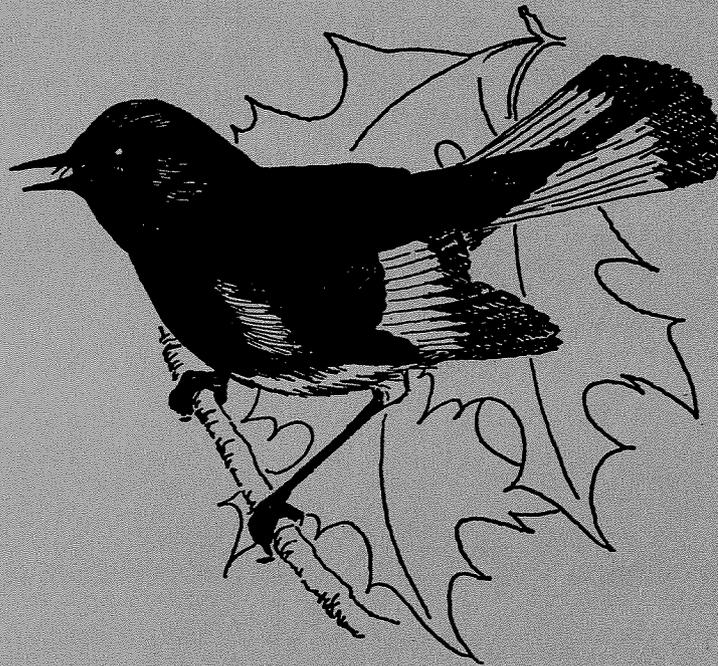


The REDSTART

VOLUME 43, NUMBER 4

OCTOBER, 1976



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**

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THE REDSTART is published quarterly in January, April, July and October at 920 Hughes Drive, St. Albans, W. Va. 25177. The official organ of the Brooks Bird Club, it is mailed to all members in good standing. Non-member subscription price is \$5.00. Individual copies cost \$1.00 except the Foray issue which is \$2.00. Changes of address and requests for back issues should be mailed to 707 Warwood Ave., Wheeling, W. Va. All articles for publication and books for review should be mailed to the Editor.

Printed by Harless Printing Company, St. Albans, W. Va.

Blue Grosbeaks
in Putnam
and Mason Counties,
West Virginia

Constance Katholi and
Anne Shreve



Photo by Ray and Jo Ashworth

Eleven Blue Grosbeaks [*Guiraca caerulea*], eight males, a female and two nestlings, were recorded in Putnam and Mason Counties on June 22 and July 1, 1976. All but two males were discovered during coverage of the 25-mile "Paradise" Breeding Bird Survey. The two additional males were found when portions of the route were retraced on the later date.

1976 was the seventh consecutive year for the route and represents the first year that the Blue Grosbeak was recorded. "Paradise" was previously run by Maxine Kiff who is familiar with the species. She recorded a singing male near her farm in adjacent Jackson County in July, 1975.

The starting point for the route is the town of Paradise on State Route 34. It intersects Route 62 on stop number 15 and continues northwestward along Kanawha River. The first grosbeak noted was a female carrying food at stop 32, one mile east of Buffalo. The nest was located in a blackberry tangle three and one-half feet from the ground. It contained two young birds and an unpipped egg. The male was singing nearby. During the next 15 stops, five other singing males were recorded. The two other males, found on July 1, were near stops 17 and 29. Five of these eight singing males were seen.

The habitats were all similar—low areas through farmland that were grown over with blackberry, box elder and willow thickets. A little-used railroad track, running generally parallel to the highway, was grown over with similar vegetation and appeared to contribute to the habitat type.

Breeding records for the Blue Grosbeak are rare throughout West Virginia with none previously reported for Putnam or Mason Counties. In addition to the Kiff observation there are the following records for the Kanawha Valley: fledgings were seen once by the authors in Kanawha County; there is a May 27, 1952 sight record for Mason County by Edeburn; and one for May 20, 1969 by J. L. Smith near Confidence, Putnam County (Handley 1976). An abrupt increase for the Blue

Grosbeak in spring of 1976 in the Delmarva (Delaware, Maryland, Virginia) region was noted by John T. Linehan (conv.)

The sudden appearance of unusual numbers of Blue Grosbeaks in Putnam and Mason Counties adds another species to the list of so-called southern birds that have recently demonstrated phenomenal increases in southwestern West Virginia. The Yellow-throated Warbler has had a steady 20-year increase (Shreve 1962), rising abruptly in 1976. Katholi's "Olcott" Breeding Bird Survey Route produced 11 singing males this year. In nine years of coverage, two had been the average with four the maximum. Upon retracing portions of the route, and by searching several peripheral areas, many additional singing males were discovered.

A general increase in the Northern Parula Warbler was noted in 1975 by Bystrak (1976) and locally by Shreve and Katholi in 1976. For example, the "Yawkey" route, during ten previous years of coverage, produced an average of ten Parulas per run. The 1976 coverage on June 4 showed 19 singing males.

A current, heavy influx of the southerly Blue-winged Warbler is also becoming evident and it is apparently replacing the once-common Golden-winged Warbler. Virtually all Golden-winged territories known to the authors prior to 1976 in Kanawha and Lincoln Counties, are now occupied by Blue-winged Warblers.

On June 22, the authors were accompanied by Jo Ashworth and Calvert Armbrrecht, and on July 1, by Norris Gluck. On the latter date, the female with young out of the nest, was observed at stop 32. The nest and unhatched egg were collected. Several authors have noted that snakeskins are frequently woven into Blue Grosbeak nests. This one contained a long, narrow strip of transparent plastic that was embossed with a grid-like pattern so visually like a snakeskin that it must be viewed with a magnifying glass to see that it is man-made. The nest and egg have been deposited in the collection of the Handlan Chapter of the Brooks Bird Club at Sunrise.

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Shreve, Anne (1962) Some notes on the Yellow-throated Warbler near Charleston, Redstart XXIX: 1, 19-20.

C.K., 930 Woodland Avenue, South Charleston, West Virginia 25303
A.S., Rt. 2 Box 486-K, Charleston, West Virginia 25314

Addendum:

The above represents the last full day's birding with my friend of 25 years. It had an adventurous aspect, typical of an outing with her. Whether it was a night's banding in the Purple Martin roost, a Christmas Count or a short walk, Connie's approach was always scholarly, fresh, endlessly inquisitive. These singular impressions and insights were often imparted to us through her writing and her art. She died on November 16 after facing her fate with courage and even humor for more than two years. Members of the BBC will all remember her with a special affection.

