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## Kentucky Warbler (Vol. 11, no. 2)

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# The Kentucky Warbler

Volume XI.

APRIL, 1935

Number 2

## OUR SPRING MEETING

The thirteenth annual spring meeting of the K. O. S. was held at Louisville on April 11 and 12, 1935. The society was very much gratified at the numbers which attended the meeting and the interest shown.

Mr. Brasher C. Bacon presided at all sessions, which were held at the Kentucky Hotel. On Thursday afternoon, April 11, the pupils of Shawnee School gave interesting facts about the life of John James Audubon, including information which they had learned from the recent exhibit at the Speed Museum in Louisville. Another group gave imitations of bird calls.

Dr. Gordon Wilson, Bowling Green, spoke on "**Some Early Ornithologists.**" In this talk he gave us an insight into the lives of John James Audubon and Alexander Wilson.

Dr. T. Atchison Frazer, Marion, stressed conservation of birds for their economic and aesthetic value in his talk on "**Educating the Youth of Kentucky to an Appreciation of its Out-of-Doors.**"

Mr. Floyd Carpenter, Louisville, rendered a very interesting report on "**Birds of the Falls of the Ohio.**" With a map, showing the topography of the Falls region, he explained how one could reach places for easy observation. He enumerated about forty species of water and wading birds he has recorded there in the fall of the year when the water is low and food abundant.

In "**Some Friends of the Garden,**" Miss Mary May Wyman, Louisville, showed slides of some of the birds and insects which frequent her large lot and told us of her interesting observations of their habits and food.

Nine enthusiastic people, who braved the cold winds and rain for a hike at seven o'clock, Friday morning, were very richly rewarded when they reached Indian Hills' ponds and witnessed the great collection of ducks and other water birds there. In less than four hours there and in the surrounding territory, **fifty-five** birds were recorded.

The luncheon at noon, Friday, was well attended. Mr. Fain King, Wickliffe was the guest speaker in the absence of Mr. Daniel Janzen and Mr. Tom Wallace. He told us of the "**Ancient Buried City Bird Refuge**" at Wickliffe, and expressed a desire that this might be the beginning of the establishment of several more in that section of the state, where conditions are so favorable for water birds.

At the afternoon session Friday Mr. Ed Ray, Fordsville, in his talk on "**The Embryonic Bird,**" showed slides of all the stages in the development of an egg from a single cell.

Mr. Curtis Allin, Frankfort, our field representative, talked on the

"Life History of the Bob-White." He also told us of the need for more Bird Sanctuaries in the state.

Mr. Burt Monroe, Louisville, in his subject, "Nature's Four Horsemen," in a clever way told about misconceptions that people have concerning hawks, owls, crows and snakes.

Miss Emilie Yunker, Louisville, was in charge of some excellent exhibits. The bird houses displayed were made by Hazlewood School, Louisville. Bird sticks made by pupils of Albert S. Brandeis and Margaret Merker Schools were given as favors. Bird transparencies were also exhibited.

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### BIRD HIKE

The morning of Friday, April 12, dawned dark and cold. The rain came down in sheets at times, and the wind blowing slightly out of the north cut through your clothes like a knife. It was a day typical of late November rather than of the spring of the year. It was a day that kept the timid folks well housed—a day that tested the spirit of the real bird lover—a day that sent into the fields only those who were willing to tackle rough weather for the sake of a great opportunity to see birds some of them have not had the pleasure of seeing before. Nine members of the Kentucky Ornithological Society ventured forth on this morning at seven to try their luck at bird-finding. Unfortunately, some members, willing to go a-field, could not get away from their duties or other sessions; so the group was small. However, the few members of the group were able to approach birds that a larger group would have frightened, and we were rewarded with an excellent list of fifty-five species, including many varieties of waterfowl and some shore birds.

The party gathered at the entrance to Cherokee Park at the designated time and set forth under the able leadership of Miss Evelyn Schneider, of Louisville. We traveled in cars to the ponds in Indian Hills, a section of country along the banks of the Ohio River. On the journey over such common birds as the Eastern Robin, Eastern Mourning Dove, Southern Downy Woodpecker, Flicker, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Cardinal, and English Sparrow were noted.

