

Fall 1944

Kentucky Warbler (Vol. 20, no. 4)

Kentucky Library Research Collections
Western Kentucky University, spcol@wku.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/ky_warbler



Part of the [Ornithology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Kentucky Library Research Collections, "Kentucky Warbler (Vol. 20, no. 4)" (1944). *Kentucky Warbler*. Paper 67.
http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/ky_warbler/67

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by TopSCHOLAR®. It has been accepted for inclusion in Kentucky Warbler by an authorized administrator of TopSCHOLAR®. For more information, please contact topscholar@wku.edu.

. . . The . . .

Kentucky Warbler

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



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

VOL. XX

FALL, 1944

NO. 4

JESSE DADE FIGGINS

By VICTOR K. DODGE, Lexington

Jesse Dade Figgins was born August 17, 1867, near Jefferson, Maryland, and died June 10, 1944, in his home in Lexington, Kentucky. The last article written by him for publication appeared in Volume XX, Number 3 (Summer, 1944) of THE KENTUCKY WARBLER. It was entitled "Geographical Alterations in the Habitats of Birds." A few months before his death he had completed a monograph on THE BIRDS OF KENTUCKY, which is now in the hands of the Department of Zoology of the University of Kentucky and is to be published soon.

During his college career and for several years thereafter Mr. Figgins studied and collected to qualify as a technical ornithologist. His success was good enough to win the approval of the American Museum of Natural History, and he was recommended by it to the then Lieutenant Robert E. Peary, U. S. N., for the position of naturalist on the 1896 and 1897 expeditions to the Arctic regions about North Greenland. We learn from the March, 1938, PUBLISHED PROCEEDINGS OF THE COLORADO MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY that on these expeditions with Lieutenant Peary Mr. Figgins played an important part not only in the collection of mammals and birds but also in the removal to the American Museum of Natural History, New York, of a 36½ ton meteorite which had previously been found near Cape York, Greenland.

The collections secured in North Greenland proved so interesting to the American Museum of Natural History, the institution receiving them, that Mr. Figgins was asked to join its staff. In extending this invitation, it was proposed that he undertake the preparation of a series of exhibits of Greenland subjects, including habitat groups of the native Eskimos, for which he made a series of life casts. Thus afforded an opportunity for the development of the more popular phases of museum work, Mr. Figgins organized and became the head of the American Museum's Department of Preparation and Exhibition. It was while in this capacity that he was invited to the directorship of the Colorado Museum of Natural History, in 1910, a position which he held with pronounced success, for the next twenty-five years.

Of late years Mr. Figgins's studies were along geological and paleontological lines and especially as these subjects relate to evidence of early man in America. His paper published in NATURAL

HISTORY (XXVII, 229-239, No. 3, 1927) announced to the world the discovery of the oldest evidence of human occupation in the western hemisphere, which he described as the Folsom culture.



JESSE DADE FIGGINS, 1867-1944

In 1935 he was invited to the directorship of the Bernheim Foundation Museum, in Louisville, Kentucky. This work he carried on for seven years, with headquarters at Lexington. Like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky financial disaster overtook Mr. Bernheim, and his schemes for setting up in Kentucky the greatest of all wildlife museums came to an abrupt halt. Bravely setting aside his disappointment, Mr. Figgins found solace in an opportunity to prepare a monograph on Kentucky birds. His recent seven years of study of Kentucky birds and life zones in pursuance of the Bernheim project had qualified for him for the undertaking.

Mr. Figgins was married in 1893 to Miss Jane Marr, who died,

leaving him three children. His second wife was Mrs. Helen M. Haskell, who survives him.

Even during his last illness his brilliant intellect and sense of humor blessed all who came in contact with him. A few minutes before he breathed his last, he requested his beloved wife to get some rest: "If I need you, Nurse will call you." We know that he realized he was passing, and we know he felt no fear. He knew and loved the land and the sea. In his prime he had faced death in the form of the thundering Arctic ice packs, and so it is easy for us to imagine him saying, at the end, as did Walt Whitman:

"Come lovely and soothing Death . . .

I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come, come unfalteringly.

From me to thee, glad serenade;

And sights of the open landscape and the high spread sky are fitting,

And life and the fields and the huge and thoughtful night.

The night in silence under many a star,

The ocean shore and the husky, whispering wave whose voice I know."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Mrs. Figgins and the University of Kentucky have furnished us a fairly complete bibliography of Mr. Figgins's long and interesting work as an anthropologist, a museum specialist, and an ornithologist. Harry C. Oberholser named a race of Brazilian birds after Mr. Figgins in 1931, namely *Uropella camprestris figginsi* (PROCEEDINGS OF THE COLORADO MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Vol. X, No. 5).

