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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."

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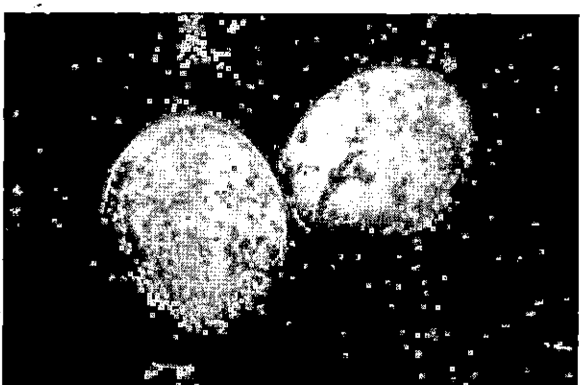
THE SUMMER RANGE OF THE CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW IN KENTUCKY

By EVELYN J. SCHNEIDER, Louisvile

The Chuck-will's-widow, the southerly member of the Goatsucker family, much larger than its northern cousin, the Whip-poor-will, is far more often heard than seen. It spends most of the day in a secluded thicket resting lengthwise on a branch or directly on the ground, and, with its mottled plumage, it is practically invisible. The Chuck has been known to roost in the same spot day after day, sitting quite motionless on a mossy log or branch of a forest tree. At dusk, however, it begins the loud call from which its name is derived. It shares with other goatsuckers the habit of feeding on the wing, usually near the ground, catching in its wide mouth moths, bugs, beetles, and occasionally small birds. Since it seems to enjoy roosting in a dirt road, the reflection of the large red eyes can plainly be seen in the glare of a car's headlights as the bird, sitting like a stone, glares rigidly into the light. Its nesting haunt is usually in mixed oak and pine woods where, as a rule, there is little under-



Nest of CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW, near Science Hill, Pulaski County, Kentucky, May, 1942. Photograph by Roger W. Barbour.

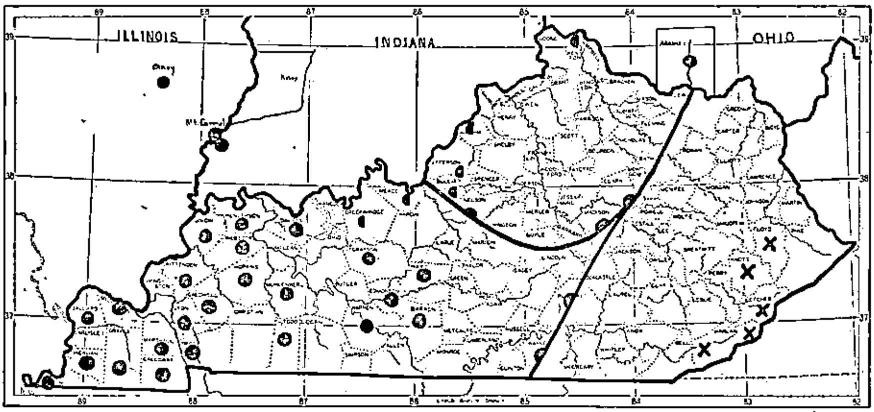
growth. It constructs no nest but places its two eggs on a carpet of dead leaves, and as the bird sits over them, it is so perfect an example of protective coloration that it cannot be seen. Once the bird is flushed, however, the creamy white eggs stand out boldly against the leaves. Audubon, as well as later writers, comments on the fact that should the Chuck discover that its eggs have been handled, it calls its mate, each bird takes an egg in its mouth, and they carry them to a new location, probably a long distance away.

Possibly because of a wider interest in bird study in the state, or probably because the range of habitat is spreading, a number of interesting records of the Chuck-will's widow for Kentucky have been published in recent years. Early writers considered it a more southern species. Alexander Wilson (1812) stated that "this solitary bird is rarely found to the north of the James River in Virginia on the sea-level, or of Nashville in the state of Tennessee in the interior . . . . In my journey south I first met with it between Richmond and Petersburg in Virginia, and also on the banks of the Cumberland in Tennessee." Audubon (1870) found that "the species is seldom observed beyond the limits of the Choctaw Nation in the State of Mississippi, or the Carolinas, on the shores of the Atlantic, and may with propriety be looked upon as the southern species of the U. S." According to the A. O. U. Checklist (1931), however, the breeding range of the Chuck-will's-widow is "the Lower Austral Zone from southern Missiouri, southern Illinois, southern Indiana, southeastern Kansas, and southern Maryland south to central Texas and the Gulf states."