— Anne Shreve

Allegheny Front Migration Observatory

Record for 1975

George A. Hall

The eighteenth year of bird-banding on the Allegheny Front Mountain in Grant County, West Virginia was a rather modest success compared with the outstanding season in 1974. After the fantastic results of last year even an ordinarily good year was bound to look mediocre. The station was in operation five days in August, 27 days in September and nine days in October. The period of continuous operation ran from August 26 to October 5, ceasing a little earlier than usual. Rain forced the suspension of one day's operation in August and lack of banders caused three days of shut-down in September. There was only one brief period of cold weather, October 3-4 and otherwise the weather was generally favorable.

A total of 3889 birds of 72 species was banded in a station effort of 2230 net-hours, giving a capture ratio of 1744 birds per 1000 net-hours. The total number of captures is the third highest yearly total, and the capture ratio is the second highest.

The pattern of captures was slightly different this year than in other years. As usual there was a peak in captures in late August. Usually this is followed by a long period of days with low captures, but this year there were two big peaks in the first half of September; September 3-5 and September 9-11. A major flight occurred September 21-22 and the biggest movement of the year on September 27-28. September 27 was the day of highest captures with 367 birds banded, although the highest capture ratios were on September 3 and September 9. These high ratios came partly because the nets were not opened for very long on those days. One other day, September 22 had a number of birds banded in excess of 300, five days had more than 200 captures and seven more days had between 100 and 200 birds per day.

No new species were added to the station list this year and that list now stands at 107 with a grand total of 37,442 birds banded. Fifteen birds banded at this station in previous years were recaptured, the prize being a Dark-eyed Junco which has Repeated every year since the original banding in 1970. No reports of birds banded at this station being recovered elsewhere have come in during this year.

As usual the Big Three species were the Tennessee Warbler, the Black-throated Blue Warbler, and the Blackpoll Warbler. For some years the Blackpoll has been the most abundant species taken here, and so it was somewhat of a surprise to find that this species came in third this year, with the Tennessee Warbler taking over Number one with 661 banded. Eastern North America experienced a massive southward flight of Red-breasted Nuthatches this fall, and this is reflected in our capturing 52, a new station high. The operation of the station ceased too early to catch many of the great southward flight of Black-capped Chickadees which took place in late October and November.

Some other species which staged good flights were Blue Jays (although the number captured ties the record number, the flight of jays past the station may not have been as high as in some years), Swainson's Thrushes, Black-throated Green Warblers, Bay-breasted Warblers and Cape May Warblers. On the darker side some species which seemed scarcer than usual were Ovenbirds and Red-eyed Vireos.

It is my impression, unsupported by a statistical analysis of the data that the ratio

of adult birds to immature birds (AHY/HY in banders jargon) was higher this year than is normal. This certainly was true for the heavy flight of Yellow-rumped Warblers that I studied at Morgantown in late October. This high ratio, if true, would indicate a less than normally successful breeding season in the north. It should be recalled that the spring migration was greatly delayed, and summer conditions did not begin in the north until quite late. This may have caused the breeding season to have been less successful than normal.

Once again this year Clark Miller gave public demonstrations of banding techniques to our many visitors. College classes from Bethany College, Madison College, Marshall University, Virginia Wesleyan College, and West Liberty State College, as well as numerous students from West Virginia University visited the station.

The banders who participated this year were John Linehan, Clark Miller, Ephe Olliver, Frances Pope, Anne Shreve, John Willet and co-leaders Ralph Bell and George Hall. John and Genevieve Findley served again as chief net-tenders.

The following people aided in tending nets, collecting cages and bags of birds, and keeping records: Gloria Aiken, Jo Ashworth, Ray Ashworth, Terry Beavers, Sue Burke, Bill Burke, Jim Bruce, Charley Davis, John Devlin, Sue Edmonds, Helen Evans, Bill Evans, Walter Fye, Elwood Fisher, Robert Hardman, Howard Heimerdinger, Sheila Hughes, Douglas Jolley, Rocky Ludwick, George Mayfield, Carole McCullough, Fred McCullough, Anne McGrew, Gerry McGrew, Bill Oberman, Marilyn Ortt and daughter, Charlotte Pryor, Carl Rowe, Joe Schreiber, Harvey Shreve, Don Shearer, Leon Wilson, and April Fern Wylie.

Our greatest thanks goes to all these people, and any others whose names have been omitted by inadvertance or ignorance. Our thanks, also go to Supervisor R. F. Mumme and other personnel of the Monongahela National Forest for their cooperation.

In the list that follows the extreme dates are given for each species for which the dates are meaningful. The date in parentheses is the one on which maximum numbers were caught.

American Woodcock 1
Common Flicker 1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 8 (ties highest total), September 30-October 18
Downy Woodpecker 3
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher 1 September 4
Least Flycatcher 2 September 28
Eastern Wood Pewee 9 August 27-September 9
Blue Jay 133 (ties record high) August 29 October 12; (October 2-23)
Black-capped Chickadee 20 August 28-October 12 (This is a big flight year)
Tufted Titmouse 7 September 27-October 12
White-breasted Nuthatch 3 September 22-October 4
Red-breasted Nuthatch 52 (new high-big flight year) August 30-October 12
Brown Creeper 12 September 5-October 12 (October 4-6)
House Wren 2 September 21-September 30
Winter Wren 4 all on October 4
Bewick's Wren 2 September 7, September 15
Carolina Wren 1

Gray Catbird 9 August 27-October 4
 Robin 3
 Wood Thrush 39 September 6-October 5 (September 28-11)
 Hermit Thrush 15 (new high) August 27-October 19 (October 18-7)
 Swainson's Thrush 325 August 28-October 19 (September 21-99)
 Gray-checked Thrush 11 September 20-October 4 (September 21-4)
 Veery 2 September 14, September 21
 Golden-crowned Kinglet 20 September 19-October 12 (October 3, 4, 12-5 each)
 Ruby-crowned Kinglet 72 September 13-October 18 (October 3, 4-12 each day)
 Cedar Waxwing 5
 White-eyed Vireo 1 October 4
 Yellow-throated Vireo 1 September 5
 Solitary Vireo 6 September 20-October 4
 Red-eyed Vireo 41 August 27-October 12 (October 4-6)
 Philadelphia Vireo 15 August 27-October 4 (September 27-5)
 Black and White Warbler 12 August 27-October 4
 Tennessee Warbler 661 August 27-October 5 (September 22-129)
 Orange-crowned Warbler 2 August 27, October 12
 Nashville Warbler 47 August 29-October 4 (August 27-10)
 Parula Warbler 4, September 9, September 22, September 27, September 30
 Yellow Warbler 1 August 27 (rather late)
 Magnolia Warbler 105 August 26-October 5 (August 29-11)
 Cape May Warbler 299 August 26-October 4 (September 3-46)
 Black-throated Blue Warbler 547 August 26-October 5 (September 3-57)
 Yellow-rumped Warbler 2 September 28, October 18
 Black-throated Green Warbler 263 August 28-October 5 (September 27-61)
 Blackburnian Warbler 127 August 26-October 4 (August 29-20)
 Chestnut-sided Warbler 19 August 26-September 28 (September 27-3)
 Bay-breasted Warbler 152 August 26-October 4 (September 22-23)
 Blackpoll Warbler 378 September 8-October 11 (September 28-54)
 Prairie Warbler 1 September 2
 Palm Warbler 3 September 13, September 28, October 12
 Ovenbird 57 August 28-October 4 (September 22-8)
 Connecticut Warbler 10 September 4-September 28 (September 4, 28 3 each)
 Mourning Warbler 4 August 26-September 4
 Common Yellowthroat 99 August 26-October 4 (September 28-9)
 Hooded Warbler 6 August 27-September 30
 Wilson's Warbler 47 August 27-September 30 (September 11-15)
 Canada Warbler 9 August 26-September 22)
 American Redstart 23 August 28-September 30 (August 28-4)
 Northern Oriole 1 September 4
 Scarlet Tanager 11 September 4-September 30
 Rose-breasted Grosbeak 55 September 11-October 4 (September 27-16)
 Indigo Bunting 1 August 29
 Purple Finch 7 August 27-October 4
 American Goldfinch 20 September 2-October 3
 Rufous-sided Towhee 8 September 19-October 19

