

Spring 1939

## Kentucky Warbler (Vol. 15, no. 2)

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# Kentucky Markler

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

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

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Volume XV

SPRING 1939

No. 2

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## ANNUAL SPRING MEETING

The sixteenth annual spring meeting of the K. O. S. was held in Louisville, on the afternoon of April 13 and 14. The sessions were held in the Red Room of the Seelbach Hotel.

In the absence of both the president and vice-president the Thursday session was called to order at 2:30 o'clock by the secretary-treasurer, Virgil D. King. Miss Emilie Yunker, Supervisor of Nature Study and Gardening, Louisville City Schools, introduced the first part of the program, namely: "Meeting of the Bird Club." The sixth grade pupils of the Victor H. Engelhard School of Louisville under the able direction of their teacher, Miss Mary V. Witt, presented one of the regular monthly meetings of their bird club. The children conducted their meeting in such a delightful and effective manner that everyone present complimented their poise and enjoyed their contribution.

Miss Evelyn J. Schneider, of Louisville, presented motion pictures of "The Eider Duck" and "Birds of Bonaventure Island." Miss Schneider told how the female Eider Duck plucks the precious down from her breast in building her nest and in making a warm cover with which to protect her eggs (usually five) from the cold while she is feeding. The production of eider-down was pointed out as a growing and valuable industry of certain sections of Canada. She also related interesting experiences which she had during a visit to the Gaspe Peninsula and Bonaventure Island, as well as to describe the color and habits of gannets, puffins, and other birds shown in the pictures. Her comments were given in such a pleasing manner that the pictures were thoroughly enjoyed by all those present.

Speaking on "Wildlife Conservation in Kentucky," Tom Wallace, editor of *The Louisville Times*, branded the "mere study" of birds as "anemic." "Rather," he said, "we should take a general interest in the legislative aspects of various branches of conservation which affect birds." He deplored the poor management of Kentucky's State Parks and pointed to laxity in enforcement of the Audubon law protecting non-game birds, particularly that part of it which protects hawks and owls.

Miss Emilie Yunker distributed colorful bird sticks made by the pupils of Grade 6A of the Brandeis and Tingley Schools of Louisville, under the direction of Misses Amy F. Healine and Hattie J. Reis. An attractive exhibit of bird houses and feeding boxes was of special interest. These were built by the 5B pupils of the Hazelwood School under the direction of Miss Mattie Pirtle.

Dr. Gordon Wilson, of Bowling Green, presided at the Friday session. During the business session those present were asked to express their opinions as to whether we should have a fall meeting or should simply concentrate on the Wilson Club meeting, which will be held in Louisville on December 1 and 2. Every member who expressed an opinion favored our having the annual fall meeting.

Misses Shirley Durham and Hazel Kinslow presented an invitation from Paducah for the fall meeting. This invitation will be seriously considered by the officers and councillors, and the date and place of the fall meeting will be announced in the summer issue of *The Kentucky Warbler*.

In response to Tom Wallace's suggestion that the K. O. S. should make a concerted effort to promote bird protection in Kentucky, a legislative committee was appointed. The members of the committee are: Leonard C. Brecher, Louisville; Major Victor Dodge, Lexington, Chairman; and Dr. T. Atchison Frazer, Marion.

James B. Young, of Louisville, gave a very interesting talk on "Bird Banding." Mr. Young described the beginning and growth of bird banding in this country and the types of traps and bait used. He said that a water drip is the very best type of bait that can be used during the summer, as it has a universal appeal to bird life. He pointed out the necessity of the bander being able to identify positively the birds banded, or his records will be useless. In relating experiences he had with "repeaters", he pointed out in a very convincing manner how gratifying the bird banding hobby is.

Fred M. Mutchler, of Bowling Green and Louisville, spoke on the "Summer Birds of the Dry Tortugas." Mr. Mutchler was sent to the Tortugas by the Bureau of Biological Survey to check on the number of Sooty Terns nesting there in 1935. He concluded there were about 13,000. He gave a very interesting and informative talk on the feeding, mating, and nesting habits of the Sooty and Noddy Terns, as well as to mention other interesting forms of life which he observed while there.

