

10-1932

Kentucky Warbler (Vol. 8, no. 4)

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Recommended Citation

Kentucky Library Research Collections, "Kentucky Warbler (Vol. 8, no. 4)" (1932). *Kentucky Warbler*. Paper 38.
http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/ky_warbler/38

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The Kentucky Warbler

Volume VIII Bowling Green, Ky., October, 1932 Number 4

Our Fall Meeting—The eighth annual fall meeting was held at Madisonville on Friday and Saturday, October 14 and 15. In the morning of October 14 Professor Gordon Wilson, of Bowling Green, Dr. L. Otley Pindar, of Versailles, and Mr. B. C. Bacon, of Madisonville, spoke before the graded schools of Madisonville on bird life, addressing about a thousand children and teachers. In the afternoon the visiting members of the K. O. S. were guests of honor at a football game between the high-school teams of Madisonville and Henderson. In the evening the following program was given at the high-school auditorium:

1. "Birds of Spring Lake"—Mr. B. C. Bacon, Madisonville. An account of the territory around Spring Lake and the 208 species recorded by Mr. Bacon in his many years of bird study in this area. He divided his finds into all-time residents, winter residents, summer residents, migrants, and occasional visitors. Because of the lake, the list included a large range of water and wading birds, many of them quite unusual. The protection afforded the birds since the establishment of the sanctuary also has had much to do with the excellent list of birds seen there.
2. "Six Summer Trips"—Professor Gordon Wilson, Bowling Green. An account of six camping and rowing trips taken during the months of June, July, and August, 1932, on Barren and Green Rivers and Drake's Creek. On these six trips 82 species of birds were seen, all of them summer or all-time residents except the Solitary Sandpiper, which had begun to migrate from the north before the last trips were taken. In addition to these 81 species of nesting birds, eight others, not found on these trips, were seen at other times during the season, making a total of 89 species that are known to have nested near Bowling Green during the season of 1932.
3. "State Birds"—Dr. T. Atchison Frazer, Marion. A review of the choosing of state birds from colonial times to the present, with a complete list of all birds that have been chosen officially or unofficially. Since many of these species are common to Kentucky, Dr. Frazer gave interesting comments on their habits, their songs, and their aesthetic and economic values. At the conclusion of his talk, by request he gave several of his inimitable bird calls, especially of night birds.

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At the end of the program Mr. Albert F. Ganier, of Nashville, Tennessee, the most prominent ornithologist of the South and one of our three honorary members, was introduced to the audience. Also Dr. L. Otley Pindar, of Versailles, was recognized. Dr. Pindar, Mr. Bacon, and Mr. Wilson were the organizers of the K. O. S. in 1923. This is the first time that all of them have been together at a meeting. Bad health has prevented Dr. Pindar's being at one of our meetings since 1924. It was a source of delight to our members that we could have all the founders at this meeting.

At seven o'clock Saturday morning, October 15, the field day started at Spring Lake Sanctuary. The following people were in the party: Dr. Frazer, Mr. Bacon, Mr. Wilson, Dr. Pindar, Mr. Ganier, and Mr. Crook, of Nashville. All morning the bird students waded among the forest paths of the refuge or rowed around the lake looking for birds. Their looking was amply rewarded, for the day's find amounted to 37 species: Red-winged Blackbird, Bluebird, Cardinal, Carolina Chickadee, Crow, Flicker, Goldfinch, Bronzed Grackle, Sparrow Hawk, Blue Jay, Kingfisher, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Meadowlark, Mockingbird, White-breasted Nuthatch, Wood Pewee, Phoebe, Robin, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Field Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Brown Thrasher, Tufted Titmouse, Towhee, Myrtle Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Cedar Waxwing, Southern Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Red-headed Woodpecker, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Coot, Pied-billed Grebe, Veery, and Starling.

