

2-1971

## Kentucky Warbler (Vol. 47, no. 1)

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# The Kentucky Warbler

(Published by the Kentucky Ornithological Society)

Vol. 47

FEBRUARY, 1971

No. 1



*MALLARDS IN FLIGHT*

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### THE KENTUCKY WARBLER

Organ of the *Kentucky Ornithological Society*. Published quarterly in February, May, August, and November. The *KENTUCKY WARBLER* is sent to all members not in arrears for dues. Membership dues are: Active or Regular, \$3.00; Contributing, \$5.00; Student, \$2.00; Life, \$50.00; Family, \$1.00 in addition to Regular, Contributing, or Life Membership dues. All articles and communications should be addressed to the editor. Subscriptions, memberships, and requests for back issues should be sent to the treasurer.

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### OUR COVER

The Ray Harm painting reproduced on the cover of this issue features an interesting study of wild Mallard Ducks (*Anas platyrhynchos*) in flight. In the Kentucky bird census appearing in this issue the Mallard is the most common duck.

## ALEXANDER WILSON VISITS LOUISVILLE\*

GORDON WILSON

In the diary of Alexander Wilson, America's first important ornithologist, appear for March 17, 1810, these brief jottings: "Rained and hailed all last night. Set off at eight o'clock, after emptying my boat of the deluge of water. Rowed hard all day. At noon recruited myself with some biscuits, cheese, and American wine. Reach the Falls—night sets in—hear the roaring of the Rapids. After excessive hard work arrive in Beargrass Creek, and fasten my boat to a Kentucky one. Take my baggage, and grope my way to Louisville—put up at the Indian Queen Tavern, and gladly sit down to rest myself."

Thus unannounced arrived Alexander Wilson, a Scotch weaver who had come to America in 1794, a sort of misfit who was already twenty-eight years old when he cast his lot with America. His efforts as a weaver proving rather unremunerative, he turned to teaching school in the Philadelphia area, finally coming to Gray's Ferry, then some miles out of the city but now in the heart of Philadelphia. Not far away was Bartram's Gardens, owned and operated by William Bartram, a naturalist of considerable fame and a good friend of many of the scientists of the whole world. Soon Wilson conceived a plan that sounds like the dream of a teen-ager: to picture and describe all the birds of the eastern United States. While still teaching at Gray's Ferry, he walked to Niagara Falls, wrote a long poem on the trip and America generally—"The Foresters"—, and dared to send some of his bird drawings to President Thomas Jefferson. That many-sided scientist-statesman-philosopher was immediately interested in Wilson's wild-eyed scheme, and, so far as I have ever found out, was the first subscriber to Wilson's AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGY when Wilson had found a publisher. Volume I of a projected ten volumes appeared in 1808. Armed with copies of the new work and with a prospectus of a new American edition of a famous English encyclopedia that was being issued by his publishers, he made numerous short trips in the East and then a rather long journey to the coastal states as far south as Florida. As soon as the second volume appeared, in 1810, he started on the western journey that he had been planning for several years. He invited Bartram to accompany him, but that aging scientist decided that his days of roughing it were already over.

Wilson left Philadelphia in early February, 1810, solicited subscribers for his work and for the encyclopedia all across the state, and arrived at Pittsburgh to make final arrangements. To his surprise, this small western town gave him nineteen subscribers to his 10-volume set, which was selling at a pre-publication price of \$120 for the set. At first he intended to buy a horse and go by land to Kentucky and the West, as the land beyond the Appalachian Mountains was still called. Reports of almost impassable roads

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\*Ed. note: This paper by the late Dr. Gordon Wilson on Alexander Wilson—the subject of his doctoral dissertation and later studies that led him to retrace many of the wanderings of that 19th century ornithologist—was originally delivered as the address at the 1961 dinner meeting of the Beckham Bird Club, Louisville Chapter, K.O.S. The subject is of such particular interest to Kentucky bird students that the editors are pleased to take this opportunity of giving it the wider audience it deserves.

made him decide to go by river. He bought a skiff, renamed it the ORNITHOLOGIST, and set out on the ice-filled waters of the Ohio River on February 24, 1810. With many side trips to visit famous people and places, he made his humble entry into Louisville as you have heard. The American wine he mentions as a part of his last day's rations was a gift from the French settlement at Gallipolis, Ohio, or the similar Swiss colony at or near Vevay, Indiana, both of which places he had visited on his way down stream.

"March 18.—Rose quite refreshed. Found a number of land speculators here. Titles to lands in Kentucky subject to great disputes."

In a letter to Alexander Lawson, his engraver, written from Lexington on April 4, 1810, he adds these items about his first full day in Louisville: "The next day (March 18) I sold my skiff for exactly half what it cost me; and the man who bought it wondered why I gave it such a droll Indian name, (the ORNITHOLOGIST); 'some old chief or warrior I suppose,' said he. This day I walked down along the shore to Shippingport, to take a view of these celebrated Rapids but they fell far short of my expectation. I should have no hesitation in going down them in a skiff."

He was not very much impressed with Louisville and seems to have expected it to be a much larger, more up-to-date place than it was. On March 19 his diary entry is brief but very significant: "Rambling around town with my gun. Examined Mr. —'s drawings in crayon. Very good. Saw two new birds he had—both Motacillae." Though Audubon's name does not appear in the diary, the letters, or the published essays, this passage has always been interpreted to mean Audubon. Many years after Wilson's death Audubon, in an essay in his *BIRDS OF AMERICA*, mentioned Wilson's visit, their hunting together, his intention to subscribe for a set of Wilson's works, and his failure to do so because his partner, Rozier, assured him that already Audubon's drawings of birds were more numerous and better than those in the volumes shown to the future famous ornithologist. Dashing Frenchman, whose descendants and worshipers still stoutly maintain was the lost Dauphin, and plain Sandy Wilson, with no present or future halo over his head—it was a little too much to expect a subscription from Audubon. How much of Audubon's later apology is to be accepted as window-dressing, since he had meanwhile become famous for his works and could afford to be condescending to the memory of Alexander Wilson, is more than I have been able, in a third of a century of studying Wilson and Audubon, to find out. George Ord, Wilson's worshipful understudy, who brought out the last—and ninth—volume of Wilson's *AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGY* and continued to see other editions through the press, was almost belligerent toward Audubon and helped create the so-called Wilson-Audubon quarrel, which did not and could not exist, for Wilson had been dead for years before Audubon became internationally famous. I have often wondered whether Ord did not ultimately destroy or garble several items in Wilson's letters and diaries, things that are now lost forever.

