Liverpool, O. throughout the period. The only record of **Loggerhead Shrike** was that of one wintering near Hinton, W. Va. (JLS).

Warblers—A **Cape May Warbler** attempting to winter at Boardman, O. was found dead at a feeder Jan. 10 (WB). 9 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were seen at Bethany, W. Va. Dec. 21 (AB). 20 of this species were included on the Charleston, W. Va. C.C. They were also reported at Youngstown, O. and Elkview, W. Va.

Blackbirds—More than usual **Eastern Meadowlarks** remained in the region during the winter. Two flocks of 20-25 were seen regularly in the Youngstown, O. area (WB). Some were seen all winter at Barnesville, O. (C&E) with flocks after Feb. 9. A small flock was seen at Charleston, W. Va. Jan. 30 (HG) and Princeton, W. Va. Feb. 12 (JP). Some **Red-winged Blackbirds** were seen throughout the winter and migrating flocks arrived mid February. A **Rusty Blackbird** was seen at Clarksville, Pa. Jan. 30 and 6 were there Mar. 15 (RKB). A flock of 18, composed of both male and female **Rusties**, was seen at the Soji residence in Parkersburg, W. Va. (ES) on Feb. 9. A few **Com. Grackles** wintered in the region. All over reports indicated that migrants returned around the middle of February. **Brown-headed Cowbirds** also returned earlier than usual.

Grosbeaks through sparrows—Most reporters commenting on **Cardinals** thought the population was good. However the Charleston C.C. showed a marked decrease compared to the 1974 count. A **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** wintered at a feeder in Youngstown, O. (WB). **Evening Grosbeaks** appeared to be well distributed over the region. They came early and built up to great numbers. Olliver banded 600 at Elkins, W. Va. and speculated that he could have banded a thousand. The Charleston, W. Va. C.C. showed a count of 283 compared to zero in 1974. **Purple Finches** were practically non-existent in the northern part of the region. **House Finches** were reported at Washington and Uniontown, Pa. (AG) and one came to a feeder in Elkins, W. Va. for the second year (EO). A flock of 30 **Redpolls** was found in a weedy riverside situation at East Liverpool, O. Feb. 19 (ERC). **Pine Siskins** were scarce. A small flock appeared at Barnesville, O. first week of December (C&E) and one was seen at Wheeling, W. Va. Jan. 9 (WHB). The winter population of **Am. Goldfinches** did not measure up to that of the past several years. **Rufous-sided Towhees** remained in the region in better than usual numbers. A **Savannah Sparrow** was seen at Princeton, W. Va. Feb. 28 (JP). **Dark-eyed Juncos** were fairly plentiful with several reporters noting "common." However the reporters from Charleston, W. Va.

thought numbers there were somewhat low. **Tree Sparrows** were extremely scarce in most areas. **Field Sparrows** were recorded by most reporters which indicates that a greater number than usual remained in the region. A flock of 30-40 **White-crowned Sparrows** spent the winter at the Handley farm at Lewisburg, W. Va. He noted that there was an unusual number of adults in the flock. Edgerton also noted that most of the White-crowned Sparrows seen at Barnesville, O. were adults. Most reporters commented on good numbers of wintering **White-throated Sparrows**. There were several reports of **Fox Sparrows**. A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was seen on the Charleston, W. Va. C.C. as well as 4 **Swamp Sparrows**. **Song Sparrows** were considered to be fairly common by most reporters. Large flocks of **Snow Buntings** were seen in Mahoning Co. O. during the winter (WB). A flock of 1000 plus was seen in Belmont Co. O. Feb. 19 (C&E). A flock of about 20 birds was seen at Clearview near Wheeling, W. Va. on Jan. 10 (George Lippert fide WHB).

Contributors—William Bartolo, **WB**; William H. Beatty, **WHB**; Ralph K. Bell, **RKB**; Dorothy Broensen, **DB**; Brooks Bird Club, hq. Wheeling, **BBC**; A. R. Buckelew, Jr. **AB**; E. R. Chandler, **ERC**; Mary Chapman and Mabel Edgerton, **C&E**; Alan Gillen, **AG**; Norris Gluck, **NG**; Hullet Good, **HG**; Charles O. Handley, Sr., **SOH**; Sarah Hugus, **SH**; George F. Hurley, **GFH**; Oliver Johnson, **OJ**; E. M. Olliver, **EO**; Glen Phillips, **GP**; James Phillips, **JP**; Merit Skaggs, **MS**; J. Lawrence Smith, **JLS**; Eleanor Soji, **ES**; Patricia Temple, **PT**.—Mrs. Nevada Laitsch, MC 21, Dixonville, East Liverpool, Ohio 43920

## An Addition to the West Virginia List— Northern Shrike

George A. Hall

Brooks (1944) placed the Northern Shrike [*Lanius excubitor*] on the hypothetical list for West Virginia on the basis of uncertain sight records from Wood and Ohio Counties. In recent years two reasonably satisfactory sight records have been reported in the "Field Notes" section of **The Redstart**. E. R. Chandler reported one from Newell, Hancock County on January 3, 1954 and G. F. Hurley found one at the McClintic Wildlife Station, Mason County on March 20, 1967. Northern Shrikes, except for the immatures, are extremely difficult to distinguish from Loggerhead Shrikes [*L. ludovicianus*], and so in my "List of West Virginia Birds" (Hall, 1971) I agreed with Brooks' earlier decision to carry this species on the hypothetical list.