Floyd S. Carpenter, of Louisville, showed natural-color slides, which he made during the past summer, as he spoke on "Bird Observations along the Chesapeake Bay." The slides included not only birds but also attractive views of Mt. Vernon, the Potomac River, a rainbow, and other objects of interest. All those present were highly pleased with Mr. Carpenter's witty and humorous remarks, which he so cleverly wove into his talk.

—VIRGIL D. KING, Secretary-Treasurer

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### BANDING OF BIRDS

By JAMES BOSWELL YOUNG

The history of bird banding reaches far back into antiquity, and there are isolated reports of the banding of birds in ancient times before Christ. However, in so far as America is concerned it is both fitting and proper that the first man to do this work in this country should be Audubon, and those of you who have read the story of his life, know that in Pennsylvania he banded a brood of phoebes and that he was rewarded for his efforts by the return, the next season, of two of his banded birds.

In December, 1909, there was formed in this country an organization known as the American Bird Banding Association, and this organization—developing a method of systematic trapping of birds—demonstrated fully the possibility of extensive banding operations. Realizing that the information obtained from the work would be of unquestionable value in the administration of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of July, 1918, the Biological Survey, which is a division of the Department of Agriculture, took over the work of the American Bird Banding Association.

Today there are 2,193 voluntary cooperators working under the supervision of the Bureau of Biological Survey, gratis, who have, up to the present time, banded 3,000,000 birds. These operators are scattered throughout the United States and Canada.

Of course, it must be perfectly obvious to all of you that the fundamental effort on the part of every bird bander is to capture, band, and release an uninjured bird. If the bird is injured in any way, during the process, the record is of no value, because the subsequent history of an injured bird gives us no indication of how a perfectly normal bird would act, and that is what the Government really wants to know.

Therefore, every precaution is taken to insure the safety of the birds, and in the time within which I have been banding I have yet to experience a serious tragedy of any sort.

The banding itself is done with an aluminum band of varying sizes, depending on the size of the bird, on each of which there is a number which is different from any other number on any other bird. On the inside of the band is printed "Notify Biological Survey, Washington, D. C." These bands are furnished free to all cooperators and are placed on the tarsus or leg of the bird taken. At the present time we are instructed to band every species of bird with the exception of the English Sparrow.

There are many methods of trapping birds. At the outset you must accustom the birds to coming to your trapping station by the use of food and shelter. Once you have established such a station, there are various sorts of traps used. It is the hope of every bander that he may find one type of trap that will be the perfect trap and take all kinds of birds under all conditions. However, such is not the case, and most cooperators use a variety of traps.

One of the simplest and incidentally most successful of all traps is known as the Drop Trap, or the Pull String Trap, which is nothing more or less than a wire box, one end of which has been raised and propped by a stick, to which is attached a string which is held by the operator, who is hidden from view. Food is placed under the trap, and as the birds hop under it to eat, the string is pulled, and the trap falls, thus imprisoning them.

Another successful type of trap is called the Sparrow Trap, which is worked on the same principle as a wire rat trap or lobster pot is built, to wit, an inverted funnel, into which the birds, having entered, find it difficult to extract themselves. One of the most popular types of traps is known as the Potter Trap, named for Miss Jessica A. Potter. This type of trap is merely a small cage with a door that slides up and down precisely like the door of some canary cages. There is a small platform to which is attached an arm. This arm, in turn, holds the door open. When the bird hops upon the platform,

the support is removed, and the door falls. I say this is one of the most satisfactory traps because once the bird is imprisoned, it has no way of escape. This type of trap may be used as a single cell or many cells together.