"March 20.—Set out this afternoon with the gun. Killed nothing new. People in taverns here devour their meals. Many shop-keepers board in taverns; also, boatmen, land speculators, merchants, &c. No naturalist to keep me company."

Some Audubon fans feel that Wilson was deliberately slurring at Audubon here, but we must remember that Audubon, in his own high-flown words, ran a "counting-house" in Louisville and possibly had to devote

some time to it. Anyway, on March 21 we seem to meet Audubon again: "Went out this afternoon shooting, with Mr. A. Saw a number of Sandhill Cranes. Pigeons numerous."

Whether Wilson did not know how to spell Audubon's name or G erge Ord edited it out is one of the unsolved puzzles about this strange meeting of giants. I have tried, unsuccessfully, to locate any remnants of Wilson's diary, here or at Paisley, Scotland, but have had no success. The Louisville events are only a very small part of the whole adventure into the West. The letters from Pittsburgh, Lexington, Nashville, and Natchez, some pretty badly garbled but now restored, appeared in THE FORT FOLIO, a Philadelphia magazine published by the same company that issued Wilson's works. It is assumed that these letters, as well as the right to reprint Wilson's better-known Scotch and American poems in the same magazine, were part of Wilson's repayment of the loan for the long Western journey.

As Wilson was coming down the Ohio River, he stopped to explore at Big Bone Lick. There, besides collecting numerous specimens, he wounded a Carolina Paroquet, which became his companion for the rest of the journey to New Orleans and out into the Gulf of Mexico, where the bird pecked its way out of a wickerwork cage and, being unable to fly steadily, drowned. This parrot came to be associated with Wilson as much as his gun and drawing materials. The statue in Paisley, Scotland, his birthplace, shows Wilson with his dainty little parrot, called by the Indians of Mississippi "Kelinky," now, like all of its tribe, a romantic memory of pioneer times in Kentucky. This explanation of Wilson's attachment to the parrot seems necessary to clarify Wilson's final diary entries about Louisville. Here is the passage, as clarified by Frank L. Burns, of Pennsylvania, one of the best students of the life and works of Wilson: "March 23.—Packed up my things, which I left in the care of a merchant here to be sent on to Lexington; and, having parted with the gentlemen of the tavern with great regret, I, with my paroquet, bade adieu to Louisville, to which place I had four letters of recommendation, and was taught to expect much of every thing here; but neither received one act of civility, from those to whom I delivered my letters, one subscriber, nor one new bird; though I delivered my letters, ransacked the woods repeatedly, and visited all the characters likely to subscribe. Science or literature has not one friend in this place. Every one is so intent on making money that they can talk of nothing else; and they absolutely devour their meals that they may return the sooner to their business. Their manners correspond with their features. Good country this for lazy fellows; they plant corn, turn their pigs into the wood, and in the autumn feed upon corn and pork—they lounge about the rest of the year.

"March 24.—Weather cool. Walked to Shelbyville to breakfast." With this rather sour farewell, Wilson might have been expected to wish he had not attempted his rather dangerous wild-goose chase into the West. However, the sight of billions of Passenger Pigeons as he went on his way to Frankfort and Lexington, the securing of 15 Kentucky subscribers, all told, from Kentucky citizens and schools, his romantic but tragic trip by horseback from Lexington to New Orleans, and his securing 60 subscribers in New Orleans, which had been American territory only six years, somewhat softened his disappointment at his cool reception at the hands of the elite of Louisville. The word *tragic* was deliberately used, for on his long journey through the wilderness and Indian country south of Big Buffalo

River and Meriwether Lewis's lonely grave beside the Natchez Trace he became a sufferer of dysentery, the disease which was ultimately to take his life. Barely able to sit on his horse, burning up with fever, and inadequately provided with camping equipment for two whole weeks in the woods, it is a wonder that he was ever able to reach New Orleans alive. For the remaining three years of his life he worked too hard and too long in his effort to finish his AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGY. The eighth volume had appeared and the plates for the ninth and final volume were ready when he succumbed to an attack of his old enemy. A story that has never been authenticated but really should be true says that his final illness came when he, though feverish, pursued a strange bird, waded a cold stream, and was immediately struck down by his last illness. His death, on August 23, 1813, ended a strange, adventurous chapter in American ornithology.

Many another period in his life is fundamentally as romantic as his one visit to Kentucky and Louisville, but somehow as a student of Wilson for a large part of my grown-up days, I find his journey in 1810 the best documented, the most rounded, the most remarkable of his whole life as a traveler, as a poet, as an artist, and as an ornithologist.



## In Memoriam

GORDON WILSON

1888-1970

Dr. Gordon Wilson, a founder of the Kentucky Ornithological Society and the retired head of Western Kentucky University's English department, died on April 12, 1970, at the age of 81. His passing leaves a great void in the Society and in the state of Kentucky.

Born on October 14, 1888, in New Concord, Calloway County, Kentucky, Dr. Wilson was the son of Dr. Mark P. Wilson, a physician, and Malinda Robertson Wilson.

At the age of 18 years he taught in a one-room rural school, Oakwood, in Hickman County, and later in another rural school at Moscow, Kentucky. Dr. Wilson entered the "Normal School," at that time a two-year course, in 1908. This same normal school later became Western Kentucky University. Since no high school education was available to him at the time, he did his secondary school work along with his college courses, receiving his diploma in 1913.

