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THE KENTUCKY WARBLER



Bottle in effigy of the Owl. Filmed overall with red pigment. Found at the Angel Site, Vanderburgh County, Indiana. Photo by Indiana Historical Society.

Vol. 29 No. 1

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Founded in 1923 by

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THE USE OF BIRDS AMONG THE PREHISTORIC INDIANS OF THE OHIO VALLEY

GLENN A. BLACK, Angel Mound, Indiana

In almost any prehistoric site which is properly excavated, and where all materials found therein are saved, the most numerous single class of objects will be the bone debris resulting from the food habits of the aboriginal occupants. Mammal bones constitute the largest class by reason, perhaps, of the fact that such game was larger and provided more meat, was easier to kill or trap, skins for clothing had economic importance, and the bones ideally suited for the fabrication of tools. Mammals were, relatively speaking, also more numerous. But the use of birds among these early dwellers of our area should not be overlooked.

The Wild Turkey is by far the most numerous species represented in the sites of this area. This is probably due to the size of the bird, which made it worth while to hunt or snare for food. The feathers would also have had economic and esthetic value, and the bones of the legs made perfect bone awls. At the Angel Mounds Site, near Evansville, Indiana, bones of the Turkey rank second to those of the Virginia Deer in frequency of occurrence in the debris deposits.

The water birds were also important if we may judge from the number and variety of bones found. The feathers of these varieties would have been important, and the colorful plumage of the Wood Duck, as an example, must have added to the natural charms of many an Indian—both male and female.

Birds now extinct in this area are also found. The Carolina Paroquet once was plentiful here, since the bones of this bird are common here and at many other early sites. Its importance among the aborigines was probably completely esthetic, for the size of this bird would almost preclude inclusion in the food category. The feathers of the Paroquet would no doubt have been incorporated in feather mantles and feather textiles, which we may safely assume the Indians of this area made. The combination of its natural hues of green, greenish-yellow-blue, and rich orange chrome would have provided a fabric of great beauty.

The Passenger Pigeon is also represented in the bone debris, and this bird, unlike the Paroquet, was large enough that it would have paid to trap, snare, or shoot it for food.

The Ivory-billed and Pileated Woodpeckers, the former completely extinct in this area, were also common in prehistoric times. Not only are the bones of these two largest of all the Woodpeckers found in the debris, but they are often depicted in the art of the aborigines, as will be mentioned again subsequently.

The archaeologist attempts to reconstruct the past—to write a history which was never before written—and to do so he extracts from each prehistoric site every bit of data which may contribute to the overall story. In so doing he often adds knowledge to other and unrelated fields. Many species of animal life are known to have once flourished in this area only by reason of the fact that some archaeologist has excavated a site which was lived upon prior to the time of written history, carefully saved every scrap of evidence which came to his attention, and exhausted the potential of these scraps through the medium of study and identification. Thus he may add to the store of knowledge of the ornithologist by indicating distributions, habitats, and abundance of species of birds which would not otherwise have been known for the area. Unfortunately there are few specialists able to identify birds through the medium of bones alone, and as a result there is a great backlog of unidentified material to be worked on and described. When the task is done, the bird will be seen to have occupied a most important part in aboriginal life.

As an example of just how important, and also of the magnitude of the task, allow me to cite some figures compiled for a limited sample of bones from Angel Site. These studies were made by a young man studying to be a comparative osteologist. The total sample was composed of 8,546 bones, and I would like to stress the fact that this is a *sample* and not the total number of bones from the excavation. Of this total sample 837 are bones of birds, 222 are of fish, 388 of reptiles (mainly terrapin and turtle, with very few of snakes), 4,640 are of mammals, and 2,459 are unidentifiable. Thus birds account for about ten percent of the whole, and this would be higher if the number of "unidentifiable" bones could be reduced, for many of these are tiny fragments of the bones of small birds.

Unfortunately, a great deal of the material culture of the American Indian of prehistory was made up of items which were not imperishable and are, therefore, never found in the excavation of dwelling and burial sites in this area. Such things as feather cloth, feather mantles, feather fans and headdresses are left to conjecture, but that they had

them there can be no doubt. Upon occasion burials are found in the rock shelters of Southern Indiana and Kentucky where, because of extreme dryness and the nitrates in the soils of the floors, perishable materials such as cloth, wood, and even skins are preserved. Too often such discoveries were made years ago, before the time of proper appreciation for such things, and little care was exercised in the removal of the material from its soil matrix; and only rarely were such discoveries reported. There are some known, however, where feathers were involved. One especially interesting example was found in Ohio a few years ago, where a woman had been buried with a feather boa-like neck ornament, and the feathers were those of an owl.

The owl must have been looked upon with some awe by the Indians of this area. He was known as the "Warrior of the Night" by at least one group who lived hereabouts. That he was held in esteem is suggested by the fact that in the major late occupational period of the Lower Ohio Valley the people often made pottery bottles and beads in the likeness of this bird. His head, modelled in clay, served as one of the handles on many wide-mouth bowls of the same period. Two owl effigy rattles of pottery have been found at Angel Site; and several pendants, carved of fluorite, faithfully depict head, wings, tail, and feet and have a hole drilled through the neck that they might be strung like beads.