More recently, however, I have uncovered some very old information. Thaddeus Surber, the well-known and very reliable naturalist who once lived in Greenbrier County reported (Surber, 1888) that he had shot one at White Sulphur Springs on November 4, 1887. Knowing that many of Surber's specimens were now in the collections of the American Museum of Natural History, I wrote to Mr. John Bull of that institution to see if this specimen were there. Mr. Bull was unable to locate this particular specimen but did find a specimen collected by Surber at White Sulphur Springs on December 7, 1893. The existence of a valid West Virginia specimen for this species serves to remove it from the hypothetical list, and place it in the "Accidental winter visitor" category of "The List." Whether Surber actually collected two birds six years apart, or whether the data on the specimen label are in error cannot be ascertained at this time.

Although by custom this specimen places the species on the full list, it does not in

any way change the true status of the sight records by Messrs. Hurley and Chandler. In each of these cases the bird was correctly identified or it was not, and no one can ever decide which of these alternatives is "true." Thus these records remain just as "hypothetical" or "non-hypothetical" as they ever were. This procedure of allowing a single specimen (usually an old one) to validate and make "sanitary" recent unrelated sight records has always struck me as incongruous. However, it is sanctioned by years of tradition among faunalists.

I would, however, like to remind all field workers that identification of Northern Shrikes is very difficult, and should be undertaken with great care. West Virginia does lie well south of the normal winter range of the species, and it can never be expected to be other than accidental.

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## The Gathering Cage



Constance Katholi, Editor  
930 Woodland Avenue  
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**Columbus, Ohio.** Many of us are concerned about the plight of the Kirtland warbler but few of us are in a position to do anything about it. So we operators of the decoy trap on the University Farm in Columbus can derive some satisfaction from the fact that we have made an actual although modest contribution to the problem. Here is the story.

In recent years cowbirds have appeared in the area where the Kirtlands breed and, following their ancient custom, have parasitized many Kirtland nests. This has produced an alarming decrease in Kirtlands at the end of the season. Last year the Wildlife Service carried out a program of trapping and eliminating cowbirds in the area. I have not seen the detailed results but understand that the program produced a significant increase in the warblers at the end of the season.

This present year (1976) the Wildlife Service is engaged in a similar program using

large decoy type traps for the cowbirds. Such traps at the beginning of the season lack decoys although later when doing something with the captured birds the operator leaves enough in the trap for decoys. So that is where we came in,—providing the initial decoys. We had been operating our trap since late winter. Presently we began saving all the cowbirds, i.e. putting them from the gathering cage back into the trap. After a few weeks of this the Wildlife people one spring morning took all our cowbirds to Michigan. There they were used to “bait” a goodly number of traps and hopefully to further the demise of most of the cowbird would-be parasites. We have not heard of the results as yet but we are glad we could do a little something for those nice but endangered Kirtland warblers. **Harold E. Burt**

### Migrating Osprey 'Packing a Lunch'

On Saturday, September 13, 1975, I was with a group of West Virginia University students at Centennial Park on Route 219 south of Thomas, W. Va. to observe the hawk migration. The temperature reached a high of 46 degrees F. with a 25 to 30 mph, N.W. wind blowing constantly. We had moderate success for this early in the season, with a daily total of 250 hawks of 6 species. A little before noon we noticed an Osprey, at a considerable distance N.E. of us, soaring down the ridge in our direction. This was our second Osprey for the day. As this bird approached, it looked a bit different in form, seeming to be “bottom heavy.” As the bird passed close by, we were amazed to note that it was carrying a fish in its talons. While we could not identify the fish, it appeared to be around 8 to 10 inches in length. We all got quite a chuckle when someone referred to the bird as a “brown-bagger,” carrying his lunch on the way south.

We then began discussing what we had observed. Where did the Osprey get the fish? Could it have been caught at Silver Lake, about eight miles “up the ridge” and in the direct path of migration along Backbone Mountain? Do Ospreys have a difficult time finding places to feed while migrating along the mountain ridges? Could this be a deterrent to inland migration south of the glaciated northeast? So, once again, an observation had opened many doors behind which there were no answers. If others have observed Ospreys “packing a lunch” south, I would like to hear about it.

— **Bill Wylie**, Division of Forestry, W.V.U., Morgantown, W. Va. 26506

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