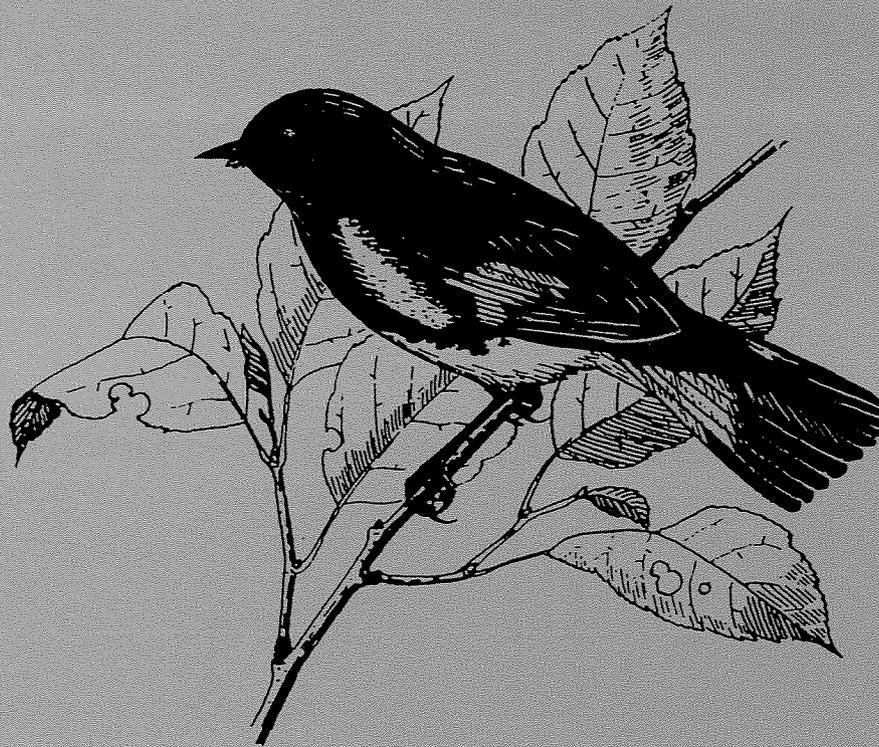


ISSN: 0034-2165

*The* REDSTART

VOLUME 63, NUMBER 4

OCTOBER, 1996



PUBLISHED BY THE BROOKS BIRD CLUB

# 1996 - The Brooks Bird Club, Inc.

Founded September 1932  
Named in honor of A. B. Brooks, Naturalist

## OFFICERS

President	Thomas R. Fox, Rt. 1, Box 420, Millstone, WV 25261	304-354-7686
Pres. Elect	James Bullard, P.O. Box 137, Ashton, MD 20861	301-421-9108
Vice Pres.	Cynthia Ellis, 103-A Oakwood Estates, Scott Depot, WV 25560	304-757-7394
Imm. Past Pres.	LeJay Graffious, P.O. Box 69, Bruceton Mills, WV 26525	304-379-4492
Administrator	Carl Slater, 57290 Mehlman Rd., Bellaire, OH 43906	614-635-9246
Treasurer	Gerald A. Devaul, 17 Mozart Road, Wheeling, WV 26003	304-233-4133
Asst. Treas.	Dolores Devaul, 17 Mozart Road, Wheeling, WV 26003	304-233-4133
Recording Sec.	Virginia Cronenberger, Rt. 1, Box 37, Petroleum, WV 26161	304-628-3382
Membership Sec.	Carolyn Conrad, 423 Warwood Ave., Wheeling, WV 26003	304-277-2036
Editor <i>The Redstart</i>	A.R. Buckelew Jr., P.O. Box J, Bethany, WV 26032	304-829-4392
Editor <i>Mail Bag</i>	William Murray, P.O. Box 944, New Cumberland, WV 26047	304-564-5071

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Serve Through:

1996 .....	Steven D. Mace, P.O. Box 122, New Haven, WV 25265	304-882-3497
	Polly Matthey, 1241 Penn St., Clarksburg, WV 26301	304-622-7595
	Jane Robbins, 11909 Gordon Ave., Beltsville, MD 20705	
1997 .....	Ivarene Pierce, 211 Evening Lane, Winchester, VA 22601	703-667-3184
	Leon Wilson, Box 105, Ona, WV 25545	304-743-4013
	John Northeimer, P.O. Box 686, Davis, WV 26260	304-259-5377
1998 .....	Jane Whitaker, 3817 Windom Pl., N.W., Washington, DC 20016	202-966-6218
	Judith Ward, R.D. 1, Box 1070, Ruffsedale, PA 15679	412-696-3028
	Scott Emrick, 52713 S.R. 800, Jerusalem, OH 43747	

## TRUSTEES

1996 .....	Greg E. Eddy, 3 Aster Dr., Clinton Hills, Triadelphia, WV 26059	304-242-4774
1997 .....	George Breiding, 540 Elmira Street, Morgantown, WV 26505	304-296-4630
1998 .....	Juanita Slater, 57290 Mehlman Rd., Bellaire, OH 43906	614-635-9246

## ADVISORS

Kenneth Anderson, 2042 Weberwood Dr., So. Charleston, WV 25303	304-344-1446
Ralph K. Bell, R.D. 1, Box 229, Clarksville, PA 15322	412-883-4505
Elizabeth Noonan, 2 Jayson Drive, Wheeling, WV 26003	304-242-3616

## COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Budget	Cynthia Ellis, 103-A Oakwood Estates, Scott Depot, WV 25560	304-757-7394
Research	James Bullard, P.O. Box 137, Ashton, MD 20861	301-421-9108
Foray	Carl Slater, 57290 Mehlman Rd., Bellaire, OH 43906	614-635-9246
Foray Directors	Carl Slater, 57290 Mehlman Rd., Bellaire, OH 43906	614-635-9246
	Juanita Slater, 57290 Mehlman Rd., Bellaire, OH 43906	614-635-9246
Foray Sites	William Grafton, 456 West Virginia Ave., Morgantown, WV 26505	304-292-0229
Conservation	William Grafton, 456 West Virginia Ave., Morgantown, WV 26505	304-292-0229
Backyard Sanctuary	Dorothy Conrad, 423 Warwood Ave., Wheeling, WV 26003	304-277-2036
Club Library	Dorothy Broemsen, 15 Mozart Rd., Wheeling, WV 26003	304-232-6694
Publicity	William A. Noonan, 2 Jayson Drive, Wheeling, WV 26003	304-242-3613
	John Northeimer, P.O. Box 686, Davis, WV 26260	304-259-5377
Legal Advisor	Sharleen Eddy, 3 Aster Dr., Clinton Hills, Triadelphia, WV 26059	304-242-4774
Nest Card Program	Carolyn Conrad, 423 Warwood Ave., Wheeling, WV 26003	304-277-2036
Christmas Count	Leon P. Wilson, Box 105, Ona, WV 25545	304-743-4013