At noon Mr. Bacon served barbecued rabbit to the K. O. S. members and some fifteen or twenty local business and professional men, most of whom are also members of the Spring Lake Fishing Club. After the excellent dinner Mr. Bacon talked for a while on the origin of the Spring Lake Sanctuary and the abundance of bird and other wild life found there. Mr. Wilson told of the temporary lake in Warren County which attracted so many unusual water and wading birds in the spring and summer of 1927. Mr. Ganier told very enthusiastically of his adventures in reaching the nesting places of some 450 American Egrets and many Great Blue Herons, Double-crested Cormorants, Water Turkeys, and other water birds on an island in Reelfoot Lake, in western Tennessee, last spring. Mr. Crook gave an account of his experiences as nature guide and lecturer in Yellowstone National Park during the last four seasons, especially of his helping band young Pelicans on one of the small islands in Yellowstone Lake. The party broke up at 2:00 o'clock, pronouncing it the greatest meeting our society has ever had. It was a source of regret that professional business called Dr. Frazer away before the conclusion of the hike and program. Before he left, however, pictures were taken of all the people who went on the field trip and also of the three founders.

Miss Emilie Yunker, Director of School Gardens of the schools of Louisville, was unable to be present because of an attack of pleurisy, but she sent her address and also a feeding station to be presented to the local schools. It was a source of real regret to all who were present that so many others of our most faithful members were unable to attend this fall meeting: Dr. Lancaster, Miss Wyman, Mr. Ray, and others. Plans were made for a drive for membership and for increasing the size and widening the scope of The Kentucky Warbler.

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Christmas Bird Census—For several years, following a custom set in 1900 by the Audubon Societies of America, the Kentucky Or-

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nithological Society has promoted a Christmas Bird Census. In the past this activity of the society has been quite satisfactory. It is hoped that many will participate in the census this Christmas. Plan to be out all day, certainly as many as six hours. Go into as many kinds of territory as possible: woods, fields, along streams, etc. Count every species and every individual bird. Mail your report to the editor with information about the place where the census was taken, the weather the temperature, the number of miles covered, and the names of the people participating. Here is a sort of form:

Madisonville, Dec. 26; 6:30 a. m. to 5:00 p. m. Spring Lake Sanctuary and adjoining region. Weather, cloudy; wind, northwest, strong; ground bare; temp. at start 28, at return 34. Bluebird, 86; . . . Turkey Vulture, 6. Total 45 species, 1893 individuals.—B. C. Bacon.

The report will appear in the Jan. issue. Even if you feel that you do not know all the species you are likely to find, go anyway; the very fact that you start participating in this annual event will give you an impetus to know the birds better. Every one who has taken part in this event says it is the greatest single day of the year, one that is different from all other days of outdoor life.

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Mr. Ray's New Position—Our Secretary, Mr. Edward M. Ray, who took his A. M. degree at Western last summer, is now the principal of the Fordville High School, in Ohio County. Barbara Ann Ray, the daughter of our Secretary, was born October 30.

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Mr. Hibbs's Birds—Mr. G. D. Hibbs, of Cox's Creek, Nelson County, reports the following nesting birds around his bird sanctuary during the 1932 season: Sparrow Hawk, 1 pair; Spotted Sandpiper, 1; Killdeer, 2; Bobwhite, 2; Dove, 3; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1; Southern Downy Woodpecker, 1; Flicker, 3; Robin, 2; Bluebird, 5; Tufted Titmouse, 1; Carolina Chickadee, 2; Carolina Wren, 1; House Wren, 1; Warbling Vireo, 1; Chimney Swift, 3; Barn Swallow, 2; Summer Tanager, 1; Yellow-billed Cuckoo, 1; Song Sparrow, 2; Grasshopper Sparrow, 1; Chipping Sparrow, 1; Bachman Sparrow, 1; Lark Sparrow, 1; Field Sparrow, 6; Towhee, 2; Cardinal, 3; Indigo Bunting, 1; Dickcissel, 1; Mockingbird, 1; Brown Thrasher, 2; Catbird, 2; Kingbird, 1; Phoebe, 1; Wood Pewee, 1; Crested Flycatcher, 1; Meadowlark, 3; Red-winged Blackbird, 2; Orchard Oriole, 1; Purple Grackle, 4; Maryland Yellowthroat, 1. Starlings were also seen, but no nests were found. Mr. Hibbs is one of the most enthusiastic bird students of the state and has for many years encouraged birds to live with him at his Nelson County farm.