It has been found from experience that certain birds will enter a trap only from the top. This is particularly true of the Warbler group. Chickadees and Titmice likewise seem to prefer this type of entrance. So there has been developed a type of trap known as the Chardonneret. With this type, the door, or entrance, is on the top of the trap and is held in place by a spring. A small trigger is attached to the end of the door, and when the door is opened, this trigger is braced by a horizontal rod, which serves as a perch and which is hinged. When the bird hops down on the perch, its weight pushes the perch downward, thus releasing the spring, and the door springs shut.

Another type of trap involving the same principle is known as the Cohasset Trap, which is nothing more or less than a funnel down which the bird hops into the wire enclosure. When it attempts to get out, it follows the edge of the trap and does not come back to the center and fly upward, which is the only way that it can escape.

There are many types of bait used. In fact, I know of no kind of food ordinarily eaten by birds that cannot be used at some season of the year. In the winter a mixture of hemp seed, cracked corn, millet, and sunflower seed is good. Sunflower seed attracts the Cardinal; the millet attracts Juncos and all of the Sparrows. Bread will attract Mockingbirds and, in the early spring, Robins. Suet is ideal for Chickadees, Titmice, and Woodpeckers. In the summer time the finest of all baits for all types of birds is water. A small pool into which there is a slow drip of water is excellent. Robins, Catbirds, and Brown Thrashers cannot resist the lure of the shower bath, and, so far as known, water is the only universal means by which Warblers can be attracted. From my own personal experience I have taken proportionately more birds from a trap using water as bait than all the rest of my traps put together.

All of the methods of trapping which I have heretofore mentioned can be used in connection with water, and it affords a universal appeal to all species of birds.

As to the qualifications of the cooperator himself, it is obvious that he must be sufficiently qualified in ornithology to recognize and distinguish the type of bird he has caught. If he cannot do this, his records are worse than useless and lead only to confusion.

Perhaps to some of you this may sound like over-emphasis—that identification of a bird in the hand is simple—but there are times when the positive identification of birds, even in the hand, is a very difficult matter. I refer especially to the Warblers in fall plumage, and I have spent many interesting hours trying to identify positively a Warbler whose back is dull green, whose breast is light yellow, and which has or has not a line over the eye, depending on the way you look at the bird. Is it a Tennessee, Nashville, or Orange-crowned? Adult or juvenal?

Likewise a cooperator must have sufficient time to devote to this work. He must not leave birds imprisoned for an undue length of time, and he must always be watchful less a stray cat or other predatory animal get at the imprisoned bird.

But there is no pastime that I know of that is more interesting, worthwhile, or diverting, particularly at this time of year, when almost any type of migrating bird can be found in the traps.

What is the result of this effect, and what worthwhile information has been obtained?

On this subject alone one could talk for hours, but I think that if I give you a few specific examples, perhaps you may be able to judge for yourself whether a worthwhile knowledge of our bird life is being gained.

For instance, we know that a Mallard duck may live at least 15 years, for Dr. Lincoln, who is the present head of the Biological Survey, banded one in November, 1922, and it was shot some few miles from where it was banded in November, 1937.

From banding we have learned that the Marsh Hawk is quite a traveler, for one banded in June, 1937, in Minneapolis was killed near Havana, Cuba, in 1938.

There is a record of a Red-tailed Hawk which was banded in June, 1924, at Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, which was killed in Louisiana 14 years later.

An Osprey banded in June, 1936, on Long Island was found dead a year later in Brazil.

We know the Chimney Swifts live at least 11 years, for one banded at Thomasville, Georgia, in 1927 was caught in Quebec in 1938.

There is a record of a Lesser Yellowlegs banded in Cape Cod in August 28, 1935, which was killed September 3, 1935, in Martinique, French West Indies. This distance is more than 1900 miles and indicates a traveling speed of more than 300 miles a day.

Banding has disclosed a certain east-west or west-east movement of migrating birds, which, before the era of banding, was not suspected. For instance, a Cliff Swallow banded on June 14, 1937, in South Dakota was captured in July, 1937, in West Virginia.

