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The Kentucky Warbler

Volume IV.

Bowling Green, Ky., October, 1928

Number 4

OUR MEMBERS—Early in June of this year Dr. T. Atchison Frazer gave over radio from Station WHAS an address on the *Byways of Kentucky*. An extract will be found elsewhere in this leaflet.

Professor L. Y. Lancaster, of the Ogden Department of Science, Teachers College, Bowling Green, received his M. S. degree from Ohio State University last June. His thesis was on *Winter Food of Fresh Water Fishes*. Professor Lancaster is now making a collection of all Kentucky fishes. He resumed his duties in the Teachers College in the summer term.

Our president, Gordon Wilson, is pursuing his graduate work this year in Indiana University. He is using for his thesis study the life and works of Alexander Wilson, thus combining his two lines of study, English and Ornithology. Those desiring to communicate with him will write him at 403 East Third Street, Bloomington, Indiana.

Miss Mary May Wyman, head of the science department of the Louisville Normal School, is honored and has honored our society by having accepted for publication in the initial number of *Nature and Science Education* (October, 1928) the address she delivered last spring before our society, *Let Us Teach Nature Study*.

Miss Emilie Yunker, our vice-president, will have an article in the November issue of *Better Homes and Gardens on School Garden Activities in Louisville*. Miss Yunker is also writing articles for the *Herald-Post* each week on trees.

Mr. G. D. Hibbs, of Cox's Creek, always interesting for his observations of wild life, is now contributing occasional articles to his county paper on birds and their economic and aesthetic values. A recent article was entitled *Birds and Insects and Their Relation to Man*.

Mrs. Charles McBride, our secretary-treasurer, is an inveterate traveler. Just recently she has returned from a protracted stay in Yellowstone National Park, where she spent many days studying the wild life.

Dr. Frazer, we should have added above, has recently been invited by the clubwomen of Louisville to address them on birds some time in the spring. While attending the Kentucky Medical Association at Richmond, in early September, he addressed the wives and daughters of the physicians of the state on birds and wild life.

Mr. B. C. Bacon and other members of the Madisonville chapter of the Izaak Walton League have finally put through their Spring Lake Wild Life Sanctuary. The President of the K. O. S. appreciates

THE KENTUCKY WARBLER

very highly an honorary membership in this, the first wild-life preserve sponsored by the Izaak Walton League in the state.

Mr. A. F. Ganier, of Nashville, Tennessee, an honorary member of the K. O. S., was honored this summer by being called for a week of lectures on ornithology at Pennsylvania State College.

Mr. Edward M. Ray is now principal of the Frances High School, Crittenden County, having taken his A. B. degree at the Western Teachers College in August. He reports that he and Dr. Frazer are planning some great outdoor trips while he is in that part of the state.

* * * *

CHRISTMAS CENSUSES—We had such an interesting response last year to our requests for Christmas censuses that we hope to have an even better this year. Plan right now to take one. Stay out all day, or as long as you possibly can. Count each species and each bird seen. Write out a full account of your trip, giving the kind of weather, the temperature, the places visited, and then the census. Mail the census to the president at 403 Third Street, Bloomington, Indiana, not later than December 31. This census should be taken between December 22 and 28. Let's have a dozen or more, from all parts of the state.

* * * *

OUR FALL MEETING—The annual fall meeting of the Kentucky Ornithological Society was held this year at Hodgenville, September 14 and 15. On the afternoon of September 14 Miss Mary May Wyman, head of the science department of the Louisville Normal School, lectured to a teachers' meeting at Magnolia, fifteen teachers and their pupils being present. Miss Emilie Yunker, director of school gardening of the Louisville schools, spoke twice at Hodgenville, before the grades and before the high school. Through the unavoidable delay of Dr. T. Atchison Frazer and Professor Gordon Wilson, it was impossible for a speaker to be present at Buffalo, as originally planned.

Friday evening, September 14, the society held its meeting in the Masonic Building at Hodgenville. Dr. Frazer, Marion, gave an address entitled *Bird Enemies*, stressing especially man's wanton destruction of wild life. Miss Wyman gave a series of Audubon Society slides on some thirty of our commoner birds. She emphasized the sociable nature of birds and their ready response to our kindness. Miss Yunker gave a series of slides put out by the International Harvester Company to illustrate the economic value of birds. Mr. Wilson reviewed briefly his recent study of the life and works of Alexander Wilson; his famous trip through Kentucky in 1810, and his observations in the Barrens, or prairies.

Early Saturday morning, September 15, the K. O. S. went to the Lincoln Farm for an outing. Besides visiting the shrine, the party took a short field trip in the surrounding woods and found some thirty species, including a number of migrating warblers. Those present at the Lincoln Farm were as follows: Misses Emilie Yunker, Mary May Wyman, Lillian Bailey, and Margie Yenowine and Mrs. Charles E. McBride, Louisville; Dr. T. Atchison Frazer and Miss Ada Nell Frazer, Marion; G. D. Hibbs and Rodman Cissell, Cox's Creek; Gordon Wilson, Mrs. Gordon Wilson, Winifred Wilson, and Gordon Wilson, Junior, Bowling Green; and Superintendent J. R. Wilson, Hodgenville.