Arriving at the ponds, we were immediately greeted with the sight of a pair of Shoveler ducks, tipping up and feeding in the shallows. Coots were everywhere, it seemed, and several Pied-billed Grebes, disturbed by our presence, set the air to ringing with their weird calls. We moved along the edge of the swamps, listing such birds as the Song and Swamp Sparrows, Red-Winged Blackbirds, Bronzed Grackles, and Green Heron, until we came to more open water, where we were greeted with one of our finest sights. The surface was literally covered with ducks, and we held our breaths for fear they would take alarm and move away. But, believe it or not, even these ducks were imbued with the spirit of the K. O. S. and heartily cooperated with us by allowing us to approach very near to them and examine them practically at will. What a break that was for several members of the group, who were listing these waterfowl for the first time. Flocks of Blue-winged Teal seemed to be everywhere, nodding their heads and whistling softly to each other; the stately Baldpate probed along the grass edges of the ponds, while the black-and-white-patterned Lesser Scaup and Ring-necked Ducks swam leisurely about in the open; several of the "big gray ducks," the Gadwall, tipped up constantly, flashing their white underparts like an army signal. We watched this array of talent for some time and then moved very near to them to flush them so that we could observe their patterns in flight. It was indeed interesting

to see the pond ducks bounce into the air as if they were on springs, while the diving ducks scurried across the water to gain the momentum necessary to launch them. And everyone got a first-hand look at the flight patterns, because the ducks, still co-operative, wheeled and turned above and around us and settled again in the very next pound beyond the row of trees barely fifty yards away. We owe the Order Anseriformes a debt of gratitude for the part they played in our show and hereby acknowledge their gracious conduct with a rising vote of thanks.

The duck show over, we moved away from the water, while a Belted Kingfisher rattled off his hunting cry, and hurried on to open woodland and shrub-lined roads a short distance away. A Carolina Wren, with his loud tinkling, was constantly interrupting the duet being staged by a Brown Thrasher and a Mockingbird, and above this outburst of song we were barely able to hear the plaintive and mellow notes of the Bluebird perched on a dead snag a short distance away. The Blue Jay in the large elm tree near the road, the several Crows winging their way overhead, and the Red-eyed Towhee in the thicket had no trouble whatsoever in bursting in with their notes; and it seemed as if they were determined that we should not miss them for our list.

In addition to the birds, we saw many wild flowers on our trip back to the cars, and, as is usually the case with our bird hikes, where many members are along who have varied interests, we stopped and admired them. But we didn't linger long and wended our way, adding the Cowbird, Meadowlark, Eastern Goldfinch, and Chipping and Field Sparrows en route.

A quick trip in the cars and another stop at a flooded, cultivated field, not actually backwater but a result of the constant, several-day rain which was still falling, making its vain attempt to dampen our ever rising spirit and still-failing miserably to do so. Over the field an Eastern Sparrow Hawk hovered, scanning the furrows which weren't flooded. Killdeers noisily resented our intrusion and flew excitedly about voicing their protest. Other shorebirds seemed to be entirely lacking, but close observation showed us many, many Wilson's Snipes, probing in the wet mounds of earth peeping up through the water near the edges. It was here that we were rewarded with one of the day's "finds"—a Horned Grebe in breeding plumage. The yellow plumes protruded from the sides of his head, and his beauty made many of the observing party comment in rather awed tones. Two Bufflehead ducks kept him company and added another real "find" to our ever-increasing list.

We left the field and traversed the road along the Ohio River, watching some Black Ducks floating down stream with the current and enjoying the graceful flight of Herring Gulls and the trim-looking Ring-Billed Gulls. We paused opposite Six-Mile Island, where our field glasses revealed plenty of nests in the tree tops—the result probably of many seasons of nesting of the Black-Crowned Night Herons; and, as many of these birds were flying about, perhaps there were new nests or "repair work" there of 1935.

Lentz's Pond, a wet-weather body of water, was the next stop, and it was here that we were treated to a veritable three-ring circus. On the pond itself was a myriad of ducks, and, in addition to those previously listed, we added two of the Mergansers, the Red-Breasted and the Hooded. In the air above, graceful and gorgeous black-headed Bonaparte Gulls turned and twisted, and far above them we noted Turkey Vultures, circling on motionless wings. Over the field and meadow across the road from the pond the spring migration of Swallows had paused. Flying low over the grass and even alighting on it, was a great flock of Swallows—the long, forked-tailed Barn Swallows, the flashy Cliff Swallows, and the rare

(for this territory) blue-and-white Tree Swallows, with a few Purple Martins tossed in for good measure. The flight of these swallows, especially the Tree Swallows, seems to be a one-day proposition around here, and we were lucky indeed to see them on this trip.

