

Kansas Ornithological Society

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Bulletin

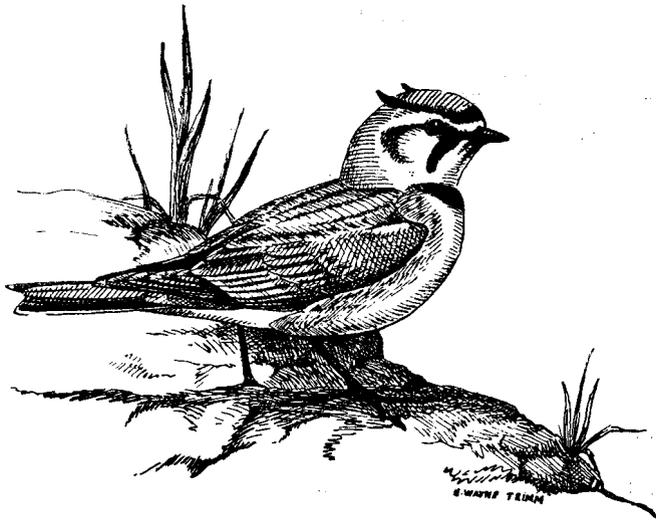
COUNSELORS

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Active Membership, \$1.00; Sustaining Membership, \$5.00.
Subscription to the Bulletin is included in either class of membership

Notes from the President

There are two or three things about which we need to begin to think for the coming year:

1. It has been customary in the fall to have an all-day bird-observation trip in some part of the state. There is no reason why we might not have more than one of these bird-hikes during the fall, winter or early spring. I think we will leave it to the members in the different parts of the state to organize such "hikes" and to let it be known that such trips are to be. However, we would be glad to send out notices to the membership of the where and when of such excursions. Please let us know about them.

2. Be thinking about the possibilities of an interesting paper which you might present at our annual meeting. Also remember that any interesting bird-observation or incident or experience would be welcomed by our editor, Ivan L. Boyd of Baldwin, Kansas.

3. All committee chairmen remain the same for next year except the membership chairman. Since that is in the hands of the vice-president, the new chairman is Rev. Eugene Dehner of Atchison. All chairmen will appoint the members of their respective committees. Please send us the names of the members of your committee.

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We know of at least three of our members who had interesting trips during the summer which ought to yield some most interesting bird studies: Rev. Eugene Dehner, our genial vice-president, spent most of the summer in and around Yellowstone National Park. Our secretary, Rollin Baker, spent several weeks in Mexico. Bill Eastman and his family drove to the Pacific northwest and back in August. It seems to me I heard that our photographer and artist par excellence, Orville Rice, of Topeka, had made a trip to the Pacific Coast.

L. D. Wooster

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General Notes

Parula Warblers at Baldwin.—On July 13, 1953, R. F. Miller and James Loewen observed a male Parula Warbler feeding two young birds in a woods about a mile southwest of Baldwin. Parula Warblers (both male and female) have been frequently seen in the Baldwin region in the months of April, May, June and July, but no nests have been found. These birds are usually seen in the tops of tall sycamore trees. There is need of some research to discover the nesting habits of this species in Kansas.

Linn County Bird Club Being Organized.—Plans are being made to organize a bird club in Linn County. There is a need for such an organization in southeast Kansas as well as there is in many other parts of the state. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson Dingus have exerted considerable influence in this area and are to be congratulated for their efforts. Anyone desiring information on steps necessary for organizing such a group might contact the Dingus' or your editor. Who else will be responsible for adding a local club to those now functioning in Kansas; namely Burroughs Nature Club (Kansas City area), Topeka Audubon Society and Baldwin Bird Club? Are there others?