Much earlier in time—in fact, among the earliest of the so-called "Mound Builders" of the Ohio Valley—there are many representations of birds of several species preserved in the art objects of these folk. Perhaps the most spectacular would be the large breastplates made from native copper, cut out in the form of raptorial birds on the wing, and with feather detail in the wings carried out through the technique of repousse. These probably represent one of the hawks, although they are generally referred to as "eagle effigies." The same bird, especially the head-beak and the foot-talon parts, is carved upon human bone, generally skull parts or sections of long-bone shafts. One of the most unusual objects combining the bird as the motif and bone as the medium is the likeness of a swan with the head thrown back over the body in characteristic fashion and carved of tortoise shell.

By far the greatest variety, and perhaps the finest, of bird effigies are found in the pipes of the same mound culture. These are the platform pipes, so-called because the bowl rests upon a platform, either straight or curved, which also serves as the stem of the pipe. The bowls are very often carved in the effigies of animals and so realistically that there is usually no question as to the species of animal represented. Among the birds there are the Paroquet, Quail, Crow, Raven, Whooping Crane, Shoveler Duck, and Roseate Spoonbill. In the case of the Crane the artisan took pains to use a piece of Ohio Pipestone which had a touch of red in the proper spot to use for the head of the bird, and the Spoonbill suggests a knowledge on the part of the pipemaker of birds not common to the Ohio Valley. A very strange combination of bird and fish is to be seen on one Ohio pipe. This may reflect a bit of aboriginal folklore or a sense of humor, but the effigy of a duck riding on the back of a fish is a most unnatural situation. The duck forms the bowl and the fish the stem of the pipe.

In the Southeast very large and heavy pipes are found. These usually incorporate animals as a part of the pipe design, and very often the animal is a bird. The owl is again common in this type, and one very outstanding piece represents a Whip-poor-will on the wing.

Also in the Southeast culture area—which includes Kentucky, of course—there are hundreds of bird heads of clay which once served as a handle on wide-mouth pottery bowls. These, as a rule, are the heads of ducks, and judging from the crest-like appendage usually present, the Wood Duck was probably in the mind of the woman potter. The owl and Pileated Woodpecker are also so depicted.

Among a certain group who once lived in Indiana and Kentucky, the custom of making gorgets to be worn suspended from the neck was the fashion. These were made from the outer whirl of large Gulf Coast conch shells as well as thin sheets of native copper. Upon these they engraved likenesses of birds and mammals, and in the bird class the most common motif is a pair of Pileated Woodpeckers standing upon a cross, bill to bill. More rarely there are figures of men in dancing postures who have a bird-like mask as a part of the facial features and feathered, wing-like appendages to their arms. These men were probably engaged in a ritualistic dance, or in the act of performing a ceremony in which the bird assumed an important part.

If one went into detail, and covered the entire period of man's dominance of the Southeastern part of these United States, these comments would become well-nigh endless. Perhaps this bit of data, derived through the medium of archaeological research, will suffice to indicate that the bird in the time of the American Indian was as much the object of interest, both economically and esthetically, as it is today.

MID-WINTER BIRD COUNT 1952

Edited by GORDON WILSON, Bowling Green

The Mid-winter Bird Count conducted by some of our members in late December, 1952, is in many ways one of our very best since a few scattering censuses were recorded in THE KENTUCKY WARBLER in the January, 1926, issue. The long-continued dry weather forced all waterfowl to be feeding or resting on our larger rivers and our few permanent ponds and lakes. Inland ponds and marshes were largely dry. Kentucky Woodlands, Henderson, Owensboro, and Louisville have reported large numbers of water birds, of 36 species. Land birds, especially those that suffered such great inroads on their numbers because of the severe winter of 1950-51, show, in general, a noticeable uptrend in numbers. Again we have some unusual species for our mid-winter count: Louisville has the first authentic report of an Eared Grebe for the state; the Bald Eagle appears on the Kentucky Woodlands, Henderson, and Louisville; the Woodcock was seen at Henderson and Louisville; Bonaparte's Gull, somewhat of a rarity in winter, appeared in good numbers at Louisville; Henderson reports the Barn Owl and the Short-eared Owl; the Phoebe, usually reported from two or more places, is on only the Bowling Green list; the Brown Thrasher appeared at Madisonville, Henderson and Owensboro for one of the few times in the history of our census in Kentucky; Louisville has a great oddity in its Baltimore Oriole; again the Pine Siskin appears on our list, with 109 reported from Louisville; Kentucky Woodlands has a LeConte's Sparrow; and Henderson reports both the Chipping and the Harris's Sparrows. In the "Field Notes" section of this issue will be found some comments on many of these rare finds. The editor of this department wishes to thank again all participants in this annual count and to solicit their continued help in making this distinctive study more and more valuable.

KENTUCKY WOODLANDS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (7½-mile radius centering at Laura Lease, extending northward to Kentucky Dam, southward to the Rock Castle road, eastward to the Cumberland River, and westward to Kentucky Lake; open water 25%, woodland 14%, shoreline 4%, open fields 18%, roadsides 25%).—Dec. 27; 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 24 to 35; wind NE, 0-12 m.p.h.; ground frozen in early morning; water frozen in the more sheltered bays. Nine observers in 6 parties. Total party-hours, 34 (25 on foot, 9 by car); total party-miles, 144 (18 on foot, 126 by car). The numbers for some of the water species are partly estimated. Total, 67 species about 9,414 individuals.—FRED CUNNINGHAM, JUDITH CUNNINGHAM, EUGENE CYPERT (Compiler), MARY LOUISE CYPERT, KATHLEEN KEY, O. V. McNEELY, LAUREN PUTNAM, NELLIE STRICKLAND, and GRACE WYATT.