# The REDSTART

VOLUME 63, NUMBER 4

OCTOBER, 1996

Contents	Page
White Ibis Flies by East River Mountain Hawkwatch Site in Southern West Virginia —Ann McRae .....	111
Carolina Chickadees Feeding on White-tailed Deer Carcass —Jane J. Whitaker .....	112
Three Previously Unreported Plants Found in Ritchie County —Jane J. Whitaker .....	113
Red-tailed Hawk Nesting Study on Interstate 79 —Joseph Herron .....	116
Animals Killed Along West Virginia Route 20 in Southern West Virginia —James D. Phillips .....	118
Attempted Yellow-crowned Night-Heron Nesting at Pleasant Creek Wildlife Management Area, West Virginia —Susan Olcott .....	122
1995 Fourth of July Butterfly Counts in West Virginia —Jim Arnold .....	124
Field Notes —James D. Phillips .....	127
Book Reviews .....	131

### Editorial Staff

Editor • Albert R. Buckelew Jr., Biology Department, Bethany College, Bethany, WV 26032  
Associate Editor • Marjorie Keatley, Marshall University, Huntington, WV 25755  
Field Notes Editor • James D. Phillips, HC 78, Box 42-C, Pipestem, WV 25979  
Banding News Editor • Ralph K. Bell, R.D. 1, Box 229, Clarksville, PA 15322  
Advisory Editorial Board • Eleanor Bush, Greg E. Eddy, George A. Hall, George F. Hurley, Nevada Laitsch, Patricia Temple

*The Redstart* is published quarterly in January, April, July, and October at 423 Warwood Ave., Wheeling, WV 26032. The journal of the Brooks Bird Club, it is mailed to all members in good standing. Nonmember subscription price is \$17. Individual copies are \$4, except the Foray issue, which is \$8. Changes of address and requests for back issues should be mailed to 423 Warwood Ave., Wheeling, WV 26032. Articles for publication and books for review should be mailed to the editor. Printed on recycled paper by PrinTech, Wheeling, WV. ISSN: 0034-2165

## White Ibis Flies by East River Mountain Hawkwatch Site in Southern West Virginia

Ann McRae

On September 3, 1995, my husband, Grady McRae, and I were watching for the Bibbee Nature Club's fall hawk migration count on East River Mountain above the town of Bluefield, West Virginia. Our observation site is just over 3,300 feet in elevation and faces northeast, and to our backs the ridge runs southwest.

At 1:25 p.m. I heard a small plane out over the valley to our left and glanced that way. To my astonishment there appeared a large white bird with black wingtips, long bright pink legs trailing behind the body, and a long curved pink bill, an adult White Ibis, flying along the ridge. At that point the bird was 400 to 500 feet out from us at eye level. It was flying northeast up the ridge. A Red-tailed Hawk flew out from the hillside in front of us and attacked the White Ibis, both tumbling down into the treetops. The White Ibis flew up and back down the ridge toward us coming up almost even to the point where we first saw it. It then turned around and headed back up the ridge. The Red-tailed Hawk came out at it again, and the White Ibis veered off directly north, continuing that way out of sight. We probably observed it three to four minutes.

In our more than 25 years of birdwatching this was the first White Ibis we had seen in West Virginia. This past April, 1995, we visited our daughter and her husband in Tampa, Florida. Daily we went to the local park to bird watch. White Ibis, both adults and juveniles, were plentiful. At dusk each night lots of waterfowl and other birds flew over our daughter's back lawn, including the White ibis, Anhinga, Tri-colored Heron, Cattle and Great egrets, ducks, and gulls of various species.

While we are sure this bird was an adult White Ibis, we're still amazed at seeing it at 3,300 feet flying along a ridge in Bluefield, West Virginia.

126 Fincastle Lane  
Bluefield, WV 24701

## Carolina Chickadees Feeding on White-tailed Deer Carcass

Jane J. Whitaker

During my participation in the BBC Christmas Bird Count in December 1995, I was birding along the North Fork of Hughes River about three miles south of Pennsboro in Ritchie County, West Virginia. The weather was clear with a temperature of approximately 40 degrees. There was no snow cover except in sheltered areas. Below a high bluff along the river is a pasture where white-tailed deer remains are dumped. There were at least three carcasses present at the time of my observations. I saw four very noisy, active Carolina Chickadees feasting on the remains of a deer that had only the rib cage left intact. I observed the chickadees feeding for about 10 minutes before continuing along the road. *The Birders Handbook* does not report scavenging of vertebrate carcasses as a feeding behavior in chickadees. Since chickadees eat suet at winter feeders, this behavior would not seem too exceptional during bad weather when other food sources were unavailable. However, there did not seem to be a lack of seeds, berries, and other food sources at the time of my observations. Perhaps this behavior may be common but not reported often, or possibly this is an acquired behavior of the endemic population as the location has been a dumping site for deer remains for many years. A. R. Buckelew Jr. tells me that he has observed Carolina Chickadees, Tufted Titmice, various species of woodpeckers, and White-breasted Nuthatches feeding on white-tailed deer carcasses in Bethany, West Virginia.

### References

Buckelew, A. R. Jr. (July, 1996). Personal communication.

Ehrlich, P. R., Dobkin, D. S., & Wheye, D. (1988). *The birders handbook*. New York: Simon Schuster Inc.

3817 Windom Pl., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20016

### Three Previously Unreported Plants Found in Ritchie County

Jane J. Whitaker

In October of 1995 I found three plants previously unreported for Ritchie County, West Virginia at the Pennsboro City Park. The city park is approximately 400 acres of primarily woodland that has remained undisturbed for over 50 years. It consists of two ridges that form a horseshoe configuration around a small valley that had been pasture prior to the park's purchase. The city built a small farm pond at the upper end of the valley in the early 1950s. In the 1960s a larger impoundment, Tracy Lake, was built downstream from the pond. About 0.3 miles of overgrown pasture separate the two impoundments. Tracy Lake is easily reached by automobile, but the smaller pond is accessible only on foot or by ATV. This habitat supports a rich variety of flora and fauna. The plants found there in October were Four Angled Spikerush (*Eleocharis quadrangulata*), Seedbox (*Ludwigia alternifolia*), and Winged Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*).