Perhaps you are wondering about my own experience in banding and my own records. I think the greatest reward that comes to a bird bander is the return of birds to his station after the space of a year, or two years, or even five years. Of course, the longer one traps, the more birds that he bands, the more returns he is sure to receive. I do not want to bore you with too many dates, but I would like to tell you of two interesting birds.

The first of these is a Robin, which I banded one cold, snowy fourteenth of March, in 1937, at 11:00 o'clock in the morning. My pull string trap that I have heretofore described to you is so situated that it can be operated from my kitchen window, and on that particular day the trap was baited with bread. My good friend, this particular Robin, was extremely hungry, and he entered the trap without hesitancy. So hungry, in fact, that although the trap had fallen over him, he continued to eat. As soon as he became aware of his imprisonment, I went out, caught him, and banded him with number 37-221, 802. Apparently the trap did not disturb him very much because at 5:15 on the same day I caught him again in the same trap.

May I say at this point that there are too many records of repeating birds to allow even a conjecture that trapping frightens birds away. On the contrary, repeating birds are so common in all stations that a phrase has been used to describe them. They are known to have acquired the "trap habit," and it is not uncommon to catch a bird 15 times within the space of 45 days. This type of bird learns that there is plenty of good and no harm in the trap, and he has not the slightest hesitancy in entering. This is particularly true of Titmice and Chickadees, and after a while these birds become more or less a nuisance because they continually trip the trap and occupy it, so that other unbanded birds cannot enter.

But back to the Robin. That was the last I saw of this gentleman until the twenty-fifth day of February, 1938, one year later, when I again caught him. No mistaking it, because there was the band on his leg. After a whole winter of vacationing in the south, he was nice and plump and full matured, and my catching him didn't seem to bother him very much.

I heard no more of him until St. Patrick's Day of this year, and there he was in the same trap as fit as ever. You may rest assured that I look forward with considerable pleasure to seeing him again in 1940.

I should like also to tell you of a Mockingbird who has my utmost respect and also the undisputed freedom of my yard. This gentleman was banded by me on New Year's Eve Day, 1936, at 9:00 o'clock in the morning. His number is 37-210,380. He repeated on the third day of January, 1937, and the tenth day of January.

Perhaps those of you who have read Mrs. Lasky's splendid articles on the Mockingbird know that they have a most interesting habit of "defending a certain territory." This means that a certain Mockingbird will decide that he is the owner of a certain well-defined area, and woe be to any other Mockingbird that enters. This is particularly true in the spring when he is waiting for a mate, and during that period Robins are the particular source of his displeasure, and he has no hesitancy in chasing them beyond his boundary lines.

This particular gentleman seemed to select my back yard as part of his domain, and woe be to any Robin that alighted therein. This was not particularly pleasing to me, because it was the time of year that Robins can be trapped rather easily, and so I decided to deport my good friend, the Mockingbird. On the sixth day of February, 1937, I caught him at 9:30 in the morning and took him to Hikes Lane and Bardstown Road, which was about three miles from my home and released him.

It is my honest belief that he got home before I did, for there he was ruling the roost as usual. So on the ninth day of February, 1937, I caught him again and took him six miles from home and released him. On March 5, 1937, he was back. I figured that such persistence should be rewarded; so I did without the Robins, and he policed my back yard all that spring. That was the last I heard of this gentleman, and, as his most ardent admirer, I regretted his disappearance. Much to my surprise, on the fifth day of February, this year, I caught him again, and he was now back at the old stand when last I saw him, still giving the Robins the very devil.

There are many interesting problems regarding banding that I hope some day to solve. It has been my pleasure to band a considerable number of Cardinals, and I have received many returns

from these bands, both at my own station and from persons who have found these birds—most of which have met with the tragedy of cats and automobiles. There is a certain winter shifting of Cardinal population, and some day I hope to know more about it. How long do these birds live, how often do they return, and how far do they go on their winter wanderings? These are some of the many problems.