Warblers at Baldwin.—The warbler count of 25 species in the Baldwin area this spring not only surpassed all previous records, but also included for the first time these three, Blue-winged, Golden-winged, and Canada. Six of the rarer species were found, including Magnolia, Black-throated Green, Cerulean, Blackburian, Chestnut-sided, and the Northern Water-thrush. The Palm, Bay-breasted and Cape May that were seen here last year failed to reappear. The "regulars" on the list were Black and White, Tennessee, Orange-crowned, Nashville, Parula, Yellow, Myrtle, Black-poll, Ovenbird, Louisiana Water-thrush, Kentucky, Mourning, Yellow-throat, Chat, Wilson's, and American Redstart.

Warblers were most abundant on May 9, 10 and 11, and most of the species were found at "Big Hill" on the Baldwin-Vinland road. At least four species—Parula, Louisiana Water-thrush, Kentucky, and Yellow-throat—apparently are nesting in that same area.

Shore birds at Baldwin.—Three species of shore birds made unprecedented appearances in an area fifteen miles west of Baldwin last spring. The first was a flock of Golden Plovers seen Sunday, April 12, along Highway 50, near the Douglas-Osage county line. About forty plovers, none in full adult plumage, were in a burned-over pasture that was just beginning to green up. The flock was seen here several times during the week. By the second Sunday, April 26, the flock had moved to an unburned pasture a half mile east a fourth were in adult plumage. Two days later only 25 could be found and all had disappeared by May 2, the day of the spring census. That day and the next, however, Wilson's Phalarope appeared in two flocks of 23 and 20 each in this same vicinity, where usually only one or two individuals are found at a time.

Also on May 3, 22 Am. Avocets rested on Lone Star Lake a few miles to the northeast. The lake attracts very few shore birds or other water birds, so this find was quite surprising.

Two other unusual shore birds were reported at the Lone Star Lake during May, but neither stayed long enough for other members of the Baldwin Bird Club to verify the indentifications. One was a Red Phalarope and the other a sandpiper that had the round black spots, the wing stripe, the white-edged tail, and the teetering habit of a Spotty, but its head, neck, back, and breast were a brownish-black.

Gift and Exchange Issues of the Bulletin. It has been the policy of the editor to distribute the K. O. S. Bulletin to a wider range than that of the regular membership. This distribution, accomplished either by gift subscriptions or by exchange, includes the following:

- "Bluebird" (Missouri); G. E. Moore, editor.
 - "Indiana Audubon Quarterly"; James B. Cope, editor.
 - "Iowa Bird Life"; Fred Pierce, editor.
 - "Nebraska Bird Review"; William F. Rapp, editor.
 - "The Scissortail" (Oklahoma); Joe C. Creager, editor.
 - "South Dakota Bird Notes"; Herman F. Chapman, editor.
 - "Wilson Bulletin"; Harrison B. Tordoff, editor
- Library of Congress.
Wayne Trimm, contributor of the design for the front cover.

Black-throated Blue Warblers at Garden City.—Two Black-throated Blue Warblers were discovered September 18 by Marvin D. Schwilling at Garden City. One was collected by Mr. Schwilling for positive identification.

Ruddy Turnstone at Topeka.—L. B. Carson reported finding a Ruddy Turnstone September 19 at Lake Shawnee. This is another unusual record for the state.

Birding On Missouri's Niangua River

By Margaret Hedges
Kansas City, Kansas

The Niangua River rises in the uplands of south central Missouri and courses northward through the beautiful Missouri Ozark woodlands to enter the Lake of the Ozarks at the famed Hahatonka Castle near Camdenton. About midway down the river, one of Missouri's few trout streams, Bennet Spring Branch, enters and gives to the Niangua River a surge of clear cold water, enough water to make the river a fine float stream for the fisherman who enjoys plugging for the small mouth bass.

Fishermen are not the only ones lured by this peaceful scene, for birders too find a challenge here. It was along this beautiful river that the writer spent several days this past Fourth of July week-end floating in an aluminum canoe. The float of over 20 miles (both above and below Bennett Spring) proved very worth while for the scenery was lovely, the stream sporty enough to be interesting and the birding far beyond expectations.