Members of the genus *Eleocharis*, the spikerushes are an important food source for muskrat and waterfowl and are members of the Cyperaceae, the Sedge Family. *E. quadrangulata*'s most unusual characteristic is its four-angled stem, which supports a solitary spikelet. The leaves are reduced to bladeless sheaths and it can obtain a height of 4-5 feet (Silberhorn, 1982). It is the only species of this genus with a square stem (Brown & Brown, 1984; Fernald, 1950). The habitat of this spikerush is reported to be primarily the coastal plain and tidal creeks. Strausbaugh and Core (1977) list *E. quadrangulata* as being found in only two southern West Virginia counties, Fayette and Mingo, which are approximately 100-150 miles distance from Ritchie County; however, it has since been found in five or six other sites within the state (Grafton, 1995). It has been suggested that the achenes have been transported from site to site by fishermen via the mud on their boots (Grafton, 1995). *E. quadrangulata* was observed only at Tracy Lake where it was the dominant spikerush along the water's edge in October. It was in bloom. No specimens were seen at the smaller upstream pond.

*Ludwigia alternifolia* has the characteristic four-parted yellow flowers of Evening Primrose family (Onagraceae). It is primarily a plant of wet areas and was observed along the edge of the smaller pond in the park. It is reported to be common throughout the state (Strausbaugh & Core, 1977), although there is no record of it for Ritchie County at the state herbarium at West Virginia University (Grafton, 1995). *L. alternifolia* is a perennial, and it has a slightly woody stem. Since it was October, the lance-shaped leaves were absent but the seed capsules were quite distinctive. They were cubic with a rounded base, 5-7 mm high and slightly wing-angled. The top had the dried remains of a sepal attached to each of the four sides, and there was a 1 mm

opening in the top where the small seeds fall out when dry.

The third plant, Winged Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatas*), was observed adjacent to the road leading to Tracy Lake. It is mentioned in *Flora of West Virginia* (Strausbaugh & Core, 1977) as an introduced species from Europe. It had been reported only at one site in Wirt County, which is adjacent to Ritchie County. It is mentioned in only four of the listed references (Fernald, 1950; Gleason & Cronquist, 1991; Muenscher, 1957; Strausbaugh & Core, 1977) and there are no illustrations included. *E. alata* is a member of the Staff-tree family, the Celastraceae. It is very similar to *Euonymus autopurpureus*, Burning Bush, with opposite leaves, four-sided branchlets, flowers in axillary chymes, and fruits with red axils. It is easily distinguished from other species in its genus by its distinct corky, winged branches. The wings are approximately 1 mm thick, and on the smaller branches each wing can approximate the width of the branchlet. The unusual features discussed above of *E. quadrangulata*, *L. alternifolia*, and *E. alata* made them more obvious in late fall than they would have been during the warmer months when the foliage was full.

Naturalists should be encouraged by these findings to maintain a certain level of field observations even when conditions seem less favorable. These and other plants may be found more widespread than believed if care is taken to look for them at different times of the year.

#### References

- Britton, N.L., & Brown, A. (1970). *An illustrated flora of the northern United States and Canada*. New York, NY: Dover Publications, Inc.
- Brown, M.L., & Brown, R.G. (1984). *Herbaceous plants of Maryland*. Baltimore: Port City Press, Inc.
- Fernald, M.L. (1950). *Grays manual of botany*. 8th edition. New York, NY: American Book Co.
- Grafton, W. (November 4, 1995). Extension Wildlife Specialist, West Virginia University, personal communication.
- Gleason, H. A., & Cronquist, A. (1991). *Manual of vascular plants of north-eastern United States and adjacent Canada*. 2nd edition. New York, NY: New York Botanical Gardens.
- Harned, J. E. (1936). *Wildflowers of the Alleghenies*. 2nd edition. Published by the author.

Muenschler, W. C. (1957). *Key to woody plants*. 6th edition. Ithaca, NY: Comstock.

Newcomb, L. (1977). *Newcomb's wildflower guide*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co.

Silberhorn, G.M. (1982). *Common plants of the midatlantic coast. A field guide*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Strausbaugh, P. D., & Core, E. L. (1977). *Flora of West Virginia*. 2nd edition. Grantsville, WV: Seneca Books, Inc.

3817 Windom Pl., NW  
Washington, DC 20016

## Red-Tailed Hawk Nesting Study on Interstate 79

Joseph Herron

During the spring of 1993 I decided to keep a record of Red-tailed Hawks and nests that I spotted while traveling on Interstate 79. Later in the spring I checked the nests to see if they were being used by hawks to raise young. Interstate 79 stretches from Charleston, West Virginia, to Erie, Pennsylvania. This study focuses on the stretch of road from Charleston to Fairmont, West Virginia. Mile markers were used as landmarks along the interstate to identify where the nests were found. The first active nest was found at the 28-mile mark, the last at the 130-mile mark.

Twenty-two possible nests were noted during the winter of 1993 and marked on a map to be checked later in the spring for nesting activity (see table). The nests usually look like a dark bunch of leaves or twigs lodged between limbs or in the forks near the trunk. Most of the nests were easily seen from the roadway, and the ones that were somewhat obscure were given away by hawks flying in the area regularly.

I checked the nests for young on May 1 and 2, 1993. Seven out of the 22 nests mapped were active. Four of the active nests had two young each, two had one each, and in the other nest the eggs were not hatched. The ages of the chicks ranged from one week to five weeks old. At one nest an adult was observed preening the young, at another the chick was being covered by the adult from the hot sunlight. One nest that sits above the interstate on a highwall was hard to observe. I climbed up to it to try and reach a vantage point above the nest to see inside. As I made the climb, both adults began flying over and screaming their discontent with the situation. Once I found my way past the tree, I climbed further up the bank and onto a log to look down on the nest. At first the nest appeared empty—no white fluffy chicks—but a closer look revealed a large bird hunched down flat in the nest. This young bird was nearly ready to fledge and join its parents in the skies above. It had all of its primaries and the brownish back blended well with the nest.

In all, 10 young were observed in the seven nests that were active. Two of the nests that were active were within eyesight of nests that were observed to be active back in the late 1970s. Perhaps these birds are the same adults nesting in the same area or offspring that have returned to the area to nest. The habitat along the interstate appears to be suitable for Red-tailed Hawks to hunt and nest successfully.

