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Kentucky Warbler

*"To sift the
sparkling from the
dull and the true*

*from the false is
the aim of
every Ornithologist."*

Volume XIV

WINTER 1938

No. 1

SOME BREEDING BIRDS OF LETCHER COUNTY, KENTUCKY

By DR. J. J. MURRAY, Lexington, Va.

Papers on the bird life of the mountains of eastern Kentucky have been so few that even the incomplete notes presented in this article may be of some interest. There is possibly no area of similar extent and importance in the whole Appalachian region about which so little has been written. The chief papers that I can call to mind are those by Arthur H. Howell (Auk, July, 1910, 80 Kentucky species); Dr. Witmer Stone (Auk, July, 1921); and the migration studies by R. E. Horsey (Auk, January, 1921, 1923, 1927).

The country in Letcher County is very rough, with narrow valleys and small farms; low, wooded hills, irregular in outline; and a few higher mountain ranges. The eastern boundary of the county, along the Virginia-Kentucky line, is formed by the Black (Cumberland) Mountains, rising in places to 3,500 feet. Pine Mountain, running roughly north and south through the eastern half of the county, almost reaches 3,000 feet. The lower ridges run from 1,500 to 1,800 feet. The North Fork of the Kentucky River runs westward through the county, its valley being about 1,000 feet at its lowest point. Some of the tributary valleys are considerably higher. All of this territory, except the upper reaches of the mountains and higher ridges, is definitely Carolinian in character. Carolinian species press up even on the highest mountains and mingle there with typical Transition forms. There was no suggestion of Canadian fauna even on the great Black Mountain above Lynch in Harlan County, at 3,500 feet.

From June 4 to 11, 1935, I spent a week at the Stuart Robinson School, near the mining village of Blackey, Letcher County. Unless otherwise indicated all observations were made along Rockhouse Creek, which drains into the Kentucky River near Blackey. The elevation of the creek valley at the school is just above 1,000 feet. Some negative results may be of interest. I was very much surprised that not a single Turkey Vulture was seen during the week. Neither did I see a Crow. No hawks were seen, which seems strange in such country, and no owls. I did not see a Green Heron nor a Kingfisher along the stream. There were no Meadowlarks or Red-Wings, there being no suitable places for either of these birds. Blue Jays were not noted except on wooded ridges. Towhees were absent in the valleys in places which seemed admirably suited for them,

although a few were seen on the ridges. The list of birds which were noted follows:

1. Bob-white. Common.
2. Mourning Dove. Scarce.
- 3-4. Yellow-billed and Black-billed Cuckoo. Cuckoos were fairly common. I think both forms occur, although the only bird which I saw well enough to identify positively was the Black-billed.
5. Whip-poor-will. One heard on two nights, 5th and 6th, near the school.
6. Chimney Swift. Common.
7. Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Fairly common.
8. Flicker. Only three seen, one at the top of Pine Mountain, the others near Blackey.
9. Downy Woodpecker. Common.
10. Phoebe. Fairly common, both in the valley and on the ridges.
 1. Acadian Flycatcher. Abundant.
 2. Wood Pewee. Common.
 3. Rough-winged Swallow. Some five pairs along the creek. Two occupied nests, in the face of a limestone cliff above a railroad track. I was interested in the type of nesting cavity, which was new to my experience. They were not excavated by the birds but were small natural cavities in the rock. I am told by Mr. Burt L. Monroe that similar sites are often used near Louisville. I could not reach the nests with my hand.
 4. Blue Jay. Only one seen, on Eastern Rocks, a high hill above Blackey.
 5. Carolina Chickadee. Fairly common.
 6. Tufted Titmouse. Fairly common. A nest with five or six well-grown young in a hole in a small dogwood on the 6th. They were not shy and fed the young while I was standing near. An adult did not leave the nest while I peered in.
 7. Bewick's Wren. A male singing on a dry hillside above Blackey.
 8. Carolina Wren. Abundant. Young out of the nest, on the 5th.
 9. Mockingbird. One pair on the campus. I was shown an empty nest where a brood had been raised that season.
 10. Catbird. Fairly common.
 11. Brown Thrasher. Fairly common.
 12. Robin. In all only four or five pairs.
 13. Wood Thrush. Abundant. Young birds just from the nest.
 14. Bluebird. Uncommon. Young on telephone wires, being fed, on the 10th.
 15. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. Fairly Common. A pair acted as if I were near a nest.
 16. Cedar Waxwing. Only two seen.
 17. Starling. Some three pairs at the school. Carrying food.
 18. White-eyed Vireo. I heard the unmistakable song once along the creek. On the 11th I found one about two-thirds of the way up Pound Mountain from Jenkins.