Savannah Sparrow 3 September 17, September 23, September 26
 Dark-eyed Junco 47 August 28-October 19 (October 1-7)
 Field Sparrow 1
 White-throated Sparrow 13 September 29-October 19
 Fox Sparrow 1 October 12
 Lincoln's Sparrow 2 September 26, September 27
 Swamp Sparrow 9 September 27-October 4
 Song Sparrow 6 September 27-October 19

The station was open from August 26 to October 4, and then also on October 11, 12, 18, and 19. — West Virginia University, Morgantown, W. Va.

Buff-Breasted Sandpiper in West Virginia

George A. Hall

On the afternoon of September 7, 1975 Charles Davis and I were driving along the access road to the Canaan Valley State Park, Tucker County, when our attention was attracted to a large loose flock of Killdeer [*Charadrius vociferus*] loafing in the grassy field beside the road. Among these Killdeer was a lone bird which proved to be a Buff-breasted Sandpiper [*Tryngites subruficollis*]. We were able to approach the bird to within 50 feet, and studied it for some time with the aid of binoculars. We noted the following characteristics: the bird was slightly smaller than the nearby Killdeer; the head, which was rather dovelike in appearance, was a rusty-yellowish color; the back had a very distinct scaly or mottled appearance; on one occasion the bird lifted its wings over its head, and we saw the white underwing linings; when the bird flew the wings were unstriped. The flock flew when we approached too closely, and we were unable to locate it again. The sandpiper was not as buffy on the underparts as is shown in the various field guides, but was only an off-white in color. I have examined specimens of this species and I conclude that the color of the underparts in this species is variable and that many are not as buffy as is shown in the guides. Perhaps this is characteristic of the fall plumage.

There is no previously published record of this species in West Virginia, but I am informed by Mrs. Anne Shreve that a bird which she identified as this species spent the day on her lawn and driveway in the Middle Ridge section of Charleston on April 19, 1969. Since neither Mrs. Shreve, Mr. Davis, nor I have had previous experience with this species it must be added to the "Hypothetical List" of the state birds according to the criteria that have been set up for acceptance of birds on the state list (Hall, 1971).

Buff-breasted Sandpipers must be considered to be purely accidental in our area. The normal migration route between the Arctic breeding grounds and the southern wintering area lies in the Great Plains. A few birds are seen on the Atlantic Coast each fall, but there are very few inland records in the east. The species has occurred on several occasions in the Youngstown, Ohio area. It is to be noted that there had been a severe storm a few days previous to this sighting, which may have accounted for its presence here. The characteristic habitat of the Buff-breasted Sandpiper is

not the shore, but is rather open grassy areas such as golf courses, and park areas similar to the one in Canaan Valley where we saw the bird. Because of its tameness the Buff-breasted Sandpiper was almost exterminated in the days when shorebirds were hunted, and it has been slow to regain its former numbers since the hunting ceased.

Canaan Valley State Park has become a very attractive place for shorebirds in the fall of the year. The development of the park, and particularly its attendant golf course has opened up a previously inaccessible area. There is a small pond on the golf course, several beaver ponds, and parts of the golf course are often covered with shallow standing water after heavy rains. Such things as both yellowlegs [*Tringa* spp.], Pectoral Sandpipers [*Calidris melanotos*] and other small sandpipers have been seen regularly. Since at least 1971 American Golden Plovers [*Pluvialis dominica*] have been seen there annually, and sometimes on several occasions during the year. Prior to this time there had been very few records for this species in the state. William Wylie informs me that he saw a flock of Dowitchers [*Limnodromus* sp.] at the Park in the late summer of 1975. This too is an unusual species for the state.

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Hall, G.A. The List of West Virginia Birds. *Redstart*, 38:2-18.

West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia 26506

Bill Legg of Mt. Lookout

by Maurice Brooks

During the year 1938 a group of young readers who had found a common interest in birds through the pages of a boys' magazine were talking about and making preliminary plans for a magazine of their own devoted to field studies of birds. They generated the requisite enthusiasm without difficulty; their major problem was finding a publisher for the new journal. They secured the columns of the boys' magazine to state their needs.

Help came to them from a most unexpected source. Bill Legg, of Mt. Lookout in southwestern Nicholas County, West Virginia, offered to consider becoming their publisher if the boys themselves would furnish the copy and do the editing. This they agreed to do, so the venture went forward.

Bill Legg was older than the other young men who planned the new journal, but he shared with them an interest in birds and a deep desire to learn more about the life of the beautiful country in which he lived. Also, he had the requisite equipment and skill; somehow he had acquired an old Washington Hand Press, a bit of printing gear that was already becoming a museum piece. He owned the type and the forms for hand-set composition, and he was willing and eager to give his time and efforts to the new enterprise.

These were Depression days, and no one had enough money for paper, printer's ink, and other necessary supplies. The boys decided they could get enough copy for a monthly publication, and for its name they chose FIELD ORNITHOLOGY. They set an annual subscription rate at **fifty cents** a year, and enough of them paid in advance

so that funds for supplies were provided. They gathered from their own ranks some notes and articles; these were edited by a group of young enthusiasts in Ohio, and FIELD ORNITHOLOGY was ready for launching.