The Illinois and Indiana records are in the southern parts of these states, where the territory has many characteristics of more southern areas. According to Ridgway (1889), "the Chuck-will's-widow is essentially a southern bird, the extreme northern limit of its range being the lower Wabash Valley, where, so far north as Mount Carmel it is, or at least was, not uncommon. The writer has heard its easily recognized notes as far north as the then (in 1865) heavily timbered Big Creek bottoms in Richland County, about three miles south of the town of Olney." Butler (1897) found the Chuck-will's-widow a "summer resident in the lower Wabash Valley, at least as far north as Knox County. In that region it is not uncommon . . . : Mr. William Brewster and Mr. Ridgway identified this species on the Indiana side of the Wabash, April 20, 1878." The northernmost breeding record seems to be that of Adams County, Ohio, where, according to Hicks (1935) "at least 25 or 30 pairs breed on a tract of about six square miles lying on either side of Ohio Brush Creek in Tiffin and Jefferson townships. The species was first discovered for the state on May 14, 1932." To the south, in Tennessee, Ganier (1933) reports that the species is a common summer resident in the western part, fairly common in the lowlands of the middle section, and a rare summer resident in the lowlands of the east.

Among the earliest published records of the Chuck-will's widow in Kentucky which I have found is that of Pindar (1925), who recorded the bird in Fulton County, in the extreme southwestern corner of the state, as found in his studies of 1884-89, 1890, and 1892-93; he considered the species a rare summer habitant. Gordon Wilson (1922) lists it as a fairly common summer resident in the Bowling Green area and (1923) as a common to abundant summer resident in Calloway County. Ridgway (1914) gave no reference to any Kentucky record, while Bent (1940) among his early dates of arrival lists Covington (April 17) and Bowling Green (April 25) in Kentucky. Beckham (1884) did not list the species for Nelson County. but Blincoe (1925) records one taken on June 27, 1915, and another seen on May 6, 1917. These are his only records, however, over a period of ten years.

In BREEDING BIRDS OF KENTUCKY—A COMPOSITE LIST, compiled by Gordon Wilson (1942), the Chuck-will's-widow is given as fairly common at Reelfoot Lake (Fulton County), Paducah (McCracken County), Kentucky Woodlands Wildlife Refuge (Lyon and Trigg Counties), Marion (Crittenden County), Bowling Green. (Warren County), Mammoth Cave National Park (Edmonson, Hart, and Barren Counties), and Glasgow (Barren County). To these western and southern records for the state Wilson adds from his own records the following counties: Hickman, Graves, Ballard, Marshall, Calloway, Union, Caldwell, Webster, Henderson, Muhlenberg, Daviess, Todd, Grayson. Another record in this part of the state is that of James William Hancock, who gives the species as a common summer resident at Madisonville, Hopkins County. There are, then, 23 counties of western and southwestern Kentucky, from Fort Knox to the Mississippi River and to the Tennessee border in which the species is at least fairly common.



Map by EVELYN J. SCHNEIDER

Summer Range of the Chuck-will's-widow in Kentucky.

Round dots—fairly common; half dots—rare; crosses—not discovered in studies made.

Wilson states in a personal communication: "The Chuck-will's-widow is fairly common in limited habitats, usually either dense or open woods, with little or no forest-floor covering of bushes. In general I associate the species with hills in my territory, but this is not true elsewhere that I have found the bird. My earliest date for Bowling Green is April 14. Thus far I have never found a nest or eggs or young, but I have stumbled upon the adult birds in the woods in broad daylight. The species seems to migrate all at once, as I can tell no difference between the numbers early or late. In the Mammoth Cave National Park the Whip-poor-will is more numerous and more widely distributed. At Dr. Lancaster's cabins, at the mouth of Gasper River (Warren County), the Whip-poor-will is rarely heard, the Chuck-will's-widow regularly. After mid-summer the Chuck quiets down; I suppose it then migrates back south, but the Whip-poor-will remains well into September. August 3 is the latest date I can find for the Chuck."