29. Yellow-throated Vireo. One on the 6th.
30. Red-eyed Vireo. Abundant.
31. Black and White Warbler. Fairly common at all elevations.
32. Parula Warbler. Abundant.
33. Yellow Warbler. Abundant. Carrying food on the 5th. The song of these birds differed from that in western Virginia, being shorter and with a more brilliant quality, somewhat like the Redstart's song.
34. Cerulean Warbler. At least eight singing males.
35. Yellow-throated (?) Warbler. On the 6th I heard a brilliant warbler song, with a quality like the song of the Louisiana Water-thrush, coming from the top of a high pine on a wooded hillside. Following it up I found a pair of warblers of the dominica species feeding several young. As it was so high and the sunlight so blinding I could not tell whether the line over the eye was yellow or white, but as the song of the Sycamore Warblers is said to be very different from this song I took these birds to be the Yellow-throated.
36. Prairie Warbler. One each day at several places, one of them being high up on Easter Rocks near where a Scarlet Tanager was seen.
37. Oven-bird. Fairly common.
38. Louisiana Water-thrush. One fully-grown young bird following an adult near the creek on the 10th.
39. Kentucky Warbler. Two pairs.
40. Maryland Yellow-throat. Fairly common. The song of these birds was also noticeably different from that of our Virginia birds, though the difference is not easy to express. The Virginia bird says, "witchety, witchety, witchety;" while the Kentucky birds said, "tseet-e-rer, tseet-e-rer, -tseet-e-rer, tseet."
41. Yellow-breasted Chat. Common everywhere. This Austral bird was singing even at the top of the Black Mountain, in close proximity to the Mountain Vireo and the Chestnut-sided Warbler.
42. Hooded Warbler. Fairly common. Carrying food. It was seen along the creek, and also on the Pine and Black Mountains.
43. Redstart. Fairly common.
44. English Sparrow. Abundant around houses.
45. Orchard Oriole. Fairly common.
46. Baltimore Oriole. One male on the 8th.
47. Cowbird. A few around the school dairy barn.
48. Scarlet Tanager. Common on the higher hills above the creek. Seen on Pine and Pound Mountains.
49. Summer Tanager. Uncommon. A few on the lower hills near the creek; one seen in Poor Fork Valley between Pine Mountain and the town of Cumberland; one seen half-way up Pound Mountain. At this last place I could hear a Scarlet Tanager above me and a Summer Tanager below singing at the same time. On the 7th I found a nest with three small young, 10 feet up at the top of a small walnut tree over-grown with Virginia Creeper vines.
50. Cardinal. Abundant.
51. Indigo Bunting. Abundant. Nest on the 7th with four fresh eggs.
52. Goldfinch. Common.

53. Towhee. Absent in the valley; one on Easter Rocks; common on Pine Mountain; one on Pound Mountain.
54. Chipping Sparrow. Abundant. Carrying food.
55. Field Sparrow. Abundant.
56. Song Sparrow. Abundant along the streams.

* * * * *

KENTUCKY WARBLER'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CENSUS

The response to our appeal for the Christmas Census was somewhat under that of last year and as a result, there was a decrease of four in the number of species recorded from 1936. However, the seven state lists turned in made up in quality what they lacked in numbers. Many fine discoveries were made including a new bird for the state check list.

Louisville, aided tremendously by waterfowl on the Ohio River, was able to head the list with 55 species and 11,650 individuals, topping the Bowling Green list of 43 species and 3876 individuals. Competition is becoming keener each season and adds zest to the undertaking.

It is disappointing that several lists sent in last year were missing this year. We hope those members will take part in 1938. We welcome the list of Ercel Koze from the "far East" and thank him, as well as the old stand-bys for their co-operation.

* * * * *

Madisonville, Ky. (Spring Lake, Brown Meadow Lake, Manitou and back)—Dec. 21; 6:30 A. M. to 3:30 P. M. Clear; wind south, strong; temperature 27 at start; 43 at return. 46 Miles by auto; 2 miles on foot.