Volume 1, Number 1 came off the press in January, 1939. One of the boys who had originated this venture had some skill and a lot of imagination in linoleum-block illustrating; he carved and supplied the cuts for the journal's cover. His name was Don Eckelberry, of Sebring, Ohio. Students of outdoor painting throughout the world will recognize the name; Don now enjoys an international reputation. So far as I can learn, these covers for FIELD ORNITHOLOGY were his first published efforts in illustration.

When the final issue of the first year, No. 12 in printing history, appeared in December, 1939, the publisher found that his press had turned out a total of 188 pages, a respectable volume by any standards. Contents were assembled from amazingly varied places; the first year's work showed articles and notes from Sebring, Ohio; Milton, Massachusetts; Llandudno, Wales; Wilkesboro, North Carolina; Racine, Wisconsin; Trinity Valley, British Columbia; and numerous contributions with a West Virginia flavor—notes and articles by the publisher, Bill Legg.

Bill deserves a closer look. He was native to the Mt. Lookout community, and his family ran a village store and kept the post office in the neighborhood. Bill was without formal education, although he had served a hitch in the army, and had done some traveling. He was short in stature, but those who tried to walk with him found that he could climb Nicholas County hills at an amazing speed. His hair was dark, and he had piercing eyes which missed little of what went on around him. He had endless patience, energy to go afield at times when no one else would venture out, and, above all, a deep interest in and curiosity about every living thing around him.

The area around Mt. Lookout is not mountainous, its hills topping in the range of 1600 feet. Valleys are abundant, each with its clear stream and rich vegetation. A few miles south is Meadow River, famous for the hardwood forests which line its banks. Rainfall is more than adequate; the result is a highly varied tree cover, with undergrowth of dense tangles of rhododendron, mountain laurel, and American holly—prime country to meet the needs of birds which seek homes in dark forests. As he studied the birds of his own community, Bill found much to write about.

The beginnings of Volume 2, in 1940, brought FIELD ORNITHOLOGY to a crisis—it had been forced to increase its annual subscription rate to seventy-five cents, and renewals had not come in. Number 2 of Volume 2 contained the following appeal:

"If you do not happen to have the necessary .75 for a year's renewal, remember, .25 will pay for 4 months, .50 for 8. 23 of the Jan. renewals have failed to come in—our worst month so far. Frankly, we're worried, for a few months like it and F.O. will cease to exist, or continue only at a decreased size. We could have 30 pages or a larger publication if we had enough subscribers to merit it."

In the issue for March 1940, Don Eckelberry told how the whole movement for FIELD ORNITHOLOGY started, and told of its many tribulations during the first year of publication. Of its efforts to keep going, he writes:

"We got an ad in *Bird-Lore* but dared not risk any more lest the trickle of fifty cent pieces might stop. All eyes were on the cash box after each issue—usually empty.

Then we'd start to pray for a few more subscriptions so that the next issue could appear.

"Now, with less than 200 subscribers, we are only a little better off. But still we hold tenaciously to the straw of hope, a straw greatly strengthened by words of praise from those whose words carry weight."

Among these was Mrs. C. N. Edge, whose determined efforts resulted in the creation of the famous Hawk Mountain Sanctuary. Mrs. Edge sent them a \$3 donation, and with that they purchased additional paper and ink. FIELD ORNITHOLOGY continued regular publication until the outbreak of World War II finally closed it. During its short history it published an amazing amount of significant ornithological information, and it resulted in a vast expansion of our understanding of one of America's rarest and most elusive birds—Swainson's Warbler.

For his last issue of Volume 1, Bill Legg needed a filler paragraph, so he wrote one under the caption "Swainson's Warblers?" I quote a portion of its content:

"On June 5, 1939, I followed a song of a bird that sounded like that of a Louisiana Water-Thrush but I knew it wasn't for I was acquainted with the Water-Thrush and its song. Finally, after many frustrated attempts, I saw the bird singing from a low branch in the dense thicket. In the dark, damp place it appeared Water-Thrush-like, . . . but its underparts were unmarked by streaks and it did not bob its tail. I was puzzled and, back in my study, referred to the bird guides. Exhausting all known possibilities and thoroughly searching for others, I always ended up at Swainson's Warbler."

When Bill Legg wrote these words, American ornithologists, almost without exception, believed that Swainson's Warblers were restricted to cane thickets on the southeastern Atlantic Coast and in swampy areas up some southern rivers. The birds had been discovered by Audubon near Charleston, South Carolina, and were not even reported again for about fifty years. There had been a few puzzling reports from more northern areas, but these were disregarded as strays and vagrants. When a capable bird student in southwestern Virginia found a nest that he identified as Swainson's the experts to which he submitted it agreed that it was undoubtedly a Swainson nest, but they did not believe it came from southwestern Virginia. No national bird journal in the country would publish the record.

Legg's filler started an investigation that changed all that; within a few weeks of publication bird students were down in his area. I went, along with William A. Lunk, and we found the birds before we got to Mt. Lookout. Next day, under Legg's guidance, we found a lot of them, and secured a specimen. George Miksch Sutton also visited the area, as did a goodly assemblage of others. As a result of these and other investigations, it was determined that this southern bird has an Appalachian population, seemingly isolated from the Coastal Plain cane-dwelling birds. Bill Legg changed one entire concept in American ornithology.

Since he was publishing a journal of wide, if restricted circulation, Bill decided that his press should have a name. He chose "Twintilliana Press," and this imprint appeared on a number of his publications. I never knew where he got the name, but his sister suggests that it may have come from two basswood trees [*Tilia*] which grew nearby.

Bill Legg's interests were not restricted to birds. Shortly after World War II, the

Mt. Lookout community developed quite a business in the sale of fine Christmas greens, chiefly American holly which was abundant in the area. Legg began to study holly and its requirements, and as a result he brought out one of his best pamphlets, "SOME NOTES ON HOLLY: TRANSPLANTING—INSECT ENEMIES." This bulletin is now a rarity, a collector's item. Of it, Bill himself wrote, "This is a very limited edition—in fact, so limited that it's about the same as talking to myself." He closed the bulletin as follows:

"Like Sterne in "Tristram Shandy," I should leave several blank pages for you to finish this booklet but paper is too scarce. And, like Mark Twain, in case you find where some punctuation marks are needed, here they are.....!!!!,.....:.....;..... And if you find an infinitive split, reader (I hope), it was entirely accidental, I assure you. And, like Voltaire, if you tell me that I have taught you nothing, remember that I told you that I was ignorant."

Legg's knowledge of his region, and of the living things to be found in it, led to his being called upon by museums in this area. When Graham Netting, then head of the Section of Herpetology, Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh, needed specimens of a certain kind, he called on Bill Legg. One of the state's nurseries needed a bushel of a certain kind of holly seed; Legg was able to provide it. His explorations led to the discovery of what was, for years, the farthest north known station for Catawba rhododendron. Legg's interests extended far beyond birds.