Dr. A. L. Pickens, of Paducah, confirms Dr. Wilson's findings in a letter in which he says, "I have one date for the Chuck-will's-widow coming as early as April 27, in 1937, and one as late as May 3, in 1942. It seems to come about the same time the Whip-poor-wills and the Nighthawks do. Inquiry indicates that the Chuck-will's-widow is fairly common in this vicinity. Every case of Whip-poor-will resolves itself in Chuck-will's-widow when the notes are whistled. The Whip-poor-will is not absent, however, but I regard it as being chiefly a passing migrant with perhaps spotty local nestings. Have no autumn records for Chucks, but from more southerly records of my own and others, would judge it leaves rather early, even in some cases during August. It does not call in southward migration so freely as does the Whip-poor-will, and this adds to the difficulty."

Another record, nearer the central part of the state, is the specimen which A. L. Mirus, Louisville, has in his possession. It was shot down in Breckenridge County, in 1931, and brought to Mr. Mirus, who mounted it.

For eastern Kentucky the lists made by Barbour (1941), Horsey (1922), Murray (1938), Olsen (1938), Patten (1937), and Stone (1921) do not include the Chuck-will's-widow. Since the species is a bird of the lowlands, the terrain of these localities is apparently not suitable as its habitat. A record is given by Wetmore (1940) of a Chuck-will's-widow heard calling near Monticello, Wayne County, on June 7, 1938. A party from the United States Museum, carrying on field work through the state from April 15 to July 15 and September 15 to November 15 added this single individual to the existing records. In May, 1942, Roger W. Barbour discovered a nest near Science Hill, Pulaski County, and photographed it. (See cut).

Patten lists the Chuck as an uncommon summer resident in the Berea region. He states that it "breeds casually around the knob bases bordering the lowlands where the trees are Virginia pine and oaks of the Ohio shale and Waverly formations. At least four were heard calling near the base of West Pinnacle in the early morning (1:30 A. M.) of June 22, 1941." He gives the average date of arrival as May 10 in this region. Dr. John B. Loefer, of Berea, writes, "We came upon a female with an injured wing quite accidentally on May 25, 1940 . . . . It is a bird we never get on regular trips; hence the lack of adequate data."

Another record in the eastern part of the state is that reported by Major Victor K. Dodge, of Lexington. He states, "I am glad to report the taking of two eggs of the Chuck-will's-widow on May 17, 1942, by Mr. J. D. Figgins at Oil Springs, Clark County, Kentucky. Several of our members saw the bird, which made several trips to its nest during the day. The nest was in a thin black pine grove where the ground was covered deep with pine needles. The type of soil was slaty with practically no undergrowth."

On May 1, 1942, a large number of K. O. S. members attending the Kentucky Natural History Conference at Otter Creek Recreational Area, Meade County, heard the Chuck-will's-widow calling in competition with the Whip-poor-will. This was the first known record for the species in this area. Although we listened for the calls the following night, neither was heard. (Schneider, 1942).

The Chuck-will's-widow as reported by Burt Monroe, Jr., who very kindly sent me his father's records during his absence in the armed forces, include the collecting of a specimen, female, by Robert M. Mengel in Bullitt County, two miles south of Shepherdsville, on June 21, 1941, and an individual heard on May 6, 1942, by Burt Monroe, Burt Monroe, Jr., and others at Sleepy Hollow, in Oldham County. Leonard Brecher reports hearing a Chuck on June 27, 1942, in the region of Sleepy Hollow, about half a mile southeast of the lake, and another at Camp Shantituck, two miles north of Shepherdsville, Bullitt County, on May 1, 1943. On May 16, 1942, one was heard by his daughter, Ruth Brecher, in Jefferson County, about two miles north of Fern Creek.

To date no records of the Chuck-will's-widow have been found in the Cumberland Plateau or in the Bluegrass Region of the state, while in the Mississippian Plateau, the Western Coal Field, and the Mississippi Embayment the species has been found to be fairly common. Hence the eastern limit for the Chuck is apparently the western edge of the Cumberland Plateau. Pulaski and Wayne Counties lie at this edge. Except for the recent records in Oldham and Jefferson Counties, it would appear that the northern limit of the species in the state might be the wooded area in the region of the Knobs, as it has been for other forms of life. The Knob Region is a narrow belt extending in a rough semicircle around the Bluegrass, the eastern arc beginning at the Ohio River in Lewis County and extending southeastward, the western arc running northward along Salt River into Bullitt County to the Ohio. Oil Springs, Berea, Bardstown, and Shepherdsville, where the Chuck has been found, all lie at the edge of the Knob Region.