MARION (City of Marion and Ohio River and its bottoms: woods, fields, and thickets).—Dec. 28; 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p. m. Clear; no wind; temp. 30. Total, 53 species, 1801 individuals.—**CHASTAIN FRAZER** and **DR. T. ATCHISON FRAZER**.

PENNYRILE STATE PARK (Deciduous and pine woods and fields within the park area, Pennyrile Lake, and adjoining farmlands; wooded area 50%, open fields in the park 15%, farmlands 15%, lake shore 20%).—Dec. 29; 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Partly cloudy; wind SW, 13-18 m.p.h.; temp. 26 to 40. Total hours, 10; total miles, 14 (7 on foot, 7 by car). Total, 35 species, 390 individuals. Strangely enough, several rarities were recorded, whereas others, more or less to be expected, such as Winter Wren, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, and Bluebird, were not seen. This is the first winter record of the Ruby-crowned Kinglet for Pennyrile.—**KENNETH BROWN** and **JAMES W. HANCOCK**.

MADISONVILLE (W. W. Hancock farm, Brown and Frostburg Roads, and five lakes at Madisonville; open fields 20%, deciduous woodlands and thickets 60%, lake shore 20%).—Dec. 22; 6:45 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Heavy overcast and occasional light showers; wind SE, 8-12 m.p.h.; temp. 38 to 44. Total hours, 10; total miles, 25 (7 on foot, 18 by car). Total, 44 species, 747 individuals. At times a cold rain hindered observation. Other species recorded during Christmas week: Dec. 23: Loggerhead Shrike, 2; Bewick's Wren, 1; Dec. 26: Ring-necked Duck, 42; Lesser Scaup, 28; Ruddy Duck, 2; Brown Creeper, 1; Cedar Waxwing, 10 (all for this latter date at Brown Meadow Lake). Among other birds known to be wintering are Red-shouldered Hawk, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Winter Wren, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Red-winged Blackbird, and Cowbird.—**JAMES W. HANCOCK**.

HENDERSON (7½-mile radius from Audubon State Park Museum; deciduous woods 28%, sloughs and bottom lands 12%, hill fields and fence rows 25%, river and edges 18%, small thickets 9%, abandoned fields 3%, town and suburbs 5%).—Dec. 20; 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Cloudy; wind S to NW, 8-11 m.p.h.; temp. 53 to 40. Passage of a cold front with a threat of snow made birds very active; some drizzle. Twenty observers in 5 parties. Total party-hours, 34 (16 on foot, 12 by car, 6 by boat); total party-miles, 32 (15½ on foot, 10 by car, 6½ by boat). Three of the Canada Geese were of a lesser race, the Lesser or Hutchins. Some of the larger figures are estimates. Total, 87 species (and 1 additional subspecies), about 42,706 individuals. The Harris's Sparrow was seen by Virginia Smith and King Benson as they were working a small wood lot with scanty undergrowth, on the Lyle place. Benson says that he had an opportunity to study this same bird at close range last fall; several of this species were feeding just outside his window, where he watched them, bird book in hand, for a long time. W. P. Rhoads and Franklin Berry recorded one of the Chipping Sparrows on a ridge between two arms of the lake in Audubon State Park, in low shrubs and sparse broomsedge. Both observers had close observation for several minutes. The double eye-stripe was plainly visible, even without glasses. Another Chipping Sparrow was observed by Mrs. Nat Stanley, Sr., Mrs. Nat Stanley, Jr., and Mrs. George Stanley, Jr., in the edge of Green River bottom. The rest of the Chippings were recorded by Walter Alves on his farm just west of Henderson, in

some small thickets in a pasture. Seen in the area Dec. 23: Snowy Owl, 1 (by Mrs. Manion); Dec. 11: Herring Gull (by W. P. Rhoads).—WALTER ALVES, KING BENSON, FRANK BERRY, LESLIE CLARK, MRS. LORA CLARK, JIMMY FRIELDS, AMELIA KLUTEY, MRS. LEO MANION, W. P. RHOADS (compiler), MRS. ARCH SHELTON, VIRGINIA SMITH, R. C. SOAPER, MRS. GEORGE STANLEY, JR., MRS. NAT STANLEY, SR., MR. AND MRS. NAT STANLEY, JR., MRS. RICHARD STITES, EDNA VOGEL, and MRS. ZENAIDA WATSON.

OWENSBORO (Ohio River bottoms, Carpenter's Lake, Panther Creek, fields, roadsides, and suburban areas).—Dec. 26 and 27. We studied four types of habitats in four scattered areas and made a total of five trips. Total hours afield, 15; total miles, 82 by car and 10 to 12 on foot. Weather fairly cold, and windy at times on both days. Total, 50 species, approximately 2,311 individuals. During the week of December 13 and 14, Mr. and Mrs. Powell found 2 male and 4 female Am. Widgeon, and at the weekend of December 21 Mr. Powell found them again. They usually appear every winter at Carpenter's Lake. The Canada Geese were seen at Little Hurricane Island, below the Owensboro Locks, by Powell and Charles Seaborn, of Memphis, Tennessee. They were flying in huge flocks and rather high; 1000 is a very conservative estimate. On January 1 the following additions were made to our censuses: Mallard, 3000; Black Duck, 25-50; Pintail, 1; Cooper's Hawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 2; Marsh Hawk, 1; Bewick's Wren, 1 (at Miss Virginia Smith's home near Henderson); Brown Thrasher, 1; Swamp Sparrow, several.—JOE FORD, CHARLES SEABORN, A. L. POWELL, JR. (Compiler), and MRS. A. L. POWELL, JR.