Gliding along quietly in a canoe the birder has a great advantage for his approach is noiseless. In many places the giant rocks overhang the water and the great oaks and sycamores bend their mighty limbs to form a shady glen. In such an atmosphere as this the birds send their songs ringing back and forth across the hills. Thus, even the most uncommon ones do not escape the trained ear, for as the birder drifts through the water, the birds seem unaware of his presence. Under these circumstances the student may linger as long as he likes, listening over and over again to the same song or studying the habits of the birds at close range.

Fortunately for us most of the birds were still in good song on that early July week-end despite the hot, dry weather. It was the warblers that we were especially seeking to learn of their habitats and to become more familiar with their songs. Our biggest thrill was to find so many Sycamore Yellow-throated Warblers in full song. Scarcely a mile passed that we didn't get one or more of these beautiful warblers. Once one learns the song it is quite easy to pick up, even though the bird may be singing from the top of a tall sycamore tree several hundred yards distance. It is surprising to find this warbler so common on this river since it reaches its most northwestern breeding range in this part of Missouri. In all probability this bird can also be found in summer on up into the upper Osage or Grand river valleys.

Another elusive fellow that we were glad to see in fair numbers was the Cerulean Warbler. These were not as common as the Yellow-throated Warbler in this valley but were numerous enough that we soon learned their song. Only the Parula was more common. Other warblers seen or heard more or less regularly were the Black and White, Prothonotary, Worm-eating, Yellow, Prairie, Oven-bird, Louisiana Water-thrush, Kentucky, Yellow-throat, Chat, Hooded and Redstart—practically all of the warblers known to nest in Missouri.

Birding along the Missouri Ozark streams in any season of the year is always rewarding. We tried it last winter and spring and found it a very satisfactory means of studying the bird life in remote areas. Ordinarily a road into a wooded valley with a short walk from the car will give a birder some idea as what to expect, but it takes a long canoe float, averaging about three miles an hour, down these beautiful streams to bring out the best in birding.

The Niangua River is highly recommended for those hardy birders who want to get out and see something more than just a glimpse of Missouri's birds.

Nesting record of the Cedar Waxwing in Topeka.—Cliff Olander and T. W. Nelson found a nesting Cedar Waxwing in Topeka on June 16. The first breeding record for the waxwing in Kansas was reported by Harold Hedges only a few years ago.

Annual Report of the Best Bird Finds for Kansas *

By L. B. Carson
Topeka, Kansas

This is a report of the best or unusual birds as discovered and reported by birders of the state. The species reported were considered the best bird finds for the areas in which they were reported. These may or may not be unusual records for other localities of Kansas. Only the species seen since the last annual (1952) meeting were included. The arrangement is according to the most recent A. O. U. check-list.

Red-throated Loon; October 26, 1952 at Lake Shawnee by L. B. Carson and others.

White-crested (or Farallon Cormorant); April 12, 1953 at Lake Quivira by John Bishop, Harold Hedges and Elizabeth Cole.

Little Blue Heron in adult plumage; spring record at Concordia by John M. Porter.

Surf Scoter (two); October 18, 1952 at Lake Quivira by Harold Hedges.

White-winged Scoter; November 27, 1952 at Lake Quivira by Harold Hedges.
Ferruginous Rough-legged Hawk; April 12, 1953 two miles northeast of Lawrence by Mr. and Mrs. Bert Chewning and R. W. Fredrickson.

Prairie Falcon; December 21, 1952, six miles southwest of Lawrence by Robert Findley.

Whooping Crane fatally wounded; October 30, in a pasture $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles south of Sharon in Barber County, reported by Thane Robinson.

Yellow Rail; August and September, 1952 near Baldwin by Wilson Counts and T. A. Evans.

Red-backed Sandpiper; May 17, 1952 at Lawrence by Mr. and Mrs. Bert Chewning.