The following year, 1994, two new active nests were found, and one of the nests active the prior year had been abandoned due to timbering in the area. One of the new active nests was a nest that was not used the previous year. This nest was observed until the young hawk it contained fledged and left the nest.

Red-tailed Hawk Nests Along West Virginia I-79 in 1993

Mile Mark	Northbound or Southbound Lane	Activity
6	south	none
16	north	none
21	north	none
28.5	north	active (female on nest)
34.5	south	none
40.5	north	none
44	north	possible
49 (rest stop)	north	active (two young)
49.25	south	none
59.25	north	none
67.5	south	none
69	south	none
70.25	south	none
70.75	south	active (two young)
72.75	south	none
75	south	active (two young)
82 (highwall)	north	active (one young)
97.5	south	active (two young)
97.5	south	none
106	south	active (one young)
125	north	none
130.5	north	none

511 Ohio Avenue  
Fairmont, WV 26554

Animals Killed Along West Virginia Route 20  
in Southern West Virginia

James D. Phillips

During the period from January 1, 1990 to December 31, 1992 I maintained a record of animals killed along West Virginia Rt. 20. The area surveyed is between the Princeton post office and the entrance to Pipestem State Park. The entire route is paved and includes urban as well as rural settings. Speed limits along the way range from 15 to 55 miles per hour. The distance covered includes about 16 miles in Mercer County and about one mile in Summers County. Most of the trips were made Tuesdays through Saturdays with the northbound trips usually occurring between 8:00 and 8:30 a.m. and the southbound trips usually occurring between 4:30 and 5:00 p.m. The survey was conducted from an automobile with no stops for closer investigation. A breakdown of the carcasses follows:

Species	Mammals		
	1990	1991	1992
Eastern Cottontail	102	120	149
Virginia Opossum	89	105	132
Eastern Chipmunk	10	12	19
Eastern Gray Squirrel	10	3	24
Fox Squirrel	2	2	1
Red Squirrel	1	2	5
Domestic Cat	20	17	21
Woodchuck	15	17	16
Striped Skunk	10	7	6
Raccoon	5	9	13
White-tailed Deer	-	5	9
Domestic Dog	5	5	4
Norway Rat	4	4	2
Red Fox	2	3	-
Gray Fox	2	1	1
Muskrat	1	3	1
Mouse	-	1	1
Totals	278	316	404

Birds			
Species	1990	1991	1992
Unidentified	32	27	73
American Robin	6	9	11
Northern Cardinal	1	4	1
European Starling	3	-	-
American Goldfinch	3	1	1
Eastern Screech-Owl	2	-	2
Domestic Duck	2	-	2
Common Flicker	2	-	-
Red-winged Blackbird	2	1	-
Eastern Meadowlark	1	1	-
Rock Dove	1	-	1
Ruffed Grouse	1	-	-
Mourning Dove	1	-	-
American Crow	1	-	-
Wood Thrush	-	1	-
Scarlet Tanager	-	1	-
Common Grackle	1	-	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	-	-
House Sparrow	-	-	1
Totals	60	45	93

Amphibians/Reptiles

Species	1990	1991	1992
Frog species	-	1	-
Turtle species	-	1	2
Eastern Box Turtle	2	1	1
Common Snapping Turtle	2	-	5
Snake species	1	3	2
Black Rat Snake	3	3	2
Totals	8	9	12

Unidentified Remains

	1990	1991	1992
Totals	11	30	15

Yearly Totals For All Categories

	1990	1991	1992
Totals	357	400	524

Discussion

While these numbers indicate the impact automobiles may have on wildlife populations they probably do not reflect the true impact on smaller animals. Small victims, such as mice, salamanders, frogs, and even insects, are difficult to see from a moving vehicle and they are also easily removed from the road by predators and scavengers. Evidence for this idea comes from experiences along other roadways in Mercer and Summers countries. A walk along a quarter mile stretch of road in Pipestem State Park after a spring shower produced the sighting of at least 27 flattened Red-spotted Newts on the pavement. Once during a warm evening rain, along about a 2-mile section of road near Princeton, I moved 70 Spotted Salamanders out of the road. A dozen or more of these salamanders as well as Spring Peepers, Wood Frogs, and Pickerel Frogs had not made a successful crossing of the road. Virginia Opossums were observed in the vicinity and American Crows were noted the next morning. These scavengers are often found feeding on animals killed on the road. As for insects, perhaps the best way to obtain figures is to check the grill of your car.

This 3-year survey did indicate the existence of some patterns. Many of the mammals, birds, and turtles were hit during their breeding season or during the time that young were venturing out on their own. Eastern Cottontails and Virginia Opossums accounted for the majority of mammals killed followed closely by members of the squirrel family. Most of the birds were difficult to identify to species. Whether the victim was in the northbound lane or berm, middle, or southbound lane or berm was noted. Very few were in the middle. There seemed to be a 50/50 chance as to north or south. Although exact locations were not recorded, it appeared through observations that more animals died where the speed limit was higher. Observations also indicated a higher number of fatalities in roadcuts where the banks rose steeply above the highway.

Traffic counts compared to the number of roadkills may offer some insight into the impact of highways. According to 1992 figures from the Department of Highways, 7,700 vehicles travel over WV Route 20 at Athens in a day and 2,500 at Pipestem. In 1995, the Department of Highways estimated 8,400-14,000 vehicles per day were present on WV Route 20 in the Athens area. The projected use of the road for the year 2016 is 13,600-22,700 vehicles per day.

### Conclusions

This survey began as a way to pass the time while driving to and from work. It also gave me an idea of the types of animals that lived and died in the area. At the end of each year I was amazed at the number of animals being killed along this road. While I viewed this as a negative impact on the wildlife, I was surprised by a park guest who suggested that it was good that the highway was there to help limit the numbers of these animals. In other words, we might be overrun with rabbits and opossums if not for our automobiles.

As with most nature observations, the more you know the more you want to know. If this stretch of 17 miles of road was responsible for this many deaths then what about the thousands of miles of highway across the state? What do road builders do to lessen the impact of a road on the wildlife? An article in *The Morgan Messenger* described the possibility of using a BioMass Composter to dispose of roadkills. As so often happens, it seems we are looking for ways to clean up what we are doing to the environment rather than preventing the destruction in the first place.

HC 78, Box 42-C  
Pipestem, WV 25979

## Attempted Yellow-crowned Night-Heron Nesting at Pleasant Creek Wildlife Management Area, West Virginia

Susan Olcott

There are no breeding records for the Yellow-crowned Night-Heron for West Virginia, although there are summer records of birds that may have been nonbreeding or wandering postbreeding birds. A first-year plumaged night-heron, which may have been a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, was reported during the West Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas study only a few miles from the Virginia border adjacent to a known breeding occurrence near Pearisburg, Virginia (Buckelew & Hall, 1994; Hall 1983).