BOWLING GREEN (Schneider, Taylor, Chaney, and Albert Covington farms; Three Springs; Lost River; Mouth of Gasper).—Dec. 22; 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Cloudy; occasional showers from mid-morning on; temp. 38 to 43; wind SW, 1-7 m.p.h. Four observers in three parties. Total, 52 species, 3493 individuals. Other species recorded in late December or on January 1: Black Duck, Black Vulture, Marsh Hawk, and Bob-white. Several species showed a decided increase over their numbers of a year ago, when the birds had not recovered from the severe winter of 1950-51.—L. Y. LANCASTER, CHARLES L. TAYLOR, J. R. WHITMER, and GORDON WILSON (Compiler).

MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK (Central area, Beaver Pond, Katy Pace Valley, Hickory Cabin, North Bank of Green River, Joppa Ridge).—Dec. 29; 6:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear; wind SW, 1-3 m.p.h.; temp. 19 to 47. Four observers in two parties. Total, 34 species, 750 individuals. In spite of the small number of individuals on this list, the following species were more numerous than on any previous census in the park: Yellow-shafted Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Myrtle Warbler. Nearly all species showed an increase over the 1951 census.—FRANK EWING, MYRON HAYS, Park Naturalist C. T. REID, and GORDON WILSON (Compiler).

MID-WINTER BIRD COUNT 1952	Ky. Woodlands	Marion	Penn. St. Park	Madisonville	Henderson	Owensboro	Bowling Green	Mam. Cave Pk.	Louisville	Otter Creek	Willard	Maysville
Common Loon				1	16				2			
Horned Grebe									2			
Eared Grebe									1			
Pied-billed Grebe					2				10			
D-cr. Cormorant					1							
Gr. Blue Heron	4	2			12		1					
Bl.-cr. Night Heron					1				21			
Canada Goose	3260	18			1126	1000			63			
Snow Goose	1											
Mallard	2225	335			25M	119	264	3	228	70		
Black Duck	404	132			1900	3		25	215	50		2
Gadwall	4											
Am. Widgeon	38		10			*			6			
Pintail	1		40		210	*			2			
Green-winged Teal					70				1			3
Wood Duck					1		2					
Redhead					2	2			*			
Ring-necked Duck	20	1	75	11	60	25	2		20			4
Canvas-back					220	8			75			
Gr. Scaup Duck									1			
Les. Scaup Duck	35	6		*	1100	5			301	10		
Am. Golden-eye	12				80	1			3			
Buffle-head	4				12	1			27			
Old-squaw					6							
Ruddy Duck	1			*	7	1			26			
Hooded Merganser	4								10			
Am. Merganser	2				37				3			
R.-br. Merganser					135							
Turkey Vulture		4			3				6			
Black Vulture			1					9	7			12
Sharp-sh. Hawk					1				2			
Cooper's Hawk	1	1			5	1			4	1		1
Red-tailed Hawk	6		1	1	13	*			6	2		3
Red-sh. Hawk	2	1		*	22	1			7	1		1
Rough-legged Hawk							2					
Bald Eagle	3				4				1	1		
Marsh Hawk		2		2	14	2	*		1			
Osprey					1							
Peregrine Falcon					4							
Sparrow Hawk		2		3	33	22	4		53	1		3
Ruffed Grouse	2										1	
Bob-white	9	13	10	13	15	4	*	12	5	12		
Eastern Turkey	11											
Am. Coot	28	2			1	2			2			
Killdeer	5		1	3	51	2	16		5			
Am. Woodcock					1				1			
Wilson's Snipe				2	1		5					
Herring Gull	3	13							142			
Ring-billed Gull	2018					50			900			
Bonaparte's Gull									20			
Mourning Dove	19	20		43	261	4	140		79			
Barn Owl					1							
Screech Owl	1	1			2	1			1			
Horned Owl	1				3				2			
Barred Owl	3	4		1		1			3			
Short-eared Owl					1							

