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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."*

Vol. XXIII

WINTER, 1947

No. 1

ANTING BY THE INDIGO BUNTING

Walter Shackleton and Elizabeth Shackleton, Prospect

On June 16, 1945, at our home in Sleepy Hollow, Oldham County, we witnessed an unusual sight while watching the birds at our feeding stations. Our driveway passes directly in front of the house, about five feet from it and not more than six feet below the windows. This driveway is a two-track affair, with a grass plot in the center, each track consisting of crushed rock covered with asphalt and tar. Our main road through the grounds is similarly constructed, and we have noticed that during the hot summer period, the tar is drawn to the surface in sticky patches. On more than one occasion, walking the road at night, we have found worm snakes that have become stuck in the tar while attempting to cross the road. This time, upon seeing a male Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*) jumping up and down on our driveway, we thought it was stuck in the same manner, and our first impulse was to release it. When we opened the front door, the bird flew away; but when we returned to the window, we discovered two other male Indigo Buntings acting in a similar manner. The birds were pivoting on the left foot. The head was thrown sharply back over the right shoulder until it touched the tail, which was spread out fan-shaped, resting on the ground. The movements were so fast that they gave the impression that the birds were doing a back somersault. In both cases the left foot remained on the ground, and the right one moved up and down describing an arc. We then noticed that the birds were picking up something from the ground. With the aid of binoculars at close range we could see a trail of large red ants, each about a half inch long, moving in the grass at the edge of the asphalt road. Careful observation disclosed that the birds were not eating the ants but were "swiping" them through the distended tail feathers and the drooping right wing primaries. Heads and bodies of the ants could be plainly seen lodged between the feathers, and both tail and wing feathers appeared to be drenched with liquid. It was also noted that the ants were crawling up the legs of the birds and, in one or two instances, were seen on the underparts of the body.

Upon further investigation it was found that this colony of ants was moving from a spot in the nearby woods to the base of a rotted tree stump one hundred and fifty yards distant, following the entire length of our driveway through the grass plot at the edge of the wheel track in the roadway. Indigo Buntings continued their anting with this abundant supply of ants on the following three days, which gave us an unusual opportunity to watch this queer phenomenon. When we made these observations, we had never heard of anting

and merely recorded them in our "Wild Life Log" as an unusual and amusing incident. Later the importance of this episode was brought to our attention, and the literature on the subject of anting was reviewed with the aid of Miss Evelyn Schneider and H. B. Lovell.

The literature on this curious phenomenon was reviewed in 1938 by McAtee in the *Auk*. Mrs. Margaret Nice and ter Pelkwyk (1940) have published a series of sketches showing the Song Sparrow anting. These drawings show much the same antics which we have described. Later Mrs. Nice (1943) in her classic work, *Studies in the Life History of the Song Sparrow, II*, discusses the problem again and states that anting has been recorded in 13 passerine families and in at least 38 species.

Ivor (1941 and 1943) has made a very careful study of this strange behavior in caged birds, which were so tame that he was able to watch them from a distance of 16 inches, and some of the birds even anted on his hand. Ivor's account differs somewhat from our own observations and from the drawings of Nice and ter Pelkwyk; and while it is undoubtedly correct for his tame birds, it would not be surprising if variations should occur under different circumstances. Ivor states that the bird brings the wing forward and out from the body and rubs the ant on the ventral surfaces of the outer primaries from the wrist to the tip. At the same time the tail (for no apparent reason) is brought forward and even stepped upon. He insists that ants are not rubbed on the tail. Ivor has no suggestion to make relative to the biological function of anting. Other less conservative writers have offered numerous explanations.

Ivor is the only writer who has previously witnessed anting by the Indigo Bunting and this only in caged birds. He writes (1943, p. 52): "No suggestion of what we know as preening was evident nor was any preening done immediately after, or a short time after, the performance was finished with one exception. On this occasion a female Indigo Bunting flew to a perch and went through all the actions of drying herself as after a bath."

From among the numerous explanations which have been offered to explain the biological significance (if any) of anting, we have compiled the following. We do not find any of them satisfactory.

1. Formic acid from the ant is rubbed on the skin, where it acts as a counter-irritant to ectoparasites.
2. The ants are placed among the feathers to rid the birds of ectoparasites. Some suggest that the ants may grasp the parasites in their mandibles.
3. Birds anoint their feathers with the formic acid of the ant to repel ectoparasites.
4. The birds eat the ants for the formic acid, which may be valuable as a medication to increase muscular energy or to expel endoparasites.
5. Birds place ants under their wings to provide food during migrations. (This is the least probable of the suggestions).
6. The curious antics have suggested that the birds derive some pleasurable sensations from the formic acids.

At this point it might be well to point out that other materials have been observed to bring about the same general behavior. Nice (1946) observed a Song Sparrow that used staghorn sumac berries for "anting." Groff (1946) has reported Purple Grackles anting with walnut juice from the hulls of walnuts. She suggests that the hulls

contained an acid. Thomas (1946) observed a Catbird "anting" with a silvery-green leaf believed to have been a species of *Antennaria*. This plant has a very wooly leaf. Hill (1946) discovered a Bronzed Grackle "anting" with a moth ball 20 times in 15 minutes. Ivor (1941) had previously reported a Bronzed Grackle which rubbed chokecherries on its feathers.

A fairly complete list of the American species which have been observed in the process of anting has been compiled. Many of these have been reported quite recently and will be listed by the author.