Scaup Duck, 5; Turkey Vulture, 1; Black Vulture, 2; Sparrow Hawk, 7; Bob-white, 18 (covey); American Coot, 1; Mourning Dove, 5; Screech Owl, 1; Northern Flicker, 2; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 2; Downy Woodpecker, 5; Prairie Horned Lark, 2; Blue Jay, 12; Crow, 30; Carolina Chickadee, 8; Tufted Titmouse, 3; Brown Creeper, 1; Carolina Wren, 6; Mocking-bird, 5; Robin, 1; Bluebird, 3; Starling, 150; English Sparrow, 135; Meadowlark, 15; Cardinal, 21; Goldfinch, 9; Red-eyed Towhee, 10; Slate-colored Junco, 80; Tree Sparrow, 15; Field Sparrow, 3; White-throated Sparrow, 25; Song Sparrow, 21.

Total, 33 species, about 505 individuals.

RAYMOND J. FLEETWOOD,
SHERWOOD NICHOLS.

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Madisonville, Hopkins County, Ky. (W. W. Hancock farm, Loch Mary, Clear Creek, Spring Lake, Princeton and Hecla Roads, woods, streets and open country)—December 30, 1937, 7:00 A. M. to 5:00 P. M. Calm; foggy in early morning, cloudy remainder of the day. Temperature 43 degrees at start, 53 degrees at return. About nine miles on foot.

Sparrow Hawk, 3; Bob-white, 16; Flicker, 14; Pileated Woodpecker, 2; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 14; Red-headed Woodpecker, 3; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 2; Downy Wood-

pecker, 6; Blue Jay, 18; Crow, 8; Carolina Chickadee, 14; Tufted Titmouse, 14; Winter Wren, 1; Bewick's Wren, 2; Carolina Wren, 17; Mockingbird, 8; Robin, 12; Hermit Thrush, 4; Bluebird, 17; Cedar Waxwing, 3; Starling, 10; English Sparrow, 300; Meadowlark, 3; Red-winged Blackbird, 28; Cardinal, 50; Purple Finch, 5; Goldfinch, 18; Red-eyed Towhee, 22; Slate-colored Junco, 61; Tree Sparrow, 103; Field Sparrow, 1; White-crowned Sparrow, 5; White-throated Sparrow, 13; Fox Sparrow, 2; Swamp Sparrow, 9; Song Sparrow, 24. Total, 37 species, 833 individuals. Other species recorded December 28—Lesser Scaup Duck, 4; Barred Owl, 1; Belted Kingfisher, 2; American Pipit (?) 4.

JAMES WILLIAM HANCOCK.

* * * * *

Bowling Green, Ky.—Dec. 20, 7:00 A. M. to 4:30 P. M., Smith, Covington, and Nye farms; along Drake's and Jennings Creek; Sally's Rock; an area about thirteen miles in diameter. Cloudy; ground bare; wind, northwest, brisk; temp. 28 at start, 40 at return. Observers in three parties. Black Vulture, 3; Cooper's Hawk, 1; Marsh Hawk, 2; Sparrow Hawk, 3; Bob-white, 19 (one flock of 15); Mourning Dove, 7; Screech Owl, 1; Barred Owl, 1; Belted Kingfisher, 1; Flicker, 13; Pileated Woodpecker, 8; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 14; Red-headed Woodpecker, 29; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 5; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Southern Downy Woodpecker, 22; Prairie Horned Lark, 136; Blue Jay, 60; Crow, 1000; Carolina Chickadee, 116; Tufted Titmouse, 71; White-breasted Nuthatch, 4; Brown Creeper, 1; Bewick's Wren, 3; Carolina Wren, 34; Mockingbird, 51; Robin, 36; Bluebird, 46; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 4; Cedar Waxwing, 130; Starling, 596; Myrtle Warbler, 17; English Sparrow, 430; Meadowlark, 32; Eastern Red-wing, 20; Bronzed Grackle, 3; Cardinal, 122; Purple Finch, 136; Goldfinch, 58; Red-eyed Towhee, 46; Slate-colored Junco, 329; Tree Sparrow, 42; Field Sparrow, 79; White-crowned Sparrow, 46; White-throated Sparrow, 22; Fox Sparrow, 6; Swamp Sparrow, 10; Song Sparrow, 50. Total, 48 species, 3876 individuals. Other species known to be wintering here—Red-tailed Hawk, Killdeer, Migrant Shrike, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Turkey Vulture.