Parting with this place came about with great reluctance, but we had to get back in time for the luncheon. We paused an instant at the heavy sycamore woods in the heart of Indian Hills and listened to the "peabody call" of the White-Throated Sparrow and the wild, ringing notes of the Sycamore Warbler. The trees were full of the pestiferous English Starling, which just about completed our list, with the exception of a flock of ever-present Cedar Waxwings, which stay about Cave Hill Cemetery in the vicinity of our starting point, Cherokee Park.

Our trip, despite the inclement weather, was one of the most successful in K. O. S. history, and everyone enjoyed it. The nine members making the journey were the leader, Evelyn J. Schneider, Amy Deane, Dorothy Hobson, Mabel Slack, Mildred Gorham, Dr. and Mrs. Harvey Lovell, Samuel Stein, and Burt L. Monroe.

What a day! What a trip! What a list! What a successful two-day K. O. S. session! And if we could have located one of little Sammpy Stein's "Swamp Swallows," which he often referred to, we would have had an "unbeatable and scientific discovery."

The compiled list of birds follows:

Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Eastern Green Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, Red-breasted Merganser, Hooded Merganser, Bufflehead Duck, Baldpate, Gadwall, Black Duck, Blue-winged Teal, Shoveller, Lesser Scaup, Ring-necked Duck, Turkey Vulture, Sparrow Hawk, Coot, Wilson's Snipe, Killdeer, Herring Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Southern Downy Woodpecker, Flicker, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Purple Martin, Blue Jay, Eastern Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Bluebird, Cedar Waxwing, Starling, Sycamore Warbler Cowbird, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Bronzed Grackle, English Sparrow, Eastern Goldfinch, White-throated Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Red-eyed Towhee, Cardinal, and Bonaparte Gull. Total—55 species.

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#### AUDUBON EXHIBIT

During the month of February there was held in the J. B. Speed Memorial Museum, at Louisville, a John James Audubon Exhibit, which included prints, portraits of members of the Audubon and Bakewell families, personal belongings of Audubon and his family, copies of **Birds of America** and **Quadrupeds of America**, letters from Audubon and his sons, and several other relics. The great emphasis was given, rightly, to the illustrations from the first edition of his **Birds of America**, one of the great art treasures of America.

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#### CORRECTION

Through the fault of no one in particular, the Christmas census sent in by Mr. James William Hancock, of Madisonville, was incomplete by not having the Pileated Woodpecker, of which Mr. Hancock observed two. The editor is glad to make this correction, or any other that is called to his attention.

## A LIST FROM MAMMOTH CAVE

A Christmas species list from Mammoth Cave arrived too late for our January issue. Here it is:

December 27: Turkey Vulture, Black Vulture, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Eastern Red-tailed Hawk, Eastern Sparrow Hawk, Bob-White, Eastern Mourning Dove, Northern Flicker, Northern Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Eastern Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Downy Woodpecker, Prairie Horned Lark, Blue Jay, Southern Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Northern White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Eastern Winter Wren, Mockingbird, Southern Robin, Hermit Thrush, Bluebird, Cedar Waxwing, Starling, Myrtle Warbler, English Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Cardinal, Red-eyed Towhee, Slate-colored Junco, and White-throated Sparrow.

—CLAUD W. HIBBARD.

## BIRD BOOKS

Roberts, Thomas Sadler. BIRD PORTRAITS IN COLOR. 295 North American species. Illus. with 92 color plates by Allan Brooks, George Miksch Sutton, Walter Alois Weber, Francis Lee Jacques, Walter John Breckenridge, including one plate by the late Louis Agassiz Fuertes. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1934. 206 p. Cloth, \$3.50; Limp cloth, \$2.50; Separate plates in portfolio with index but no text, \$1.50. 11¼ x 8¾ in.

Eaton, Elon Howard. BIRDS OF NEW YORK. State Museum, Albany, N. Y., 1925. 106 plates. \$1.20. 12 x 9 in.

Fuertes, Louis Agassiz, and Brooks, Allan. PORTRAITS OF NEW ENGLAND BIRDS: drawn in color for "Birds of Massachusetts and other New England States," by Edward Howard Forbush. Secretary of State, State House, Boston, Mass., 1932. 93 plates. \$1.75. 12½ x 9 in.

Besides a field book, a student of birds will find most helpful a good set of large colored plates in order to have pictured with greater detail that which he can usually see only at a distance. Three such collections of plates, each taken from larger works, are available.