Ivor (1943) lists twenty species which anted in captivity. These included the following American species: Blue Jay, Catbird, Robin, Wood, Hermit, and Wilson's Thrushes, Cedar Waxwing, Bobolink, Baltimore Oriole, Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Junco, Harris, White-crowned, White-throated, Fox and Song Sparrows. Thomas (1941) reports anting by the Summer Tanager. Groskin (1943) saw Scarlet Tanagers anting. Nichols (1943) reports Robins anting. Van Tyne (1943) observed anting by the Robin and the Towhee. Nice (1945) reported anting by Cowbirds. Davis (1946) describes anting by the English Sparrow, although it is not clear from his account that this was a typical case. Even Audubon in his *Birds of America*, (Vol. 5, p. 48) speaks of young turkeys which "roll themselves in deserted ants' nests to clean their growing feathers of the loose scales, and prevent ticks and other vermin from attacking them."

To summarize, we have described the first case of anting in the wild state of the Indigo Bunting. Our observations disagree somewhat with those of Ivor, for we observed the bodies of the ants lodged in the feathers. In general the peculiar antics of the Buntings which we observed agree very closely with typical cases as described by numerous authors. The recent reports of birds behaving in a similar manner with berries, walnut juice, and a fuzzy leaf indicate that this behavior is not restricted to ants, and therefore a broader interpretation of the phenomena must be looked for.

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FIELD NOTES

THE GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER IN HOPKINS COUNTY IN SUMMER

One of the many pleasures of bird study is the recording of a rare bird, or, better still, of a rare bird out of season. I had that experience on June 10, last while rambling in scrub-growth and cut-over timber about two miles west of Madisonville. To refer to my notes.

"Some Titmice attracted my attention, and I lifted my binoculars toward the tree in which they were busily working. Something seemed to warn me that some strange or rare bird lurked there and, sure enough, a Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) suddenly appeared among the leaves: Instantly I saw the black throat, yellow forehead patch, and the yellow wing bars before the brightly colored little songster moved out of sight. Thrilled and delightfully elated, I followed, tracing the bird by the buzzy, insect-like notes, which, however, are easy to distinguish from those of the Blue-winged Warbler."

"Soon the little bird appeared in sight among fallen trees, just a few feet above the ground. I then noted the gray upper-parts, white under-parts, and the black patch through the eye."

Since I was on an all-day hike, I left, after satisfying myself as to the identification. However, on June 12 I returned and followed the bird for fully an hour. Never did I see more than the one bird nor anything to indicate a possible nesting unless it was that this individual never strayed far from where originally found. According to my notes of June 12:

"He led me both across the densely-grown hillside and down into the fallen tree tops and vegetation of the lower ground. Once he made a sally at a female Cardinal but turned before attacking. The Cardinal only shifted slightly on her perch. Due to his restlessness and feeding near the ground, I was unable to keep him under observation long at a time, although sufficiently long for positive identification."

The Golden-winged was studied with 6X Dientglas binoculars. I have found it previously only as a rare migrant. The Blue-winged Warbler summers in the immediate vicinity of this spot, and, as Burt Monroe suggests, the two species may have mated. Normally the Golden-wing nests farther north, and "south to northern Missouri, southern Illinois, northern Indiana, southern Ohio, northern New Jersey, southern Connecticut and (in mountains) to northern Georgia." This is, as far as I have been able to learn, the first summer record on the species in the state of Kentucky.

Unfortunately, I was unable to make any further trips to this spot during June. Perhaps another spring will bring the bird again and further observations of interest.

—JAMES HANCOCK, Route 1, Madisonville.

RECOGNITION OF INDIVIDUAL BIRDS BY FREAK MARKINGS

Not a small part of the difficulty of field studies in ornithology has to do with the recognition of the individual bird. Now and then an individual comes under observation marked in some manner, so that identification and reidentification are possible. Such was the case of the chickadee with the warped outer tail-feather, which visited our feeding-board throughout the winter of 1945-46.

During the early 1930's we were able to follow the fortunes of a certain male robin (*Turdus migratorius*) for three summers consecutively. This bird had a large conspicuous area of white feathers on the crown, a complete ring or necklace of white on neck and shoulder, and a few other scattered flecks of white. The special pattern did not disappear or diminish the second and third years, although it is obvious that these feathers must have been molted and replaced.

During the first year the bird took possession of what we fondly called our back yard as his territory, and defended it quite successfully. His mating activities that year involved the rearing of two broods in different nests.

The second summer this bird was the father of three broods consecutively, reared in three nests, each in a different maple nearby. All young on leaving the nest were brought to the same back yard by the parents.

This same white-marked robin returned to its old nesting site the third summer and fathered at least one brood. We went away on an extended summer vacation at that point. On our return the bird was not to be seen, and as it has not been seen since, it must have succumbed to one of the numerous hazards which ever beset a bird's life.

For several seasons robins were observed in the vicinity with irregular white markings about the foreparts, seeming to indicate descent from our ring-necked bird and a return to the place of birth.

—W. R. ALLEN, Zoology Department, University of Kentucky.

* * * * *

SIGHT RECORD OF AN AVOCET AT KENTUCKY LAKE

An Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*) was observed on the mud flats at the head of Jonathan Creek embayment, Kentucky Lake, on September 25, 1946. These mud flats are located at the point where state highway 98 crosses Jonathan Creek in Marshall County. The bird was feeding in a shallow pool of water left by the draw-down of the lake at this season of the year. It was under observation for about twenty minutes, between 4:30 and 5:00 P. M., with eight-power binoculars, at a distance of approximately a hundred feet. It was identified by its large size (appearing about twice the size of a Killdeer), the striking white patch on its closed wing, its slightly recurved bill, and its habit of feeding. The bird fed with its head submerged to the eyes, moving its bill from side to side with a scythe-like motion as it walked forward through the water. This is not the first time that I have had an opportunity to see an Avocet, as I have previously observed these birds on Lake Malheur in eastern Oregon in 1941. According to the editor this is the first record of the Avocet for Kentucky, although it has been recorded as an accidental visitant from nearly all the adjacent states.