HAYWARD BROWN,
JO ALLEN BRYANT,
L. Y. LANCASTER,
CHARLES L. TAYLOR,
J. R. WHITMER,
GORDON WILSON.

* * * * *

Glasgow, Ky.—(Starr, Darter, and Winger Farms; along Beaver Creek, west of Glasgow). Dec. 23. 7:30 A. M. to 3:15 P. M. Cloudy; wind, northeast, light; ground bare; temp. 42 at start, 46 at return. About twelve miles on foot. Canada Goose, 40; Turkey Vulture, 2; Black Vulture, 5; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Bob-white 11; Mourning Dove, 40; Northern Flicker, 13; Pileated Woodpecker, 3; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 11; Red-headed Woodpecker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 2; Southern Downy Woodpecker, 7; Prairie Horned Lark, 55; Blue Jay, 30; Crow, 941; Carolina Chicka-

dee, 56; Tufted Titmouse, 60; Bewick's Wren, 1; Carolina Wren, 21; Mockingbird, 5; Robin, 14; Bluebird, 21; Starling, 28; Myrtle Warbler, 27; Meadowlark, 42; Bronzed Grackle, 5; Cardinal, 49; Goldfinch, 29; Purple Finch, 39; Red-eyed Towhee, 37; Slate-colored Junco, 103; Tree Sparrow, 25; White-crowned Sparrow, 16; White-throated Sparrow, 60; Fox Sparrow, 10; Swamp Sparrow, 6; Song Sparrow, 49. Total, 38 species, 1895 individuals. Also found during Christmas week—Mallard, Marsh Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Belted Kingfisher, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Cedar Waxwing, and Brown Creeper.

RUSSELL STARR.

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Louisville, Ky., and vicinity (Cherokee Park, Cave Hill Cemetery and along Ohio River and surrounding territory from the Falls to Twelve Mile Island. All well within 15 mile diameter circle). Dec. 26. 6:00 A. M. to 5:00 P. M. Pale sun; ground bare; wind, light from N. E.; temp. 33 degrees at start and 43 at end. About 15 miles and return, on foot and in automobile. Observers in three parties.

Double-crested Cormorant, 1; Common Mallard, 4; Black Duck, 25; Canvas-back, 10; Lesser Scaup Duck, 111; American Golden-eye, 2; White-winged Scoter, 1; Ruddy Duck, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Red-shouldered Hawk, 5; Duck Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 6; Killdeer, 2; Herring Gull, 81; Ring-billed Gull, 4; Mourning Dove, 5; Barred Owl, 1; Belted Kingfisher, 2; Flicker, 19; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 13; Red-headed Woodpecker, 32; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 2; Hairy Woodpecker, 5; Downy Woodpecker, 12; Blue Jay, 33; Crow, 557; Carolina Chickadee, 21; Tufted Titmouse, 58; White-breasted Nuthatch, 6; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 4; Brown Creeper, 6; Winter Wren, 1; Carolina Wren, 8; Mockingbird, 18; Robin, 52; Hermit Thrush, 3; Bluebird, 14; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 1; Cedar Waxwing, 5; Starling, 10,000 plus (these roost in the business district of the city); English Sparrow, 100; Meadow Lark, 10; Redwing, 2; Bronzed Grackle, 50; Cardinal, 95; Purple Finch, 8; Goldfinch, 11; White-winged Crossbill, 5; Red-eyed Towhee, 56; Slate-colored Junco, 98; Tree Sparrow, 3; Field Sparrow, 1; White-throated Sparrow, 57; Swamp Sparrow, 1; Song Sparrow, 15. Total, 55 species; about 11,650 individuals. Duck Hawk seen by B. L. Monroe. This bird has been seen a number of times since it arrived here in September. White-winged Scoter seen at about 50 yards to 500 yards, in flight and on water. White wing patches and dark body seen clearly by LaFollette, Monroe and Carpenter. White-winged Crossbills seen at close range by Ganier and Slack. Their crossed bills and white patches on the wing plain. Other species seen in the same territory during the census period—Buffle-head; Hooded Merganser; Turkey Vulture; Black Vulture; Golden Eagle (sharply defined black end of tail and white spots under wings seen by Monroe and Carpenter); Bald Eagle; White-crowned Sparrow and Myrtle Warbler.