MID-WINTER BIRD COUNT 1952	Ky. Woodlands	Marion	Penn. St. Park	Madisonville	Henderson	Owensboro	Bowling Green	Mam. Cave Pk.	Louisville	Otter Creek	Willard	Maysville
Belted Kingfisher	5	2		1	5	2	3	1	3	2		
Y.-sh. Flicker	20	6	2	13	23	13	24	21	73	19		19
Pil. Woodpecker	2	2	1	1	9	1	7	12	5	2	3	
Red-bel. Woodpecker	6	16	1	9	20	7	18	14	43	4		5
Red-h. Woodpecker		2		2	4	1	1		7			
Y.-b. Sapsucker	3	1		*	4	2	1	6	4	5		
Hairy Woodpecker		5		4	10	1	4		10	2	5	1
Downy Woodpecker	22	23	4	9	34	11	32	10	76	9	6	19
Eastern Phoebe							1		*			
Horned Lark		12		17	35	30	115		2			
Blue Jay	20	15	2	20	67	46	65	9	101	53		3
Am. Crow	61	32	12	6	10M	109	401	16	2454	172	1	216
Carolina Chickadee	85	65	30	22	75	46	92	39	123	45	20	27
Tufted Titmouse	26	80	2	28	62	43	43	20	149	22	10	14
White-br. Nuthatch	23	3		1	17	1	13	26	4			1
Red-br. Nuthatch			1		7		2		2			
Brown Creeper		1		*	5		1		14	8		1
Winter Wren				*	4		3	4	7	2		1
Bewick's Wren		3	1	*	4		1					
Carolina Wren	12	6		12	8	7	28	8	41	11	4	13
Short-b. Marsh Wren										1		
Long-b. Marsh Wren					1							
Mockingbird	1	5		8	22	5	16		40	1		
Brown Thrasher				*	1	*						
Am. Robin	3	4	4	*	2		77	97	169	41		
Hermit Thrush			3	2	8	2	6	9	1	2		
E. Bluebird	23	16		17	36	7	22	15	134	11	18	9
Golden-cr. Kinglet	2		21				8	7	8	10	15	
Ruby-cr. Kinglet		6	1		2				1			
Cedar Waxwing	2	18		*	14		28	60	71	28		
Loggerhead Shrike				*	3		2		3			
Com. Starling	129	350	1	53	520	25	1020		11M	75		89
Myrtle Warbler	2		8	3	1		14	48	2	18		
English Sparrow	45	150	12	80	352	300	287	15	159	3	6	60
East. Meadowlark	4	35		52	276	50	2		8	1		10
Red-wing	6	6		*					3			
Rusty Blackbird				1			85	3	2			
Purple Grackle	2	6			23				500			1
Brown-h. Cowbird		150		*	151							
Cardinal	70	29	22	41	229	104	167	39	622	77	7	37
Purple Finch	104		11	1			9	50	11	50		
Pine Siskin									109			
Am. Goldfinch	198	7	4	32	8	7	82	19	62	2	32	10
Eastern Towhee	32	5	1	25	15	20	42	41	263	11		1
Savannah Sparrow	2											
LeConte's Sparrow	1											
Slate-col. Junco	310	65	68	107	74	56	132	94	411	152	55	56
Am. Tree Sparrow	15	65	21	10	6	2	10		95	13		13
Chipping Sparrow					2							1
Field Sparrow	7		5	21	51	125	1	2	10	10		7
Harris's Sparrow					4							
White-cr. Sparrow	2	20		6	31	6	62		12	2		1
White-th. Sparrow	23	8	6	17	4	2	101	17	136	3		2
Fox Sparrow	5		2	2	6		4		2	1		
Swamp Sparrow	10		2	12	*		1	1	3	11		
Song Sparrow	4	22	4	27	10	27	37	11	86	21	5	14

LOUISVILLE (Louisville, Anchorage, and Worthington to Prospect, Goshen, and the Ohio River in Jefferson and Oldham Counties).—Dec. 21; 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Overcast; temp. 31 to 46; wind very slight, 2-5 m.p.h.; rain the previous two days; all water open. Thirty-five observers in 11 parties. Total party-hours, 75 (69 on foot, 6 by car); total party-miles, 91 (39 on foot, 52 by car). The Eared Grebe, the first state record, was observed as close as 20 yards in good light in morning by Monroes; all field marks noted: dark neck, conspicuous white ear patch, and slender upturned bill; observed again in afternoon by Brecher. The Greater Scaup was shot by a hunter. The Baltimore Oriole was wintering at the home of Dr. Arch Cole and fed on sugar-coated grape-fruit candy. Additional species observed during the week were: White-winged Scoter, Phoebe. Total, 86 species, about 19,735 individuals.—KIM BABCOCK, LEONARD BRECHER, HELEN BROWNING, FLOYD CARPENTER, WILLIAM CLAY, JACOB P. DOUGHTY, MRS. J. J. ELLINGTON, TOM FULLER, PAXTON GIBBS, BOB KELLOGG, MR. AND MRS. F. X. KRULL, HOWARD C. MITCHELL, BURT L. MONROE, JR., BURT L. MONROE, SR., (Compiler), MRS. H. V. NOLAND, KENT PREVIERTE, MR. AND MRS. HARVEY B. LOVELL, EVELYN J. SCHNEIDER, WALTER SHAKLETON, MR. AND MRS. FRANCIS SHANNON, JERRY SMITH, MR. AND MRS. F. W. STAMM, BOB STEILBERG, CHARLES STRULL, MRS. FAN TABLER, MR. AND MRS. S. CHARLES THACHER, AUDREY WRIGHT, MABEL SLACK, VIRGINIA WINSTANDLEY, LOUIS PIEPER, and MARIE PIEPER.

WILLARD—Dec. 26; 9:40 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Cloudy most of the time, with a little sunshine in the afternoon. Temp. about 38 all day. Ten miles of fields and woods. Total, 15 species, 188 individuals.—ERCEL KOZEE.

MAYSVILLE, Mason County, Kentucky (Jersey Ridge, German-town Road, Charlestown River Bottom Road, banks of the Ohio River, creeks and river 5%, open farmlands 50%, deciduous woodlands 10%, roadsides 25%, thickets 5%, residential 5%).—Dec. 26; 9:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Cold, dull, cloudy; wind 10-12 m.p.h.; temp. 25-32 degrees; ground bare, ponds and creeks frozen over, river open. Two observers together. Total hours 5¼; total miles, 27 (5 on foot, 22 by car). Total species, 35; individuals, 647.—FRED W. STAMM, ANNE L. STAMM.