—JOHN S. MORSE, Federal Aid Project Leader, Benton

THE DICKCISSEL AT PROVIDENCE

During the summer of 1946 Dickcissels (*Spiza americana*) and the Kentucky Warbler, (*Oporornis formosus*) were observed for the first time since our group has been collecting data from this region. The latter was observed in low damp woods bordering the east bank of Tradewater River. The Dickcissels were reported by Truda Sigler Corbin as being numerous at the Corbin farm, approximately four miles west of Providence. She said that they were persistent songsters during the months of July and August. Audubon reported the Black-throated Bunting, as he called this species, as "scarce in Kentucky," and other writers have reported that it is very irregular in its distribution, being entirely absent from many parts of Kentucky. For example it was not reported by Wilson (1942, *Ky. Warbler*, 18: 17-25) from Kentucky Woodlands, Cynthiana, Morehead, Berea, Floyd-Knott Counties, and Harlan County. On the other hand it is fairly common in the Barrens and in parts of the Blue Grass Region. As more areas come into cultivation as broad open fields, the Dickcissel tends to become more numerous. When areas are allowed to grow up in trees and shrubs, the Dickcissel deserts the region, as in Mammoth Cave National Park, where Gordon Wilson reports that he has not recorded the bird since July 8, 1937.

—THOMAS A. SEMPLE, Providence

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EXTENSION OF THE BREEDING RANGE
OF THE SONG SPARROW

A Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*) remained with us all summer in 1946 at Providence and delighted us every day with its brilliant measures which it sang in our maple trees and those on adjoining lawns all along South Broadway in the very heart of town.

There were several Song Sparrows observed throughout the entire summer on the grounds of the municipal filter plant, where they had access to hedges, bushes, and flowering shrubs, as well as clear, bubbling water in the reservoir.

We believe that this is an extreme southern record for the Song Sparrow in summer in Western Kentucky. Gordon Wilson does not find them in the summer either at Bowling Green or Mammoth Cave. Pickens, however, reported them carrying food at Paducah on a small sandy island in the Ohio River (1940, *Ky. Warbler*, 16:12). They have also been reported at Marion by Dr. Frazer. On the other hand Pindar (1925, *Wils. Bull.* 37: 163-169) reported the species as merely a "winter habitant at Hickman," and Garner does not find them around Reelfoot Lake in the summer.

—SUSIE HOLDMAN GILCHRIST, Providence

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CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT FROM MICHIGAN

Three Rivers, St. Joseph County, Michigan—Dec. 22, 1946; most of A. M. Weather, overcast; temp. 33 to 35 F; wind, moderate, southwest in A. M., northwest in P. M. Observers together, on foot; covering some of city limits of Three Rivers; woodlands; various places along St. Joseph River; and also in Scidmore Conservation Park. At least 8 miles covered. 7X Mirakel and sports field glasses used. Ground covered with an average of two inches of snow. Ponds and some of rivers and streams frozen over. Common Canada Goose, 14; Common Mallard, 109; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Eastern Red-tailed

Hawk, 2; Herring Gull, 3; Ring-billed Gull, 1; Domestic Pigeon, 9; Eastern Mourning Dove, 6; Eastern Hairy Woodpecker, 3; Northern Downy Woodpecker, 4; Northern Blue Jay, 11; Eastern Crow, 33; Black-capped Chickadee, 15; Tufted Titmouse, 2; White-breasted Nuthatch, 5; Brown Creeper, 1; Cedar Waxwing, 16; European Starling, 1235; English Sparrow, 184; Eastern Cardinal, 3; Slate-colored Junco, 25; Eastern Tree Sparrow, 10. Total, 22 species; 1692 individuals. Others species observed recently but not on this day, are American Golden-eye Duck, common, 68 on Jan. 2; Cooper's Hawk, Dec. 25 (1); Eastern Belted Kingfisher, common; Northern Flicker, Dec. 25 (1); Eastern Purple Finch, Dec. 25 (12); Common Redpoll, Jan. 3 (1 heard); Eastern Goldfinch, Jan. 1 (200). Song Sparrow Dec. 21 (1 heard).

—OSCAR MCKINLEY BRYENS AND KENNETH EARL DARROW, SR., 231 South Main St., Three Rivers, Michigan.

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AN UNUSUAL WINTER ROOST IN A CEDAR THICKET

Six miles from Providence, there is a cedar thicket which covers approximately five acres of sloping, southern hillsides. The area is fenced in and is edged with dead weeds, briars, and buckberry bushes.

The cedars range in size from mere shrubs to grown trees. This cozy, secluded thicket is a peaceful and general roosting place for hundreds of birds, including Blue Jays, Doves, Robins, Mockingbirds, Starlings, Cardinals, Wrens, Chickadees, Titmice, Slate-colored Juncos, Purple Finches, Bluebirds, Song Sparrows, Field Sparrows, Myrtle Warblers, and Cedar Waxwings.

We Semples discovered the roosting place during our preliminary survey, and observed it on our Christmas Census, as well as immediately before and after. To our surprise, we learned that the various species would come winging in to the roost even before 2:00 P. M. The most popular homing hour seemed to be between 2:00 and 3:00 P. M., although there would be a few stragglers until almost sundown.