MABEL SLACK,
 JAMES LaFOLLETTE,
 ROBERT MENGEL,
 BURT L. MONROE,
 JAMES B. YOUNG,
 FLOYD CARPENTER,
 ALBERT F. GANIER.

Cynthiana, Ky.—(Allen and Lair Farms)—Jan. 2, 9:00 A. M. to 12:00; 1:30 to 4:15 P. M. Clear; wind, southwest, light; temp. 34. Great Blue Heron, 2; Killdeer, 1; Crow, 54; Bronzed Grackle, 1; English Sparrow, 30; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Southern Downy Woodpecker, 3; Carolina Chickadee, 35; Tufted Titmouse, 13; Starling, 60; Mockingbird, 1; Flicker, 1; Bluebird, 2; Goldfinch, 3; Carolina Wren, 5; Cardinal, 8; Slate-colored Junco, 26; Tree Sparrow, 3; Song Sparrow, 7; unidentified Duck, 1. Total, 20 species, 257 individuals.

BIRD WELLS RICE,

W. G. WIGLESWORTH.

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Johns Run, Carter County, Ky.—December 26, 1937, 8:00 A. M. to 4:00 P. M. Clear with sun shining most of the time. Temperature 32 degrees to 38 degrees. About 8 miles on foot in wooded and open field areas. Red-tailed (?) Hawk, 1; Bob-white (two coveys), 19; Crow, 2; Chickadee, 32; Tufted Titmouse, 10; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Flicker, 1; Winter Wren, 2; Hermit Thrush, 2; Bluebird, 6; Goldfinch, 3; Red-eyed Towhee, 6; Slate-colored Junco, 102; Chipping (?) Sparrow, 2; Cardinal, 20; Song Sparrow, 5. Total, 16 species, about 214 individuals.

ERCEL KOZEE.

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1937 CHRISTMAS CENSUS

Summary for the State of Kentucky

Double-crested Cormorant, 1; Great Blue Heron, 2; Mallard, 4; Black Duck, 25; Canvasback, 10; Lesser Scaup Duck, 116; American Golden-eye, 2; Ruddy Duck, 1; White-winged Scoter, 1; Canada Goose, 40; Turkey Vulture, 3; Black Vulture, 10; Cooper's Hawk, 1; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Marsh Hawk, 2; Red-tailed Hawk, 3; Red-shouldered Hawk, 5; Sparrow Hawk, 19; Duck Hawk, 1; Bob-white, 85; American Coot, 1; Killdeer, 3; Herring Gull, 81; Ring-billed Gull, 4; Mourning Dove, 57; Barred Owl, 2; Screech Owl, 2; Belted Kingfisher, 2; Hairy Woodpecker, 13; Downy Woodpecker, 55; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 9; Pileated Woodpecker, 52; Prairie Horned Lark, 193; Red-headed Woodpecker, 65; Flicker, 63; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 52; Blue Jay, 158; Crow, 2592; Carolina Chickadee, 282; Tufted Titmouse, 229; White-breasted Nuthatch, 11; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 4; Brown Creeper, 8; Carolina Wren, 91; Bewick's Wren, 6; Winter Wren, 4; Mockingbird, 88; Hermit Thrush, 9; Robin, 115; Bluebird, 109; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 5; Cedar Waxwing, 138; Starling, 10,844; English Sparrow, 995; Myrtle Warbler, 44; Red-wing, 50; Meadowlark, 102; Bronzed Grackle, 59; Purple Finch, 188; Goldfinch, 131; White-winged Crossbill, 5; Cardinal, 366; Red-eyed Towhee, 177; Slate-colored Junco, 799; White-crowned Sparrow, 67; White-throated Sparrow, 177; Tree Sparrow, 191; Chipping Sparrow, 2; Field Sparrow, 84; Swamp Sparrow, 26; Fox Sparrow, 18; Song Sparrow, 171. Total species, 72; individuals, 19,292.