I believe that the winter home of the Chimney Swift, which still remains a great puzzle to ornithology, will be found through banding. The Tennessee Ornithology Society, working with Mr. Ben Coffee, Mrs. Laskey, and others, have banded thousands of Chimney Swifts during the fall migration. Some day soon,—perhaps sooner than we think—some missionary in the wilds of South America may be handed one of these bands from a native, and then the first definite clue as to the winter quarters of these interesting birds will be known. I am planning to do some Swift banding myself this fall, and I hope it will be my band that he finds.

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#### ANNUAL FIELD DAY AT McELROY FARM, APRIL 1 and 2, 1939

Last year, when twenty-one Kentuckians and Tennesseans visited the McElroy Farm, on March 26 and 27, it was decided to make this journey an annual event, the date to be determined by Mr. Wilson. Some weeks after Christmas, 1938, the dates were set for April 1 and 2, 1939, and invitations were sent out to all chapters of the Kentucky Ornithological Society, the Tennessee Ornithological Society, and the southern chapters of the Indiana Audubon Society. A total of forty-six people visited the farm on one or both days, thirty-three of them coming from a distance. A total of 100 species of birds was listed, 41 of these being water birds. The lake was at that time a little over 300 acres in extent, many times larger than it was at the same time in 1938 and about the same size as in late April, 1937.

Those who arrived on April 1 ate dinner together at the Helm Hotel in the evening and then visited the Kentucky collection at Western Teachers College, especially to see the stuffed specimens that have been done by Ottis Willoughby of Warren County. The next morning they returned to the lake and were joined by a crowd almost at large. The party visited the similar lake on the Chaney Farm in the early afternoon and broke up about 3:30.

The following people visited the McElroy Farm on this occasion: Indianapolis: Mr. Samuel E. Perkins, III; Misses Elizabeth Taft, Katherine Graves, and Ruby Wolfe; Nashville: Messrs. A. F. Ganier, Leo Rippey, Jr., James A. Robins, George R. Mayfield, and Paul K. Bryant; Mrs. Paul K. Bryant and Miss Elaine Woodward; Clarksville: Messrs. Alfred Clebsch, Alfred Clebsch, Jr., Charles E. Pickering, and Buddy Collier; Miss Katherine Pickering; Glasgow: Messrs. Russell Starr, Everett Frei, Cal Rogers, Leonard Rogers, and Clayton Gooden; Mrs. Everett Frei; Marion: Messrs. C. A. Hollowell, O. M. Shelby, T. Atchison Frazer, and R. J. Hardesty; Louisville: Messrs. Burt L. Monroe, Bobby Mengel, Virgil King, and James Lafollette; Misses Mabel Slack, Evelyn Schneider, Audrey Wright, and Marie Peiper; Cloverport: Floyd Carter; Rich Pond: William Jameson; Hardinsburg: Joe M. Robertson; Calhoun: Felix Perrin; Bowling Green: Messrs. Gordon Wilson, L. Y. Lancaster, Ottis Willoughby, Jo Allen Bryant, Hayward Brown, J. R. Whitmer, Ed. Diddle, and Kelly Thompson.