We were particularly interested to note three different troops of Cedar Waxwings,—the smallest, only eight in number; and the three troops would wing in very quietly at short intervals apart. The Jays would come, in noisy flights of eights and tens. Bluebirds, came leisurely from all directions, also in flocks, and so did the Purple Finches, Juncos, and Cardinals. Most of the other species "soloed" in—one after another, in rapid succession, between the two hours specified.

All the birds seemed wary and disturbed by our presence—especially the Bluebirds and Mockingbirds—and apparently most of them took turns scolding us as though we might have been two cats.

—SUE WYATT-SEMPLE, 900 Princeton Street, Providence.

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CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT FROM MAYSVILLE

Mason County near Edgemont, Jersey Ridge and Hillcrest. Dec 23, 27, 28, 1946. Weather cool, clear, windy. Temp. 40 to 58. Total hours, 12. Black Ducks, 10; Turkey Vultures, 2; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Herring Gull, 27; Rock Dove (feral), 62; Flicker, 3; Hairy Woodpecker, 2; Downy Woodpecker, 9; Crow, 58; Carolina Chickadee, 128; Tufted Titmouse, 38; Carolina Wren, 9; White-breasted Nut hatch, 6; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 3; Brown Creeper, 3; Mockingbird, 5; Robins,

14; Bronzed Grackles, 23, English Sparrow, 351; Starling, 5; Cardinal, 83; Slate-colored Junco, 42; Tree Sparrow, 20; Field Sparrow, 4; White-crowned Sparrow, 23; Song Sparrow, 9. Total, 26 species; 919 individuals. Blue Jays and Bob-whites were not seen. In addition, 113 birds were seen which were not identified with certainty.

—CHAD CHRISTINE, Maysville High School (Junior Academy of Science)

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MID-WINTER BIRD COUNT, 1946-47

Edited by Gordon Wilson

MURRAY (College campus and vicinity and Wildcat Creek). Dec. 14; 8:00 A. M. to 12:00 and 1:00 P. M. to 4:00 P. M. Clear and warm, wind less than 5 m. p. h., temp. at noon, 68. The next day Mr. Harrod and Miss Wyatt spent the day at Kentucky Woodlands.

Starred forms in the list are the species recorded at Woodlands but not at Murray; the individuals are of Murray only.—ANN BROWN, HEWLETT COOPER, KENNETH EVITT, RUTH HAIR, W. H. HARROD, BETTY JOE ROBERTSON, MIRILLA THOMPSON, CHARLIE WALSH, GRACE WYATT (compiler).

GOLDEN POND (Kentucky Woodlands National Wildlife Refuge, Kentucky Lake, and vicinity: fields 26%, water and marsh edges 53%, deciduous woods 21%). Dec. 28. Partly cloudy to cloudy; temp. 64; wind 5-10 m. p. h., west, changing to north; unseasonably warm weather preceding count. Three observers working separately. Total hours, 13; total miles, 40¼ (2¼ on foot, 10 by motor boat, 28 in car).—JOHN MORSE, Leader of Pittman-Robertson Project on Waterfowl for the State of Kentucky, and JOHN STEENIS and WALTER R. SYLVESTER, Fish and Wildlife Service.

MARION (Maple Sinks, which contains a lake of some 150 acres, and in and around Marion). Dec. 25; 8:00 A. M. to 4:00 P. M. Clear; brisk wind; temp. 40. Observers separate.—CHASTAIN FRAZER and Dr. T. ATCHISON FRAZER.

PROVIDENCE (Territory in area of Clay, Wheatcroft, and Providence: orchards, meadows, open fields, swampy bottomlands, open woods, lots where stock are fed). Dec. 21-22; first day cloudy, with scattered snow; second day clear, temp. 60. Ten observers; all soloed except two parties; total hours, 60; radius of ten miles of Providence, in cars and on foot.—R. H. VAUGHN, WILLIAM VAUGHN, DAMON WITHERS, J. CLEVE CANNADAY, SUSIE HOLDMAN GILCHRIST, JAMES ROSS GILCHRIST, TRUDA SIGLER CORBIN, DORA WYATT, THOMAS SEMPLE, AND SUE WYATT-SEMPLE.

PENNYRILE STATE PARK, CHRISTIAN COUNTY (Deciduous and pine woods, weed fields, and Macedonia Lake). Dec. 30; 6:45 A. M. to 4:15 P. M. Sky overcast; snow flurries in morning; light northeast wind; temp. 21 to 25. Observers together. Total miles, 8 on foot, 8 by car; total hours, 9½. Red-breasted Nuthatches observed with 6x30 Dienstglas binoculars; black stripe through eye noted, buffy underparts, and nasal high-toned call. Golden-crowned Kinglets common throughout pine woods. Lake unusually low, and no waterfowl found there.—JEWELL THOMPSON and JAMES W. HANCOCK.

MORGANFIELD (Harding's Pond, Morton's Lake, Des Islets (Camp Breckinridge Reservation), Uniontown, Pomeroy's Point on Ohio River). Dec. 27; 8:15 A. M. to 5:00 P. M. Mostly cloudy, strong southwest wind; temp. 60 to 65. Three observers together; 6 miles

on foot, 40 miles by car; 14 party hours.—ROBERT L. WITT (compiler).

MADISONVILLE (W. W. Hancock farm, five lakes; Loch Mary, Sunset, City, Atkinson, and Spring Lakes, woods, streets, and fields). Dec. 23; 6:30 A. M. to 4:30 P. M. Partly cloudy; strong west wind; temp. 45 to 59. Total hours, 10; total miles, 11 on foot, 2 by car. Starred forms were seen during Christmas week. Although not seen in this period, the Marsh Hawk and Mourning Dove are undoubtedly wintering.