1922. Additional Notes on the Status of the Subspecific Races of *Branta Canadensis*. PROC. COLO. MUS. NAT. HIST., Vol. IV, No. 3, pp. 1-19.
1923. The Breeding Birds of the Vicinity of Black Bayou and Bird Island, Cameron Parish, Louisiana. AUK, XL, 666-677. (An annotated list of 42 species, mostly aquatic forms, including such rarities as the Mottled Duck, the Roseate Spoonbill, the White Ibis, the Sandhill Crane, the Louisiana Clapper Rail, and Attwater's Prairie Chicken. The notes on the habits of the Black Vulture are quoted extensively in Bent's LIFE HISTORIES OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS OF PREY, Part I, p. 35).
1925. Some observations Relative to Hybrids and Integration. PROC. COLO. MUS. NAT. HIST., Vol. V, No. 1, pp. 1-12. (Advances the theory that many subspecies of birds are really hybrids).
1925. Some Observations Relative to Meteorological Influences. PROC. COLO. MUS. NAT. HIST., Vol. V, No. 2, pp. 12-22. (Skins of Towhees placed in strong sunlight were noted to fade in a short time. On this observation it is suggested that many of the subspecific differences in birds are due to the fading of their colors because of strong sunlight or longer periods since the last moult).
1925. Twice-told Tales. PROC. COLO. MUS. NAT. HIST., Vol. V, No. 3, pp. 23-32. (Further discussion and objections to the rapidly expanding number of subspecies of birds).

1927. The Antiquity of Man in America, NATURAL HISTORY, Vol. XXVII, No. 3, pp. 229-239.
1930. Proposals Relative to Certain Subspecific Groups of *Carpodacus mexicanus*. PROC. COLO. MUS. NAT. HIST., Vol. IX, No. 1. (Three races of *Carpodacus mexicanus* proposed: *C. m. smithi* Figgins, *C. m. obscurus* McCall, and *C. m. sayi* Figgins, the latter a new name for *C. m. frontalis* (Say).
1931. A Proposed Standard of Viewpoints from Which to Illustrate Horned and Antlered Mammal Skulls. PROC. COLO. MUS. NAT. HIST., Vol. X, No. 3, September 26.
1933. The Bison of the Western Area of the Mississippi Basin, PROC. COLO. MUS. NAT. HIST., Vol. XII, No. 4, December 5.
1934. Folsom and Yuma Artifacts. PROC. COLO. MUS. NAT. HIST., Vol. XIII, No. 2, December 29.
1935. New World Man. PROC. COLO. MUS. NAT. HIST., Vol. XIV, No. 1, July 22.
1935. Folsom and Yuma Artifacts, Part 2. PROC. COLO. MUS. NAT. HIST., Vol. XIV, No. 2, October 3.
1940. BENT'S LIFE HISTORIES OF NORTH AMERICAN CUCKOOS, GOATSUCKERS, HUMMINGBIRDS, AND THEIR ALLIES, Bulletin 176. (Mr. Figgins is quoted in this book in the article on Costa's Hummingbird, p. 369).
1944. Geographic Alterations in the Habitats of Birds. KENTUCKY WARBLER, Vol. XX, No. 2, pp. 25-28. (Traces the extension of the range of the Prairie Horned Lark in Kentucky during recent years).
(This was Mr. Figgins's last published article.—Ed.)
- Unpublished. BIRDS OF KENTUCKY. Manuscript now in the possession of the University of Kentucky, under whose supervision Mr. Figgins did the work. It is to be published as soon as funds become available.

* * * * *

THE WARBLERS AND WRENS OF MAYSVILLE

By THOMAS KEITH, Limestone Science Club

The warm sun of an April day beamed down on the ground, still wet from the warm shower of the night before, and the small stream which followed the path down a wooded hillside busily rippled on its long journey. A flash of flaming orange settled on a nearby tree, a Blackburnian Warbler, heralding the arrival of the first major wave of warblers. There had been earlier migrants, such as the Worm-eating, the Black and White, and the Myrtle Warblers, but they were not a part of this wave. Farther up the path I could hear the jocose calling of the Yellow-breasted Chat.

Also in the initial wave were the Pine Warbler, the common Black-throated Green; the Cerulean, blue as the sky; the Bluewing, singing its buzzing lyric; as well as the Yellow and the Black and White, which arrived earlier. Such was the gathering of birds at Maysville, Kentucky, on April 27, 1943.

On the following day the Redstarts were seen in great numbers catching their insect food. This miniature Baltimore Oriole is to the eye what a firecracker is to the ear. Dr. Chapman says he is

"the little torch that flashes in the gloomy depths of tropical forests." Also arriving were the Nashville Warbler and those two characteristic songsters, the Ovenbird and the Yellow-throat. A charming lyric sung on the wing attracted us down along a stream, where after a long chase, we saw the warbler walking along the edge of the water wagging its tail. This musician was the Louisiana Water-Thrush.

Following a period of a week during which few individual migrants were recorded, another wave larger than the first arrived to feed on the various insect pests rapidly emerging from their eggs and cocoons. Among these new arrivals were the Cape May, which seems to be more abundant recently; the Canada; the Baybreasted; the Chestnut-sided; the Magnolia; and the Black-throated Blue.