Here is a list of the 100 species of birds recorded in the two days, with numbers, chiefly for April 2: Loon, 2; Holboell's Grebe, 2; Horned Grebe, 2; Pied-billed Grebe, 5 plus; Double-crested Cormorant, 1; Great Blue Heron, 1; Green Heron, 1; Black-crowned Night Heron, 45; Yellow-crowned Night Heron, 4; Bittern, 5; Canada Goose, 4; Mallard, C; Red-legged Black Duck, C; Gadwall, 1; (a new record for the farm) Baldpate, C; Pintail, 25; Green-winged Teal, 10; Blue-winged Teal, A; Shoveler, C; Wood Duck, 4; Redhead, F. C.; Ring-necked Duck, A; Canvas-back, 1; Greater Scaup, 1 (tentatively identified late in the afternoon by Miss Slack and Dr. Lancaster and positively the next morning by Clebsch and Ganier; this is a new record for the farm); Lesser Scaup, A; Golden-eye, 4; Buffle-head, 5; Ruddy Duck, 1; Hooded Merganser, 4; American Merganser, 1; Red-breasted Merganser, A on April 1 but only 4 or 5 on April 2; Turkey Vulture, 4; Black Vulture, 4; Cooper's Hawk, 1 (nest); Marsh Hawk, 2; Osprey, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Bob-white, 10; Coot, A (probably 2500); Killdeer, C; Wilson's Snipe, C; Upland Plover, 2 April 1; Solitary Sandpiper, 1 April 1; Western Willet, 1; Greater Yellow-legs, 8; Lesser Yellow-legs, 5; Ring-billed Gull, 2 on April 1; Common Tern, 2 on April 1; Mourning Dove, C; Chimney Swift, 2; Belted Kingfisher, 1; Flicker, 4; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 3; Red-headed Woodpecker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 2; Phoebe, 2; Prairie Horned Lark, C; Tree Swallow, 4 on April 1; Barn Swallow, 1 on April 2; Purple Martin, 2; Blue Jay, F. C.; Crow, C; Carolina Chickadee, F. C.; Tufted Titmouse, 5; Brown Creeper, 1; House Wren, 1 (the first record for the farm and one of the few for Bowling Green); Bewick's Wren, 4; Carolina Wren, C; Mockingbird, C; Brown Thrasher, F. C.; Robin, C; Hermit Thrush, 4; Bluebird, C; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 3; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 5; American Pipit, F. C.; Migrant Shrike, 1; Starling, A; Myrtle Warbler, 5; Louisiana Water-thrush, 1; English Sparrow, A; Meadowlark, C; Red-winged Blackbird, A; Bronzed Grackle, A; Cowbird, 1; Cardinal, C; Purple Finch, 5; Goldfinch, C; Towhee, 4; Savannah Sparrow, C; Vesper Sparrow, C; Slate-colored Junco, C; Chipping Sparrow, C; Field Sparrow, C; White-crowned Sparrow, A; White-throated Sparrow, C; Fox Sparrow, 2; Swamp Sparrow, 1; Song Sparrow, C.

—GORDON WILSON, Tabulator.

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#### WINTER RECORDS OF THE PHOEBE AND THE BROWN THRASHER IN KENTUCKY

By HARVEY B. LOVELL, University of Louisville

On January 31, 1939, I saw an Eastern Phoebe in Indian Hills, near Louisville. The bird was perched in a low bush on the edge of an overflowed swamp and was observed for several minutes at close range. When I consulted Burt Monroe's records, I found that the average date for the arrival of the Phoebe is March 10, and the earliest previous record was March 3.

The following data have been assembled to determine how far north of its usual winter range the present Phoebe was. A. F. Ganier informs me that the Phoebe is "a very rare winter resident in central Tennessee," but that it is usually reported in their Christmas census, seven being the number for 1938. For southern Kentucky Gordon Wilson reports that his earliest record until the present winter was January 9, 1932. Dr. L. Y. Lancaster found the Phoebe

on December 21, 1938, the day after the Bowling Green census, and at the edge of the Mammoth Cave National Park on December 30, 1938. It seems, therefore, that the Phoebe should be included among the rarer winter residents of the state, especially in the southern portion.

On February 5, 1939, I observed a Brown Thrasher in my yard in Jefferson County, near Louisville. The bird seemed to be quite at home and ran under the shrubbery or flew from tree to tree while being observed from a distance of not over twelve feet. The bird has been seen repeatedly throughout the month of February and gives every indication of having returned for the summer. From Monroe's records I learned that the average date of arrival for the Brown Thrasher is March 15, and the previous early record was March 6.

The following data have been assembled concerning the winter range of the Brown Thrasher. A. F. Ganier writes that the bird is not a winter resident in central Tennessee and that his earliest records for Nashville over a period of twenty years are February 14, 14, 26; March 1, 1, 2, 4, 5, 5, 6, 6, 7, 7, and 9. Leaving out the first two out-of-line dates, we find the average to be March 4. Ganier reports, however, that the Brown Thrasher usually winters in western Tennessee and also along the Georgia line.