He then attended Indiana University for two years and received his A.B. degree in 1915 from that institution, graduating with honors and election to Phi Beta Kappa.

He joined Western's faculty in 1912, alternating teaching and pursuing his college work at Indiana University. After receiving his master's degree he was granted his doctorate in 1930. In September 1928 he became head of the English department at Western, retiring in 1959 at the age of 70.

His well-known generosity and willingness to give freely of his own time resulted in his prominence as an inspiring speaker. He once remarked that he had probably given more commencement addresses than any other man in the state. Active in church affairs, he attended and taught Sunday school for 40 years at the State Street United Methodist Church in Bowling Green.

Dr. Wilson enjoyed bird study from the time he was a young lad; he was greatly impressed by the hosts of migratory birds that visited his home area at the edge of the Mississippi flyway. In the early 1920's he affiliated with national ornithological societies and became secretary of the Wilson Ornithological Club (Society) from 1923 to 1925. It was in 1923 that Dr. Wilson, Dr. Otley Pindar, and Brasher C. Bacon founded the Kentucky Ornithological Society. Serving as its first secretary and later elected as its president on a number of occasions, he was completely dedicated to the Society. He once remarked that ". . . the life of the society and my own life have run along together for so many years that we seem in every way twins."

In those early years of the Society there was little in the ornithological literature about Kentucky birds. Realizing the need for a publication to record the seasonal occurrences, distribution, breeding habits, etc., of the birds of the state, he launched in 1925 the first issue of *The Kentucky Warbler*. This journal he edited from 1925-1936; 1940-1944; and 1954-1963, thereafter serving on the Editorial Advisory Board until his death.

Easy going to the point of permitting himself to be imposed upon, friendly with everyone, simple, kind and unaffected, with a keen sense of humor, his real enjoyment was concentrated in the out-of-doors, camping, and studying birds. His frequent trips to the "transient lakes" south of Bowling Green and to Mammoth Cave National Park resulted in intensive records. He was always ready to drive many miles to investigate any bird some farmer might ask him about. His winning smile and the charm of his personality did much to develop an interest in birds throughout Warren and Edmonson Counties.

Dr. Wilson began publishing bird articles in the 1920's in ornithological journals such as the *Auk*, *Bird-Lore*, and the *Wilson Bulletin*, as well as in *The Kentucky Warbler*. His major ornithological works have been concerned with chronicling the appearance of aquatic birds at the transient lakes of the karst country in Warren County, south of Bowling Green, beginning in 1927 and continuing until the time of his death. Besides noteworthy papers and pamphlets on the birds of the Mammoth Cave area,



another publication, based on a number of reports from local observers, dealt with the distribution of breeding birds in Kentucky (1942). His *Birds of South-Central Kentucky* (1962) is a valuable contribution to ornithological literature of the state. In 1967, Dr. Wilson completed 50 years of compiling the annual Christmas censuses in the Bowling Green area; these have been recorded in *The Kentucky Warbler*. Robert M. Mengel in his *Birds of Kentucky* (1965) mentioned him as ". . . the senior bird student of the state."

A prolific writer, with apparently endless energy, he led an active life in retirement, writing some 50 scholarly works dealing with folklore and linguistics in addition to his ornithological studies. His language studies of the Mammoth Cave area are to be included in the new "Dictionary of American Regional English." His numerous ornithological works are included in the bibliography of the book, *Folklore of the Mammoth Cave Region* (1968), published by the Kentucky Folklore Society and Friends of Gordon Wilson to honor Dr. Wilson on his 80th birthday.

All of us who came in contact with him can appreciate his love of birds as set forth in his words: "When I was a very young man, I suddenly discovered that the annual succession of the seasons was a show far ahead of any circus and that I had a reserved seat. After several years of watching for the arrival of the migrants and comparing one's own records, a bird student becomes a sort of walking statistician, whether he has an appreciative audience or not. To any of us who have listened to the first Brown Thrasher or to the first Wood Thrush of the season, Keats seems to be speaking:

'Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!  
 No hungry generations tread thee down.  
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
 In ancient days by emperor and clown.  
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a path  
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,  
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn,  
 The same that oft-times hath  
 Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam  
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.'

In 1969, Western named the former library building after Dr. Wilson. This building now houses the Department of Speech and Theater, a theater, and a study library. It was with great foresight that, a number of years ago, Dr. Wilson requested that all his ornithological records, papers, etc., as well as folklore material be sent to the Kentucky Library in Western's Kentucky Building.

In one of Dr. Wilson's last talks before the Kentucky Ornithological Society, he challenged the members with these words: "Just what direction the study of ornithology may take in the next forty or hundred years I do not know. Certainly, with the many T.V.A. and Army Engineers Corps lakes; with the numerous state parks; with growing areas of local, state, and national forests; with changing standards in agricultural practices; and with increased interest in all phases of wildlife and of recreation, we can be sure that among every twenty persons who can recognize fifty or more of our commoner species there should be at least one person who would determine to know all the species of his study area. The very need for adventure in any age will probably assure our society of a group that will

want to put on some outing clothes and find out for themselves what is still alive and challenging."

He is survived by his wife, Avis Hines Wilson, whom he married on September 9, 1913, a daughter, Mrs. Harold Hughes of Portland, Oregon, a son, Dr. Gordon Wilson, Jr., head of Western's chemistry department, five grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

We are the richer for having known him and having had his counsel and inspiration. We have lost an educator, an ornithologist, and above all a good friend. His accomplishments and contributions will long be remembered.