OTTER CREEK PARK (Ohio River, Otter Creek, the park area and adjacent farmlands; river 10%, mature woods 10%, brushy fields 35%, open meadows 15%, farmlands 30%).—Dec. 28; 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Weather mild, partly cloudy; no ice or snow; wind 3-5 m.p.h. Total hours 19 (15 on foot, 4 by car); total miles, 25. Six persons in 3 parties. Total species, 47; total individuals, 1052.—ANNE STAMM, FRED STAMM, FLOYD CARPENTER, DR. PERRY FRAZER, FRANK X. KRULL, H. B. LOVELL (Compiler).

FIELD NOTES

SIGHT RECORDS FOR TWO NORTHERN GULLS IN KENTUCKY

On the morning of December 25, 1949, while we were watching a small group of Herring Gulls (*Larus argentatus*) feeding on the Falls of the Ohio, Louisville, Jefferson County, Kentucky, a Glaucous Gull (*Larus hyperboreus*) in first winter plumage appeared in their midst. Excellent comparisons were possible, as the Herring Gulls were in various plumage stages. The bird in question was as big as or very slightly larger than the Herring Gulls. Also observing the bird were Dr. Harvey B. Lovell and Mr. Donald Summerfield, in addition to the writers. The only other record for the state is another sight record by Floyd Carpenter, made at Louisville on February 21 and 24, 1942 (Ky. Warbler 18:37).

The writers had the good fortune to observe an Iceland Gull (*Larus leucopterus*) in first winter plumage on February 9, 1952, near Harrod's Creek, Jefferson County, Kentucky. The bird was first seen feeding in a flooded field adjacent to the Ohio River with a flock of Ring-billed and Herring Gulls. Again comparisons were made possible. The bird was slightly larger than the Ring-billed and noticeably smaller than the Herring Gulls. After several minutes the flock left the field and flew overhead, heading up the Ohio River.

Although these are sight records, they were both made under very good conditions and are here entered for what they are worth.—BURT L. MONROE, SR., AND BURT L. MONROE, JR., Anchorage.

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ENGLISH SPARROWS FEEDING ON INSECTS

On September 20, 1952, in late afternoon I observed a flock of about 40 English Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) feeding on small grasshoppers along a country road near Murray, Kentucky. The birds, in flycatcher fashion, flew out from the fences, hovered, and snapped up the insects, which were flying through the weeds. Maurice Brooks, (Wil. Bull., 63: 116) noted English Sparrows eating locust leaf-miners. Whether these are incidental observations or whether this behavior has been largely unreported for this species might be of some interest.—L. S. PUTNAM, Dept. of Zoology and Entomology, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

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SIGHT RECORDS OF THE HARRIS SPARROW IN KENTUCKY AND SOUTHERN INDIANA

On December 15, 1952, I was sitting at my window when to my surprise strange Sparrows appeared upon the scene. I was watching about a dozen White-crowned Sparrows enjoying their tidbits at a favorite feeding spot not over fifteen feet from me when I noticed the two strange birds. I knew at once I had added a new species to my life list, the Harris's Sparrow. They were the most beautiful sparrows I had ever seen, about the size of the Fox Sparrow, and exhibited a more alert and wilder appearance than my rather tame White Crowns. Their black crowns were veiled in gray, for they

were in their first winter plumage, because instead of a black bib which is so characteristic of the adults the second winter, these birds had blotched and streaked breasts which were more or less fused into a beautiful buff color on the sides. The stripes on the back were very distinct and gave the bird a mighty handsome appearance. When something frightened the flock, the two Harris's Sparrows flew up in the top of an apple tree nearby, while the White Crowns alighted in some sumac bushes that stood near their feeding place—another distinct characteristic of Harris's Sparrows.

I sat with eager anticipation hoping that they would reward me with their song, and, sure enough, this they did. I then went outside in order to see whether I could get closer to them. On seeing me they flew to a plum tree not far away and gave utterance to their best sparrow song. It is similar to that of the White Throat but is even more delicate and richer in tone and quality than even that gifted singer. Two days later the pair returned to the same spot.

On December 21, Virginia Smith and I were taking the Christmas Bird Census on a hill farm where there was a wood lot. A flock of winter birds were flushed, but four remained and flew into very low trees. They were so close to us and sat there so long that we had no trouble in identifying them as Harris's Sparrows.

Mrs. James C. Bower had found a pair in Evansville, Indiana, on November 18, 1952, and also another pair on December 26. Both pairs were immatures.

According to Russell Mumford, a Harris's Sparrow was observed in Porter County, Indiana, by Merrill Sweet on October 16, 1952. Mumford saw one in Jackson County in the same state on December 7 and remarks that there seems to have been a heavier fall flight of this species than usual east of the Mississippi River.—KING BENSON, Route 1, Henderson.

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BLUEBIRD HOUSES

Twenty years ago we were living on a Kentucky farm, not many miles from Louisville, and at the back of our house there stood a large square cedar post, which was used for holding up one end of a clothes line. Woodpeckers had excavated a hole in one side near the top of this post, and in this cavity a pair of Bluebirds built their nest each summer.