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CENSUS FROM OUR MICHIGAN MEMBER

McMillan, Luce County, Michigan—Dec. 25. 9:07 A. M. to 11:40 A. M. and 1:23 P. M. to 2:58 P. M. Weather, clear at start, becoming overcast at about 11:00 A. M. and remaining so during most of the

remainder of the day. Temperature ranged from 5 degrees to 21 degrees F. Wind, northeast in morning, changing to east in afternoon; light. Snow averaged about one foot deep. Covered four miles on skis. The forenoon being chiefly cut over land and the south, east and north sides of McCormick Lake; lake frozen over for at least one month. In P. M., covered woodland in which there were many large trees and no cutting down in it since before the year 1912, and then the only "very best" trees. Seven power Mirakel glasses used.

Hairy Woodpecker, 2 (one tattooing; the other had just dug out a large white grub from the decayed wood of a beech tree. The grub being frozen, it was placed in a crevice in order to be picked in small pieces); Blue Jay, 2 (at feeding station); Black-capped Chickadee, 7 (some feeding on seeds of ironwood); White-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2; English Sparrow, 15; Evening Grosbeak, 3 (feeding on seeds of hard maple); Pine Grosbeak, 32 (feeding on seeds in birch cones); Snow Bunting, 1. Total, 10 species, 79 individuals. Cones on birch and evergreen trees, not plentiful. Beechnut crop rather favorable, but most may be off of trees. Hard maple seeds were plentiful, only scattering trees that any seeds remain.

OSCAR MCKINLEY BRYENS.

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INDIANA CENSUS BY K. O. S. MEMBER

Bloomington, Ind.—(To Turkey Run State Park and vicinity). December 23. 7:45 A. M. to 3:15 P. M. Sun shining most of time; light northwest wind. 24 Degrees at start; 39 degrees at return. About 9½ miles on foot, 15 miles by automobile.

Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Flicker, 4; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 2; Red-headed Woodpecker, 29; Hairy Woodpecker, 3; Downy Woodpecker, 7; Prairie Horned Lark, 25; Blue Jay, 18; Crow, 40; Black-capped Chickadee, 1; Tufted Titmouse, 21; White-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Bluebird, 4; English Sparrow, 50; Cardinal, 13; Goldfinch, 3; Slate colored Junco, 15; Tree Sparrow, 76; Song Sparrow, 25. Total, 20 species, 340 individuals.

DOROTHY M. HOBSON.

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AN UNUSUALLY EARLY RECORD FOR THE SNOWY OWL

In the last issue of the WARBLER I stated the adage, Seek and ye shall find. I also declared that while, in the majority of cases we have to search, diligently and patiently, in a bird's most favorable environment, sometimes unusual visitors boldly cross our paths and thrust themselves upon us, so to speak, without our meriting the event. An example of this thesis was never more aptly demonstrated than by what occurred on Saturday, November 6.

On this afternoon, to us a memorable one, Mr. Floyd Carpenter, Miss Evelyn Schneider, Mr. Burt Monroe, and the writer, set out in search of American Pipits. To this end we were riding up the River Road east of Louisville, toward Oldham County, where there was a country Golf Course and many plowed up fields, a location where Pipits had been found in previous years. As we neared the foot of Twelve-Mile Island we noticed a big white hump or spot in the very

top of a large sycamore tree, growing on the Kentucky shore. The tree was bare of leaves and its white branches glistened in the sun. Yet, in the extreme top where a branch had evidently been broken off, was this lump, whiter than the limbs of the tree. As we pulled over to the side of the road to investigate, two members of the party simultaneously suggested a Snowy Owl. "Sure, let's make it a Snowy Owl!" cried another. "Say, you fellows, you needn't be kidding, that is a Snowy Owl!"

Having thus determined the probability of a great find, we drove up opposite the tree, which was about one hundred yards away. There we carefully trained our glasses and a thirty-power telescope on the bird, comparing it with descriptions in our guides. There was absolutely no question left as to this being a Snowy Owl (*Nyctea Nyctea*). The dark spots on the head, as well as the horizontal markings on the breast, were clearly visible. The bird was facing us and we had a perfect view of it, as it turned its head around, now to the left and now to the right. This gave us a good profile view of the head and, in the clear sunshine, against a blue sky, every detail was discernible.

