

Don't Forget Your Membership Dues

If you have not yet paid your dues for 1968, the treasurer and membership secretary urge you to do so at once. They would much rather bank your money, write your receipts and note your address changes in the dead of winter than later when spring migration starts. Dues reminder envelopes were mailed with the December Bulletins. The treasurer reports that 121 memberships (12 student, 21 sustaining, 88 regular) had been received to date.

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Fall Migration Notes Kirwin National Wildlife Refuge

Merle O. Bennett

The waterfowl migration through the Kirwin area was an interesting one. The Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal and Pintail migration, as always, started in August, but was hardly noticeable until early September. From September until the first week in December a steady buildup of waterfowl occurred, reaching a peak of 10,228 geese, mostly Canadas but including 150 White-fronts, 8 Snows, one Blue, and one Ross'. Ducks reached maximum numbers about the same time with 46,550 recorded. Most of the ducks were Mallards, but included a few Pintail, Widgeon, Golden-eye, and 9,000 Common Mergansers. The Ross' Goose stayed all fall and winter. We had our first Ross' in 1965. A few Hooded Mergansers were seen during the fall.

The big event of the fall was the arrival on October 23, of three Whooping Cranes. The two adults and one young set down on a mudflat about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south of the refuge office about 4:00 p.m. The birds were under observation from then until dark, but had moved west on the lake about one mile by sundown. The next morning we found the three another $\frac{1}{2}$ mile west standing in shallow water near a mudbar. Just as the sun peeked over the horizon (to give enough light for a photo) the birds took to the air heading south.

Four Common Loons were seen October 20 and at least one of them stayed for nearly a month. We didn't see him very often but could hear him about every morning and evening. An Osprey was seen several times in September and October. The Franklin's Gull migration was much less spectacular this year reaching a peak of 10,500 in early October. We usually record nearly 80,000 in the fall. Eagle numbers were below normal all fall. The first (a Golden) was seen October 20. A week later a Bald Eagle arrived and these two were the only ones using the area until January 9 when four Golden and three Bald Eagles were noted.

Several interesting collections were made during the fall. A male Mallard X Pintail hybrid showing characteristics of each was taken from a hunter and a male Mallard X Widgeon hybrid was captured during banding operations in late December. Both were presented to Dr. Ely and are in the Fort Hays Kansas State College collections.

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Fall Notes From Hays

Charles A. Ely

The fall migration at Hays was generally routine. We maintained a banding station during most of the period and most of our observations are from the near vicinity of Hays. Some of the more interesting observations through November are summarized below:

Cooper's Hawk - several sightings in mid Oct.; Long-eared Owl - 1, Oct. 13; Saw-whet Owl - singles, Oct. 14, 1 Nov. (first for Hays); Olive-sided Flycatcher - 1, Sept. 23; Long-billed Marsh Wren - 1, Oct. 20; Eastern Bluebird - usual small numbers during Oct.; Red-eyed Vireo - singles, Sept. 23 & 30; Magnolia Warbler - 1, Oct. 1 (first fall record); Ovenbird - singles, Sept. 16 & 23; MacGillivray's Warbler - Sept. 14-25 (banded); Yellow-throat - 1, Oct. 22 (only one seen all fall); Fox Sparrow - 1, Nov. 23; Swamp Sparrow - few, Oct. 17 - Nov. 18.

The migration of Least and Traill's Flycatchers peaked from Aug. 14-21 with the latest record (a Least) on Sept. 23. Ruby-crowned Kinglets were present from Oct. 7 through November 18. Orange-crowned Warblers were in much smaller numbers than last year with the last record on Oct. 23. Myrtle Warblers were unusually common during Oct. -- much more abundant than in 1966.

Late dates were obtained for: Bell's Vireo - Sept. 16; Nashville Warbler - Oct. 7 & 20; Rose-breasted Grosbeak - Sept. 25; Blue Grosbeak - Oct. 10; Dickcissel - Oct. 13. Some first fall arrival dates were: Brown Creeper - Oct. 23; Townsend's Solitaire - Oct. 25; Golden-crowned Kinglet - Oct. 27; House Finch - Nov. 5 (periodically throughout the month); Slate-colored Junco - 7 Oct.; Oregon Junco - Oct. 8; Tree Sparrow - Oct. 13 (regular by 24th); Harris Sparrow - Oct. 12 (regular by 19th); White-crowned Sparrow - Oct. 1 (regular by 10th, numbers far below 1966 numbers).

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Operation Recovery - Hays Station

Charles A. Ely & Larry W. Anthony

Operation Recovery began along the Atlantic coast in the autumn of 1955. The original goal was to pool activities of several banders at major concentration points in a united effort to trace the fall migration of individual birds. Although this goal was not achieved, other major objectives were and still are being fulfilled. Banding is concentrated during the period August 1 through October 31. Continuous operation (for at least one week, preferably a month) with a consistent number of nets and detailed, accurate records are imperative. An attempt is made to sex and age each bird to determine differences in migratory behavior of different age and sex groups. Weight and fat class are also recorded for each individual and wing (and other measurements) and soft part colors are recorded whenever pertinent. The special records made are then submitted to the Migratory Bird Populations Station, Laurel, Maryland. (Additional details can be found in two articles by Chandler S. Robbins in the Inland Bird Banding Association News -- 38:83-85 (Sept.-Oct. 1966) and 39:92 (July-Aug. 1967)).