Gordon Wilson's earliest record for Bowling Green is March 5, a date which has been repeated several times.

There are at least four records of the Brown Thrasher in Kentucky in December. Dr. T. Atchison Frazer reported the species in his Christmas census for December 24, 1933, at Marion, and Raymond J. Fleetwood saw it at Madisonville on December 20, 1938. Virgil King informs me that he identified the bird beyond doubt in Henderson County on December 31, 1938, and L. Y. Lancaster saw it in Bowling Green during the 1938 Christmas holidays. Three of these records are in the western part of Kentucky near the boundary of the Lower Austral Zone.

There are also numerous records of the Brown Thrasher's wintering to the north of Kentucky. Josselyn Van Tyne says that the Brown Thrasher is a rare winter resident of the southern two tiers of counties in Michigan (check list of the birds of Michigan), and Dr. Frank Chapman in his HANDBOOK OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS says that it winters along the seaboard as far north as New York City.

In view of these records it is surprising that the Brown Thrasher has not been reported in Kentucky during the month of January prior to 1939. It is highly probable that it will be found to winter in the western part of the state regularly and that accidentals will continue to be found in other parts of the state.

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BIRDS AROUND A HOSPITAL—Chastain Frazer, the youngest son of the grand old man of our K. O. S., suffered a break-down in health some months ago and is sojourning at Hazelwood Sanitarium. "You can't keep a good man down," especially an ornithologist of such enthusiasm as Chastain. Even if he cannot get out very far to see the birds, they seem to come to see him. In a recent letter he says, "There is nothing unusual about the species I have observed,

although to me the beauty and poise of the Fox Sparrow are unusual. Perhaps this observation is due to the fact that I never took the time before to really see it. I am quite sure I have failed to identify several of the smaller birds. The ones I have identified are the following: White-crowned Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, Slate-colored Junco, Red-eyed Towhee, Cardinal, Carolina Wren, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Flicker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Bluebird, Robin, Mockingbird, Meadowlark, Cedar Waxwing, Bronzed Grackle, Bob-white, Killdeer, Starling, Crow, Mourning Dove, Sparrow Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Screech Owl, Turkey Vulture, Canada Goose."

All of us wish for Chastain a speedy recovery and plenty of experiences with the birds that he has always known and loved so well.

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**GOOD WORK BY GAME WARDENS**—Major Victor Dodge, of Lexington, has sent us some clippings relative to a rather wholesale conviction of men in central Kentucky for shooting doves in 1937 in baited fields. More than 25 people were fined \$50 each for this offense, one of them a circuit judge. On December 29 a prominent city official in Fayette County was arraigned for shooting a Golden Eagle, but the case was dismissed in Magistrate's Court.

Mr. E. J. Stewart, game warden for the Bowling Green area, is very watchful and has arrested several violators in the past year. He is guarding with real zest the temporary lakes in Warren County, the haunt this year, as usual, of so many water birds.

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**A MORNING IN AUDUBON MEMORIAL PARK**—On March 25, 1939, with a temperature of 80 reigning everywhere, I set out to see what I could find in Audubon Memorial Park, near Henderson. From nine o'clock until noon I climbed over the big hills, which are rather heavily wooded. There are few border and open areas in the park. The four-acre lake which was built solely for the use of wild life had no water birds on it. The most interesting observation concerned a Carolina Chickadee busily engaged in excavating a nesting cavity in an ash snag. The snag was about eight inches in diameter, and the hole was about fifteen feet from the ground. One bird did all the work, but its mate gave moral support from nearby branches and occasionally flew to the snag to inspect the work. All of the dozens of pieces of waste material taken from the hole were carried to nearby branches and then dropped to the ground. While I watched, a Downy Woodpecker flew to the snag and started toward the hole, which it may have begun for its own use. The alarmed Chickadee vigorously attacked the Downy and drove it away.