As we had cameras with us, pictures were taken with both an Argus Camera, carrying color film, and with an Exakta, using super-sensitive panchromatic film. Mr. Carpenter, who took these shots, made them at different distances and finally obtained one directly under the tree in which the owl was perched. After Mr. Carpenter had gotten back to the car, the owl took wing, flying directly over us, its tremendous wings casting a shadow on the ground before us. It flew inland toward the Indian Hills woods, until it was lost to sight, about three quarters of a mile away. Subsequent search failed to locate it, but we had approximately an hour's leisurely view of the owl, from 2:15 to 3:15 P. M.; temperature 61 degrees. Since two of the party happened to be game wardens, conversations for the remainder of the afternoon was all on the fate of the white bird—game season was on and perhaps some gunner would take a pot-shot at this unusual target. This is the sixth record of its occurrence in Kentucky in recent years, but Audubon says of it, "Scarcely is there a winter which does not bring several of these hardy natives of the North to the Falls of the Ohio at Louisville." He then goes on to describe how they seized fish which had been trapped in the 'pot-holes' or pools of water in the rocks.

But to conclude, and draw the moral to my tale! We then proceeded on our search for Pipits, but not a Pipit did we see, even though the environment and time were perfect for them. But who cared that day about the absence of Pipits, for the afore-mentioned 'unmerited event' had happened. The unusual visitor had thrust itself upon us, and we had gained a life record. A Snowy Owl in Kentucky on a clear, warm, early November day!

LEONARD C. BRECHER, Louisville, Ky.

* * * * *

[Editor's Note—On the 12th of November, this owl was found on a farm near Avoca, Kentucky. The farmer's wife discovered her cows pushing the lifeless body of the bird around the field. Mr. Al. Mirus, a member of the Beckham Bird Club was consulted, and he mounted this specimen, a female, which was claimed by the farmer's son for the library of Anchorage High School. The owl had not

been shot, but its body was badly bruised, whether from striking an auto or from the cow's sport, we will never know. However, it now presents a handsome appearance.]

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FALL MEETING, 1937

The 1937 Fall Meeting of the K. O. S., held at Henderson, on October 22-24, is one that will long remain in the memories of those who were present. By far the largest group ever to attend a fall session assembled for the various meetings. The hospitality of the Henderson members and other citizens, the attractions of interest in the city, the excellence of the programs, and the fellowship and exchange of experiences enjoyed in the associations all conspired toward a highly exceptional meeting.

At the opening session on Friday evening, Dr. Gordon Wilson spoke on "Christmas Bird Censuses," giving many experiences from the nineteen consecutive censuses in which he had participated. The reasons for these censuses, how to organize them, a resume of the birds seen, and the advantages and pleasures of this form of activity were enthusiastically told. It was encouraging to hear that according to Dr. Wilson's observations birds are now seen in considerably larger numbers than when he began, and some species, especially those protected about homes and farms, have shown decided increase.

Mr. Samuel E. Perkins, III, Treasurer of the Wilson Ornithological Club, spoke about "The Pets of Audubon." His gathering together from numerous sources the bits of information and the stories of Audubon's dogs, particularly Zephyr and Dash, his horse Barro, the sparrow hawk Nero, the trumpeter swan, and others proved interesting and entertaining.

At the business session on Saturday morning were discussed many questions relating to the Society, showing a stimulation of interest not hitherto evident. Reports from the three chapters, the C. W. Beckham Bird Club in Louisville, nearly three years old, and the newly formed chapters in Henderson and Madisonville, gave evidence not only of increased membership but of more active participation and more wide-spread activities. At the conclusion of the business meeting Miss Susan S. Towles, of the Henderson Historical Society, spoke on "Audubon in Henderson," and exhibited many of the folio prints and interesting articles from the Audubonian Collection.

Under the leadership of Mr. Virgil King, a trip was made on Saturday afternoon, to the Audubon Memorial Park, a mile north of the city, where high on a hill overlooking a majestic stretch of the Ohio River, in the midst of four hundred acres of rolling land and thick woods, is being erected the Audubon Museum, a gray stone building in the Norman style of architecture. While climbing about the temporary scaffolding, peering into the round tower, the large main gallery, and other rooms, we envisioned the completed edifice with its exhibitions of prints, mounted birds, books and portraits, birds nesting in the masonry, the formal garden laid out with the wheel from Audubon's grist and lumber mill in the center, and the French gate house near by. Leaving the Museum we were taken to another section of the park, where, as we walked along the beautiful woodland paths, observed the view from the lookout tower,

and enjoyed the log fire in the rustic shelter house, we pictured to ourselves Audubon himself, in this lovely country, observing and gathering materials for the paintings which brought him fame. On returning to the city, we visited the Public Library, where are many of Audubon's folio prints and other interesting items.