Comparatively few of the warblers nest in this vicinity, only five definitely: the Chat, the Yellow-throat, the Yellow, the Louisiana Water-thrush, and the Ovenbird. In late May at the foot of the hillside we were attracted to a nest containing its speckled eggs by the "witchity-witchity-witch" of the Yellow-throat. When the young hatched, there was no resting for the black-masked father and his mate, but even after the young hatched, the female remained on the nest a great part of the time. A Cowbird had deposited her big speckled egg in the nest. In spite of the fact that we knew that a scientist never interferes in the course of nature, we decided to be altruistic rather than scientific and so removed this nesting hazard. However, it was all in vain, as a thunderstorm drowned the nestings and partially destroyed the nest.

On the top of the hill was a nest of a Yellow Warbler. It, too, was destroyed by some predator. The frail structure had been strewn over the ground. While the nests of the other three species were not found, their summer residence was attested by their constant presence throughout the summer season.

At the time that the warbler migration attracted our attention, in an old chicken house was found the wonderfully constructed nest of a pair of Carolina Wrens. This nest, completely roofed over by these clever architects had to be entered through a hole in the side. The parents were raising five newly-hatched nestlings, each of which had the appearance of a bill and two eyes; the parents alternated between feeding their charges and scolding the intruder, namely, me. Again and again the rust-brown female approached cautiously and flew away frightened by my unwanted presence. Finally she decided that the danger was only imaginary and fed her babies anyway. Soon the male returned with the market basket and less cautiously deposited the contents into seemingly limitless depths of open mouths. This process continued from dawn until noon. Then came a brief siesta, after which the male sallied forth apparently intent on establishing still another home. The female, after enjoying a good meal, returned to feed her children at five-minute intervals. Despite the occasional escapades of the father, no family was better cared for. Woe betide the Blue Jay that had designs on breaking up this home of the wrens!

On a higher level of the slope, not fifty feet distant, was the home of the Bewick's Wren. The adults alternated between flooding the hillside with their melodious, Song Sparrow-like song and feeding their young fledglings. They were easy to distinguish from the other wrens by their long black tails spotted around the edges and held at a ninety-degree angle to their bodies. These wrens also knew how

to reprimand the intruder, and the similarity of their scolding to that of the Carolina was more marked than the songs.

Still farther up the hill warbled the impish House Wren, whose nest was concealed in a pile of rocks and entered through a small hole in front.

With the exception of the House Wren, which winters in the South Atlantic and Gulf States, these wrens are permanent residents on this hillside or in the vicinity. The familiar song of the Carolina may be heard with its equal vigor on a sunny day in December or on a day in May. The Bewick's, on the other hand, is more retiring in winter, and its song is rarely heard from early fall until spring. The Winter Wren, down from the north, replaces the House Wren during the fall and winter months and often feeds from our window boxes.

The nesting season over, the troops of migrants again return southward, but the warblers were now less gaily colored. The Blackburnian no longer boasted its flaming orange. The Black-throated Green was much less gay, and the Chestnut-sided, the Blackburnian, and the Cape May were almost exactly alike in plumage. Others, such as the Redstart, retained their spring coloring. Several new species were added: the Prairie, the Golden-winged, the Wilson's. The 1943 ornithological year ended with the snow-covered hillside still furnishing food and shelter to Carolina Chickadees, Cardinals, Titmice, and the ever-melodious Carolina Wrens.

* * * * *

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT FOR 1943-44

Because of war restrictions of gasoline and travel in general, the officers of our society cancelled both the spring and the fall meetings. In spite of this, our membership, as shown in the summer issue, is slightly larger than ever before. We now have members from Maine to California. During the year several large museums have added the KENTUCKY WARBLER to their files: the Smithsonian Institution, the American Museum of Natural History, and the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard University.

Two of the articles in the KENTUCKY WARBLER were abstracted in WILDLIFE REVIEW, published by the national Fish and Wildlife Service. These were "Notes on the Wild Turkey in Western Kentucky," by Gerald F. Baker, and "The Relation of Vegetational Life Forms to the Distribution of Breeding Birds," by Leonard C. Brecher. A large number of requests for these articles have come from all over the country.

We have continued our affiliation with the Junior Academy of Science. We again offered cash prizes for the best paper on birds and gave three free memberships in the Kentucky Ornithological Society. The first award was divided between Frank Quigley and Jimmy O'Bannon; the prize subscription went to Wilkie Burns Gooch, Mona Holton, and Marie Corey.

The society now has a life member. Mr. Ralph Ellis, Berkeley, California, has sent us a check for \$25.00, for which he asks to be enrolled as a life member. Miss Evelyn Schneider and Mrs. S. Charles Thacher have also pledged to become life members. We need one more in order to buy another share in Building and Loan stock to add to our endowment of \$300.00 left us by one of our founders, Dr. L. Otley Pindar. Since contributions to the K. O. S.

are deductible from federal and state income tax returns, we urge our members to take out life membership before December 31, 1944.