The Bluebirds reared two or three families each season in the cedar post, and all the Bluebird children remained in the yard all summer. Every time we stepped out the back door, we were greeted by a large company of Bluebirds. To us these birds became such a delight that we have been putting up Bluebird houses ever since and now have some 300 houses in operation over a wide section of the United States. Our problem is to locate these houses in suitable places where they will be appreciated and protected. In general a box should face an open area, as Bluebirds rarely nest in heavily-wooded areas.

Bluebirds, as you know, would normally build in hollow tree limbs, but dead trees are no longer permitted to stand, particularly in our cities. Bird houses are acceptable substitutes but bird houses must be properly designed and located in order to attract Bluebirds. Houses should be placed not over 5 feet above the ground; otherwise they will be occupied by English Sparrows. While many ornithologists recommend placing the boxes on a pole in the open, we have found that they are accepted by the Bluebirds nearly as well if placed low in trees.

We make no charge for our houses and would prefer, where convenient, to have the pleasure of putting them up ourselves, in case any one should be interested. These houses are constructed according to Audubon Society specifications and will last 8 years in the weather. These boxes have a removable bottom through which the old nests can be removed or English Sparrow nests destroyed.—W. G. DUNCAN, 315 Jarvis Lane, Louisville.

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1952 CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS AT THREE RIVERS ST. JOSEPH COUNTY, MICHIGAN

In the Christmas Bird Census period for the year, 1952, I took four trips, and the one I took on Dec. 25, 1952 turned to be my biggest for this Christmas. This is as follows:

Three Rivers, St. Joseph County, Michigan.—Dec. 25; 7:08 to 10:20 a.m. CST. Weather, snow fell most of the day, and the ground began to get white at my return; moderate westerly wind; temp. 30 to 32. Observer, alone, covering some of city and country; also some marshes and some of Portage, Rocky, and St. Joseph Rivers. Common Canada Goose, 1; Common Mallard, 58; American Golden-eye, 12; Ring-billed Gull, 1; Domestic Pigeon, 44; Eastern Belted Kingfisher, 1; Eastern Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Northern Downy Woodpecker, 2; Northern Blue Jay, 10; Eastern Crow, 1; Black-capped Chickadee, 10; Tufted Titmouse, 1; White-breasted Nuthatch, 3; Brown Creeper, 1; European Starling, 33; English Sparrow, 165; Eastern Cardinal, 6; Eastern Purple Finch, 2; Eastern Goldfinch, 4; Slate-colored Junco, 1; Eastern Tree Sparrow, 23; Song Sparrow, 3. Total species, 22; individuals 383.

Other species observed recently, but not on the date of census, are: Dec. 23, 1 Prairie Horned Lark, 1 Sharp-shinned Hawk, and 1 Cooper's Hawk; Dec. 30, 1 Lapland Longspur; Jan. 4, 1953: 1 Red-bellied Woodpecker; Jan. 8: 2 Eastern Golden-crowned Kinglets.—OSCAR McKINLEY BRYENS, 231 South Main Street, Three Rivers, St. Joseph County, Michigan.

NEWS AND VIEWS

BECKHAM BIRD CLUB DINNER. The annual dinner was held on February 9 in the Jefferson Room at the U. of L., with President Anne Stamm presiding. The Award of Merit was presented to Burt L. Monroe for his many years of service to both the club and to ornithology in Kentucky.

Among the activities and honors listed for Burt were: Treasurer and now first vice-president of the Wilson Ornithological Club; member and representative on the council of the A. O. U.; state ornithologist, past president of the League of Kentucky Sportsmen, and editorial writer for *Happy Hunting Ground*; chief founder and first president of the Beckham Bird Club; past president of the K. O. S. and for two years editor of the *Kentucky Warbler*; author of numerous articles in the *Auk*, *Wilson Bulletin*, *Migrant*, a chapter in *A Guide to Bird Finding*, and for several years the author of weekly column in the *Sunday Courier-Journal*, entitled the "Courier Sportsman."

Dr. Ralph Edeburn was the chief speaker of the evening. He is professor at Marshall College, Huntington, West Virginia. The first part of his interesting talk was devoted to an analysis of the birds within a 50-mile circle of Huntington. There have been 230 species recorded within the area plus 2 extinct species: the Passenger Pigeon and Carolina Paroquet. Among the unusual birds cited were Saw-whet Owl, Swainson's Warbler, and Pine Siskin. During 13 years of Christmas bird counts about 100 winter birds have been recorded, of which 35 are permanent residents. The best count was 87 species in 1952. Their largest spring count in May is 152 species. The second part of his talk was illustrated by a film entitled "Nature Recreation," which included many interesting shots of bird activities.

ANOTHER HOWARD ROLLIN PAINTING. The K. O. S. has received a Christmas present of a beautiful painting of the Arizona Pyrrhuloxia. This brightly-colored bird is a native of southern Arizona, southwestern New Mexico, and western Texas. With fine skill Mr. Rollin has portrayed both the male, with his red and gray plumage, and the female, with her less colorful dress. This is the ninth year that Mr. Rollin has sent us one of his paintings with his compliments. These pictures are available for loan to members for one year. Applications should be sent to the custodian, Miss Evelyn J. Schneider. Members desiring to purchase one of Mr. Rollin's original paintings may do so at a cost of from 5 to 12 dollars, depending upon the size. The editor will be glad to help arrange such a purchase.