There are a lot of lessons here for the field biologist. Bill Legg never had the advantage of scientific training; he trained himself to become a first-class naturalist. His home territory could have been called "remote;" he made it well-known and productive in extending knowledge of the state's outdoors. Early in his career he learned that the good finds, the significant discoveries, are made by the field student who will go abroad when and where others haven't looked.

Bill Legg met an untimely death in an automobile accident some twenty years ago. His influence and the new horizons which he opened continue onward to the benefit of West Virginia biology. If, after this, I need to tell you that he was a remarkable person, I have missed my whole aim in writing.—**Route 11, Box 69, Morgantown, W. Va.**

Herptiles of Raleigh County, West Virginia

Robert C. Lightburn

Our 15 mile working area, with the center at Shady Springs, gave us, as last year in Ritchie County, a relatively uncollected area in which to study reptiles and amphibians. The southerly location lends a more mountainous and, at the same time, warmer region. Thence, a slightly different group of herptiles are found local to Raleigh County.

The first week of the 1975 Foray (6/7-14/75) contributed only fourteen species, thirteen of which were also found the second week. The second week of the Foray (6/28-7/5/75) the species total reached twenty-six. I regret I do not have an updated copy of Dr. N. Bayard Green's, "**Amphibians and Reptiles in West Virginia Their Identification and Distribution**," to compare our finds. The list I have of the county

was expanded sixteen species from this summers work.

The land east, adjacent to the west side of the New River, second oldest river in the world, was well covered during the second week of the Foray. The western portion of the area was neglected almost entirely the second week allowing more detailed examination of the New River territory.

Reptile species expected, but not found, are *Chelydra s. serpentina* and *Trionyx s. spinifera*, turtles often common to such rivers. Admittedly, observation is somewhat of a chancy matter in both cases. It seemed surprising that *Natrix s. sipedon* was not recorded, though the river is heavily fished, and this species is not a favorite to fishermen. Neither *Heterodon p. platyrhinos* nor *Opheodrys v. vernalis*, previously recorded for the county (Dr. N. Bayard Green), were found.

Among amphibians *Desmognathus m. monticola* and *Gyrinophilus porphyriticus duryi*, both of which favor streams, and *Plethodon r. richmondi*, *Plethodon wehrei*, and *Pseudotriton r. ruber*, taking to the woods instead, were all missed though the territory studied is well within each of their respective ranges. The New River presented an excellent area in which to find *Dryptobranchus a. alleganiensis*, as well, still no record of this was made.

In this report, immediately following the Latin nomenclature of a species, is denoted the week (first, second or both) of the Foray. In parenthesis the number of specimens is recorded, but for the second week only.

TURTLES

Family Chelydridae

Stinkpot—[*Sternotherus odoratus*], both weeks (2)

Family Testudinidae

Box Turtle—[*Terrapene c. carolina*], both weeks (1)

LIZARDS

Family Iguanidae

Northern Fence—[*Sceloporus undulatus hincinthinus*], both weeks (2), male and female, one each.

Family Scincidae

Five-lined Skink—[*Emneces faociatus*], second week (1)

SNAKES

Family Colubridae

Queen Snake—[*Natrix septemvittata*], second week (2)

Family Colubridae

Eastern Garter Snake—[*Thamnophis s. sirtalis*], both weeks (1), only skin found second week

Northern Ringneck Snake—[*Diadophis punctatus edwardsii*], both weeks (1)

Northern Black Racer—[*Coluber c. constrictor*], both weeks (1)

Black Rat Snake—[*Elaphe o. obsoleta*], both weeks (4)

SALAMANDERS

Family Ambystomidae

Spotted Salamander—[*Ambystoma maculatum*], second week (Many), all in various stages of larval development, found in race track ditch system.

Family Salamandridae

Red-spotted Newt—[*Diemictylus v. viridescens*], second week (3)

Family Plethodontidae

Northern Ducky Salamander—[*Desmogerathus f. fuscus*], (many), and wide spread

Allegheny Mountain Salamander—[*Desmognathus o. ochrophaeus*], second week (1)

Red-backed Salamander—[*Plethodon c. cinereus*], second week (3)

Slimy Salamander—[*Plethodon r. richmondi*], second week (1)

Northern Two-lined Salamander—[*Eurycea b. bislineata*], second week (2)

Long-tailed Salamander—[*Eurycea l. longicauda*], both weeks (no count)

TOADS

Family Bufonidae

American Toad—[*Bufo a. americanus*], second week (3)

Fowler's Toad—[*Bufo woodhousei fowleri*], both weeks (3)

TREE TOADS

Family Hylidae

Northern Cricket Frog—[*Acris c. crepitans*], both weeks (1) heard only

Spring Peeper—[*Hyla c. crucifer*], both weeks (many) widespread

Eastern Gray Treefrog—[*Hyla v. versicolor*], both weeks (2), also heard the second week.

Mountain Chorus Frog—[*Pseudacris brachyphona*], second week (1)

TRUE FROGS

Family Ranidae

Bull Frog—[*Rana catesbeiana*], second week (many), widespread

Green Frog—[*Rana clamitans melanota*], second week (2)

Pickeral Frog—[*Rana palustris*], second week (many)

Wood Frog—[*Rana s. sylvatica*], second week (many), tadpoles only.

This report is part of the 1975 Foray Report but was received too late for inclusion in the report. **Editor**

Aerial Feeding by a Crow

On the morning of August 26, 1975, while traveling south on I-79 near the South Fairmont, West Virginia, exit, I saw four crows, *Corvus brachyrhynchos*, about 100 yards to the east of the highway. As the quartet approached the highway, one of them veered from the group. At the same time another object in the air caught my eye. It looked like an annual cicada.

Apparently the bird caught sight of the insect before I did, because it evidently was in pursuit of the insect when it started away from the group. The crow harried its quarry, and then as it approached its prey lunged out its bill and neck and gulped down the victim.

The crow swung around and joined its companions. The whole action probably took place within 30 to 45 seconds.

The incidence is the first time I recall seeing a crow feeding in this manner and wondered if the species forages in flight regularly.

George Breiding, West Virginia University, Morgantown, W. Va.

The Gathering Cage



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

Columbus, Ohio—Did you ever have a kestrel grasp your finger firmly? It is a novel experience. Occasionally I find a kestrel in the decoy trap along with other species. Presumably he sees the cowbirds in the trap and enters in order to have one for lunch. But aside from the food-gathering operation he shows no aggressiveness. He remains alone on a perch or on the ground or on the wire walls of the trap. In a crowded gathering cage he is at the bottom of the pile and often screaming.