Near the borders of the park were found a Brown Thrasher, a Mockingbird, a Bewick's Wren, two pairs of Doves, four White-crowned Sparrows, several Field Sparrows, several Juncos, four Towhees, and a Phoebe. Deeper in the woods I found six Fox Sparrows, a Hermit Thrush, three Cowbirds in the tall treetops, a Flicker, two Myrtle Warblers, a few Golden-crowned Kinglets, some Chickadees and Cardinals. Tufted Titmice were abundant. A few Crows were seen flying over, and three Turkey Vultures sailed overhead. I inspected the hollow trunk of a big tulip tree in which Vultures

have nested in the past, but there was no nest. There were a few Downy Woodpeckers and Carolina Wrens here in the deep woods.

Many of the hillsides were carpeted with wild flowers, and I often met the sweet fragrance of the blooming spice bush. The wild flowers I found blooming were yellow adder's tongue, bloodroot, toothwort, Dutchman's breeches, purple violet, downy yellow violet, harbinger-of-spring, sessile trillium, wood anemone, and sweet williams.

—VIRGIL KING, Louisville.

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THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY—Some weeks ago the Kentucky Ornithological Society and the Virginia Society of Ornithology agreed to mention the work of the neighboring states and their ornithologists. It is a pleasure for THE KENTUCKY WARBLER to call attention in this issue to the Virginia society. It was organized in December, 1929, and except for one unusual year has had a slow but steady growth to its present membership of about 70. The monthly bulletin, THE RAVEN, edited by Dr. J. J. Murray, of Lexington, keeps members in touch with bird activities over the state. Acquaintance with birds of different parts of the state is gained by holding the annual meeting and accompanying field trip near the shore, in the mountains, or in the piedmont. Membership is open to any one interested in birds, whether a resident of Virginia or not. Miss Florence Hague, of Sweet Briar, is the secretary of the Virginia Society of Ornithology.

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A RECORD OF THE HENSLow SPARROW—On Sunday afternoon, March 26, 1939, about 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon, I was working through some open, brushy hillsides at South Park, Kentucky, which is fourteen miles south of Louisville. I had come upon some Field Sparrows, and hearing a new note among them, I carefully examined them with my glasses. I found that two of the sparrows were Henslow's (*Passerherbulus henslowi susurrans*.) They were feeding on the ground, where I watched them for several minutes with 8X40 glasses at a distance of forty feet. The olive-colored head with black stripes, the very noticeable reddish or chestnut wings, and the finely-streaked breast were all plainly noticed. These markings made the identification positive. I was fortunate enough to have these birds pose in a relatively clear space, free from blackberry bushes and the broom sedge which covered most of the area. It is quite possible that there were more of them in the flock of sparrows in the immediate neighborhood. This location was about a hundred yards from a small, marshy lake.

—LEONARD C. BRECHER, Louisville.

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#### OUR BIRDS OF PREY

Among all birds there are none more fascinating or more certain to arouse the interest and admiration of those who know them than the birds of prey—the hawks, eagles and owls. Their graceful build and beautiful plumage, in spite of the absence of bright colors, their wonderful eyesight and powers of flight, and the activity and courage which so many members of the group possess make them remark-

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able, not only among birds but among all living creatures. Taken as a whole, our native species are of great economic usefulness, only a few of them preying to any great extent on birds, and to a still less extent on game birds, but largely on troublesome small rodents, such as field mice and ground squirrels, and large insects such as grasshoppers and locusts, so that any occasional depredations are more than compensated for.

These beautiful birds will soon be largely creatures of the past in this country if their wanton destruction continues at its present rate. Nearly every species of such birds native to North America has conspicuously diminished in numbers within the last few years so greatly that the sight of a hawk or other bird of prey even of the species formerly common is no longer a frequent event in most places.

This is the result of nothing else than the unreasonable, persistent and vindictive persecution that they are subjected to by man, in spite of the fact that the practical harmlessness of all but a few of them and the economic value of a great many of them has been proved again and again by scientific investigations, by government and other agencies, and by practical experience. Know your hawks and owls. Study them and their food habits.