HENDERSON AUDUBON SOCIETY presented Karl Maslowski on January 23 at a dinner in the Soaper Trellis Room in Henderson. Maslowski showed his famous film entitled "Earthquake Lake," which was taken at Reelfoot Lake in Western Tennessee, chiefly in "Cranetown," as the great rookery of egrets and herons is called. Visitors attended from all over Western Kentucky and adjacent Indiana, many of whom are members of both the Audubon Society and the K. O. S. The growth of the Henderson club has been phenomenal. Starting from a nucleus of about a dozen bird enthusiasts about 5 years ago, the club now numbers some 300 members, an amazing achievement for a city the size of Henderson. The presence of the

Audubon State Park and Museum has been important stimulus, but much of the credit is due to Virginia Smith, who has organized the society.

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BULLETIN OF THE GARDEN CLUB OF KENTUCKY. The first issue for 1953 has just been received. It is edited by Mrs. J. Kidwell Grannis, Flemingsburg. It contains 32 large double-column pages about the activities of the gardeners in the state. Miss Virginia Smith of Henderson, as chairman of the bird committee, has a report in which she urges each club to devote one program to birds and suggests that each member identify the spring and summer birds as they arrive.

Dr. J. W. Clotfelter writes from Paris, Kentucky, that he is still actively interested in birds and has given 3 talks on ornithology during the last year: Paris Junior High School, a church group, and the Bourbon County Garden Club. There is considerable interest in birds among the garden club members.

Kent Prevlette wrote a fine article on Christmas bird counts in Kentucky which appeared in the Sunday Magazine section of the *Courier-Journal* with a circulation of nearly 300,000. As a result several new members were obtained, including 3 from Ashland, a section of the state from which we had no members.

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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, Inc., owes its success to leaders of the past who have worked untiringly for the betterment of bird protection and conservation. Now our present members are trying to expand this program and create a greater feeling of responsibility to the state society.

We know that there are many people in Kentucky who are actively interested in birds but are not affiliated with the K. O. S. We must work constantly to increase our membership. If each member would try to add one new one, our goal of 400 for this year would be reached easily.

There are many things to be done for a stronger K. O. S., such as more local societies, more lecture programs, more bird-banding stations, and more articles for the *WARBLER*.

K. O. S. will celebrate thirty years as an organization next October 9, 10, 11 at Cumberland Falls State Park. We have invited the Tennessee Ornithological Society to meet with us. A committee is at work now on the program, which will include interesting field trips.

Plan now to come and make our dream of 100 in attendance a reality. With the help of each of you, I feel sure that these things can be accomplished.—VIRGINIA SMITH, Henderson.

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NATURE CONSERVANCY. This relatively new organization has been formed by a group of prominent ecologists, field naturalists, and others to protect our vanishing wildlife and other resources. They are urging all those with a serious interest in wildlife to join

and lend their support to this national group. Dues of \$2.00 may be sent to the editor, who is acting as chairman of the Conservancy in Kentucky, or directly to Nature Conservancy, 1840 Mintwood Place, N. W., Washington, D. C.

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SPRING PROGRAM

The regular spring meeting will be held on Friday, April 17, 1953, in the Mirror Room of the Kentucky Hotel. The luncheon will be at noon, for which members are requested to make reservations with Mrs. S. Charles Thacher, 2918 Brownsboro Road, Louisville (\$2.00 per plate). A business session will begin at 1:00 followed by a talk by Professor A. S. Bradshaw, Transylvania College, "Viewpoints on Ornithology."

The afternoon program will begin at 2:00 p. m. Demonstration Lesson on Bird Study by Grade 6, Cochran School, Louisville, Miss Mary McAlister, teacher.

"American Bird Artists and their Works," Dr. H. H. Michaud, Purdue University. Exhibit of Bird Paintings.

FIELD TRIP. Saturday, April 18, 7:30 a. m. Leaders: Leonard Brecher, Harvey Lovell. Meet at Castleman's Monument, Cherokee Road and Cherokee Parkway, or come directly to Indian Hills swamps.

THE FALL MEETING will be held at Cumberland Falls State Park. Plan now to attend. We hope to devote part of either the May or August issue to the natural history of the area with special references to birds and bird habitats. Please send photographs and notes on the park and its birds to the editor. There are several breeding birds in the park and adjacent Cumberland National Forest which are absent or rare in central and western Kentucky. These include the Ruffed Grouse, Pine Warbler, and Black-throated Green Warbler.

COMMON NAMES OF BIRDS. We call your attention to some of the changes in the names that occur in the table of Christmas bird counts in this issue. We are following the new common names recommended by the National Audubon Society in the printed lists which they send out to contributors. For example, it is now decided that the Purple and Bronze Grackle are merely minor variations (sub-species) of the same species and both are now called Purple Grackle. The Bald Pate is now called American Widgeon. Other unfamiliar names may be the: Yellow-shafted Flicker, Brown-headed Cowbird, Peregrine Falcon (for Duck Hawk) and Loggerhead Shrike (for Migrant Shrike, the latter name referring to an unrecognizable subspecies in the field; if recognized it should be called the Migrant Loggerhead Shrike). It is hoped that these few changes will make bird names more logical and in the end more satisfactory. It is designed to discourage the use of subspecific names by field observers.