We are printing a field list of Kentucky birds arranged alphabetically on a double index card. The list will sell at one cent a card, postpaid in lots of 25 or more. Unlike lists previously available, this one will have a comprehensive group of ducks, shore birds, and other migratory birds, about 200 species in all. We urge our members to fill out such a check list whenever they spend several hours in the field. Please send your orders to Miss Helen Browning, our secretary.

—HARVEY B. LOVELL, President, K. O. S., Louisville

* * * * *

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

RECEIPTS

Balance brought forward from preceding Secretary-Treasurer's report, January 31, 1944.....	\$ 66.84
59 Memberships @ \$1.00	59.00
53 Memberships @ .75	39.75
2 Memberships @ .50	1.00
Junior Academy of Science affiliation dues	16.00
Endowment—	
Dividend, Jefferson Savings	4.50
Life Membership, Ralph Ellis	25.00
Sale of back issues of KENTUCKY WARBLER	39.78
Donation of Beckham Bird Club for plates for WARBLER	25.00
Contribution for WARBLER cut	2.29
TOTAL	\$279.16

DISBURSEMENTS

Printing 3 issues of WARBLER (including covers)	\$102.57
Envelopes for mailing WARBLER (1000)	5.75
Stamps	9.25
Post Cards (100)	1.00
Check Book (20 checks for bank account)	1.00
Tax on balance in bank, July 1, 194409
Membership in Kentucky Conservation Council	2.00
Donation to Junior Academy of Science	5.00
Cut for WARBLER	2.29
Night letter to Dr. Gordon Wilson31
TOTAL	\$129.26
Balance on hand October 7, 1944	\$149.90

—HELEN G. BROWNING, Secy.-Treas., K. O. S., Louisville

* * * * *

ORNITHOLOGICAL NEWS

The Fifth Annual Kentucky Wild Life and Natural History Conference was held on September 24, 1944, at South Park Fishing Club, under the direction of Drs. E. K. Hall and Harlow Bishop, with Arthur Unglaub in charge of exhibits. A series of field trips featured the afternoon program, including bird, insect, and geological hikes. The Naturalists' Midway featured the later afternoon program, consisting of about twenty exhibits, many of them alive. Four species

of poisonous snakes, including the rare coral snake, and an operation upon a pregnant rat attracted the most attention. An exhibit of twenty birds' nests included those of the Summer Tanager, the Kentucky Warbler, the Goldfinch, and the Barn Swallow. In the evening the first part of the program consisted of a series of talks about the natural history objects found in the region. Harvey B. Lovell gave an illustrated talk on the forty species of birds recorded for the day, which included a Coot, Pied-billed Grebes, the Wilson Warbler, White-throated Sparrows, and a flock of Cedar Waxwings. The feature lecture of the evening was given by Dr. Charles H. Moore, who showed a remarkable series of Kodachrome moving pictures about South America. These included many shorts of birds and animals, particularly those of Brazil. The remainder of the evening was devoted to country square dancing under the direction of Howard Hardaway.

Esther Mason, retiring president of the Beckham chapter, attended the Michigan Biological Station for the 1944 eight-weeks' summer session. She took O. S. Pettingill's course in Ornithology and also Systematic Botany under Frank Gates. Each course met one day a week. The Ornithology class began at 5:30 A. M., with a field trip and a brief stop for breakfast somewhere along the way. Miss Mason saw many new nesting species raising their young for the first time, such as the Black-throated Green and Myrtle Warblers, Cliff and Tree Swallows, the latter in bird boxes, and a colony of Common Terns. Other interesting birds were the Evening Grosbeak, the Short-billed Marsh Wren, the American Bittern, and the Vesper Sparrow. One of her special memories is of the quaking bogs, which quivered until she became—shall we say?—bogsick.

Amy Deane spent eight weeks at Fairlee, Vermont, where she was Nature Counsellor at Camp Aloha. Among the nesting birds whose songs enlivened the summer were the Veery, the Hermit Thrush, the White-throated Sparrow, the Purple Finch, and the eerie cry of the Loon. After the camp season Amy went to Maine and climbed Mt. Katahdin, where she enjoyed once again the thrill of being above the treeline. Near the mountain she recorded the Orange-crowned and the Mourning Warblers.

Helen and Dorothy Peil, Vera Henderson, and Evelyn Schneider spent several weeks in the Smoky Mountains in the shadow of Mt. Le Conte, on the slopes of which they spent much of their time hiking. They saw many of the remarkable northern birds at an altitude of 5000 to 6000 feet and higher, a habitat similar to that in extreme northern United States and southern Canada. There in the spruce and fir trees they found such northern birds as the Pine Siskin, the Brown Creeper, the Winter Wren, the Carolina Junco, the Red-breasted Nuthatch, and many of the warblers, including the Black-throated Blue (Cairns's), the Chestnut-sided, the Blackburnian, and the Canada. It is hard to believe that so many northern birds can be found in summer south of Kentucky.