—Anne L. Stamm

## MID-WINTER BIRD COUNT

1970-1971

Here is our summary of the 1970-1971 bird counts, a very good survey of representative parts of the state. A total of 134 people (not counting duplications because of participation in more than one count) took part in the Society's 46th annual count, finding 104 species and a total of 740,713 individual birds. Two additional species were added for the count period. A look at the tabular sheet reveals a lack of northern finches, at least in numbers, and some decrease in the following species: Red-shouldered Hawks, Myrtle Warblers, and White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows. The mild fall may have been responsible for the sighting of Brown Thrashers on eight counts and the Catbird on the Glasgow count. Also, a Brown Thrasher and a Catbird were recorded during the count week at Sorgho and Louisville, respectively. The two Whistling Swans at the Barren River Reservoir are noteworthy. Robins may have been down in numbers due to the short supply of dogwood and cedar berries. The Eastern Bluebird has been steadily increasing in numbers and this year shows a decided increase over last year's figures, with the largest number at the Kleber Wildlife Management Area.

Again, we wish to reemphasize that your editors insist on receiving satisfactory details for all species which are unusual in your area during the count period. We solicit your cooperation. We are trying to be objective and keep our records valid and valuable.

THE LAND BETWEEN THE LAKES (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center junction of KY 453 and Mulberry Flat Road; lake and river shores 30%, fields 30%, deciduous woods 40%).—Dec. 22; 6:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Steady rain at the beginning, stopping within the first hour and gradually clearing throughout day; temp. 54° to 65°; wind calm. Fifteen observers in 5 parties. Total party-hours, 48 (12 on foot, 36 by car); total party-miles, 226 (20 on foot, 206 by car). Total, 70 species, about 42,927 individuals.

The count day began in a steady mild rain that had been continuous for almost 36 hours, but the forecast indicated a break, and shortly after we set out, the rain stopped and thereafter the light improved. By mid-afternoon, the sky was broken everywhere, with great patches of blue showing. The extreme wetness kept many of the smaller birds inactive.

Without question, the best find was the small flock (7) of Pectoral Sandpipers carefully observed for several minutes with a 20x scope at close

range by Willard Gray and Ray Nall. (In the same area on Barkley Lake near the mouth of Taylor Bay, shorebirds had been seen on the extensive mudflats all fall and as recently as late November.) (No descriptive details submitted for this unusual winter find of Pectoral Sandpipers.—Ed.)

The count of seven Loggerhead Shrikes is a record for our area and probably reflects a general increase in this species in Western Kentucky.

The 32,000 Starlings make up a roost at Kentucky Dam, on the fringe of our area. I have checked the number on several occasions as carefully as possible considering the obvious difficulties of making valid approximations, and I am confident that I have, if anything, underestimated the size of the roost. The Starlings come from both sides of the dam, beginning almost exactly 30 minutes before sundown (at this season, at least), build to a peak in about ten minutes, continue in a constant dense stream for about ten minutes, and then taper off until almost dark.—J. B. Andre, Evelyn Cole, Rusty Colvard, Larry M. Doyle, Dawn Ford, Willard Gray, Bob Head, David L. Hughes, Edwin Larson, Ray Nall, Clell T. Peterson (compiler), Lawrence Philpot, Edwin Ray, Robert D. Smith, Paul W. Sturm.

**MURPHEY'S POND** (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center at the main pool of Murphey's Pond, including points along the north and western edge of the Pond, Baltimore Bottoms, and adjoining farmland; wooded area 30%, farmland 40%, swamp 20%, overgrown fields 10%).—Dec. 28; 4:30 a.m. to 4:40 p.m. Clear; temp. 23° to 45°; wind SE, 0-5 m.p.h. Five observers in 1 party. Total party-hours, 12 (9 on foot, 3 by car); total party-miles, 92 (6 on foot, 86 by car). Total, 49 species, about 3,383 individuals.

The fifth Murphey's Pond Christmas Count was marked by the highest number of individuals yet recorded. The American Woodcock, also recorded in 1968, was found in the same area and under similar conditions. A thorough search rather than increased population probably accounts for the large number of owls. The absence of Marsh Hawk, Bobwhite, and Robin was disappointing. The Savannah Sparrow is a new species for the count.—J. B. Andre, Jim Conrad, Edwin Larson (compiler), Clell T. Peterson, and Ed Ray.

**MARION** (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center Forest Grove).—Dec. 27; 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; temp. 26° to 38°; wind SW, 0-5 m.p.h. Two observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 15 (7 on foot, 8 by car); total party-miles, 32 (6 on foot, 26 by car). Total, 48 species, about 1,792 individuals. Observed in area count period, but not on count day: Evening Grosbeaks (40).—C. L. Frazer (compiler), Jim Frazer.

**MADISONVILLE** (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center W. W. Hancock Farm, Brown Road, Elk Creek, KY 892, and two lakes near Madisonville; deciduous woodlands and thickets 50%, lake shore 30%, open fields 20%).—Dec. 27; 6:45 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 15° to 38°; wind NW, 1-7 m.p.h. Lakes open. Four observers in 1 party. Total party-hours, 10 (8 on foot, 2 by car); total party-miles 43 (7 on foot, 36 by car). Total, 50 species, about 605,224 individuals. Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Lesser Scaup Duck, Common Golden-eye, Bufflehead, Great Horned Owl, Hairy Woodpecker, White-breasted Nuthatch, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Cedar Waxwing, and Fox Sparrow.

The Bald Eagle, an adult, was seen as it flew across Pleasant View

Lake. The white head and tail were easily observed. The big blackbird roost may be down somewhat in total numbers but the large flocks are still a problem to people living along Park Avenue, and at the National Guard Armory in Madisonville.—James W. Hancock (compiler), Mrs. Sue Place, Mrs. Mary F. Travis, Mrs. Irene Wells.

**PENNYRILE FOREST STATE RESORT PARK** (Deciduous and pine woods and fields within the park area, Pennyrile Lake, and adjoining farmlands: wooded area 60%, open fields 15%, farmland 10%, lake shore 15%).—Dec. 30; 6:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Heavy overcast; temp. 20° to 38°; wind NW, 1-5 m.p.h. One observer. Total party hours, 9 (8 on foot, 1 by car); total party-miles, 21 (8 on foot, 13 by car). Total, 43 species, about 398 individuals.—James W. Hancock.