Hitherto when I have extricated a kestrel for banding he was always upright on the bottom of the gathering cage so I merely picked him up from the rear and turned him over to apply the band. None ever showed a tendency to bite or otherwise fight the bander. So I habitually banded kestrels with equanimity overlooking the fact that they had claws.

On a recent occasion, however, the kestrel was in an awkward position on its back with so many birds on top that it could not turn over. So he tried to grasp something to facilitate righting himself. That something happened to be my finger. Also the claws were oriented so that one was directly perpendicular to the skin surface. For a moment I admired how long and smooth and slim the claws were. Then as the bird tightened its grip the claw went straight in for 3 or 4 millimeters. I did not admire that aspect particularly. Also it is difficult to get a bird to release the grip on something that might contribute to its escape. The lesson of this episode is that even though the kestrel is not a "bad guy," nevertheless the bander should be alert to the whereabouts of its claws.—**Harold E. Burt**

Middle Ridge, Charleston—A tape recorder can be a useful tool for selective netting. A singing Short-billed Marsh Wren was discovered at Middle Ridge this summer. Its secretive, shy behavior in the grown-up meadow made the prospect of banding it seem dim indeed. I trampled down a narrow swath and set up one net. Then using a Uher recorder and a parabolic curve, I taped its song and played it back. The wren continued to sing but never moved closer nor appeared above the vegetation. The presence of a house cat provoked a scolding note which I also recorded. A playback of that, just beyond the net, lured the little Short-billed into view and right into the net. This was on July 26, 1976. There is only one other record for the species in Kanawha County, a dead specimen picked up at the Coal Mountain television tower on October 6, several years ago—by Katholi. Additional notes on the Middle Ridge Short-billed Marsh Wren will appear elsewhere.

An interesting recovery for Kanawha Valley came to my attention recently by way of a telephone call referred from "Sunrise."

An AHY Brown-headed Cowbird, wearing a band, was found dead by Charles L. Withrow in his yard at Quick, West Virginia, on April 24, 1976. The cause of death was unknown. Mrs. Withrow sent the information and band number to the banding office. The acknowledgement was received in August. The Cowbird had been banded on January 22, 1976 near Houston, Texas, by K.A. Arnold who is associated with the University of Wildlife Science Station at Texas A and M College.—**Anne Shreve**

Clarksville, Pa.—Sparrow Hawks (now called American Kestrel) have nested in our back yard for three years. Formerly for 18 years they had nested in a box provided for them about one-fourth mile away. But Racoons caused them so much trouble that I took down their box and put up another on an old Martin-box pole near our yard fence. The results of those 18 years were published in the July 1974 REDSTART, page 111-112.

In 1974, three young were fledged from the new box (two eggs didn't hatch). In 1975 there were four dead young in the box when I returned from the BBC Foray on June 8. The cause of death is in doubt, but I believe it should be mentioned that shortly before the young hatched there were two herbicide sprayings within one-half mile of the nest site—one by the local electric company on its right-of-way, and a neighbor sprayed a field with a herbicide that kills all plant life. Corn then can be planted without plowing the field with the customary plow.

Kestrels show a very strong attachment to their nest site and at least one of our Kestrels apparently wintered here. This year, 1976 one was often noted sitting on the electric wire near the box after January 13, and two were on the wire on Jan. 24, 25 and 26. On Jan. 27, the box was already being defended as a Starling was chased from the box. However, the two Kestrels may not have been a mated pair because seldom, if ever, were two seen together again until March 28—the day I banded a male that was captured in a Starling trap. After that, two Kestrels were often seen sitting on the electric wire near the box—usually less than a foot apart.

There were two Kestrel eggs in the box on April 22 and a total of five eggs was laid. Three young had just hatched when I checked the box on May 23 or 24, but all five had hatched before I checked the box again on May 29. When incubation started I cannot be sure. Whether the eggs were all laid on alternate days (as suggested in Bent) is something I'll try and determine in future years.

At first, the other birds in our yard accepted the Kestrels as part of the yard scene, but by June 4, the Robins and Grackles were continually scolding whenever they spotted a Kestrel. And soon the Barn Swallows were dive-bombing them too. No doubt the newly fledged young of many species would be easy prey for the adult Kestrels but we never actually saw any being caught.

The young Kestrels were banded on June 5 and I believe the first young one left the box on June 17 (or the morning of the 18th). When I opened the box on June 18, one large female left the box and flew perhaps 50 yards before landing on the ground. Since it would have been quite vulnerable to predators, I caught it and returned it to the nest box. The last young Kestrel (a male) left the box on June 24.

At first, the young stayed in the nearby trees, but within 10 days the whole family group moved to the scattered trees on top of our hill. Here the young received much

of their basic training on how to capture insects and mice.

As I write this (mid-August) the young Kestrels have been on their own for some time. But the adults are around and it is a rare day indeed that a lone Kestrel is not seen sometime during the day sitting on the electric wire not far from their box. The Kestrel is usually a bird of solitude and seldom are two seen close together during the fall and winter. —Ralph Bell

Nitro, West Virginia—The martins **did** return to the Nitro Martin Roost; back to the insect-ridden, bottom land in the bend of Armour Creek—but they didn't stay!

Observation trips were started July 12 when about 500 martins were seen on the nearby electrical transmission towers, their gathering place before going to the roost. By July 26, there were perhaps 10,000 martins using the roost along with robins, grackles, red-winged black birds, and starlings. The next day a new area beyond last year's vegetable patch was cleared. A rope, with pulleys attached, was strung 40 feet high (thanks to Jim Ashworth's tree climbing ability) between two trees at two locations. Two nets were placed on 10 ft. poles and pulled up to the rope at dusk. Seven successful nights of banding followed due entirely to a faithful, enthusiastic crew—from Handlan Chapter members to a troop of boy scouts. The Thomases again provided a banding table, lamp, and help at the nets.

But alas, the entire population of birds literally pulled out on August 7—even the starlings! They did the same swarming, swirling, and maneuvering just as they had when they left the Patrick Street Roost.

The next night of observing was August 10 and we were shocked to see over 6,000 martins on the towers. Since we hadn't made preparations for banding, all we could do was watch helplessly. Many adult birds were noticed. We followed them to the roost and our hopes were again raised for many captures starting the next night. The crew was alerted, and we assaulted the roost with vigor. About 100 of the new martins arrived at the roost. We caught 15—all HY's. This was their final night of roosting at this location.

Katholi had predicted that this would be the last year for the Nitro Roost if the birds followed their past movings . . . and maybe she was right!