Piping Plover; May 4, 1952 at Lawrence by R. W. Fredrickson.

Long-billed Curlew; April 12, 1953 at Lawrence by Helen Chewning.

Bonaparte's Gull; October 26, 1952 four miles west of Baldwin by R. W. Fredrickson.

Sabine's Gull; October 18, 1952 at Shawnee Lake, Topeka by Elizabeth Fisher, Roberta Foote, Mrs. W. A. Huxman and Mrs. E. Thorpe.

Groove-billed Ani; October 28, 1952, $6\frac{3}{4}$ miles northwest of Blue Rapids, reported by Ted F. Andrews.

Hawk Owl; December 27, 1952 at Hays by L. D. Wooster

Burrowing Owl; October 21, 1953, near Ottawa by Phillip Krutzsch and T. Vaughn. Other records, without dates given, were from Jamestown by John Porter and at Ellinwood by Frank Robl.

Saw-whet Owl; December 26, 1952 at Shawnee by Elizabeth Cole.

Pileated Woodpecker; August 28, 1952 in Miami County State Park by Ray Wackly. Frequent observations were made of this species at Mound City by Mr. and Mrs. Wilson Dingus.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher; summer of 1952, nested at Concordia, was reported by John M. Porter.

Say's Phoebe; March 26, 1953 at Halstead by Edna Ruth.

Bay-breasted Warbler; May 2, 1952, two miles north of Topeka by Richard and Jean Graber. May 9, 1952, Central Park at Topeka by David Pantle. May 10, 1952, Baldwin by Katharine Kelley. May 12, 1952, Shawnee by Ben King. May 19, 1952, Halstead by Edna Ruth.

Cape May Warbler; May 25, 1952 Baldwin by Margaret Boyd.

Black-throated Blue Warbler; May 5 and October 11, 1952 Halstead by Edna Ruth.

Redpoll; January 28, 1953, Concordia by John M. Porter. March 25 and April 13, 1953 Halstead by Edna Ruth.
 Green-tailed Towhee; January 11, 1953 near Kansas City by Elizabeth Cole and Ben King. January 18 into April, 1953 at Topeka by Orville Rice.
 McCown's Longspur; December 26, 1952 at Wichita by Ray L. Keller and Harry L. Hobson.
 Smith's Longspur; December 20, 1952 at Emporia by Ted Andrews and others making Christmas Census. December 23, 1952 at Manhattan by H. T. Gier and others making Christmas Census.
 Chestnut-collared Longspur; December 12 to February 8, 1953 west of Quivira by Harold Hedges and Ben King.

*Presented at the annual meeting, April 18, 1953.

State Bird Notes

Notes from

Cheyenne Bottoms

On September 5 my wife, Marilyn, and I visited the Cheyenne Bottoms. A great deal of effort has been exerted channeling a creek into the area and throwing up levees. At the present time a channel is being dug to the Arkansas River in order to insure a stable water supply in the area. There are five pools in the Bottoms. Pool 1 (center pool) and pool 5 (channel) are refuges and hunting is not allowed on these two. There are 165 blinds on the other three pools. The levees have been graveled but the sand is still a little soft. Because of the arrangement shorebirds are never more than 50 to 100 feet from the car. The ducks get out in marsh grass, however.

We were astounded at the large numbers of individuals and species of birds which we found in the Bottoms. Following is what we saw: a Ferruginous Rough-legged Hawk eating a Black-tailed Prairie Dog; a flock of over 5000 Franklin Gulls plus 2 Laughing and one Bonaparte's; over 5000 Pintails, 5000 or more Blue-winged Teal; over 5000 Sandpipers in the levee roads in front of and beside our car—predominantly Baird's; 2 Willets; one Marbled Godwit; one Long-billed Curlew; over 50 Avocets, of which one was crippled; 2 Knots; 10 Prairie Falcons catching Sandpipers; 3 Duck Hawks; several Scissor-tailed Flycatchers; several Western Kingbirds; a few American Egrets, Black-crowned Night Herons and Great Blue Herons.