On May 24, 1996 I observed an adult Yellow-crowned Night-Heron feeding on a tributary west of Bartlett's Run at the Pleasant Creek Wildlife Management Area, and on June 14 I found an adult on a nest on the west side of the tributary. The nest was solitary and only one adult was seen. On June 21 an adult was on the nest and the sighting was confirmed by Jim Evans of the Division of Natural Resources and Scott Blackburn, state zoologist for the Nongame and Natural Heritage programs. Donna Mitchell (DNR) took photographs on June 25. The bird was spooked off the nest but settled down after Donna and I were out of sight. The photos did not turn out. The nest was revisited on July 3, 22, and 25, but the bird was not seen again. The nest tree was a black cherry with a dbh of 34 cm. The nest was 13 m off the ground and was located 3.4 m out from the trunk on a horizontal branch. The cherry was one of the tallest trees in the sparse canopy layer. Associated species in the canopy were black cherry, sugar maple, and sycamore. The understory consisted of sycamore and hawthorn, and the shrub layer contained hawthorn, honeysuckle, and poison ivy. Grasses, goldenrods, and other forbs made up the ground cover. The nest tree was located 140 m from the stream and immediately next to an open, grassy trail. After the nest was abandoned I tried to see into the nest, but I was unable to do so in spite of several hours spent climbing trees, and positioning a ladder and mirrors on poles. There was no evidence of egg shell fragments or carcasses near the nest tree. I suspect that this was an unmated female bird that finally gave up. I will investigate this area next year in hope of finding a successful nest.

### References

- Buckelew, A. R. Jr., & Hall, G. A. (1994). *The West Virginia breeding bird atlas*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Hall, G. A. (1983). *West Virginia birds*. Pittsburgh: Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Special Publication No. 7.

1304 Goose Run Road  
Fairmont, WV 26554

## 1995 Fourth of July Butterfly Counts in West Virginia

Jim Arnold

Butterfly populations in Appalachia benefit from the relative isolation of parts of the region where large tracts of land are recovering from earlier generations' farming and timbering practices, enjoying the advantages of benign neglect from low population and low tax base. It goes without saying that whenever the economy warms, Appalachian butterfly populations come under pressure from accelerating habitat loss. Butterfly communities continue in many places to suffer fallout from spray programs used to control the gypsy moth invasion. Gypsy moth spread in Appalachia continues, leaping a row or so of counties down the mountain range each year.

NABA-Xerces Butterfly Counts are held every summer around the Fourth of July, give or take a few weeks. The counts are fun and serve a real purpose to track the butterfly populations of North America. Volunteers select a count area within a 15-mile-diameter circle and conduct a one-day census of all butterflies sighted therein. The North American Butterfly Association coordinates the hundreds of counts and publishes its annual compilation. Counts over the years monitor changes in butterfly populations and communities and provide information for analyzing effects of weather and habitat changes. If an established count is held in your area please join in for a delightful day. If there is no count close enough to join, you may start one if you can identify the butterflies. Or, you may choose to inspire a nature center to start one for you. For information on counts in your area, conducting counts, the count program, and NABA, send an inquiry and a self-addressed, stamped envelope (business size) to NABA Butterfly Count, 909 Birch St., Baraboo, WI 53913. In West Virginia feel free to contact William Hartgroves or Jim Arnold, the West Virginia compilers, at the addresses given in the counts. The accounts come with permission from *The 1995 Report, NABA-Xerces Fourth of July Butterfly Counts*, privately published April 1996 and edited to include common names and information of interest to BBC members.

Two of the five North American Butterfly Association's 1995 Appalachian Region butterfly counts took place in West Virginia; the rest were in Tennessee. For the five regional counts, 52 observers found 49 species and about 1,846 individuals. Among these, West Virginia counts fielded 24 observers, identified 34 species, and about 1,011 individuals. Remarkable sightings in Tennessee included the Diana Fritillary, and adult and larval Appalachian Blue among others.

West Virginia Counts for 1995

Jefferson County, WV. 3rd yr. Confluence of Bullskin Run and Shenandoah River. See 1993 report for area and habitat coverage. Elev.: 400 ft. 25 July 1995; 1000 to 1400 hours; clear all day, 95% sun; 80-90° F; no wind. One garden watcher in one party. Total party-hours 4, on foot. Observer: William Hartgroves (201 River Road, Avon Bend, Charles Town, WV 25414). Conservation status of area surveyed: Uses of land—residential. Uniqueness of habitats: Butterfly garden with *Buddleia*, etc., and food plants for larvae. Imminent threats continue to be development and spraying for gypsy moths. Changes since last year: More development. Zebra Swt *Eurytides marcellus* 2, Tiger Swt *Papilio glaucus* 3, Spicebush Swt *P. troilus* 1, Clouded Sulf *C. philodice* 3, Alfalfa *C. eurytheme* 1, ETBlue *Everes comyntas* 2, Variegated Frit *Euptoieta claudia* 2, GtSpang *Speyeria cybele* 3, ?-Mark *Polygonia interrogationis* 2, Mourning Cloak *Nymphalis antiopa* 1, Red Adm *Vanessa atalanta* 2, Red Spot Purple *Limenitis arthemis* 2, Hackberry *Asterocampa celtis* 1, Monarch *Danaus plexippus* 1, Silverspot *Epargyreus clarus* 1. All butterflies were identified by sight. Total 15 adult species, about 27 individuals. Immature stages seen included *Eurytides marcellus* eggs (3) on pawpaw, *Euptoieta claudia* eggs (2) on Passiflora vine, *Danaus plexippus* eggs (2) on milkweed. Field notes: Species and numbers sharply down this year. Winter 94-95 average; summer rains included four over 1", one over 2.5". Other explanations of species decrease not evident: No gypsy moth control projects in immediate vicinity for four years; however, applications of dimilin and BT have occurred nearby since 1988.