While on the field trip at the Lincoln Farm, the members discussed plans for a real outing next fall at the regular meeting and

THE KENTUCKY WARBLER

decided to hold the public sessions at Elkton and a full-day field trip in the wild canyon along Clifty Creek, in northern Todd County. This area is certainly one of the most primitive in the state and ranks with any area east of the Rockies. The vegetation is largely that of New England and is untouched by man. Several of our members have camped in this area and pronounce it the wildest accessible place in the state. In a later issue full plans will be given as to our fall meeting.

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MR. HIBBS'S BIRDS—The following birds nested in boxes within less than 300 yards of my house in 1927: Bluebird, 72 pairs with two nests each; Crested Flycatcher, 8 pairs with one nest each; Carolina Chickadee, 7 pairs with one nest each; Tufted Titmouse, 6 pairs with one nest each. All these nested in boxes I had put up, totaling over 700 fledgelings. I added 25 new boxes in 1928. Birds nesting on platforms or on the ground ran the total up to 32 species, four of them being new for my place: Summer Tanager, Black-billed Cuckoo, Indigo Bunting, and Least Sandpiper. Here are some species seen at my feeding shelves: Cardinal, White-crowned Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Carolina Wren, House Wren, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Chickadee, Mockingbird, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Southern Downy Woodpecker, Brown Thrasher, Bronzed Grackle, Blue Jay, Red-headed Woodpecker, about a hundred individuals in all.—G. D. Hibbs, Cox's Creek.

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We are face to face with a war between man and insects, with the enemy gaining ground each year. All kinds of poisons are being used in our efforts to check this foe, yet we are losing ground each day. If conditions continue for another century as they are today, it is doubtful whether we can produce enough food to sustain life. There is no plant immune from the ravages of insects, and it is strange that each insect has its special plant. The insect life increases so rapidly that it takes millions of birds and insect-destroying reptiles and animals to hold them in check. A young wren will eat ten times its weight in worms each day it remains in the nest. Suppose a man who weighs 200 pounds would eat in proportion to a wren; it would take a ton of food each day for such a man.

The economic value of our wild life is enormous, and but few of us stop to consider its value. We must get the people to see the money value of a thing before we can get them interested. The aesthetic value of our wild life cannot be estimated in money; but it must be evaluated in pleasure, in better health, in finer sentiments, in a love for the great out-of-doors. The noblest of all hunters is the man who does not take a game bag when he goes hunting, but goes only for the joy of the chase, to hear the music of the hounds, and leaves Reynard to run again. These are the people who appreciate our wild life in all its beauty, glory, and grandeur.—Dr. T. Achison Frazer, in "The Byways of Kentucky."

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At Lexington, on his trip south in 1810, which he found disappointingly unattractive after what he had been led to expect, he bought a horse and started to Nashville, going by way of Danville and Bowling Green. He discovered many new birds on this trip. Somewhere in central Kentucky he found and named the Kentucky Warbler; in the barrens he found the Prairie Warbler; and in the state of Tennessee he saw and named the Tennessee and Nashville Warblers.

THE KENTUCKY WARBLER

Nothing in the scenery interested him more than the barrens with their scrubby timber, their sink-holes, their caves, and their numerous grouse. Mammoth Cave, then newly discovered but not yet named, he described in detail in a letter which he wrote from Nashville, April 28, 1910, to Alexander Lawson. It had just been sold, he wrote, to a saltpetre company, for three thousand dollars. Other caves he visited and entered, bringing back from such trips handfuls of bats and cave crickets.

"Notwithstanding the miserable appearance of the timber in these barrens, the soil, to my astonishment, produced the most luxuriant fields of corn and wheat I had ever before met with. But one great disadvantage is the want of water; for the whole running streams, with which the surface of this country evidently once abounded, have been drained off to a great depth, and now murmur among these lower regions, secluded from the day. One forenoon I rode nineteen miles without seeing water; while my faithful horse looked round, but in vain, at every hollow, with a wistful and languishing eye, for that precious element. These barrens furnished me with excellent sport in shooting grouse, which abound here in great numbers; and in the delightful groves, that here and there rise majestically from the plains, I found many new subjects for my 'Ornithology.' I observed all this day, far to the right, a range of high, rocky, detached hills or knobs, as they are called, that skirt the barrens, as if they had been once the boundaries of the great lake that formerly covered this vast plain. These I was told, abound with stone, coal, and copperas. I crossed Big Barren River in a ferry boat, where it was about one hundred yards wide; and passed a small village called Bowling Green, near which I rode my horse up to the summit of one of these high insulated rocky hills, or knobs, which overlooked an immense circumference of country, spreading around bare and leafless, except where the groves appeared, in which there is usually water."—From "Alexander Wilson, Pioneer," by Gordon Wilson.

THE KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Organized April, 1923

President -----Professor Gordon Wilson, Bowling Green

Vice-President -----Miss Emilie Yunker, Louisville

Secretary-Treasurer --Mrs. Charles McBride, 1106 S. Fourth St.,

Louisville

Meets annually in the spring at Louisville, during the week of The Kentucky Educational Association; in the fall at some Kentucky college.

Dues for K. O. S. membership: local or state members, 50c annually; affiliate, \$2.00.

Address Warbler correspondence to the President.