**HENDERSON** (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center new Henderson County courthouse, to include Audubon State Park, Ohio River from mouth of Green River, north half of Diamond Island, keeping to Kentucky shore of the Ohio River only).—Jan. 2; 7:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Temperature 32° to 49°; wind calm. Eleven observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours, 31 (23 on foot, 8 by car); total party-miles, 55 (9 on foot, 46 by car). Total, 47 species, about 3,719 individuals.—King Benson, Bob Bolds, Lora Clark, Mr. and Mrs. Davis Gatlin, Mildred Parsons, Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Smith, Virginia Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Ike Utley.

**SORGHO** (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center along KY 54, West Owensboro—same area as in past years).—Jan. 1; 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Cloudy; temp. 30° to 37°; wind 0-20 m.p.h. Windy in afternoon, cold although temperature was above freezing most of the time. Five observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 35 (30 on foot, 5 by car); total party-miles, 42 (12 on foot, 30 by car). Total, 46 species, about 3,945 individuals. Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Wood Duck, American Coot, Screech Owl, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Thrasher.

Our observations were interesting for the birds we did not find. We failed to locate nuthatches, bluebirds, robins, waxwings, etc., which we know are in the area. The creek bottoms were flooded, and all we could do was to search along the edges. The Canada Geese were seen by the Iles and Wilson party.—Joe Ford (compiler), Mr. and Mrs. Ramon Iles, and Mr. and Mrs. L. E. Wilson.

**YELVINGTON** (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center US 60 near Maceo at Blackford Creek).—Dec. 31; 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Overcast with clearing in the afternoon; temp. 38° to 38°; wind 0-10 m.p.h. Three observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 12 (8 on foot, 4 by car); total party-miles, 21 (5 on foot, 16 by car). Total, 41 species, about 1,918 individuals.

The only waterfowl that we saw was a huge flock of Mallards; they were in the backwaters of the Ohio River. We were disturbed because of the complete lack of Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks, and also Myrtle Warblers. The sparrow count was down, too. The two Chipping Sparrows were seen in good light and carefully studied at length.—A. L. Powell, Jr. (compiler), Mrs. A. L. Powell, Jr., George Ray.

**BOWLING GREEN** (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center Three Springs, 6 miles south of Bowling Green).—Jan. 2; 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear to partly cloudy; temp. 30° to 48°; wind S, 5-12 m.p.h. Seven observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 29 (19 on foot, 10 by car);

total party-miles, 170 (16 on foot, 154 by car). Total, 50 species, about 18,855 individuals.

The count was about average. Hawks are plentiful, but not many were on the count. Sparrows are scarce.—Millard Gipson, L. Y. Lancaster, Robert Pace, Homer Parrent, David Shadowen, H. E. Shadowen (compiler), Jeff Shadowen.

**MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK** (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center Turnhole Bend Drive-Out).—Dec. 27; 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 10° to 30°; wind occasionally gusty. Eleven observers in 6 parties. Total party-hours, 40 (? on foot, ? by car); total party-miles, 141 (26 on foot, 115 by car). Total, 52 species, about 1,503 individuals.

With eleven observers in six parties, the park area was well-covered for this fifteenth cooperative count. Although the total of individuals was lower than usual, probably due to the cold and wind, the 52 species found make this an above-average count. The Shadowens at First Creek Lake added two new species: Pintail and Gadwall. Also, they saw Blue-winged Teal, which had been recorded only once before. Powell and Ray, on the north side, added a second record of the Pied-billed Grebe. Two parties found the Pine Siskin, an erratic visitor to the park.—Mrs. James Gillenwater (compiler), Cleo Hogan, Sr., George McKinley, Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Powell, Jr., George Ray, Lewis Ray, Marvin Ray, H. E. Shadowen, Jeffrey Shadowen, Russell Starr.

**GLASGOW** (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center Beech Grove Baptist Church, to include Beaver Creek area, northwest and west of Glasgow, Starr, Winger, and Elmore farms, Stovall Crossing, Brigadoon, ramps and bridges on Barren River Reservoir. Dec. 30; 6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Overcast to periods of filtered sunshine; temp. 18° to 35°; wind W, 5-8 m.p.h. Ponds frozen, ground frozen but thawing in afternoon. Five observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours, ?; total party-miles, 110 (10 on foot, 100 by car). Total, 58 species, about 4,376 individuals.

Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Lesser Scaup, Hooded Merganser, Black Vulture, Red-shouldered Hawk, Bald Eagle, American Coot, Cedar Waxwing, and Purple Finch.

The Whistling Swans were first noticed while crossing the bridge at Beaver Creek embayment, on the Finney Road to the dam. The birds were studied for about 30 minutes, with 7x35 Bausch & Lomb glasses, from the roadside and the embankment. The swans were resting on the shallow water about 150 yards from shore. They were perfectly white, had long, straight necks, black bills, and exhibited typical feeding and swimming postures.

The Canada Geese were seen in two flocks over the lake, and the Mallards and Black Ducks were seen at the Beaver Creek Ramp. Large rafts of Lesser Scaup and American Coots were seen on January 3, near the Peninsula Ramp. A mature Bald Eagle was seen at the latter ramp on December 22. The Catbird had been observed regularly at Brigadoon Farm until December 9, then again on count day. Purple Finches are unusually scarce this winter.—Marquita Gillenwater, Cleo Hogan, Sr., Elaine Richardson, Faye Starr, and Russell Starr (compiler).