Green Bottom, Cabell Co., WV. 3rd yr. 25 July 1995; 0930 to 1730 hours; clear all day, 95% sun; 80-90° F. 22 observers in two to five parties. Total party-hours 17 (8 on foot, 9 by car); total party-miles 29.5 (5.5 on foot, 24 by car). Observers: Mary Anderson, Patrick Anderson, Jim Arnold (153 Woodland Dr., Huntington, WV 25705), Laura Forman, Mike Forman, Helen Gibbins, Jeff Hajenga, Bowie Kahle, Kristen King, Craig Lewandowski, Linda Lewandowski, Barbara Lund, Sherry Patick, Jack Waldeck, James Williamson, Leon Wilson, Carol Wolf. Conservation status of area surveyed: See 1993 for uses of land and habitat uniqueness. Imminent threats: Permits pending for a papermill with a huge capacity for pulpwood. Changes noticed since last year include housing booms in Teays Valley and along Ohio River. Observations: Pipevine Swt *Battus philenor* 17 (N,B), Zebra Swt *Eurytides marcellus* 3, Black Swt *Papilio polyxenes* 1 (N), Tiger Swt *P. glaucus* 76 (B,S), Spicebush Swt *P. troilus* 20 (N,B), Cabbage *Pieris rapae* 2 (N), Clouded Sulf *Colias philodice* 314 (B,S), Alfalfa *C. eurytheme* 211 (B,S), ETBlue *Everes comyntas* 15 (N,S), GtSpang *Speyeria cybele* 62 (B,S), Meadow F *Boloria bellona* 1 (N), **Silvery Checkerspot** *Chlosyne nycteis* 1 (B), Pearl Cresc *Phyciodes tharos* 27 (S,N), ?-Mark *Polygonia interrogationis* 4 (N,B), Hopmerchant *P. comma* 7 (N,B), Painted Ldy *Vanessa cardui* 1 (B), Red Adm

*V. atalanta* 7, Buckeye *Junonia coenia* 1 (N), Red Spot Purp *Limenitis arthemis* 1, Viceroy *L. archippus* 2, Hackberry *Asterocampa celtis* 1 (N), **Northern Pearly Eye** *Enodia anhedon* 10 (N,S), Carolina Satyr *Hermeuptychia sosybius* 2 (N), Little Wood Satyr *Megisto cymela* 2 (N), Monarch *Danaus plexippus* 6 (S), Silverspot *Epargyreus clarus* 91, Common Sooty Wing *Pholisora catullus* 1 (N), *Erynnis* sp. 2, Least Skip *Ancyloxypha numitor* 44 (N,S), Peck's Skip *Polites peckius* 9 (B,S), **Sachem** *Atalopedes campestris* 46 (B,S), **Zabulon** *Poanes zabulon* 3 (B,S). Identifications were by sight (S) alone except as noted (Binocular, Netted). [New, unusual records or numbers for the count are set in boldface.] Adults: 32 species, about 984 individuals. Immature stages: *Pieris rapae*, 2 larvae on Brussels sprouts; *Colias eurytheme*, 5 larvae on red clover; *Danaus plexippus*, 1 larva on *Asclepias* sp. Field notes: Three species among 10 new to the count were also new county records this spring. Higher species and individual counts this year may be due to having more counters, more (and more experienced) leaders, and better habitat coverage. A new butterfly checklist for the five counties in and near the circle proved well worth the trouble. 1995 was a good butterfly year with well-spaced rains following a mild winter. A fortuitous pattern among places selected by counting parties appeared to discriminate among land use types: Hollows and low meadows (parties led by B. Lund) yielded 122 butterflies per party-hour; the wildlife management areas, 34 (similar to prior years there); and suburbs and towns yielded only 8.5 butterflies per party-hour. The overall average came to 58 individuals per party hour. The count received support from members of NABA, the WV Entomological Society, Tri-State Audubon, and the Brooks Bird Club.

153 Woodland Dr.  
Huntington, WV 25705

**Field Notes**  
**Spring Season**  
March-May, 1996

James D. Phillips, Editor

Another season's weather reached some extremes. Snow persisted into mid-April in several areas. Temperatures appeared to be a bit lower than normal, and it was wetter than usual as well. Some flooding occurred in yet another season. Despite the lack of the regular mudbanks (due to high water) some aquatic birds were found. Almost everyone considered the birds to be on time compared to past years, and several observers considered this the best spring migration encountered for many years.

**Loons through waterfowl**—Fewer **Common Loons** were found this season. Reports came from Mason(WA) and Summers(JP) counties in April and early May. As usual, **Pied-billed Grebes** were most evident in March but could be found throughout the period. **Double-crested Cormorants** were reported in Summers(AM), Wood(MBC) and Cabell(HS) counties. The only reports for **American Bittern**(WA) and **Least Bittern**(HS) came from the Green Bottom Wildlife Management Area, Cabell County in May. Jamie Fenske reported four nests in the **Great Blue Heron** colony on Middle Wheeling Creek in Ohio County, and Thomas Fox also found nests on the Little Kanawha at Bells Ford, Calhoun County. This species was also nesting on Grape Island, Pleasants County(MBC). **Great Egrets** were encountered in Wood(MBC), Ritchie(VC) and Cabell(WA) counties. Harry Slack found a **Cattle Egret** in Cabell County on May 30. **Green Herons** appeared on time. A **White Ibis** was seen flying over the Tygart Valley River near Elkins, Randolph County on April 12 (CC) [See Ann McRae's article in this issue of *The Redstart*].

The only **Tundra Swans** reported were those on Bluestone Lake, Summers County(JP) the second week of March. **Mute Swans** were seen in Wood (MBC) and Kanawha(HG) counties and two locations in Mason County(WA). The only **Snow Goose** was in Pleasants County(MBC). **Canada Geese** continue to increase. **Wood Ducks** were present on time. A few **Green-winged Teal** were present from mid-March to mid-April. The early date for **Blue-winged Teal** was March 10 in Summers County(JP). This species was also noted in Wood(MBC), Gilmer(TF), and Preston(JJ) counties. The only **Gadwall** report came from Wood County(MBC). **American Wigeons** were present from the beginning of the period to mid-April. Three **Canvasbacks** were seen on the Little Kanawha(TF), Calhoun County. Thirty or more were seen in Mason(WA) County, and they were also found in Wood County(MBC). **Redheads** were seen in Kanawha(HG), Wood(MBC), and Summers(JP) counties and 50 or more in Kyger Creek, Ohio(WA) in March. Small groups of **Ring-necked Ducks**

were seen in March in Mercer(JP), Summers(JP), Wood(MBC), Calhoun(TF), and Kanawha(HG) counties. **Greater Scaups** were reported in Gallia County, Ohio (WA) and Wood County(MBC), West Virginia in March. Two large rafts (130 individuals in one group and 325 individuals in the other) of **Lesser Scaups** spent a couple of days on Bluestone Lake, Summers County(MH) in early April. A **Surf Scoter** was seen on Cisco Pond, Ritchie County on April 28(VC). **Common Goldeneyes** seemed to depart a bit early, while **Buffleheads** appeared to linger a bit longer than usual. Donny Good reported 130 **Buffleheads** and five **Oldsquaws** on the lake in Blackwater Falls State Park, Tucker County on April 5. **Hooded Mergansers** did not seem to have much of a pattern. **Common Mergansers** were seen in Mason County(WA) in early March, and **Red-breasted Mergansers** were noted along the New(AM) and Kanawha(HG) rivers in late March and early May. A few **Ruddy Ducks** were found across the region.