A far higher percentage (18%) of AHY's was banded than ever before at this location. Were placements of nets a reason? Will they be back next year? Only a year of waiting to find out. —J. and R. Ashworth, Roost Reporters

The Gathering Cage first appeared in October 1965. From the beginning it was an endeavor suggested by Connie and diligently attended to by her. As a bander she appended observations of her own to those of other banders who responded to her appeals for contributions to the column. Her dexterity with words and her gift of combining words to make interesting reading attracted a following of birders, banders and non-banders alike, who faithfully read and enjoyed her articles. Since she died on November 16 this is her last Gathering Cage. Perhaps there will continue to be a regular section in **The Redstart** about banding activities. She would want that, I am sure. If so, it shall continue with a different title. **The Gathering Cage** was shaped to her own style and so we say hail and farewell to Connie and her Gathering Cage. A true friend she was and an important part of **The Redstart** it was.

George Hurley



FIELD NOTES

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

THE SPRING SEASON
MARCH, APRIL, MAY 1976

It was a crazy mixed up Spring—in fact a Spring in reverse. February and March were exceptionally warm. April was very cool and extremely dry followed by a cool May with little rainfall. Flowering plants bloomed very early. They were as much as three weeks ahead of schedule in most areas. When cooler weather came much of the fruit crop was destroyed and early leafing trees were frosted.

The migration matched the weather. March and early April migrants arrived early and waterfowl moved on and out of the region. However when the cool period began, things tended to normalize. Some resident birds were early but others were about on time. Generally the true migrants appeared to be late and some remained in the region until the end of the period. Reporters never quite agree, but all things taken into consideration, it wasn't a bad migration after all.

I wish to express my gratitude and appreciation to all of you who have contributed to **FIELD NOTES** during the fourteen years that I have edited the reports. It has been a rewarding experience. I hope that each of you will continue the coverage of your area in cooperation with my successor.

Loons, grebes and herons—The only records of **Com. Loons** came from Youngstown, O. on April 6 and May 11 (WB) and Seneca Lake, O. April 11 (ME). 3 **Horned Grebes** were seen at McClintic Wildlife Station, Mason Co., W. Va. March 28 (HG). A flock of about 150 was seen in Mahoning Co., O. April 7 and April 8 (WB). **Pied-billed Grebes** moved through in normal numbers. **Great Blue Herons** appear to be increasing in the region as reports came from most areas. Edgerton reported an increase at the heronry at Seneca Lake, O. and they were back again at the heronry in Trumbull Co., O. (WB). Two **Great Egrets** were seen at Charleston, W. Va. from March 22 to April 13 (GFH) and they were listed at Seneca Lake, O. April 16 (ME). There were two reports of **Cattle Egret**. Bell saw 2 near Clarksville, Pa. May 7 and one was seen on several occasions at Youngstown, O. between May 15 and May 26 (WB). **Green Herons** returned between May 12 and 18 and most reporters thought that they were more common than usual.

Waterfowl—The **Whistling Swan** flight peaked March 14-20 when flocks were seen at Youngstown, O., Seneca Lake, O. and on the Ohio river at East Liverpool. Little information on **Canada Geese** was found in reports. 3 **Snow Geese**, blue phase, were at Buckhannon, W. Va. from April 16 to April 24 (MT). Although there were a few

reports of small flocks of ducks and most species were listed, the overall flight was far from spectacular. There was more than usual mention of **Wigeons** and **Ring-necked ducks**. Noteworthy was the sighting of 11 **Shovelers** at McClintic Wildlife Station on April 6 (NG). They were also reported at Seneca Lake, O. April 4 (ME). 10 **Ruddy Ducks** were on Rollins Lake, near Ripley, W. Va. April 4 (HG). A flock numbering about 750 was seen at Youngstown, O. April 8 (WB) and they were listed at Seneca Lake, O. April 11 (ME).

Vultures and hawks—March 6 at Seneca Lake, O. was the earliest date for **Turkey Vulture**. Other arrival dates averaged around March 24-26. There was little mention of accipiters. **Red-shouldered** and **Red-tailed Hawks** appeared to be doing well and nesting activity was well along before the end of the period. It was noted that **Broad-winged Hawks** were back in the Princeton-Athens, W. Va. area by April 15 and there was an increase in numbers (JP). Other arrival dates centered around May 1. There were more than usual reports of **Marsh Hawks** and **Ospreys**. **Kestrels** appeared to be more common than usual.

Gallinaceous and shorebirds—Too little information was forthcoming on game birds to draw conclusions. **Virginia Rails** and **Soras** were found in Mahoning and Columbiana Counties, O. before the end of the period. Good numbers of **Am. Coots** were reported in several areas. **Killdeer** were quite common as well as early. A nest containing 4 eggs was found on a roof at Clarksville, Pa. April 1 (RKB). Two **Black-bellied Plovers** were seen at Youngstown, O. May 19 (WB). A **Ruddy Turnstone**, in full summer plumage, was observed on a small pond in Greenbrier Co., W. Va. May 22 (COH). **Am. Woodcock** and **Com. Snipe** were reported in much greater numbers than usual. **Spotted Sandpipers** were included in most every report and there were several records of **Solitary Sandpipers**. Noteworthy was the sighting of six **White-rumped Sandpipers** at Princeton, W. Va. on May 3 (JP). A **Western Sandpiper** was seen in Greenbrier Co., W. Va. May 22 (COH).

Doves, cuckoos and owls—Reporters agreed that **Mourning Doves** are increasing. On the other hand, cuckoos were considered to be very scarce. Several persons commented that they had failed to see a single cuckoo by the end of the period. The only mention of **Barn Owl** was one heard at Clarksville, Pa. April 27 (RKB). Nesting **Great Horned Owls** were found in Boardman, O. (WB), near East Liverpool, O. (NL&ERC) and in Kanawha County, W. Va. (NG). **Barred Owls** figured in more reports than usual. A nesting **Long-eared Owl** was recorded in mid May in Canaan Valley. It was seen by many of those attending the Wildflower Pilgrimage at Blackwater Falls. (NG&RKB).

Goatsuckers through woodpeckers—**Whip-poor-wills** were heard at Buckhannon, W. Va., Kanawha State Forest and Elkview, W. Va. on April 15. April 16 was the earliest date for **Com. Nighthawk**. Otherwise they arrived on schedule as did the main flight of **Chimney Swifts**. Most reporters saw **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** between April 20 and May 1. All woodpeckers seem to be doing well except the Redheaded Woodpecker which was unreported.

Flycatchers and swallows—**Eastern Kingbirds** were late in some areas and no one considered them plentiful. April 25 at North Bend State Park was a very early date for **Acadian Flycatcher** (NG). A **Willow Flycatcher** was recorded at Lewisburg, W. Va. on May 21 (COH) and they were found in Jefferson Co., W. Va. May 23 (GAH). **Least Flycatchers** did not seem to be plentiful. Very early dates for **Wood Pewee**

came from Elkview, W. Va. April 15 (HG) and April 22 at Princeton, W. Va. (JP). **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were seen at Milliken, W. Va. May 7 (HG) and at Shepherdstown, W. Va. May 22 (GAH). **Barn Swallows** arrived pretty much on time and numbers appeared to be normal. Other **Swallows** were late and in low numbers. Although there appeared to be a slight improvement in **Purple Martins**, they have a long way to go to return to normal populations.