**OTTER CREEK PARK** (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center about two miles southwest of park entrance; area includes con-

siderable fields outside park; deciduous woods 18%, brushy fields 35%, open fields 26%, hedgerows 5%, creeks, lake, and river 16%).—Dec. 23; 6:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Cloudy to clear, slight mist in a.m.; temp. 41° to 60°; wind SW to NW, 8-17 m.p.h. Creeks up and Ohio River high; heavy rains previous day. Nine observers in 5 parties. Total party-hours, 32 (23 on foot, 9 by car); total party-miles, 208 (22 on foot, 186 by car). Total, 56 species, about 2,152 individuals.

The Bonaparte's Gulls were seen both in flight and at rest by William Rowe. Most species of woodpeckers were down with the exception of the Yellow-shafted Flicker. The absence of Purple Finches was very noticeable. Two of the Winter Wrens were in song and heard by Joseph Croft. Sparrows were difficult to find and were down in numbers for most species, particularly the Tree Sparrow. The majority of the dogwood and cedar trees were without fruit and may account for the scarcity of Robins. Albert and John Westerman and William Rowe had ideal looks at the single Palm Warbler at 20 feet. The Palm Warbler and the Oldsquaw are new for our Christmas-Bird Counts in the Otter Creek area.—Virginia Calvert, Joseph E. Croft, Wilbur F. Jackson, Judy Robertson, William Rowe, Anne L. Stamm (compiler), F. W. Stamm, Albert Westerman, John Westerman.

LOUISVILLE (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center at junction of US 42 and KY 22, to include Falls of the Ohio, Jeffersontown, Pewee Valley, Goshen, and southern Indiana from Jeffersonville to Utica; deciduous woods 20%, brushy fields 15%, fields and pastures 20%, swamps and marshes 5%, Ohio River and Falls of the Ohio 40%).—Dec. 27; 5:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 29° to 35°; wind W, 10-18 m.p.h. Lakes partially frozen, other water open. Twenty observers in 7 parties. Total party-hours, 74 (41 on foot, 33 by car); total party-miles, 336 (42 on foot, 294 by car). Total, 77 species, about 18,334 individuals. Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Green Heron, Turkey Vulture, Catbird, Fox Sparrow.

In general, this was a poor year, especially for northern finches; the Ohio River was very high and muddy, reducing waterfowl and gull counts. Mildness of weather, at least up to December 25, resulted in a number of late stragglers. No less than two Catbirds and four Brown Thrasher were wintering, although only two of the thrashers were recorded on the count; on December 25, a Green Heron was recorded at a small pond near Pewee Valley, but this bird was gone on December 26 after the pond froze completely. The Ruddy Shelduck, a wild, free-flying, adult female, appeared at Cave Hill Cemetery lakes on November 25, at which time it was photographed and observed by numerous persons. It disappeared on December 13 and reappeared on the count day. Very likely it is an escape of some kind on this continent, rather than a stray from Europe. Locally, its only possible source would be one of two birds, raised as young by a pinioned pair at La Grange in the summer of 1969; the young birds were never caught and flew off about 18 months ago.—Leonard C. Brecher, Mrs. A. H. Calvert, Joseph E. Croft, Dennis H. Holding, Violet Jackson, W. F. Jackson, Richard L. Lattis, Burt L. Monroe, Jr. (compiler), Robert Quaife, Mrs. C. A. Robertson, Evelyn Schneider, Carl J. Schultz, Mr. and Mrs. F. P. Shannon, Mrs. Eugene Short, Mabel Slack, Lawrence D. Smith, Anne L. Stamm, F. W. Stamm, Marjorie H. Susie (Beckham Bird Club).

DANVILLE (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center Boyle County Courthouse).—Dec. 26; 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Fair; temp. about







MID-WINTER  
BIRD COUNT  
1970-1971

	L-B-LAKES	MURPHEY'S POND	MARION	MADISONVILLE	PENNSYLVIA	HENDERSON	SORGHO	YELVINGTON	BOWLING GREEN	MAM. CAVE N. P.	GLASGOW	OTTER CREEK	LOUISVILLE	DANVILLE	FRANKFORT	KLEBER	LEXINGTON	WILLARD
CAROLINA WREN	35	18	2	5	2	7	10	30	17	10	8	45	42	6	32	20	31	1
MOCKINGBIRD	17	18	16	5	3	20	34	16	55	5	28	30	132	42	44	20	40	
CATBIRD		1		1		1	*	2			1		*					
BROWN THRASHER	3			8	2	1			3	192	29	35	287	1	8	73	22	2
ROBIN	25		60	2	2	1		1	2	3	1							
HERMIT THRUSH	1			3	2	14		20	7	41	33	44	32	24	69	75	15	7
EASTERN BLUEBIRD	51	14	7	3	9	9		2		22	2	3	15	2	7	7	4	3
GOLDEN-CR. KINGLET	15	2		*	4		3	2		1	*							
RUBY CR. KINGLET	20		3	*	7	5		1		22	*	85	30		1	17		
CEDAR WAXWING	7	12	2	*	1	3	3	1	1	1	2			1	*	2		
LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE	7			3						243	1282	386	9680	3777	984	435	4959	14
STARLING	32000	34	124	300000	46	678	1013	96	14340	26	6	6	1			28	9	
MYRTLE WARBLER					3							1						
PALM WARBLER																		
HOUSE SPARROW	15	55	200	25	18	945	301	241	334	9	35	66	697	355	266	37	608	
EASTERN MEADOWLARK	117	66	19	22	22	36	100	77	141	5	128	54	147	119	97	34	74	
RED-W. BLACKBIRD	81	900	46	1000			6	1	301		91	31	1054	1003	7	562		
RUSTY BLACKBIRD				1000							55		153		1	357		
BREWER'S BLACKBIRD													70					
COMMON GRACKLE	3	1610	14	300000	1100	1100	450		2158	1	1188	75	400	5724	3	2	3327	
BROWN-H. COWBIRD			9	2000	1	1	4		20		3	3	1713	326		1	1	39
CARDINAL	163	32	250	38	12	94	209	60	114	50	127	126	515	205	249	170	258	*
EVENING GROSBEAK			*															
PURPLE FINCH				1	1	3		5	24	15	*			7	15	9	4	
PINE SISKIN	5		30							7			2					