**Vultures through terns**—**Turkey Vultures** appeared when expected. The roost at the mouth of the Bluestone River, Summers County usually contains both **Black** and **Turkey vultures**(JP). **Ospreys** seemed to return a bit early—March 30 in Mason County(WA) and April 6 in Summers(AM) County. Nesting was observed in Wood County(MBC). An immature **Bald Eagle** was seen in Wood County on May 11(MBC). According to an article in the *Charleston Gazette*: DNR officials have located six Bald Eagle nests in Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, and Pendleton counties. Most contributors considered the buteos to be doing well. **Broad-winged Hawks** returned on time. Wendell Argabrite saw an immature **Golden Eagle** on Cheat Mountain in Randolph County on March 16. **American Kestrels** seemed to be doing well.

More reports were received for **Ruffed Grouse**. **Wild Turkey** continue to flourish although the cold, wet weather seemed to disturb them. For the first time in 50 years, William Murray heard a **Northern Bobwhite** calling in Hancock County. Wendell Argabrite found **Virginia Rails**, **Soras**, and **Common Moorhens** at Green Bottom Wildlife Management Area. The **Virginia Rail** and the **Common Moorhens** are nesting in that area(WA). **American Coots** were present across the region most of the period. Early in April, Ann McRae saw 25-30 **Sandhill Cranes** fly over Sandstone Falls, Raleigh County.

A **Black-bellied Plover** was seen in Mason County on May 4(WA). **Killdeer** seemed to be doing well in the region. Both **yellowlegs**, **Solitary**, and **Spotted sandpipers** were seen when and where expected. Seven **Willetts** were seen in Mason County in early May(WA). **Short-billed Dowitchers** were found in two locations in Mason County on May 3(WA) and two **Long-billed Dowitchers** were seen and heard at the Robert C. Byrd Locks and Dam, Mason County two days later(WA). **Common Snipe** were seen in Ritchie(VC) and Wood(MBC) counties. **American Woodcock** were found over most of the region with displays being reported from early in the season to mid-May. Harry Slack found a **Franklin's Gull** on the Ohio River at Huntington, Cabell County on May 27 (Four other people experienced with the species saw it). **Bonaparte's**, **Ring-billed**, and **Herring gulls** were all seen across the

region during the season. **Caspian Terns** were seen in Mason County, and **Forester's Terns** in Mason and Cabell counties (WA). **Common Terns** were found in two locations in Summers County (JP).

**Cuckoos through warblers**—Unusual was a **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** near Woodsfield, Ohio (BBC) on March 18. Everywhere else had cuckoos on time. John Jacobs found remarkable numbers for both species of cuckoos in his Gypsy Moth infested area. **Eastern Screech-Owls** and **Great Horned Owls** seemed in normal numbers. **Barred Owls** seemed to be doing better than normal. **Common Nighthawks** had returned by the first week of May. **Whip-poor-wills** were reported for Mercer (AM), Hampshire (JW), Summers (JP), Calhoun (TF), Ritchie (VC), and Wood (MBC) counties. **Chimney Swifts** seemed to be about a week late. **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** were on time. Little mention was made of the woodpeckers. The only **Red-headed Woodpecker** reported was in Ritchie County (JW). **Eastern Wood-Pewees** and **Willow Flycatchers** seemed to be a week or so late, while **Acadian** and **Great Crested flycatchers** and **Eastern Kingbirds** seemed to be on time. Wendell Argabrite found five **Alder Flycatchers** at Cranberry Glades, Pocahontas County in late May. Most of the swallows seemed to be on time. Two nesting colonies of **Bank Swallows** and three nesting colonies of **Cliff Swallows** were noted in Wood County (MBC).

A few **Red-breasted Nuthatches** could still be found at the end of the period. **House Wrens** appeared on time. Wendell Argabrite had the late date of May 11 for **Winter Wren**. He also had **Sedge** and **Marsh Wrens** in Mason and Cabell counties. **Golden-crowned Kinglets** remained through the first of May and a few **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** could still be found in mid-May. **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** were on time. **Eastern Bluebirds** seemed to do well despite the cold snaps in April and May. Most observers agreed this was the best season for some time for the thrushes. All the species expected were seen and appeared to be in good numbers. It will be interesting to compare the fall banding numbers to the spring observations. Harry Slack banded a **Loggerhead Shrike** at Beech Fork Dam, Wayne County on April 13.

Most observers considered the vireos on time although a couple considered them to be late. **Solitary** (TF) and **White-eyed** (JP) vireos seemed late. First dates for warblers were as follows: **Blue-winged**, April 21 (TF); **Golden-winged**, April 28 (JP); **Tennessee**, April 22 (MBC); **Nashville**, May 6 (MBC); **Northern Parula**, April 21 (TF, JP); **Yellow**, April 13 (MBC); **Chestnut-sided**, May 4 (JJ); **Magnolia**, April 17 (MBC); **Black-throated Blue**, May 1 (JP); **Black-throated Green**, April 21 (TF); **Blackburnian**, May 5 (JP); **Yellow-throated**, April 12 (TF); **Pine**, March 24 (JP); **Prairie**, April 20 (TF); **Blackpoll**, May 5 (TF); **Ovenbird**, April 23 (VC); **Louisiana Waterthrush**, March 24 (JP); and most of the others were in place by the first week of May. **Canada Warblers** were in Ritchie County as late as May 26 (JW).