Chickadees through wrens—**Black-capped Chickadees** remained longer than usual at Princeton, W. Va. (JP) and Hall states that they now remain year round in the Morgantown, W. Va. area. **Red-breasted Nuthatch** and **Brown Creepers** were uncommon after mid April. **House Wrens** were a little early in some places and numbers appeared to good. **Carolina Wrens** continue to flourish and extend their range. The only report of **Bewick's Wren** came from Waynesburg, Pa. where 3 were heard singing on May 2 (RKB).

Mimics and thrushes—**Gray Catbirds** arrived in several places April 24-26. The average arrival dates for **Brown Thrashers** was March 27 to April 1. **Robins** returned to most areas during the warm weather in February and had built up to good numbers by the end of March. April 7 was earliest date for **Wood Thrush** at Charleston, W. Va. followed by April 13 at East Liverpool, O. They had arrived in most places by April 20 in better than average numbers. **Hermit Thrush** were banded at Morgantown on May 4 and May 14 (GAH) and an even later one was seen at Charleston on May 23 (HG). **Swainson's Thrush** moved through in good numbers and were still around in several places at the end of the period. A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was seen at Barnesville, O. May 9 (ME) and five were banded at Morgantown between May 15 and May 26 (GAH). The **Veery** received little mention and those commenting thought that they were scarce.

Gnatcatchers, kinglets and waxwings—The earliest date for **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was April 6 at Clarksville, Pa. (RKB). They arrived in normal numbers in most other areas the following week. Most reporters agreed that **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were scarce this Spring. **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** appeared to be fairly plentiful but they moved out of the region earlier than usual. **Cedar Waxwings** were absent from most of the region until near the end of the period.

Vireos—The earliest arrival date for **White-eyed Vireo** was April 17 at Kanawha State Forest (NG). They were seen at Seneca Lake, O. April 24 and at Milliken, W. Va. April 26. **Yellow-throated Vireo** was heard at Kanawha State Forest April 4 (NG). A **Solitary Vireo** was heard at this same location on March 23. Both species appeared to be scarce during migration. According to most reporters, **Red-eyed Vireos** fared much better. Hall banded 23 at Morgantown which he considered well above normal.

Warblers—The warbler group is the most difficult group to assess. This is possibly due to hit and miss dates that reporters are afield, variable weather conditions and different interpretations of migration. The picture was not very clear. Although there were no waves or great influxes, most all species that one expects to see in our region were reported. It appeared that they drifted through the region and some species remained fairly late. **Black and White**, **Worm-eating**, **Parula**, and **Chestnut-sided Warblers** were considered to be scarce. **Tennessee Warblers** made the best showing in recent years. **Cape-May**, **Yellow-rumped**, **Black-throated Green**, and **Blackpoll Warblers** migrated in good numbers. There seemed to be some

improvement in populations of **Kentucky Warbler** and **Yellow-breasted Chat**. **Yellow-throated Warblers** are becoming more common and appearing in more reports. They were found at New Cumberland, W. Va. (ERC) and several new stations were located in Columbiana County, O. (NL). A **Swainson's Warbler**, well north of its range, was found at East Liverpool, O. on May 8. Two birds were seen on May 17. The singing male was still present on June 2.

Blackbirds through sparrows—**Bobolinks** were reported at Lewisburg, W. Va. April 25 (COH), Morgantown, W. Va. May 2, and at East Liverpool and Barnesville, O. May 8. **Red-winged Blackbirds**, **Com. Grackles** and **Cowbirds** were at least two weeks early in most localities and no one spoke of reduced numbers. The average arrival date for **orioles** was April 25. **Orchard Orioles** are becoming more plentiful in the northern portion of their range. Some reporters thought that **Northern Oriole** numbers were lower than usual. Earliest date for **Scarlet Tanager** was April 18 at Kanawha State Forest (NG). **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** were considered to be rare by several reporters. **Evening Grosbeaks** moved through the region in good numbers in late April and early May. The peak at East Liverpool, O. was April 27 when flocks were heard overhead almost continually throughout the daylight hours. **Purple Finches** were seen in fair numbers in some areas but completely bypassed others. **House Finches** are becoming more common and have gained a foothold in several places. They are increasing in the eastern panhandle of West Virginia and Franklin, W. Va. (JS). Other good reports came from Elkins, W. Va. (EO), Uniontown, Pa. (AG), Buckhannon, W. Va. (MT) and Wellsburg, W. Va. (W&DJ). Five **Red Crossbills** were at a feeder at Parkersburg, W. Va. May 9 (GFH) and one was seen at Cranberry Glades Visitor Center May 19 (JP). Most of the sparrows appear to be at sub normal population levels. **Savannah, Vesper** and **Chipping Sparrows** were found at the Braxton County 4H camp April 2 (BBC). **Field Sparrows** were considered to be scarce by several reporters. The last date for **White-crowned Sparrow** was May 21 at Clarksville, Pa. Numbers of migrants appeared to be above average. **White-throated Sparrows** were noted as abundant by most reporters. Most had moved out by May 10. Hall banded 2 **Lincoln Sparrows** at Morgantown on May 11 and May 19. He commented that this is well below average. The population of **Song Sparrows** was above normal in most localities.

Contributors—William Bartolo, **WB**; Ralph K. Bell, **RKB**; Brooks Bird Club, Hdq. Ch., **BBC**; Albert R. Buckalew, Jr., **AB**; Everett R. Chandler, **ERC**; Mabel Edgerton, **ME**; Alan Gillen, **AG**; Norris Gluck, **NG**; Hullet Good, **HG**; George A. Hall, **GAH**; Charles O. Handley, Sr., **COH**; George F. Hurley, **GFH**; Wilda and Dick Jennings, **W&DJ**; E.M. Olliver, **EO**; James Phillips, **JP**; Juanita Slusher, **JS**; Maxine Thacker, **MT**.—Mrs. Nevada Laitsch, MC 21, Dixonville, East Liverpool, Ohio 43920

With regret the resignation of Nevada Laitsch as Field Notes Editor has been accepted. For 14 years she has done a great service for the Brooks Bird Club. It is a job which, in varying degrees is rewarding, frustrating, monotonous and time consuming. Field Notes has been an important part of **The Redstart** and the records printed there will be an important information source for bird students.

I hope that her talents will continue to be offered to, and accepted by the club in other ways of mutual benefit. My personal thanks for a service faithfully rendered and well done. —**George Hurley**

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