—JAMES W. HANCOCK.

HENDERSON (Audubon Park). Dec. 26; 10:00 A. M. to 3:00 P. M. Mostly fair; southern breeze; temp. 50 to 60. Three miles on foot.

—ROBERT L. WITT.

HOPKINSVILLE (Five miles east of Hopkinsville in the vicinity of Overby's Store: open woodland, thickets, fence rows, and pasture land in about equal proportions). Three observers together. About 4 miles on foot.

—HARRY MONK, SUE R. WALKER, and W. M. WALKER, JR. (Nashville, Tennessee).

BOWLING GREEN (Chaney, McElroy Farms, Three Springs Marsh, Drake's Creek from Shaker Milldam to mouth of the creek; stream banks 50%, open woods 25%; thickets 10%; old fields 10%; pastures 5%). Dec. 23; 6:45 A. M. to 4:30 P. M. Clear; ground bare; no wind; temp. 29 to 40. Four observers in two parties. Total hours, 36½ on foot; 18 miles. Starred forms seen near time of count. L. Y. LANCASTER, CHARLES L. TAYLOR, J. R. WHITMER, and GORDON WILSON (compiler).

MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK (Doyle Valley, New Entrance, Joppa Ridge, Hotel area, Pump Houses: stream banks 5%; woods 40%; old fields 40%; ponds and marshes 15%). Dec. 24; 6:40 A. M. to 4:40 P. M. Partly cloudy; ground bare; wind, 1-7 m. p. h., southwest; temp. 32 to 52. Observers together on foot. Total hours, 10; total miles, 8.

—PARK NATURALIST HENRY W. LIX and GORDON WILSON.

LOUISVILLE (Same territory as in previous years: bank of Ohio River 20%, fields and farm lands 30%, brushy fields and new growth 35%, deciduous woodland 15%). Dec. 22; dawn to dusk. Weather cloudy; pale sun for a few hours; temp. 34 to 43; wind 2-5 m. p. h., ground clear, streams open. Twenty observers in nine parties. Total hours, 44; total miles, 43.—MR. and MRS. LEONARD BRECHER, FLOYD CARPENTER, WILLIAM M. CLAY, MR. and MRS. CARL C. CORNETT, HARVEY B. LOVELL, JOHN H. LOVELL, II, DAVID McCLURE, HOWARD MITCHELL, BURT L. MONROE, BURT L. MONROE, JR., ROBERT PETREE, LOUIS PIEPER, EVELYN SCHNEIDER, WALTER SHACKLETON, MABEL SLACK, ANNE STAMM, MR. and MRS. S. CHARLES THACHER. (Beckham Chapter, K. O. S.)

HARRODSBURG (Herrington Lake in vicinity of Wildwood Subdivision, Salt River, along Bohon, Mount Pleasant Roads, Greenville Spring: open deciduous woodland, cedar thickets, brushy second growth, open fields). Jan. 3; 10:30 A. M. to 2:30 P. M. Observer alone. Five miles on foot, 35 miles by car. Temp. 25 to 35; sky overcast; biting wind. Single flocks only of the following were seen:

MID-WINTER BIRD COUNT, 1946-47	Murray	Golden Pond	Marion	Providence	Pennyrile State Park	Morganfield	Madisonville	Henderson	Hopkinsville	Bowling Green	Mammoth Cave	Louisville	Harrodsburg	Willard
Number of Species	42	56	61	57	35	49	41	31	38	51	45	65	24	20
Number of Individuals	1423	1565	2374	5413	390	1184	909	413	550	6777	1111	6296	2115	262
Number of Observers	9	3	2	10	2	1	1	1	3	4	2	20	1	1
Common Loon												1		
Pied-billed Grebe		3					4					2		
Do.-crested Cormorant		*	1											
Great Blue Heron	1	3	3			1						1		
Canada Goose	*	97	5									15		
Mallard	*	753	23	14		207				*	40	80		
Black Duck	*	195	5									867		
Baldpate		12												
Pintail		40												
Blue-winged Teal	*													
Ring-necked Duck		7	250				*							
Canvas-back		2	3			4								
Greater Scaup			6											
Lesser Scaup	*	*	101			3						142		
Golden-eye			7									3		
Hooded Merganser	*	7	2									*		
American Merganser		9										29		
Turkey Vulture	3	4	6	1			1		3	1	*	5		
Black Vulture		5	2	5						*	5	39		
Sharp-shinned Hawk			1	1			1							
Cooper's Hawk	1			5								1		
Red-tailed Hawk	1	3		*								1		
Red-shouldered Hawk	*	4	4	4		2	2	2		3		7		
Rough-legged Hawk				*										
Bald Eagle		3				1								
Marsh Hawk	2	*	1	8		1				*		9		
Sparrow Hawk	3	1	3	12		1	1		2	6	1	30	3	
Ruffed Grouse														
Bob-white	9	*	17	1	7	9	19			5	20	2		9
Wild Turkey		*	*											
Coot		*	2											
Killdeer	12	5	5	36	1	1	14		4	9		18		
Wilson's Snipe			15	2			*			11				
Greater Yellow-legs				40										
Herring Gull	25	1	18			19						240		
Ring-billed Gull	1	45												
Rock Dove				184								12	15	
Mourning Dove	41	22	11	32		2			11	180		15	1	
Screech Owl	*	*	2									1		
Great Horned Owl				1										
Barred Owl	*	3	2	2		1	1						2	
Belted Kingfisher	*	3	2	1	1	1	*	2		*		1	6	
Flicker	7	4	9	82	6	13	10	12	5	18	12	33	1	5
Pileated Woodpecker	*	1	3	*	4	2	*	2	1	13	8			
Red-bellied Woodpecker	2	7	6	14	2	16	2	17	9	17	3	35	1	
Red-headed Woodpecker	*			30			1		1					
Yel.-bellied Sapsucker	1	1	3	*	1		*	3	2	2	1	7		