Roberts' BIRD PORTRAITS IN COLOR consists of the plates included in his BIRDS OF MINNESOTA, a notable work in two large volumes which sold for \$6.00 but is now out of print except in the de luxe edition at \$25.00. Eaton's BIRDS OF NEW YORK is a reprint of the plates in his large two-volume work of the same title. This can be obtained for \$6.00. Fuertes and Brooks' PORTRAITS OF NEW ENGLAND BIRDS is composed of the plates taken from Forbush's BIRDS OF MASSACHUSETTS AND OTHER NEW ENGLAND STATES in three volumes, which is available for \$15.00. These larger works, comprising many pages of text, will be reviewed in a later issue of the KENTUCKY WARBLER.

Every bird lover will enjoy Dr. Roberts' BIRD PORTRAITS IN COLOR. The 92 full-page illustrations, including 295 species and 561 major figures, are exceptionally fine in quality of paper, printing, and color. Although the purpose of the work was to cover all species found at any time of the year in the state of Minnesota, the book includes most of the birds common to North America east of the Rockies with the exception of salt-water birds. At least 90 per cent of the birds of Kentucky, native and migratory, can be found. Summer and winter plumages, adult and immature, male and female are shown when the distinc-

tion is warranted. The page of text accompanying each plate contains a surprising amount of well-chosen information concerning distinguishing marks, size, range, interesting habits, type and location of nest, and color of eggs of the species illustrated. The introduction explains the few technical terms used. The index includes popular and scientific names.

Eaton's BIRDS OF NEW YORK consists of 106 separate color plates in a portfolio without text; 319 species and 536 major figures are included. All birds known to breed within or to visit the state of New York are represented. The thinner paper, the printing, and the duller colors make these plates less attractive than those just mentioned above. A larger percentage of Kentucky birds, however, is included, as well as species of water birds. On the inside front cover of the portfolio is an index to the plates in alphabetical order under common names. The plates themselves carry the scientific as well as the popular names.

Also excellent for Kentucky birds is the bound volume, PORTRAITS OF NEW ENGLAND BIRDS, consisting of 93 color plates, 356 species, and 562 major figures without text. Species are indexed in alphabetical order under the common name; the scientific name is nowhere given. Variations in sex and in seasonal plumage are shown. A plate of diagrammatic drawings of the under sides of hawks, vultures, and eagles as seen in flight is a helpful addition. The quality of paper, printing, and coloring is highly satisfactory.

Mathews, Ferdinand Schuyler. FIELD BOOK OF WILD BIRDS AND THEIR MUSIC; rev. and enl. ed. G. P. Putman's Sons, New York, c1921. 325 p., 7 x 4¼ in., \$3.50.

This description of the character and music of birds is intended to assist in the identification of species common in the United States east of the Rocky Mountains. No shore birds or water birds are included. Although concerned chiefly with the song, the book gives excellent descriptions of characteristic habits, a short description of the bird itself, of its nest, and the color of the eggs.

The author, who feels that "the birds with their music are the revelation of a greater world," records logically on the musical staff the songs and calls in the world of singing birds, even to the fine point of assigning the correct musical key. In his study he interprets the moods and characters of our feathered musicians, differentiating between idle chatter, flippant jest, squawking disagreement, ragtime frivolity, and serene, exultant melody. The piano arrangements which are added in many cases are intended solely to demonstrate the musical content of the bird's song. The allusions to musical parallelism are interesting and useful.

A musical key and a glossary of musical terms are added to assist in making plain the principles of music necessary to a proper understanding not only of the musical records in the volume but of the character of songs they represent. For those who do not read or understand music there is introduced in a few instances a system of dots and lines to help in the identification of the song.

The many illustrations, chiefly in color, show the songsters in one of their characteristic positions, singing or flying. In the three-color process of printing, however, some of the plates have lost their accuracy of color. There are six maps relating to the migration of birds, and the index includes scientific, common, and popular names.

The author's understanding of bird life, his humor, and his charm of presentation make this book most delightful reading.

## OUR BIRD SANCTUARY

By Emilie Yunker, Chairman, "Birds and Flowers"

Third District, P.-T. A.

Given Over WHAS, February 20, 1935

There are so many lovely birds that remain with us all winter, why not be neighborly and entertain them at your home? If ever they needed a friend, it is now, when food is scarce. For this service we are well repaid in beauty and song. March 1 the birds begin their rehearsal for the greatest of all music festivals, which takes place the first day of May. The paramount service of the birds lies in their power to destroy insects. In summer a flicker, at a single meal, will devour five thousand ants. Suet will attract him now.

How much would you give to have a pair of birds that cost you absolutely nothing nest near your window, or sing for you the season through, and show you the secrets of their wonderful housekeeping?