* * * * *

AUDUBON WILDLIFE SCREEN TOURS

Under the auspices of the Beckham Bird Club, the Kentucky Society of Natural History, and the National Audubon Society five programs are being given this fall and winter at Louisville Male High School. On October 12, Mr. W. F. Kubichek, of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, spoke on "Haunts for the Hunted." Mr. John H. Storer, of Boston, Massachusetts, will follow on November

9 with "Wings West from Florida," showing many reels of wildlife. Mr. Bert Harwell, of Berkeley, California, National Audubon Society lecturer and its western representative, will lecture on December 7 on "Music of the Out-of-Doors." His amazing whistling ability is augmented by all-color motion pictures. Mr. Alexander Sprunt,



BERT HARWELL

Jr., on January 3, 1945, will present "Wonders of the Southern Wilderness." Mr. Sprunt is the Southern representative of the National Audubon Society and knows as probably no one else has ever known the swamps and marshes of the Far South. The series will conclude on February 3 with "Wildlife in Action," by Dr. Olin Sewall Pettingall, Jr., of the University of Michigan Biological Station. The Beckham Bird Club invites every one of our members who can possibly do so to attend one or more of these free lectures. No such opportunity has ever come to our society before.

* * * * *

The new officers of the Beckham Bird Club for 1944-45 are as follows: President—Audrey Wright; Vice-President—Leonard C. Brecher; Secretary-Treasurer—Marie Peiper; Directors—Ether Mason, Evelyn Schneider, and Dr. Arch Cole.

* * * * *

Our K. O. S. secretary-treasurer, Miss Helen Browning, spent her 1944 vacation at Turkey Run State Park, Indiana.

* * * * *

BOOK REVIEW

THE WILD TURKEY IN VIRGINIA: ITS STATUS, LIFE HISTORY AND MANAGEMENT. By Henry S. Mosby and Charles O. Handley. Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries, Richmond, Virginia, 1943. 260 pages.

The Wild Turkey is the largest game bird in America and was originally found in many areas. Unfortunately it has disappeared from eighteen states and is dwindling in twenty-one other states of

its range. In Kentucky, for instance, it is found in a few isolated areas, as in the Kentucky Woodlands Wildlife Refuge, in Trigg and Lyon Counties. "The history of the disappearance of the Wild Turkey in Virginia and elsewhere indicates that, when the population becomes drastically reduced the species often has great difficulty in recovering and will continue to decline despite strenuous measures taken to preserve the few remaining individuals." (pp. 23-24). The state of Virginia has probably been the most successful in working out a program to preserve its numbers. In 1938 there were approximately 2,020 flocks of Wild Turkeys, made up of about 22,575 individuals; about 34% of the area of Virginia constitutes the occupied range, whereas it is estimated that the Wild Turkey now occupies not more than 28% of its original range in the United States and Canada.

The authors present in Part I the history and status of the Wild Turkey. There are many maps, figures, and charts. They discuss the early effect of the settlement of the country and the methods of hunting. Part II deals with the life history of the turkey, bringing in many facts vital in a conservation program. These include food and flocking habits, breeding activities, and nesting losses, development, and decimating factors: man, predators, and disease. Part III discusses propagation and management of the Wild Turkey. This program calls for "(1) a well-rounded management plan to encourage the Wild Turkey, particularly on submarginal farmland reverting to forest growth, (2) a well-developed legislative program to protect the species from undue and excessive human depredation, and (3) a long-range program of restocking depleted habitat which meets the requirements of the species." (p. 44).

Mr. Mosby is Field Biologist of the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries, and Mr. Hundley is the leader of the Virginia Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit.

—LOUISE ISFORT, Louisville.

* * * * *

SHORT NOTES

SOME NEW EXPERIENCES—The discovery of new, unusual, and interesting bird facts or relationships in these days of hectic industrial activity and limited transportation facilities is not an everyday occurrence but one which brings a degree of satisfaction quite beyond the normal, since observation trips are so rare. Circumscribed as we all are in our walks afield, the Beckham Bird Club has maintained its schedule of hikes by specializing in the city parks and adjacent country areas. My most interesting find in 1944 was on April 30, when I found the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher's nest (KENTUCKY WARBLER, XX, 33). The bird had been incubating and flew off the nest as I came down a wooded hill toward the spot. The nest was placed about fifteen feet above the ground in the crotch of a slender elm sapling, and I would never have noticed it if the bird had not taken flight. Although it was in plain view from my position, so well did it blend with the tree that it was hard to locate. Other members of the party also had difficulty in locating the nest because of its blending into its setting. Then, as if the unusual situation of the nest were not enough, our group was further attracted by the appearance of a female Cowbird, which casually inspected the situation and peered into the nest. Our exclamations evidently frightened the Cowbird, for it flew away. Since we were homeward bound, we did not have time to await the return of the Gnatcatcher or to find out whether the Cowbird made a return visit.