The record given for Covington in Bent's LIFE HISTORIES I have not been able to trace. The United States National Museum, which has on file all the pertinent correspondence between Mr. Bent and his contributors, has not been able to find any mention of this record. The individuals recorded in Oldham and Jefferson Counties may indicate an extended range of the species; perhaps the territory in which it was found has become peculiarly favorable as its habitat. Sleepy Hollow is on the South Fork of Harrods Creek above Black Bridge, where the stream is entrenched below the general level of the country. The hillsides are steep, too rugged for cultivation, and have been allowed to grow up in timber. Camp Shantituck is likewise in hilly, wooded country, surrounded by farm land, as is also the neighborhood in Jefferson County in which the Chuck was heard.

It is not likely that keen observers such as Audubon and Alexander Wilson would have missed the Chuck had it been here in their day, or that they would have confused its call with that of the Whip-poor-will. Also, as intense a bird student as C. W. Beckham would not have overlooked so vociferous a bird. It appears, then, that in the intervening years the Chuck-will's-widow has extended its range and is continuing to extend its range in Kentucky as it finds suitable habitat. Further records for the state will be extremely valuable.

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THE SHAKERS AND BIRDS

By GORDON WILSON

For many years one of my teachers, Miss Julia Neal, has studied the records of the South Union Shaker Colony, which originated in 1807 when missionaries from the East came into Logan County and began preaching. Some of the early converts gave land to the colony. From this nucleus grew the very distinctive agricultural community, which lasted until 1922. From the yearly journals kept by the colony Miss Neal has copied for me all the entries that have to do with birds. I do not know who was responsible for the earlier entries, but the ones from 1865 to the end of the journal examined by Miss Neal were the work of Hervey L. Eades, long a leader among the Shakers and a man of fine education. Other nature entries included accounts of blizzards, tornadoes, the daily weather observations, the blooming of fruit trees, and similar things. In a community dependent wholly upon agriculture it is interesting to see how the comings and goings of birds found a place in the serious journal of the community. I am listing the entries in their original spelling and punctuation, thanks to the painstaking study of Miss Neal.

"Sat. Mch. 25-1837 Martens made their appearance."

"Mon. Mch. 12, 1838—The turtle dove is heard."

"Mch. 19, 1857—Cranes are flying north—counted 168."

"Feb. 13, 1863—Wild Geese—Passed North—It is said this betokens a warm spell of wheater—but geese may be mistaken as well as men."

"Apr. 9, 1864—Mercury 52—Weather spring like—The Black Martins made their appearance 4 or 5 days since—they usually come in March—"

"Mch. 28, 1865—Martins arrive from the South."

Mch. 25, 1867—Martins arrived at their quarters on the poultry house."

"Mon. 4 Nov. 1867—Cranes—Several flocks of large Sandhill Cranes are passing over going to their Southern winter quarters—this betokens winter's approach—"

"Feb. 12, 1868—Robins made their appearance this morning."

"Aug. 17, 1868—Martins—Left—The majority of the thousands that have been circling around and roosting here for the past 3 weeks left on the 12th. Inst & the very last disappeared on Sat. the 13th. No more to be seen here until March 25th, 1869. Where they go & what they do the next 7 months I know not."

"Wed. 17, Mch. 1869. Spring birds—all on hand—Robins nest building. Blackbirds selecting their limbs among the evergreens."

"Aug. 26, 1870—**Martins**—The black martins did not all leave here for the South until the morning of the 29th Inst. At least two if not 3 weeks later than is common for them."

"Sat. 9, April, 1871. Whippoorwills—begin their night music on the 9th Inst."

"Dec. 31-1872. Robins appeared—must soon hide their heads again."

"Jan. Tues. 15, 1873—Still growing warmer. Robins that made their appearance New Years Day show themselves again."

"Feb. 18-1873. The Robins start up their spring song this beautiful pleasant morning."

"Mch. 18-1873—Martins are here—winter is gone."

"Nov. 12-1873—**Cranes**—winter is upon us, if cranes are true prophets—Their trumpet voices are heard in the air. They are bound for the coast of Florida."

"Feb. 14, 1874. **Blackbirds** appear—to fight for the pine trees."