MID-WINTER BIRD
COUNT, 1946-47

	Murray	Golden Pond	Marion	Providence	Pennyrille State Park	Morganfield	Madisonville	Henderson	Hopkinsville	Bowing Green	Mammoth Cave	Louisville	Harrodsburg	Willard
Hairy Woodpecker	*	2	2	24	2	2	*	3		3	2	3		
Downy Woodpecker	5	8	8	29	5	14	4	16	10	25	1	53	3	6
Phoebe										*	1	1		
Horned Lark		4	5				*		57	268	2	451		
Blue Jay	18	14	13	167	5	2	15	3	7	11	16	53	1	4
Crow	40	16	41	754	13	122	7	21	33	2825	21	134	1350	3
Carolina Chickadee	10	19	14	62	25	31	15	58	9	64	35	125	25	31
Tufted Titmouse	12	17	22	65	7	17	11	23	20	56	26	109	9	19
W.-breasted Nuthatch	4	1	3	6	1	3	*		2	4	7	23		
Red-breasted Nuthatch					2									
Brown Creeper	*			1	1	4	*	5	4	1	2	13		
Winter Wren	*	1		2	2	3	*	4	1	5	2	5		2
Bewick's Wren			4	4		1	1		1	3			2	
Carolina Wren	6	7	6	3	4	3	11	22	10	47	12	49	4	5
Short-billed Marsh W.				3								1		
Mockingbird	10	1	8	82	4	3	7		9	26	11	61	8	
Brown Thrasher				2										
Robin	*	6	9	53	1	1	1	20	8	2	214	28	12	
Hermit Thrush				2		1	1	2		2	5	*		
Bluebird	15	17	21	147	17	7	31	16	30	30	22	95		6
Golden-crowned Kinklet	*	2		15	27	3	1	24	7	3	8	20	10	4
Ruby-crowned Kinglet								2		1		2		
Cedar Waxwing	*		15	91			1			*	230	15		
Migrant Shrike	2	2		5		2	1			1		*		
Starling	200	11	1200	372	26	59	145		58	2005	4	2000	575	4
Myrtle Warbler				12	4		1	4	4	13	27	16	*	
Palm Warbler						2						2		
English Sparrow	500	31	150	657	11	56	290	23	45	110	12	365	16	41
Meadowlark	35	18	28	227		20	7		2	6	1	35	2	
Red-wing	1	4	16	*		30	1			10				
Rusty Blackbird				24		160				232	21			
Grackle, Bronzed	50	*	4	509						50				
Cowbird	2	10	37	300						15				
Cardinal	18	40	42		30	113	46	36	42	144	54	279	26	9
Purple Finch.	*		7	14	10		*		12	20	63	6		
Goldfinch	150	5	13	140	12	22	50	20	7	111	22	46	30	10
Towhee	15	6	4	31	12	6	15	5	12	21	5	16		4
Savannah Sparrow	2									1				
Slate-colored Junco	100	48	75	437	110	76	89	27	86	170	98	429	6	42
Tree Sparrow	*	4	50	123	4	40	36	7		9	15	26	5	
Chipping Sparrow	5?			*?								2?		
Field Sparrow	40	22	8		15	7	15	3	36	19	12	17		38
W.-crowned Sparrow	7		9	89		55	3		5	101	4	27		
W.-throated Sparrow	10	2	4	38	6	4	19	15	2	31	8	6	4	
Fox Sparrow	*		4	*		3	3	1		*	2	7		
Swamp Sparrow	12	3	6	68		18	3	5		3	11	27		
Song Sparrow	62	24	30	72	10	14	23	26	6	60	38	133	6	18
Lapland Longspur												7		

*Starred forms were recorded near the time of the count but not on the count itself.

Juncoes, Tree Sparrows, White-throated Sparrows, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Robins, and Goldfinches. The Tree Sparrows were singing. One Myrtle Warbler was seen on December 27.

—C. A. VAN ARSDALL.

WILLARD. Dec. 26; 9:00 A. M. to 3:00 P. M. Temp. about 38. Walk covered four miles through fields and woodlands. Clear and sunny.

—ERCEL KOZEE.

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Note by the Editor: It has seemed best to question several records in this winter's bird count. Unless some very scientific data accompanied the count, like the report of the Lapland Longspur's being collected at Louisville, we probably would cast doubt on many of our other records. The editor of these mid-winter counts always wants to be fair and deeply appreciates the whole-hearted cooperation shown, especially this year, in this interesting and valuable work. If you do not find your species all listed or find some of them questioned, please take that as a reminder to accompany doubtful finds by some fool-proof facts that will establish your record.

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A SUMMER RECORD OF THE PINE WARBLER AT MAMMOTH CAVE

On June 29, 1946, I heard the pleasing little warble of the Pine Warbler (*Dendroica pinus*) at the edge of the Circle—Ranger Homes at Mammoth Cave National Park. I finally located the bird in some oaks just across the driveway from several pine trees. The next day I saw and heard it again and got many close-up views, largely in the pine trees near the end of the Circle. At one time I heard another male singing while I was watching one in a yard at the lowest house in the Circle. Ten or twelve years ago Claude W. Hibbard reported the Pine Warbler as a summer resident (1935, manuscript), but I have been unable to find one in summer until this time, though I strongly suspected that I would eventually find it in the pines, as I found it once in early September. Besides, I did not see any reason why it should not be there, as conditions are identical with many other places where it is regularly found. In view of the many summers that I have spent in recording the breeding birds of this area, it was most interesting to add a new species to my summer list. I intend to try to find a nest in 1947.—GORDON WILSON, Teachers College, Bowling Green.