The next item of interest was the discovery of an Acadian Fly-

catcher's nest over Beargrass Creek in Cherokee Park in an open wooded area, during another Beckham Bird Club trip on May 28, 1944. The semipensile nest was suspended in the forks of a drooping beech branch. It was about six feet from the bank and six feet above the water. Because of the protection of the leaves, we could not see into the nest but could make out its outline and locate its position by the numerous strands of grass which swung down loosely from one side of the nest. Here, too, the nest would have gone unnoticed if I had not observed the bird flying to it with an insect in its bill. Twice we saw the Flycatcher come with insects to the nest. We could not determine the number of the young, as we were afraid of dislodging them if we tried to swing the branch from its normal position. The Acadian Flycatcher is not a common summer resident of the Louisville area, and to our knowledge this the first nest that has been found in the park, although the birds themselves have been previously observed during the nesting season.

—LEONARD C. BRECHER, Louisville.

* * * * *

BIRDS AROUND A SUMMER COTTAGE—For years my family and I have maintained a summer cottage at Park Lake, sixteen miles east of Flemingsburg, near the boundary of Lewis County. The lake covers eighteen acres and is near the large apple and peach orchards of Frank Browning. In addition to this condition I have a wild flower garden of 308 species of native plants. This is the first year that we have noticed so many species. I wonder whether the drought conditions and the presence of the orchards may have brought more than the usual numbers of species and individuals. The following fifty species were recorded between July 4 and August 12, 1944: American Egret (came into the lake, on the late afternoon of August 12), Turkey Vulture, Sparrow Hawk, Bobwhite, Killdeer, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo (came into a hemlock tree near the porch late in the afternoon), Screech Owl, Barred Owl (heard one evening between five and six thirty; usually heard late at night), Whippoorwill (heard constantly in the evening from July 4 until July 29; not heard again until August 11), Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Flicker, Red-bellied Woodpecker (spent hours in a dead chestnut tree), Red-headed Woodpecker, Crested Flycatcher, Phoebe (one bird spent almost the entire day diving from a small dead branch of a hickory tree near the porch), Acadian Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher (evidently in migration), Wood Pewee, Barn Swallow, Purple Martin, Blue Jay (plentiful), Crow, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, Catbird, Brown, Thrasher, Robin (numerous and very large-looking), Wood Thrush, Bluebird, Migrant Shrike, Red-eyed Vireo, Black and White Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, English Sparrow, Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Orchard Oriole, Cowbird, Scarlet Tanager, Summer Tanager, Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, Goldfinch (plentiful), Grasshopper Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow (?), Chipping Sparrow. The Cardinal, the Robin, and the Carolina Wren had nests in the yard. We erected a small feeding station a few feet from a dogwood tree; this was always filled with Chipping Sparrows. About 4:30 each morning the Carolina Wrens would begin their songs in a small red-bud tree about three feet from the kitchen window. All the flycatchers and warblers were quite numerous.

—MRS. J. KIDWELL GRANNIS, Flemingsburg.

BIRD NOTES FROM CARTER COUNTY—As I was quite busy during the summer of 1944, my bird study was only of a general nature. However, my hurried observations were pleasant experiences. I continued to jot down notes as the season advanced. I shall attempt to set them down as they happened.

The male Red-winged Blackbirds came to the pond in early March. A few weeks later the females arrived. The Belted Kingfisher came a week later to live with the Red Wings. The petulant cries of Killdeers came from the marshes as they rose and flew gracefully about. Later the blooming apple trees resounded with the songs of Robins and Catbirds. The melody of the Brown Thrashers could be heard every day during the nesting season. A pair built their nest in a wild crabapple thicket by the roadside. Cardinals whistled in every direction, and the emphatic notes of the Yellow Warbler sounded from the elm tree where a pair nested. Myriads of Goldfinches twittered and flew about and ate weed seeds until July, when they began their nest-building. It was fascinating to hear the clear whistles of the Bobwhite at dawn. One day I followed the mournful cooing of a Mourning Dove until I located him sitting on an old rail fence. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds visited the flowerbeds frequently. One night I heard the uncanny cry of a Loon. I listened often after that but was never able to hear it again. About two weeks later I found a dead Loon near the pond. It had been shot with a .22 rifle. A pair of Indigo Buntings built in a clump of low bushes on the hillside. The male sang almost incessantly throughout the long summer days. The plaintive note of the Phoebe sounded often from the barn where it nested. I often observed the weird-looking Yellow-billed Cuckoo in the shade trees about the house. A pair of Carolina Wrens built in the smokehouse. A pair of House Wrens visited for two or three days and disputed the nesting site with the rightful owners. But the Carolina Wrens were too firmly entrenched to be ousted, and the House Wrens moved to some other place. A hollow fence post on one side of the house harbored a pair of Carolina Chickadees, and on the other side of the house a pair of Bluebirds occupied a similar nesting place. Then occasionally at night I heard the song of the Yellow-breasted Chat. One night after the song of the Chat had subsided, I heard the sonorous call of the Great Horned Owl. What a contrast! Blue Jays often called from the hillside, and sometimes I could hear the scream of the Red-shouldered Hawk. Orchard Orioles, Tufted Titmice, Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers, and Flickers inhabited the orchard along with the Catbirds and the Robins. The Wood Pewee lived in a near-by woodland. I often heard his call. Perhaps the most popular woodland bird lives there also, the Wood Thrush. Often at dawn and twilight I have thrilled to his flute-like song. Other birds I saw and heard were the Chipping Sparrow, the Field Sparrow, the Kingbird, both the Summer and the Scarlet Tanagers, the Red-headed Woodpecker, the Towhee, the Black and White Warbler, the Hooded Warbler, the Red-eyed Vireo, the White-eyed Vireo, the Warbling Vireo, the Starling, and the Kentucky Warbler.