"Jan. 21, 1875—**Robins** returned they think winter is over—Mer. 48 degrees."

"Wed. 3 March, 1875—Black birds returned yesterday."

"Wed. 29, Dec. 1875 **Robins** returned some days since & now I hear their morning Spring Songs in the evergreens—They will likely have all their music frozen in a few days."

"Feb.-12, 1876. Blackbirds returned—very early."

"Wed. Mar. 13, 1877—Of Birds—Robins returned middle of Feb. Black Birds about the 1st Inst."

"Th. Mch. 15, 1877. Cranes—The trumpet throated cranes now flying north to the lakes—indicating that the winter is past."

"Dec. 23, 1877. Cranes—a flock of 60 cranes made us look up to see them moving to the south—Hence we conclude that winter is coming—we look for it soon to follow."

There is something a bit sad in these records, partly because of the disappearance of the distinctive community life that South Union so long had, a community life based on what to most of us seems like fanaticism. Another sad note is that the Sandhill Cranes, so often recorded among such common things as Robins, Whippoorwills, Blackbirds, and Purple Martins, have disappeared quite as surely as the quaint, hard-working, pious Shakers themselves. These notes have an especial interest to me because South Union is only fourteen miles from Bowling Green, part of the Shaker holdings having been in the same county as my home and bird-study territory.

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NOTES ON THE BREEDING OF MOURNING DOVES IN KENTUCKY

By HARVEY B. LOVELL, University of Louisville

INTRODUCTION. Why has the Mourning Dove (**Zenaidura macroura**) continued to thrive, whereas the Passenger Pigeon has disappeared under the persecution of man? There is, of course, no simple answer, but among the reasons are undoubtedly its long nesting season and its ability to nest in a great variety of places. It thrives in thickly settled areas such as Louisville, a metropolitan area of over half a million population, where it is nesting in increasing numbers. It nests in large trees, in small trees, in bushes, and even in vines. It breeds on the ground (Gordon Wilson found a nest on a bluff overlooking Barren River). It even breeds underground, writes A. F. Ganier, who found a nest near Bowling Green, Kentucky, in a sink hole three feet below the level of the surrounding field. Mr. Ganier further states that in Nashville, Tennessee, Doves nest on the posts of rail fences grown about with bushes. In Louisville a nest was found by Mabel Slack in a graveyard on a stone Bible in the hands of an angel, surely an appropriate place for a harbinger of peace.

NEST ON A CLIFF. During the summer of 1943 I found a Mourning Dove's nest on a rock ledge along the face of an old quarry. The nest was about twelve feet from the ground and partly shaded both by a small tree and by an overhang of the cliff. There is no mention of such a nesting habitat in Bent's LIFE HISTORIES, nor do any Kentucky ornithologists with whom I have communicated recall a nest in a similar location. According to Ganier, in Tennessee, Rock Doves breed on cliffs, but he has no record of Mourning Doves doing so. In Pearson's BIRDS OF AMERICA there is a mention of cliffs as nesting sites for this species, and I presume that an exhaustive search of literature would uncover other records. Gordon Wilson reports that Doves have nested on the same window ledge of one of the college buildings of Bowling Green in both 1943 and 1944, a location not unlike a cliff.

THE USE OF OTHER BIRDS' NESTS. The nest of the Mourning Dove is so poorly constructed that it must have a fairly substantial support. That is probably why it sometimes makes use of the abandoned nests of several of our more efficient builders. During the summer of 1943 I had an opportunity to observe such a nest.

A Robin had built its nest in an exposed crotch in a pear tree which grew on the edge of our driveway. Its eggs were destroyed about April 30, presumably by English Sparrows, as several were seen around and even on the edge of the nest that day. On May 8 a Mourning Dove was discovered using the nest. Investigation revealed that she had built her raft of sticks over the cavity of the Robin's nest and had already laid her quota of two eggs. The nestlings hatched on May 22. A large piece of shell was still in the nest when it was examined.

We had planned to study the rate of growth of the nestlings. On May 23, when they were one day old, they weighed 13.2 and 13.3 grams. On May 24 they had increased their weights one third, to 20.7 and 21.5 grams. A heavy thundershower coming up suddenly drenched the nest and its occupants and apparently prevented the return of the adult. When, an hour after dark, no parent had returned, we took the cold, wet nestlings into the house, made a nest of cotton, and warmed them under an electric light all night. The next morning they were in fine shape. We returned them to the nest, and within a few minutes a parent was back and brooding them. Unfortunately some predator had destroyed the nestlings the next day. The nest was too much exposed for safety, because of the dying of the limb on which it was situated.