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HOUSE WREN BREEDING UNDER DIFFICULTIES

A House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*) was seen to enter a small building near Iroquois Park in early May, 1946. It had obtained access to the building through a broken pane in one of the doors. The nest was a large mass of materials placed in an old hat about seven feet from the ground. The hat was hanging on a wall. When the owners taped up the window, the House Wren removed the tape and added it to its nest. This occurred three times while the nest was being built. After the eggs were laid, the wren did not touch the tape again. Still later the window pane was replaced, but the resourceful wren then went under the door to feed and brood its four young. I visited the nest nearly every day. When the four young were nearly ready to fly, I released them from the building. I then collected the empty nest, which had pieces of cloth and paper as well as leaves in it.

—ROBERT PETREE, 5722 Southern Parkway, Louisville.

NEWS AND VIEWS

ARTICLES ON KENTUCKY BIRDS APPEARING IN OTHER JOURNALS

Young, James B. "Screech Owl Banding," *Inland Bird Banding News*, Vol. 18, No. 4, August, 1946. By using a large top-opening trap 2 by 3 feet across and 3 feet high, and placing a small cage containing live mice inside, you can trap Screech Owls inside the city.

Monroe, Burt L., and Robert M. Mengel. "The Evening Grosbeak in Kentucky," *Wilson Bulletin*, Vol. 58; 116, 1946. The invasion of northern birds in the south during the winter of 1945-46 resulted in the collection of the extremely rare Evening Grosbeak at Anchorage on February 24, 1946. This is the second record for the state, and the first for central Kentucky.

Lovell, Harvey. B. "Some Successional Changes in the Biota at Otter Creek Area, Kentucky Naturalist, Vol. 1, No. 1, summer, 1948, pp. 3-5. A discussion of the changes in vegetation during the ten years since the area was withdrawn from cultivation and turned into a wild life area and their relation to bird life.

Weakley, S. A. "White Pelicans and Cliff Swallows on Tennessee River," *Migrant*, 16: 33-34, 1945. Cliff Swallows are already nesting on the newly constructed dam on the Tennessee River at Gilbertsville.

Aldrich, John W. "The United States Races of the Bob-white," *Auk*, 63: 493-508, 1946. This paper increases the number of subspecies of Bob-white in eastern and central U. S. from three to six. The Interior Bob-white, which occurs in Kentucky and from Canada to the Gulf, is named *Colinus virginianus mexicanus*. It seems that Linnaeus named this race from Louisiana, and therefore this name must apply to the Interior race.

Sylvester, Walter R., and Preston W. Lane. "Trapping Wild Turkeys on the Kentucky Woodlands Refuge," *J. Wildlife Management*, 10: 333-342, 1946. This article contains a lot of valuable information about the largest and purest strain of Wild Turkeys in Kentucky. This flock was protected by the Hillman Land Company until the refuge was established in 1938. Turkeys are very difficult to trap. They are so wary that traps must be built in stages. Only two adult hens were caught in two seasons. The total catch of 57 birds was released in Kentucky at Mammoth Cave National Park and a few in refuges in Mississippi and Georgia. When ready, all the birds should be released at once, so that the entire flock will remain together.

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INVENTOR OF BANDING TRAPS JOINS K. O. S.

Mr. Russel S. Davis of Glenhaven Bird Sanctuary, Clayton, Illinois, has recently joined the K. O. S. Mr. Davis is one of the finest makers of traps for bird banding in the country and has invented or perfected several types of traps, such as the Glenhaven Tree Trap and the Glenhaven Warbler Trap. Banders interested in increasing their supply of traps may obtain an illustrated booklet by writing to Mr. Davis.

JUNIOR ACADEMY OF SCIENCE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

The number of bird counts made by the Junior Academy has increased to 17 this year, with 31 members participating. The two best counts were turned in by Burt L. Monroe of Anchorage and Chad Christine of Maysville. Monroe's count made on December 21 contained two out-of-season records about which he writes: "The Phoebe was in my yard and seemed to be in good health. It fed on some kind of insects which it caught over the driveway, the only place not covered with snow. The Palm Warblers (3 in number) were seen as close as ten feet and were unmistakable." He also reported the Short-billed Marsh Wren and the Lapland Longspur. He also took part in the Beckham census. Two other good counts were made, one at Richmond by James McKinney and David Rader, and one at Harrodsburg by Proctor Higgins, Jimmy Wallace, Eugene Roach, and Martha Gortney.

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FOUR NEW LIFE MEMBERS

It is with great pleasure that the K. O. S. welcomes life members 11, 12, 13, and 14 in this issue. Our endowment fund has now been increased to \$650.00. Who will be our fifteenth life member? Our goal is to add six new life members during 1947.

Miss Marie E. Pieper and her brother, Louis H. Pieper, of Louisville are our eleventh and twelfth life members. The Piepers live on the River Road overlooking the bank of the Ohio River. Behind their home rise the steep wooded slopes of Indian Hills. The area is a wild life paradise, and their home is the favorite meeting place of our club members when on field trips. Here too, on numerous occasions we have held our spring picnics, and here we gather on our Christmas census at noon to warm our chilled members. Marie is a teacher at the Stephen Foster School, and she has long been a member of both the K. O. S. and the K. S. N. H. In recognition of her interest in nature the Glenview Garden Club sent her to the Audubon Nature Camp on an island along the Maine coast a few summers ago. Here she had the opportunity to study birds under Roger Tory Peterson. She also served as Secretary of the Beckham Bird Club in 1943-44.