The Cheyenne Bottoms should be a good target for the Whooping Crane so we are planning to drive out there early in October.—John Bishop, Kansas City, Kansas

Notes from Halstead

Mississippi Kites, seen in Harvey County Park for 4 or 5 years, have been noted along the Emma Creek east of Halstead for the second year; also seen for the second year by boat out of Halstead. This summer we've had three sight records from in town, one from our own place. While not seen in profusion, there seems to be wider sprinkling than heretofore of the Upland Plover. Flickers, both Red- and Yellow-shafted, have been sparse in this area in recent years. Carolina Wrens, resident 4 years this fall, seen in quite a number of places, are now rarely heard. The Indigo Bunting may be extending its range somewhat, for we are still finding it along the little Arkansas River, where we had never seen it until last fall. The Blue Grosbeak is definitely being seen in more localities, though just a scattering. The Rose-breasted Grosbeak is visiting our yard more frequently this summer than previously. The Black-headed Grosbeak also has called on us at different times. He was fine help picking cherries on June 22! Quite a highlight was finding both full-plumage male Black-headed and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks bathing in the birdbath at the same time on June 29. This fall the 9 species of warblers seen included the Black-throated Green Warbler, Sept.

13. The Blue-headed Vireo bathed in our backyard spray, Sept. 9. First fall Cedar Waxwings were seen September 8 from the boat. Marie Dettweiler has seen two in town since then. So far, the Olive-backed Thrush have been scarce this fall,—only 4 seen. On September 11 we had one Wood-thrush on the river bank and one has been seen at Dettweiler's. Wood Pewee and Empidonax have been passing through. The Fowsend's Solitaire has been reported by L. P. Krehbiel, bathing in his backyard fountain, September 17.—Edna Ruth, Halstead.

Notes from Kansas City We have seen 29 species and one subspecies of shorebirds this year. The first and one of the best finds was a Mountain Plover that Don Hall and I found at Prairie Lake (Platte Co., Mo.) on March 14. On our Century Run Harold Hedges and I counted 20 species of shorebirds, including Avocets at Beverly Lake (Buchanan Co., Mo.), and a Sanderling at Little Bean Lake (Buchanan Co.) and an Eastern Dowitcher (a subspecies of the Long-billed which is the more common visitor; the Eastern race is considered accidental here). Wilson's Phalarope was one of the most common shorebirds this spring. Our highest count of phalaropes was 300 individuals at Trimble Wildlife Refuge, May 5. In the fall Golden Plovers are supposed to migrate offshore down the eastern coast, but five of them were at Bean Lake on September 13 and five at Trimble Refuge on September 19. That would seem to indicate that there is an inland migration route also.

On September 13 Wayne Maddux, Esther O'Conner and I located two Sandcrings at Bean Lake and a Knot at Sugar Lake (this being the first record for the Kansas City area). Buff-breasted Sandpipers have occurred regularly this fall. Two were seen at Sugar Lake, August 23; two at Bean Lake, August 30; one at Sugar Lake September 13 and 10 at Swan Lake on September 20.

John Bishop and Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Faye discovered a Sandhill Crane on Trimble Wildlife Refuge in March. Several Little Blue Herons in adult plumage were seen by Kansas City observers in April and May. Bill Buckingham found a Purple Gallinule (accidental) in early May.

Thirty-four species of warblers have been seen in the Kansas City area this year. Harold Hedges found a Hooded on May 1 at Quivira and I found one in Shawnee Cemetery, May 11. Hedges found a Cerulean, May 9 and Dr. H. E. Schoen located a Sycamore in Mt. Washington Cemetery, May 14. Jim Myers discovered a Black-throated Blue, May 9 at Mt. Washington. I got a Worm-eating at Quivira, May 15. Mary Louise Myers concluded the season by finding the extremely rare Connecticut at Swope Park. Even the Chestnut-sided, Bay-breasted, Magnolia and Golden-winged were so numerous they were considered common.