I can find no published records of Mourning Doves' using other birds' nests in Kentucky, nor do any of the K. O. S. members in Louisville recall having seen one. Gordon Wilson found one near his house in mid-September several years ago which was built on an abandoned Robin's nest and still had the eggs unhatched. In Bent's LIFE HISTORIES it is stated that old nests of Robins, Mockingbirds, and Brown Thrashers are often used, and a Mourning Dove using a hawk's nest is figured. Roads (1931) and Hoffman (1919) also have reported Doves' use of old Robins' nests.

Mr. Ganier writes that Doves often use Brown Thrashers' and Mockingbirds' nests in Tennessee. Finally, McClure in a recent bulletin, "Ecology and Management of the Mourning Dove," states that Robins' nests are so frequently used in Iowa that they are a distinct asset to Dove management. Doves occasionally take newly completed nests before the Robins have had a chance to use them. McClure's paper contains a list of nine species of birds whose nests are used by Doves.

LATE NESTING RECORDS. The Mourning Dove has a very long nesting season, which is prolonged well into September and occasionally into October. Nickell (1944, p. 11) reports two September nests from Livingston County, Kentucky, and F. L. Dunn discovered a nest with eggs on September 26, 1941, at Dawson Springs. Even if hatching had occurred the next day, the nest would have been occupied until October 10, since the length of time in the nest averages fourteen days. McClure finds that there is a very extensive September nesting in Cass County, Iowa, and lists twenty-five nests which were still in use in October.

During the past summer I found four nests in Jefferson County which were definitely or probably September nests. A nest in a plum tree was discovered on August 18, containing two young. It was still occupied on August 31 at 5:00 P. M. but vacant at 8:00 the next morning, September 1. A second nest, with two eggs, was located in a peach tree 120 feet away. The eggs were destroyed on August 27. Adding fourteen days, we find that this nest would have been occupied until at least September 9. The Doves had built in a very exposed place on a nearly horizontal limb about twelve feet from the ground. A third nest, also containing two eggs, was discovered on Towhead Island by the members of the Beckham Bird Club on their weekly field trip, August 15, 1943. It was in a crotch of a nearly horizontal limb that leaned over the Ohio River. At the urgent request of the Coast Guard we did not again visit the island. It seems probable, however, that this nest was used into the first week of September.

I am indebted to Dr. P. A. Davies for showing me the latest nest. When I visited it on September 3, the two young weighed 28 and 28.1 grams. From this and the extent of the feather development, it seemed certain that the young were at least three days old, that is, that they had hatched on August 31. Their eyes were just beginning to open. The nest was twelve feet up in the main crotch of a small elm tree in a cow pasture.

Although the nest was visited daily, the nestlings were handled on only one occasion, September 7, when they were weighed, measured, and banded. Their weights of 50 and 50.3 grams indicated that they were about half grown. The young birds showed signs of fear and tried to escape when placed on the ground. The weighing of one was interrupted by the noisy approach of a bull, which caused me to retreat to the vicinity of a stout tree. After the interruption I returned to the scales, only to find them empty. It took me ten minutes to find the young Dove, so well hidden was it in the weeds only eight feet away.

Continued visits showed the nestlings still in the nest on September 13 at 6:30 P. M., but they were gone on September 14 at 4:40 P. M. They had apparently been in the nest fourteen days. As it is probable that young Doves need the care and feeding of their parents for at least five days after leaving the nest, this brood was still dependent upon their parents for three days after the hunting season began on September 16.