Louis, who is associated with the Ford Motor Company, has recently become very much interested in both ornithology and natural history, reviving a youthful interest. He, too, is a member of both the K. O. S. and the K. S. N. H. In 1946 he served so ably as secretary of the Otter Creek Conference on Wild Life and Natural History that he can expect to be called to similar posts in the near future. The K. O. S. is indeed fortunate to add to its permanent membership two such congenial and cooperative members.

Dr. Lawrence E. Hicks, nationally known ornithologist and wild life research worker, from Columbus, Ohio, is our thirteenth life member. He is past president of the Wilson Ornithological Club and a fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union. He has also served as secretary of the A. O. U. since 1937. Dr. Hicks spoke at the spring meeting of the Kentucky Ornithological Society in Louisville several years ago.

Mr. Chastain Frazer of Marion is our fourteenth life member. He is a young business man and the son of our former president, Dr. T. Atchison Frazer. For many years the two Frazers have made one of the finest series of Christmas bird counts ever made in Kentucky.

TWO NEW FIELD GUIDES TO EASTERN BIRDS

Reviewed by Harvey Lovell

1. **FIELD BOOK OF EASTERN BIRDS**, by Leon Augustus Hausman, illustrated by Jacob Abbott. G. P. Putnam's Sons, N. Y. 1946, 659 pages. \$3.75.

This is a different type of field guide. There is an illustrated key to the families of birds which occupies 60 pages. Then there are keys to the species under each family based on field characters. Every bird is pictured in black and white, many of them very cleverly, and then discussed under seven sub-headings. The use of field keys is a step in the right direction, even through many of these need revision. Too often the keys are not dichotomous, and 5 or more species are compared with wordy descriptions not particularly diagnostic. Each subspecies is given a full page, which greatly increases the thickness of the book. The author has paid no attention to recent literature, and no subspecies described since 1931 are included. Readers will look in vain for the Ohio House Wren, Appalachian Chickadee, and numerous others. They will also look in vain for any description of the nests or eggs. At a time when bird organizations are attempting to teach their members to do more than just recognize a bird, this may prove a serious omission.

Six color plates show groups of birds which are easily confused. Each faces a blue printing of the same plate which shows the birds as they might appear in faint light. The guide is small enough to fit into a pocket. There is a fine bibliography of 67 titles of popular bird books. We believe that this book will be a welcome addition to the library of our members.

2. **AUDUBON BIRD GUIDE, EASTERN LAND BIRDS**, by Richard H. Pough, illustrated by Don Eckelberry. Doubleday and Co., Garden City, N. W., 1946. 312 pages and 48 color plates. \$3.00.

This is the first book of pocket size to have every species in color. However, only the land birds are included. The color plates are all together in the center of the book, a very convenient location. Each bird is discussed under five subheadings, which include nests and eggs. The descriptions are designed to point out the differences in species which resemble each other. The author has completely disregarded subspecies, which we think is an improvement in a field manual. This required some revision in common names which may bother beginners. For example, the Migrant Shrike becomes the Loggerhead Shrike, Bachman's Sparrow becomes the Pine-woods Sparrow, the Red-eyed Towhee becomes the Eastern Towhee, and the Wood Pewee becomes the Eastern Pewee. These changes are in line with recommendations recently made by several leading ornithologists that each species be given a specific common name which is capable of being changed into a subspecific common name by adding a modifier. In spite of the obvious objections to meddling with established common names, it is to be hoped that the next revision of the A. O. U. Check List attempts this.

Although we do not think that either of these two books will replace Peterson's Guide with the average amateur, we do recommend both to supplement it. The fine colored plates of Pough's Guide will prove more useful when a bird's colors are seen in good light, and the keys of Hausman's book should stimulate those who prefer to work out their birds by description.

THE AUDUBON SCREEN TOURS

The fourth lecturer of the 1946-47 season of Audubon Screen Tours at Louisville was Allan Cruikshank, whose lecture was entitled "South along the Suwanee." the river made famous by Stephen Collins Foster. The colored film starts in the Okefinokee Swamp and follows the Suwanee River down to the Gulf of Mexico. Mr. Cruikshank, who is a versatile entertainer as well as a photographer, gave many imitations of bird calls both during and after the picture.



ALLAN CRUIKSHANK

These lectures, which are co-sponsored by the Beckham Chapter of the K. O. S., have been drawing many K. O. S. members from distant parts of the state. The final lecture of the season brings the famous author of **FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS**, Roger Tory Peterson, to Louisville. He will present his Kodachrome moving picture "Field Guide to the Familiar" on Wednesday, April 23, at Halleck Hall. Why not plan your business trip to Louisville for that date and combine pleasure with business?

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OUR SPRING MEETING

Our Vice-President, Mrs. Mary Louise Frei, has arranged a good program for our spring meeting at K. E. A. time. The date is April 17, in the afternoon. Be on the lookout for a complete program in the **KENTUCKY SCHOOL JOURNAL** and in the official K. E. A. program.

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BILL WALKER DEAD

Just as this issue was in the press, word came from Nashville that W. M. Walker, Jr., had died on January 23. Mr. Walker has been one of our most interested members for many years. Though in very bad health for some time, he took a census at Christmas at his old home at Hopkinsville and also went with the big party at Nashville. For twenty or more years he was a chemist with the Tennessee State Highway Department and with T. V. A. Very active in the T. O. S., he was once the state president of that live organization. Our society has lost one of its very best members.