AM. GOLDFINCH	63	6	18	3	15	20	59	57	60	31	63	39	212	71	109	35	60
RUFOUS-S. TOWHEE	132	4	11	11	7	4	84	14	25	18	23	45	53	7	10	7	17
SAVANNAH SPARROW	6	379	43	300	17	44	19	55	20	50	180	133	125	433	61	201	196
SIATE-C. JUNCO	1	14					3				9	12	23	2	1		26
TREE SPARROW																	
CHIPPING SPARROW								2									
FIELD SPARROW	96	21	4	39	37	17	26	22	61	6	88	41	103	*	15	7	37
WHITE-CR. SPARROW	3	30	80			54	66	14	34	2	33	31	81	41	3	4	84
WHITE-TH. SPARROW	51	52		6	5	4	4	7	25	30	83	50	121	2	34	57	49
FOX SPARROW	3			*				*		2	2	4	3	*	3	1	2
SWAMP SPARROW	9	16		4	1	5	1	5	5	5	35	45	14	2	2	4	6
SONG SPARROW	13	9	100	19	5	36	71	37	23	11	83	159	224	36	65	73	66
																	12

DATE OF COUNT	Dec. 22	Dec. 27	Dec. 28	Dec. 27	Dec. 27	Dec. 30	Jan. 1	Jan. 2	Jan. 31	Dec. 2	Dec. 27	Dec. 30	Dec. 22	Dec. 27	Dec. 26	Dec. 26	Jan. 2	Jan. 26	Dec. 27	Dec. 26	Dec. 27	Dec. 26	Dec. 27	Dec. 26		
SPECIES	70	49	48	50	43	47	46	41	50	52	58	56	77	52	47	46	65	17								
INDIVIDUALS	42927	3383	1792	605224	398	3719	3945	1918	18855	1503	4376	2152	18334	14888	3135	1724	12255	184								
OBSERVERS	15	5	2	4	1	11	5	3	7	11	5	9	20	19	14	6	20	1								

An asterisk (\*) indicates that the species was recorded during the count period, but not on the count day.

15° to 35°; wind 5-10 m.p.h.; small patches of snow, larger ponds and streams open, small ponds frozen lightly. A very mild fall until just before count. Nineteen observers in 6 parties. Total, 52 species, about 14,888 individuals. Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Field Sparrow. (No details on the Brewer's Blackbirds—Ed.)—W. C. Alcock, R. Bear, A. R. Brousseau, F. M. Brown, C. Caldwell, Mrs. R. Caldwell, Mrs. S. Early, D. Elliott, Mrs. P. Gudge, Dr. and Mrs. F. H. Heck, Dr. and Mrs. W. T. Hill, Mrs. A. Jester, T. Kreamer, Dr. and Mrs. F. W. Loetscher, Jr., Mrs. W. B. Myers, C. A. Zimmerman (compiler).

FRANKFORT (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center at junction of US 27 and KY 1900, 1.2 miles north of Frankfort, to include State Game Farm, Federal Fish Hatchery, and Buckley Hills; deciduous and cedar woods 20%, brushy fields 35%, pastures and cultivated fields 35%, town and suburbs 10%).—Dec. 26; 7:20 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Clear to partly cloudy; temp. 8° to 29°; wind SW, 5-17 m.p.h. Ground and ponds frozen, streams full and open. Fourteen observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours, 43 (34 on foot, 9 by car); total party-miles, 184 (37 on foot, 147 by car). Total, 47 species, about 3,135 individuals. Seen in area count period but not on count day: Turkey Vulture, Loggerhead Shrike.

This year's count is down as far as species. A flock of 45 Canada Geese was sighted in the late afternoon to enliven an otherwise dull waterfowl day. Hawks continue to be scarce. Eastern Bluebirds are definitely more numerous than in recent years. Sparrow numbers seem low, with the most obvious decline in White-crowned Sparrows; whether this is due to habitat destruction or some less evident factor is uncertain.—William Cain, Ellwood J. Carr, Mr. and Mrs. R. M. Coleman, Peggy Sue Derryberry, Mrs. William Frymire, Bill Grayson, Charles Grayson, Mary Grayson, Howard, P. Jones (compiler), Margaret LaFontaine, Pete Lynch, Suzanne Moore, Pinkie Mae Richardson.

KLEBER WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center at junction of US 227 and KY 845 in Owen County, census conducted principally in the wildlife area itself; however, Craddock Bottoms, Claxon Ridge, roads and Kentucky River areas near Monterey, and dam area at Elmer Davis Lake were also visited; deciduous woods 25%; cedar woods 10%; brushy fields 25%, fields and pastures 30%, stream bottomland 10%).—Jan. 2; 7:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. Overcast, becoming clear; temp. 34° to 52°; wind SW, 5-10 m.p.h. Ground bare and frozen, ponds frozen, streams and lake partially frozen. Six observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 19 (14 on foot, 5 by car); total-party miles, 77 (12 on foot, 65 by car). Total, 46 species, about 1,724 individuals.

This year brought the highest species count—46—ever recorded in the Kleber area. This was undoubtedly due to wider coverage of the area plus a perfect day weather-wise. The waterfowl were found on Elmer Davis Lake, near the dam where only the inner coves were frozen. The Pileated Woodpecker was observed in a wooded area at the edge of Kleber and the Red-headed Woodpecker in a cleared area at the eastern shore of Elmer Davis Lake. Eastern Bluebirds were in good numbers; the Stamm party reported separate flocks of 23 and 27 birds. Myrtle Warblers were plentiful and seen particularly in and around red-cedars which cover many Owen County hillsides. Sparrows were hard to find except at the multiflora rose plantings at Kleber. White-crowned Sparrows and Tree Sparrows were conspicuously scarce.—Marvin Bing, Howard P. Jones (compiler), Margaret LaFontaine, Pete Lynch, Mr. and Mrs. Frederick W. Stamm.