Dinner on Saturday evening proved a memorable occasion, with thirty-three bird enthusiasts present. Each one related briefly an interesting and entertaining experience during the year in connection with bird study. This means of becoming acquainted with each other and the enjoyment of companionship have made these annual informal dinners occasions which we anticipate with rare pleasure. Reluctantly we tore ourselves away to attend the evening session with its group of noted speakers.

Mr. C. E. Dudley, Superintendent of Schools in Henderson, extended a cordial greeting and praised the interests and work of the K. O. S. A large group of members of the Evansville, Indiana, Audubon Society were among the visitors.

Mrs. Fred C. Laskey, well known for her excellent work and integrating of results, spoke on "Bird Banding," giving briefly its origins and history and telling many of her experiences in banding over ten thousand birds (108 species) in a period of six years. Mrs. Laskey stressed the importance of banding in obtaining many kinds of information as well as the pleasure in the work and the privilege of having rare birds close at hand.

Mr. Albert F. Ganier showed many lantern slides of unusual pictures which he had made, including hawks, owls, the Bald Eagle, Mississippi Kite, with their nests, eggs, and localities. His views of Reelfoot Lake, together with the King Rail on its nest, the nest of the Least Tern, American Egrets, Cormorants, Anhingas, and Great Blue Herons found there, were of unusual interest.

Dr. George R. Mayfield, in speaking on "How to Learn the Warblers," mentioned the importance of keen eyes, a good ear, and unlimited patience. He stressed the need of learning individual characteristics, spoke of the thrill of locating by ear what cannot be seen, and described the habits and songs of many of the warblers. We could not help but agree with Dr. Mayfield that the beauty, habits, elusive ways, and the songs of the different species, all recommended these birds to intensive study.

Dr. Gordon Wilson, in concluding the last session of the meeting, expressed the indebtedness of the Society to Mr. King, local chairman, for his capable work in making all arrangements, to Mr. Dudley for his cooperation, to the boy scouts for their helpful services as guides and ushers, and to the newspapers for the articles printed. Every member and visitor felt deepest gratitude to the speakers, especially those who had come from considerable distance to give us the benefit of their years of study and experience.

On Sunday morning, under the leadership of Mr. King, and Mr. R. C. Soaper, a field trip was made to the heronry, fourteen miles west of Henderson. After helping each other through the tangled woods, jotting down the birds we observed along the way, we reached the tall trees laden with nests of herons, egrets, and cormorants. Again we regretted the necessity of returning to town, and a hasty

dinner, the bidding of farewells, and departure for various parts of the state marked the end of one of the best attended, most enthusiastic and stimulating meetings ever held.

EVELYN SCHNEIDER, Secretary, Louisville, Ky.

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Some time ago you were informed by the Secretary-Treasurer of the K. O. S. that there would be a delay in this issue of the Kentucky Warbler and that there was a surprise in store for you. We believe that you have already guessed it.

The cover and the change in size of the Warbler, this issue, marks a decided departure in design from the past issues and initiates the style that is to be followed in the future. The problem of working within a limited budget has been an annual one, but the officers of the Society have seen fit to advance. They believe that a "bigger and better" organ will bring in more paying members and that we can give more for the money than heretofore. Undoubtedly, the change is a big improvement. The cover lends more charm, while the increased size allows for more material.

The cover was designed and executed as a generous contribution to the Kentucky Warbler by Mr. Albert F. Ganier, whose work is already well known to many of our readers through the medium of the Tennessee Ornithological Society and its organ, the "Migrant." He has been one of the guiding hands in our own State Society, and, together with Dr. Gordon Wilson, of Bowling Green, has furnished the inspiration for the progress of the K. O. S. We take this opportunity to thank him for the splendid co-operation he has always given us.

A new cover, a new size, new birds, new members, and a new year—1938 should be the best in our history. Get behind your Society—pay up your dues, boost the K. O. S., contribute to the Warbler, and above all, help increase the membership.