Three Painted Buntings appeared in the area during May but apparently they did not stay. Four Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were seen by birders at various spots.

Even some of the unusual sparrows showed themselves this season. On May 3, Elizabeth Cole located a Baird's Sparrow and several Gambel's White-crowned Sparrows near the Cole's homestead. Andrew Randolph and I spotted a Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Trimble on September 19. Other Burroughs Club members verified this sparrow and stated that it was the first record of this species for the Kansas City Region.

John and Marilyn Bishop got a Pigeon Hawk on August 27 at Sugar Lake. Father Terence Rhodes located a Duck Hawk at Trimble on September 14.

A composite list for the Kansas City Region would approach 300 species. My only regret is that it doesn't leave many new birds for next year.—Ben King, Shawnee. [Although this report is not exclusively birds seen in Kansas, it might be of general interest to K. O. S. members.—Ed.]

SCHEDULES FOR THIS SEASON'S AUDUBON SCREEN TOURS

Topeka Audubon Society
Municipal Auditorium — 7:30 P. M.

- Dec. 2—Merle Deusing
 “Outlaws in Nature”
 Dec. 30—George Miksch Sutton
 “Bird Magic in Mexico”
 Mar. 1—Laurel Reynolds
 “Western Discovery”
 April. 16—Robert Hermes
 “Once Up On An Island”

Burroughs Nature Club
Edison Hall — 8:00 P. M.

- Oct. 27—Allan Cruickshank
 “Santa Lucia Sea Cliff”
 Nov. 24—Lorus Milne
 “Panama Adventure”
 Jan. 20—Dick Bird
 “Newfoundland”
 Mar. 2—Laurel Reynolds
 “Southern Exposures”
 Apr. 20—Robert Hermes
 “Once Up On An Island”

Book Review

A GUIDE TO BIRD FINDING WEST OF THE MISSISSIPPI, by Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr. (Oxford University Press, 1953; price \$6.00).

The western volume of Dr. Pettingill's series on bird finding is off the press in October. It is indeed the book that we all have been looking forward to possessing, especially those who enjoy birding in the western part of the United States. Local birders who have used the eastern counterpart have found it exactly what they needed and will require no urging to obtain a copy of this edition. Pettingill's Guide will probably become essential to the eager bird watcher as the book by Duncan Hines has become for the hungry tourist.

There are 22 chapters; one for each state west of the Mississippi River. Each chapter consists of an introduction and a series of bird-finding locations. The introduction presents the ornithology of the state, with particular reference to physiographic regions and biological communities, to migration and to the winter season. The leading paragraph usually points out one or more matters of outstanding interest pertaining to the state. The material that follows takes up the regions and communities, describing them briefly and usually mentioning characteristic breeding birds. Two or more paragraphs deal with peculiarities of migration and winter birdlife. The principal migration routes through the state and their relationship to the continental flyways are indicated.

The chapter on each state is enlivened by one or more of George Miksch Sutton's pen-and-ink drawings. These sketches are either typical or unique for the state or region of the state in which the bird may be found.

The index is especially valuable because the species of birds are listed by pages as well as by states in which they are located.

The Kansas Ornithological Society members will be interested to know that the chapter on Kansas has the typical introduction and 14 bird-finding places. These 14 locations seem to include adequately all avifauna of the state.

Contributing authorities for Kansas were: D. J. Ameel, I. L. Boyd, L. B. Carson, J. C. Dean, E. W. Dehner, W. R. Eastman, Jr., J. E. Galley, Mrs. J. E. Galley, F. C. Gates, R. R. Graber, Mrs. R. R. Graber, H. C. Hedges, F. W. Robl, H. B. Tordoff.—I. L. B.