**Tanagers through finches**—The first date for **Summer Tanager** was April 23 (TF). The first date for **Scarlet Tanager** was April 21 (JP). Some observers reported tanager numbers down and some thought numbers were up. **Rose-breasted Gros-**

**beaks** seemed to be more numerous and had returned by the third week of April. **Blue Grosbeaks** were found in Ritchie (VC) and Wood (MBC) counties. **Indigo Buntings** were back by April 20 (TF) and considered to be more common this year. **American Tree Sparrows** were last seen March 24 in Summers County (JP), Preston (JJ), and Hardy (MW) counties. **Fox Sparrows** moved through at the usual time but seemed to be in lower numbers. **Lincoln's Sparrows** were found in Wood (MBC) and Calhoun (TF) counties. The last date for **White-throated Sparrows** was May 11 in Hardy (JW), Wood (MBC), and Summers (JP) counties. The last date for **White-crowned Sparrows** was May 17 in Calhoun (TF) and Wood (MBC) counties. **Dark-eyed Juncos** remained until late April. **Bobolinks** were reported for Wood (MBC), Summers (JP), and Preston (JJ) counties. Most of the other blackbirds appeared normal. Both **orioles** were on time and in better numbers. **Purple Finches** were in good numbers late into the spring. A pair was observed breeding and gathering nest material at the Pipestem State Park nature center on May 26 (JP). **House Finches** were in lower numbers. The only report of **Common Redpolls** came from Wood County (MBC) in late March. **American Goldfinches** seemed to be abundant. There were scattered reports of **Evening Grosbeaks** throughout the season. As many as three dozen still visited feeders in Summers County at the end of the season (JP).

**Correction**—In the October, 1995 issue of *The Redstart* a **Black Vulture** sighting in Ritchie County was in error. Please disregard.

**Contributors**—Wendell Argabrite (WA), Headquarters Chapter (BBC), A.R. Buckelew (JB), Coleman Cain (CC), Virginia Cronenberger (VC), Jamie Fenske (JF), Thomas Fox (TF), Hullet Good (HG), Margaret Hank (MH), Virginia Bly Hoover (VH), John Jacobs (JJ), James Phillips (JP), Ann McRae (AM), Mountwood Bird Club (MBC), William Murray (WM), Harry Slack (HS), Jane Whitaker (JW), and Matthew Whitaker (MW).

HC 78, Box 42-C  
Pipestem, WV 25979

## Book Reviews

**Stokes Field Guide to Birds: Eastern Region** by Donald and Lillian Stokes. 1996. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 471 pp., \$16.95 paper covers.

Donald and Lillian Stokes, well-known for their bird behavior guides, have produced a well-organized, easy to use, very informative field guide to the birds. Whereas the inside front cover of Roger Tory Peterson's *Field Guide to Eastern Birds* shows silhouettes of common birds and *The Birds of North America* by Chandler Robbins *et al.* has blank pages, as does the National Geographic Society *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*, the *Stokes Field Guide to Birds* has a quick alphabetical index, and a color tab index to bird groups. This organization makes the book very quick and easy to use in the field. Inside, too, are innovations that improve this guide. A single page is devoted to each bird, with a few exceptions. More than one view is shown of most birds and the pictures are color photographs that are unusually fine. A color range map is provided for each species. Voice, habitat, and feeding and nesting habits are clearly stated as well as a full description of the bird in all phases and both sexes. There are two sections titled "Other Behavior" and "Conservation" that are not found in the other guides. Interesting or unique behaviors of each bird are detailed in "Other Behavior" and "Conservation" notes population trends from Breeding Bird Surveys and Christmas Bird Counts. A drawing on the top right hand corner of the page informs whether the bird will use nest boxes or bird feeders. There are learning pages for challenging groups of birds, i.e., hawks in flight, shorebirds, gulls, flycatchers, warblers, and sparrows. These give an overview of each group, which birds are commonly seen, and reference pages for specific birds.

This book is worth your perusal. Birders often have very personal allegiances to their bird guides, but there are enough organizational changes and new features in this one to warrant giving it a try.

Elizabeth B. Bullard

**A Parrot without a Name: The Search for the Last Unknown Birds on Earth** by Don Stap. 1990. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press. 239 pp., \$14.95, paper covers.

Don Stap, a journalist, followed ornithologists John O'Neill and Ted Parker for four years, witnessing their search for what may be the last new bird species. The effort included two expeditions to northeastern Peru, visits to the ornithology museum at Louisiana State University, and visits to the homes and offices of field ornithologists. Any devoted bird watcher will appreciate the excitement generated by an expedition with a chance to see a bird new to science. Stap does a good job of conveying the

sense of excitement, primitive scenery, beautiful birds, hardships of travel in remote rain forest habitat, and reactions of human beings dedicated to the study of birds to remote and beautiful lands. There are few places in the world where one can be truly isolated from civilization, where the risks of exploration are very real, and where there is any chance of seeing new bird species. The headwaters of the Amazon River in eastern Peru is one of these places. Stap records the adventure as well as accounts of the many interesting birds seen on the expeditions. He discusses the process and problems involved in naming new species, and enables the reader to understand how collection of specimens and use of museum skins are necessary to the process.

The story gives us insight into the lives of men and women dedicated enough to abandon normal family life and take on the risks involved in travel under difficult conditions to find new birds. John O'Neill, involved in the discovery of 11 new species since 1961, was influenced by George Miksch Sutton's *Mexican Birds* when he was only 11 years old and met Dr. Lowery of L.S.U. at 13. He went to the University of Oklahoma to study with "Doc" Sutton. Ted Parker, in his freshman year at the University of Arizona in 1971, used his father's credit card and set a new American Birding Association record for birds seen in one year, 626. This was accomplished without the aid of private jets and bird hotlines. His dedication to travel to exotic places to find new species of birds kept him from doing a Ph.D., but he was on the staff at L.S.U. and was recognized as a top South American field ornithologist until his death in a plane crash in South America. Readers will enjoy Stap's biography of these men. And, yes, a new species of parrotlet was discovered on one of the expeditions Stap joined.

**The Beak of the Finch** by Jonathan Weiner. 1995. New York: Vintage Books. 332 pp., \$13.00, paper covers.

*The Beak of the Finch*, a winner of the Pulitzer Prize, is an account of the 20 years of research done by Peter and Rosemary Grant and their students on evolution of Darwin's Finches in the Galapagos Islands. Charles Darwin wrote that evolution proceeds at such a slow pace that no one would ever be able to observe the process in a lifetime, but the Grants and their students have shown through their research that one can observe changes in the beaks of Darwin's finches in response to changes in weather over 20 field seasons on Daphne Major. The author also discusses other important evidence for the more rapid pace of evolution, but most of the book is about the work of the Grants. Ornithology students will enjoy the detailed descriptions of field methods and the vivid picture drawn of field work carried out under difficult conditions. Natural selection occurs rapidly enough that it can be seen by careful observers, a compelling confirmation of Darwin's theory of evolution.

A. R. Buckelew Jr.