—ERCEL KOZEE, Johns Run, Carter County.

* * * * *

CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW IN KENTUCKY AND SOUTHERN INDIANA—In her recent article (KENTUCKY WARBLER, XX, 13-19, Spring, 1944) Miss Evelyn Schneider showed that the Chuck-will's-widow (*Antrostomus carolinensis*) is a summer resident in the southern and western parts of Kentucky but probably not in the northern and eastern parts of the state. The species reaches its most

northern point along the knob country, a wild, wooded area. She also presented evidence that the Chuck is gradually extending its range northward and expressed a desire for further records. We are therefore offering the following occurrences.

We were camping at Tall Trees in the Otter Creek Recreational Demonstration Area on May 13, 1944. Just at dusk Whip-poor-wills began calling, and one alighted on a dead branch in a nearby tree, where in the failing light we could see the bird clearly outlined against the sky. Then we heard, so close that the first syllable was clearly distinguishable, the slower and more distinctive call of the Chuck-will's-widow. It was repeated at intervals from greater and greater distances. This is the second time that we have heard the Chuck at Otter Creek. (See Miss Schneider's article).

On June 30, 1944, we were staying at the Weeter Farm in Clark County, Indiana. At dusk from a wooded ravine close by the call of the Chuck-will's-widow came to us. This area is along the Ohio River about twenty miles northeast of Louisville. The farm is opposite Oldham County, Kentucky, where Burt Monroe heard the Chuck as reported by Miss Schneider. Mrs. W. H. Weeter, who spends nearly every weekend at the farm, says that she has heard an unusual call several times during the summer and that she is now certain that it was that of the Chuck-will's-widow. The presence of a calling male in late June is excellent evidence for a breeding record. Previous summer records for the species in Indiana appear to be confined to the extreme western part of the state along the Wabash River.

—HARVEY AND ETHEL W. LOVELL, Louisville.

* * * * *

BIRDS AROUND A VICTORY GARDEN—My roommate and I grew a Victory garden in 1944. The garden plot is near a wooded section here at St. Matthews. In the evening when we are working we often hear numerous bird songs. The Mockingbird that has frequented our area once did a good imitation of the Whip-poor-will's note. A Robin built a nest on the window ledge of an apartment opposite ours. The occupants of the apartment left their Venetian blinds down so as not to disturb the birds. We could watch the parents feed the young. The apartments are of brick, and vines grow around the windows. One of my friends reported that a Mourning Dove built her nest in the gutter above the downspout. When the water ran down, it was underneath the nest and did not harm the eggs.

—THELMA GENTRY, St. Matthews.

* * * * *

BITTERN MEETS POET—I am all excited over a new bird that I have just identified; at least he is new to me. A little while before sunset yesterday (July 20, 1944) Mr. Semple and I drove out scenic highway No. 109 and parked our car near a bridge on the picturesque levee, which is fringed with dense bottomland woods on either side. In the slough-like depressions, where dredges had excavated the dirt to build the levee, water stood several feet deep, despite the drouth. It was teeming with minnows, frogs, crawfish, and other small aquatic life. We were sitting perfectly relaxed in the car, enjoying a chorus of Wood Thrushes, whose clear and bell-

like music pealed out in penetrating and vibrating notes. At the same time we were being serenaded by the rippling warbles of a number of Indigo Buntings. Suddenly I detected that what I had at first taken for a sharp snag sticking up at the edge of the flat was really a bird. Not a muscle did the tawny-brown and buff-freckled fellow move as he stood, apparently waiting for prey to come within striking distance. By that time we had our binoculars focused on him, when he moved and suddenly snapped and gulped a minnow. Meanwhile we identified him as an American Bittern. For an hour or more we watched him as he posed as a stump or as he walked sedately down the marshy edge of the muddy flat all alone, treading out a delectable dinner of minnows, frogs, and what-have-you. Once he bellowed a most unmusical "pump-er-lunk," which amused us very much. Do you wonder that I came home and wrote this sonnet:

TO A BITTERN

He is a gawky, stupid-looking bird:
 His head is flat, his legs are short, his toes
 And bill are long; his pose appears absurd
 As he stands rigid-still and seems to doze.
 His plumage is a tawny brown, disguised
 To blend with his environment; he makes
 A droning, trumping noise, as if surprised,
 And keeps a watchful eye for fish and snakes.
 Past master at concealment, he can stand
 Unnoticed for an hour among the reeds
 And rushes; but, in truth, his aim is planned
 To scan the shallow water where he feeds.
 He relishes a minnow or a frog
 The Bittern is the genius of the bog!