NOTES ON DEVELOPMENT OF NESTLINGS. For the first few days the nestlings are naked except for a covering of gray nestling down. When picked up, they closed their feet automatically upon the sticks in their nest, but otherwise they showed no sign of fear. They opened their eyes on the third day, but it was not until the seventh day that any great advance in their mental development was noted. They were more alert and paid more attention to their surroundings. On the eighth day the larger one, in the plum tree nest mentioned above, flew out of the nest when I climbed up to it and fluttered to the ground, where it crouched motionless in the weeds. When placed on the short grass of the lawn, it ran around fluttering its wings. However, when replaced in its nest, it crouched down and made no further attempt to escape. Since partly grown birds are apt to leave their nest too soon if disturbed after their fear instinct develops, we observed all nests from a distance through field glasses after the eighth day. Doves, therefore, should be banded on either the seventh or the eighth day. At that time they are about half grown and weigh from 48 to 60 grams. Their wing primaries are 50 to 58 mm. long and about two-thirds unsheathed, their tail feathers 30 to 35 mm. long and about half unsheathed. An adult that was trapped weighed 112.5 grams.

SUMMARY. Mourning Doves nest in a great variety of sites: A nest on a cliff is described. Another one built over an abandoned Robin's nest is discussed. Doves breed so frequently in late August and early September that the hunting season should not begin before September 16 or 20. The fear reaction appears on the seventh or eighth day, after which nestlings should not be handled or disturbed or they will leave their nest too soon. The appearance of the fear reaction is delayed until the wing feathers unsheath sufficiently to allow the nestlings to glide to the ground safely.

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ORNITHOLOGICAL NEWS

Mr. W. L. McAtee, of the Fish and Wildlife Service, is preparing a book on vernacular bird names and would like to receive contributions from our society. If our members will send the editor a list of vernacular names, a composite list will be sent to Mr. McAtee, representing the whole K. O. S. Mr. McAtee also asked for a copy of Mr. Gerald Baker's article on the Wild Turkey to be abstracted for Game Management Abstracts.

Because of the congestion of travel, the officers decided not to hold a meeting of the K. O. S. at Lexington on April 13 and 14, 1944, when the Kentucky Education Association met for brief sessions.

Both Bobby Mengel and Tommy Smith, two of our younger and very active members, are in the armed forces overseas.

Burt Monroe, now stationed near Dyersburg, Tennessee, had a two weeks' vacation the latter part of March and reported a number of interesting water birds on the Ohio, including the Gadwall, the Horned Grebe, and the Loon.

The AUK is now indexing the KENTUCKY WARBLER in the section of the magazine devoted to current literature. In their April, 1944, issue there are twenty-one pages devoted to articles on birds, containing about 560 references.

Mr. Walter P. Nickell, whose notes on the late nesting of the Mourning Dove appeared in the Short Notes section of last issue, is a native Kentuckian, having been reared at Grand Rivers, "between the rivers," in Livingston County. He is the ornithologist for the Cranbrook Institute of Science, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. In November, 1943, he was in Louisville and appeared before the Beckham Bird Club, showing many kodachrome slides on bird life. His wide range of knowledge of Kentucky birds should make him a regular contributor to our magazine.

With this issue is being sent a double-map feature, showing the Mississippi Flyway and the new Kentucky Reservoir. This excellent aid to our study of birds is a contribution of our Mr. A. F. Ganier from reprints made from the March, 1944, issue of THE MIGRANT.

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IDYLL OF SPRING

By SUE WYATT SEMPLE

O creature heavenly in color! Sweet
And musical your song: "Tru-al-ly, tru-
Al-ly." You set my spirits dancing, greet
Me with bird-lure when you make your debut.
O little sweetheart of the South, your role
A warbled note from somewhere overhead.
On singing wires I see an aureole
Of Blue, a throat and breast of rusty red.
Come closer, little minstrel, make yourself
At home in my young apple orchard; here
I've built a special house for you, dear elf—
Personified in bird—my heart to cheer.
I welcome your gay glint of azure wing,
Bewitching Bluebird, guest of magic spring!

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SHORT NOTES

A TAME BROWN THRASHER—The return of the spring migrants reminds me again of an unforgettable circumstance. It was a warm day, April 8, 1938, when I found an adult Brown Thrasher in my banding trap. Taking trap and all to the back porch and then removing the bird, I walked indoors. Thrashers, shy and timid by nature, usually remain quiet when handled. Lying there on its back in my left hand, waiting patiently for me to place a band on him, he seemed to have lost all shyness and suddenly burst forth in his sweet, clear, stirring song. Such a reward was not expected. This behavior seemed unusual and was such a contrast to the Cardinal's fighting habits. A red-letter day for me! I may never have this experience again. However, some day I hope to meet this songster, and when I do, there will be fond memories when I see No. 36-301802. —MRS. F. W. STAMM, Louisville.