At our home, 1140 Everett, open house is held at all seasons of the year, particularly in the winter months. Two cafeterias have daily patronage. The one near the kitchen window is on a sycamore stump with several branches for perches and for suet. We provide sunflower and cantaloupe seeds, crumbs, dried raisins, and meat scraps. Don't throw the dried bitter-sweet away. Give it to the birds. I am so sorry any of it was ever taken from the woods; there it should stay for the cardinals and the cedar wax-wings.

The first call to breakfast brings Mr. Cardinal to the cafeteria. Peanuts, sunflower and cantaloupe seeds are delicatessen for him. Though wedded for life, Mrs. Cardinal doesn't eat with him. Patiently she sits in the magnolia tree, until her lord and master has finished his meal. Then she breakfasts. It is quite the reverse in the spring time. Assuming the role of Romeo, Mr. Cardinal, in his brilliant red suit, leads his fair Juliet gallantly to the cafeteria and coaxes her to eat. Yea, he not only offers her the choicest tid-bit, but actually puts it into her mouth. Don't fail to attract the cardinals. Birds, after all, have a very human side; their dispositions and emotions are like those of men and women. Anger, love, courage, laziness, good and bad manners—you may find them all in birddom.

The blue jay finds the food to his liking and pays an occasional visit. The flicker, downy woodpecker, and chickadee are attracted by the suet. They rid the trees of scale insects and aphids, which have become a public menace. There is royalty in the garden when the ruby-crowned kinglet joins this standing army for the destruction of insect pests. The oldest of three dogwood trees yields hundreds of lunches for the bluebirds, mockingbird, cardinals, and blue jays. The Japanese barberry, purple beauty fruit, and seeds of 110 feet of lilac add to their menu. There is always a corner in our garden for a few sunflower plants, the ripe seeds of which are most welcome to the gold finches. The linden tree and snowball bush furnish



nesting places for the robins and catbirds. Two families of wrens were raised.

In house hunting the wrens insist upon one thing, and that is cleanliness. They fetch little twigs and drop them into their little home. Then bits of cloth and chicken feathers are added, as if they intended to make a feather bed. Mr. Wren carries things in his bill and sings at the same time. Sometimes Mrs. Wren would chatter louder than ever. I've seen her guard the door and politely refuse to accept his contribution. After carrying his burden around for a while, he dropped it. He soon learned that Jenny Wren is the housekeeper, and to keep peace in the family he must do as she says.

Johnny Wren sang on just as happily and entertained her while she did most of the work. At last, they fetched grasses. It was a joy to see how happy they were at their work. Jenny Wren loved her little home so well that she stayed there nearly all of two weeks. Johnny Wren brought her worms and many kinds of bugs to eat, singing to her all his waking moments.

The chickadees aren't at all particular as to what they eat. They sing just as cheerily when they have only bread crumbs as when they have suet, peanuts, and sunflower seeds. Chickadees are thrifty. They never waste their food. If any falls to the ground, they pick it up. Chickadees are the politest of birds, and, like the downy who enjoys the suet, they work on the lilacs and trees most of the time.

This year we are happy to announce a new guest, the mocking bird. He enjoys the dogwood berries and suet and does not sing until the spring concerts begin. If you want a real treat, listen to the mocking-bird, one of our best American songsters. English sparrows do not have it all their own way, not if you feed the variety of food I have recommended.

A few days ago, when the temperature registered 42 degrees, the mocking-bird took his bath. Two English sparrows waited their turn; and when they left, the blue jay enjoyed a shower. The birds are grateful for fresh water daily. Lest you forget, melt the ice with hot water. The winter birds are among our best house cleaners, ridding us of tree pests. Should we not give them a treat once in a while and so brighten the cold days with their cheer?

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### THE KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Organized April, 1923

President.....Mr. Brasher C. Bacon, Madisonville, Ky.  
 Vice-President.....Mr. Edward M. Ray, Fordsville, Ky.  
 Secretary-Treasurer.....  
 .....Miss Mabel Slack, 1004 Everett Ave., Louisville, Ky.

Address correspondence about THE WARBLER to Dr. Gordon Wilson, Bowling Green, Ky. Send dues to the Secretary-Treasurer.

Dues: Sustaining (including membership in the Wilson Ornithological Club) \$2.50; Active, \$1.00; Group (of ten or more children under sixteen years of age), 25c a person.

Meets annually in Louisville during the week of the Kentucky Education Association; in the fall at some town or park in the state.