LEXINGTON (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center East Hickman on Tates Creek Pike, including 23 miles of Kentucky River, Lexington Reservoir, Nicholasville, and University of Kentucky Experimental Farm; surface water 2%, deciduous woods 3%, towns and suburbs 4%, pasture, cultivated lands, hedgerows and farm lots 91%).—Dec. 27; 7:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. Clear to cloudy; temp. 20° to 32°; wind WNW to W, 4-20 m.p.h. Most water open. Twenty observers in 7 parties. Total party-hours, 52 (19 on foot, 33 by car); total party-miles, 276.4 (24.5 on foot, 251.9 by car). Total, 65 species, about 12,255 individuals. Seen in area count period, but not on count day: Evening Grosbeak.—Mrs. W. R. Allen, Ellen Allen, Mrs. G. L. Burns, Mrs. Lida Feck, M. B. Flynn, Rory Flynn, Dr. Lewis Francis, Mrs. Douglas Hurt, Colin Hyde, Austin Lilly, Mrs. Betty Maxson, Dr. William T. Maxson, Bernice McClure, Robert L. Morris, A. M. Reece (compiler), Virginia K. Reece, Jerry T. Reece, Mrs. O. K. Robbins, Robin Robbins, Mrs. Douglas Ruff.

WILLARD (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center Willard—same territory as in past 30 years; creek bottoms 40%, fields 20%, deciduous woodlands 40%).—Dec. 26; 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Cloudy to clear in a.m., cloudy in p.m.; temp. 24° to 35°. A raw wind blew constantly. One observer. Total, 17 species, about 184 individuals.

## BOOK REVIEW

BIRDS AND THEIR HABITATS IN MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK, by Gordon Wilson. Published by Eastern National Park and Monument Association in cooperation with the National Park Service, 1968. Paperbound, 39 pp.

This is the last in a series of publications by Dr. Wilson concerning the birdlife of Mammoth Cave National Park, and in this last publication he refers to two earlier editions written in 1946 and 1953.

The major objective of the booklet is to provide park visitors with a non-technical and convenient source of information on the birdlife of the park, field trip points of interest, and a checklist showing seasons of occurrence and relative abundance of each of the 203 species of birds. The author has developed it into a valuable source of information for both the novice and the trained ornithologist.

To some readers the major contribution of the publication may be its wealth of ecological information. Although not trained in the field of ecology, the author does an excellent job of noting the impact of civilization on the region and in describing the ecological succession of both plant and animal life. The reader can visualize this rugged area in the 1800's with its many small farms, large tracts of timber, and abundant wildlife, and its decrease in value as a result of farming practices, excessive lumbering, and removal of wildlife. Later, after Congress had authorized the establishment of Mammoth Cave National Park in 1926, one can visualize the change in flora and fauna as residents abandoned the land after its purchase by the government. Changes in birdlife accompanied reforestation. The author resists the temptation to praise or to condemn agencies or people whose influence on the region has been felt. Instead, he remains objective and gives an unadorned but interesting description of Mammoth Cave National Park and its birdlife. The booklet is short and concise, but it reveals a vast wealth of information and familiarity with the subject,

which only extensive (30 years) and diligent (over 600 field trips) study is able to provide.—HERBERT E. SHADOWEN, Department of Biology, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101.

## FIELD NOTES

### AVOCET ON THE FALLS OF THE OHIO

On the morning of October 16, 1970, Dorothea McConnell, Frederick W. Stamm, and I visited the Falls of the Ohio. Upon our arrival we walked beneath the Pennsylvania Railroad Bridge and as we reached the channel, we saw on the lower rock-shelf a single American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*), feeding in the shallow water. The bird was in its winter plumage—a striking black and white dress—with no suggestion of buffiness about the neck and head; its feet and legs were a pale blue. This constitutes the first record for the Louisville area. We were rather surprised to find this western species, particularly in October, since the previous three Kentucky records have been in August or September. A “bird alert” was put into effect, and a number of local observers had the opportunity to see this accidental visitor. Apparently the Avocet left at dusk, as it was not found the following day.

The temperature that morning was in the upper thirties, a drop of 15 degrees from the low of the previous day, and a strong wind came from the northwest.—ANNE L. STAMM, 9101 Spokane Way, Louisville 40222.

## NEWS AND VIEWS

A joint meeting is being planned with the Tennessee Ornithological Society for April 30-May 2 at Mammoth Cave National Park. A committee is busy at work planning a program, field trips, and other features for the meeting. Plan now to attend the meeting; it will give you an opportunity to meet Tennessee ornithologists and to renew acquaintances among our own members.

Back copies of *The Kentucky Warbler* are in demand. As we are short of many issues, members having back copies which they do not care to keep will do the Society a great favor by sending them to Miss Evelyn Schneider, K.O.S. Librarian, 2525 Broadmeade Road, Louisville, Kentucky 40205.

As we go to press we regret to announce the death of Floyd S. Carpenter, a founder of the Beckham Bird Club, Louisville Chapter, Kentucky Ornithological Society. He died at the Baptist Hospital, February 7, 1971, after a brief illness.

One of our Michigan members, Oscar McKinley Bryens, writes that on December 25, 1970 between the hours of 7:20 and 10:15 a.m., with two inches of snow on the ground and the temperature ranging from 7 to 27 degrees, he counted 13 species of birds and a total of 117 individuals. His list includes Mallard, 5; Downy Woodpecker, 2; Blue Jay, 5; Crow, 1; Black-capped Chickadee, 2; White-breasted Nuthatch, 3; Eastern Bluebird, 4; Starling, 13; English Sparrow, 34; Red-winged Blackbird, 2; Cardinal, 12; Slate-colored Junco, 24; and Tree Sparrow, 10.