—SUE WYATT SEMPLE, Providence.

* * * * *

NOTES ON THE SUMMER RANGE OF THE SONG SPARROW AND THE HOUSE WREN AT HARRODSBURG, KENTUCKY—From the reports of 112 short field trips made in the vicinity of Harrodsburg, Kentucky, during the three-year period extending from May 1, 1940, to May 1, 1943, I have concluded that the southern boundary of the breeding range of the Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia* subsp) extends at least this far. The Song Sparrow was recorded on 44 of the 112 trips. Twelve of these records were for the months of June, July, and August and were all in possible nesting habitats (near water courses, in low swampy ground, etc.) The twelve records are as follows:

June 7, 1940, 3 individuals; June 9, 1940, several individuals; June 13, 1940, 1 individual; June 18, 1941, 2 individuals; June 19, 1941, 2 individuals; June 22, 1941, common; July 25, 1941, common; August 8, 1941, 1 individual; August 20, 1941, 1 individual (dead); June 4, 1942, 1 individual; July 5, 1942, 2 individuals; August 9, 1942, 1 individual.

These records when compared with those of the other nine months of each of the other three years show that the Song Spar-

row was equally common as a summer resident and as a winter resident.

The House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon* subsp.) was not recorded except on May 4, 1941, and May 3, 1943, probably as a migrant and probably does not occur this far south as a summer resident. The types of habitats used by the House Wren farther north (bird boxes, gourds, ledges, and cervices around man-made structures) are generally inhabited here by the Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii* subsp.), which is the common breeding wren south of the House Wren's range, excluding, of course, the Carolina Wren.

—ALEX VAN ARSDALL, Harrodsburg.

* * * * *

A NEW BIRD FOR GLASGOW—On April 29, 1944, while I was waiting for a bus at Glasgow, I walked out the Burkesville Road, East Main Street. Near Franklin Street I was suddenly aware of a warbler note that was new to me. I soon located the bird with my glasses; it was high in a maple tree. By degrees it dropped down until it was not more than fifteen feet from me and very plainly visible in the bright sunlight. I studied it for ten minutes or more at this close range, comparing it with the figure and description in Peterson's guide. This is my first record of this species. I wonder why I have not heard its distinctive notes or seen it before.

—Gordon Wilson, Bowling Green.

* * * * *

YOUNG NIGHTHAWKS IN NEST OF ANOTHER SPECIES

Early in July, 1943, I noticed that two Nighthawks kept circling over my back yard at 308 South Sixth Street, Louisville. One morning when I came into the yard, one of the birds almost dashed into my face and then fluttered down to the ground and out of my reach as if it were injured. I immediately concluded that it had a nest near by. My next-door neighbor told me that there were some strange birds in a nest in a lilac bush beside his garage. We examined the bush and found the nest five or six feet from the ground, a nest built of large sticks, leaves, and grass, with a soft lining. Two young birds were in the nest and fairly well feathered. In another week they had flown away, after spending some time exercising their wings. It had always been my idea that the Nighthawk nests on the ground.

—J. R. MEADOR, Louisville.

(My experience leads me to believe that the birds had been hatched on a roof near the lilac and had fluttered down into the deserted nest of a Cardinal or a Brown Thrasher. I have seen young Nighthawks on our campus at Western on the paths or walks and unable to fly more than a yard or two; just how they got down from the nest on the roof I do not know. —Editor),

THE KENTUCKY WARBLER

Publication of the Kentucky Ornithological Society
 Issued for the Seasons

Subscription Price.....\$1.00 Per Year

(Includes membership to state organization and local chapters)

ALBINO ROBIN AT MARION—On May 19, 1944, Mrs. Vance Haynes called me to tell me that she had captured a white Robin in her yard. I immediately went to her home and found that she had an immature albino Robin. It had been out the nest only a short time and could not fly very well. I examined the nest and also the bird and positively identified it as a Robin. Of the three birds in this brood two were albinos. The eyes, bill, feet, and legs were a beautiful pink. All feathers were snow-white. I called Curry Nichols, an amateur photographer friend of mine, who came immediately with his outfit and a lot of enthusiasm and made some pictures. He said it was the greatest thrill he had had out of his hobby. (The doctor enclosed one of the pictures of the albino for the editor to see. —Ed).

—Dr. T. Atchison Frazer, Marion.

* * * * *

CHRISTMAS CENSUSES

For many years we K. O. S. members have taken an annual Christmas Bird Census and have published our finds in the winter issue of the WARBLER. The editor is eager for as many censuses as possible this Christmas. Stay out all day, count every species and every individual bird. Then write up your trip, telling where you went, something about the weather, and the names of all the people in your party. Please mail your censuses by or before January 1, so the report can be made ready for publication early in the new year.

* * * * *

THANKS FOR THE SHORT NOTES

As you have noticed, there are a great many short notes in this issue. Thanks to all who have sent them. Please send more. The WARBLER should represent as many of our members as possible. Surely you have had some experience with birds that would interest the rest of us.