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"Cranetown"—In May, 1932, I made a trip deep into the cypress swamp on the west shore of Reelfoot Lake, where I discovered and studied what I believe to be the largest "cranetown" in the interior of the United States. Here, over an area of from ten to fifteen acres, the big cypress trees are covered with perhaps a thousand nests of the American Egret, Great Blue (Ward's) Heron, Double-crested Cormorant, and Water Turkey. The Egrets were the most abundant of the species mentioned, being nearly half of the total number. Their snow-white forms dotted the green cypress trees in every direction, making a rare and memorable sight. These Egrets, rendered nearly extinct at one time by the plume hunters, have increased remarkably under the protection given them by law, and their plumes cannot now be sold or worn in the United States. All of the nests were built of sticks and were located from seventy to a hundred feet above the

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water. Sometimes nests of all four species were found in one tree, and some of the trees held as many as a score of nests.

Reelfoot Lake, with its adjacent swamp lands and a strip of dry land entirely around it, is now the property of the state of Tennessee and is being administered as a state park. Hunting and fishing are permitted in proper season and under special regulations. Several sections of the lake have been designated and marked off as duck refuges. These places have been quickly found out by the ducks, which repair to them when the bombardment of the hunter gets too hot.

I have been interested in the bird life of this area for twenty years and have made trips in all seasons to study the birds. I have recently prepared an account of the birds found there, which will appear in the January issue of the Journal of the Tennessee Academy of Science. No more interesting region exists in the interior of the United States, a region that belongs jointly to both Kentucky and Tennessee.—From "Reelfoot Lake Rookery," by A. F. Ganier.

Summer Birds in the Great Smoky Mountains—The Editor of the Warbler spent his vacation this summer in the Great Smoky Mountains of eastern Tennessee and western North Carolina. From Kinzel Springs, at the foot of the mountains, numerous trips were taken into the Smokies and across the mile-high divides into North Carolina. The time spent there, August 26 to September 13, was the most unfavorable to see birds, because it is the moulting season; however, the following 64 species were recorded: Bluebird, Bobwhite, Indigo Bunting, Catbird, Cardinal, Carolina Chickadee, Black-capped Chickadee, Crow, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Dove, Flicker, Goldfinch, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Cooper's Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Osprey, Green Heron, Great Blue Heron, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Blue Jay, Carolina Junco, Kingbird, Kingfisher, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Purple Martin, Mockingbird, White-breasted Nuthatch, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Screech Owl, Great Horned Owl, Wood Pewee, Phoebe, Redstart, Robin, Solitary Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Chimney Swift, Scarlet Tanager, Brown Thrasher, Wood Thrush, Tufted Titmouse, Towhee, Red-eyed Vireo, White-eyed Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Hooded Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, Pine Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Cairns's Warbler, Cedar Waxwing, Southern Downy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Carolina Wren, House Wren, Turkey Vulture, Maryland Yellowthroat, Starling, and Ruffed Grouse. The greatest treats of all were the birds seen on the tops of the mountains, such as the Carolina Junco, the Black-capped Chickadee, and the Cairns's Warbler. Mr. A. F. Ganier, of Nashville, is shortly to publish the results of his many years' observations of birds in the Great Smokies.

THE KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Organized April, 1923

President Dr. T. Atchison Frazer, Marion

Vice-President ---- Miss Mary May Wyman, 1040 Mary St., Louisville

Secretary-Treasurer

Mr. Edward M. Ray, Teachers College, Bowling Green

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

Dues for K. O. S. membership: adult, 50c a year; child, 25c. Address Warbler correspondence to Gordon Wilson, Bowling Green.