The O.R. station established at Hays last fall is the first for Kansas -- more are needed -- and one of the few in the Great Plains area. Ten nets were operated from daylight to dark from October 8 through 28 (nearly 2000 net-hours) and all birds captured were processed fully. We spent all of our free time tending nets, assisted by Thomas Bowman, Marvin Rolfs, R. Kent Schrieber, and occasionally others as their schedules permitted. The migration through our station was sparse during that period and our major accomplishment was getting acquainted with the details of an O.R. operation and gaining experience in the various techniques. Aging and sexing by plumage characteristics is still a challenging problem for some fairly common species. Even aging by parting the crown feathers and examining the skull ossification through the skin was not always simple. We are certainly better prepared for the 1968 season and with additional manpower intend to expand the operation this fall.

The daily catch varied considerably with weather and migratory activity. Wind is always an important factor in the Hays area and nets are ineffective in moderate to high winds. During the three week period we handled a total of 594 birds of 40 species. The poorest day yielded 8 birds of 5 species; the best 63 birds of 14 species. Among the less common birds netted were Swamp Sparrows, a Long-billed Marsh Wren, and a Townsend's Solitaire (recaptured twice later). At least two Accipiters hunted the netting area regularly and one Sharp-shinned Hawk was captured. He was recaptured on two later occasions, the last time with a decapitated, neatly plucked Tree Sparrow (banded of course). Due to the season involved, sparrows and finches comprised the bulk of the catch including 92 Goldfinches, 59 Lincoln's Sparrows, 42 White-crowned Sparrows, 37 Tree Sparrows, 33 Song Sparrows, 30 Oregon Juncos, 26 Field Sparrows, and 14 Harris' Sparrows. We were surprised at the influx of Myrtle Warblers and captured 60 during the operation. Robins arrived in several flights and concentrated in the cedar windbreaks where "berries" were abundant. Although most successfully avoided the nets, a total of 72 was eventually banded.

We obtained considerable data on arrival dates of various species, migration peaks and the differential arrival of adult and young birds. For example, immatures of both Harris' and White-crowned Sparrows arrived a full two weeks before the first adults and adults were not regular for another week to ten days. As usual individuals of many species arrived days in advance of the main migration and before the species was recorded by conventional field observations. Although a mist-netting station requires a great amount of time and labor it can produce valuable data and is one of the best ways to become really familiar with your local bird population.

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Short Notes:

Richard F. Johnston reports that everything is routine at K.U. He also hints of an exciting discovery of hybridization in two well-known Kansas birds as determined by numerical taxonomy. Perhaps he will break the news in the near future.

Mrs. Celia White sends her greetings from Florida together with a clipping on the avian cholera outbreak in the Everglades National Park. At present 3000 to 5000 waterfowl, chiefly Coots, have died and the possibility exists that other species may be affected.

Short notes (cont.)

Avian cholera hampers the bird's ability to dive for food, leaving him swimming aimlessly until he eventually dies. A vaccine is available but its use is impractical with so many birds present over such a large area. She also reported seeing four Whooping Cranes at Aransas and of adding four new species to her list.

Miss. Katharine Kelly reports that bird banding has been productive this year (at Baldwin, Ed.). Since she is a school teacher, a snow storm on a week end means a good chance to band at her feeders. The storm on January 13 and 14 was especially productive of Cardinals, with 28 getting into the traps. The storm at the year's end had been almost as good, with 19 being banded. Most of the time only one pair shows up regularly at the feeders.

Miss. Kelly's banding project is to ascertain whether the same birds come to her feeders day after day and year after year. During the last five years she has banded about 200 Cardinals, of which 30 have been subsequently retaken. One of these was retaken after a three year lapse, another after the full five years. Also getting into the traps this last storm were a Carolina Wren and a Mockingbird. The former came just out of curiosity, the latter to warm water and a mixture of cornmeal and bacon grease. Many housewives who feed birds in Baldwin have complained that a Mockingbird keeps all other birds away. Now that one is banded, they will be able to tell whether just one bird is making the rounds of several feeders. (submitted by Miss. Betts).

Marvin E. Rolfs, of Hays, reports eagles from several localities: Wilson Reservoir, January 24 - 2 adult Bald; 3 unidentified; January 25 - 1 adult & 1 immature Bald; Eight miles West of Hays, January 27 - 1 adult Golden; Smoky Hill River south of WaKeeney - 17 soaring overhead including 2 adult Bald. The remainder were immature Bald and adult and immature Golden but the constant swirling of the flock made an accurate species and age breakdown impossible. He also reports that Brown Thrashers and Spotted Towhees wintering near Hays were still present on January 19. No House Finches have been sighted since December 3.

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Life Memberships Available

Amelia J. Betts

I would like to call the attention of K.O.S. members to the Life Membership that is now available. For a single payment of \$100.00, or for four consecutive payments of \$25 each, any member can substantially aid the Society and at the same time be relieved of paying dues annually. The Board of Directors have begun plans for an official button or pin as a recognition of Life Membership.

It is not too late to become the first, or one of the first, life members. If you have already paid \$3 or \$5 for membership this year, just add enough to make \$100 (or \$25) and mail it to our treasurer.

Definite plans as to the investment and use of the Life Membership receipts will be discussed at the spring meeting. During the lifetime of each member it will be invested in bonds or in savings where the yield will be approximately that of a Sustaining Membership. The subsequent accumulation of funds might be used for scholarships, for a state bird book, or some other special activity, as the membership decides.

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K.O.S. Checklist Soon Available

Amelia J. Betts

A checklist of the birds of Kansas will be available by early February for the use of K.O.S. members, college ornithology classes, Junior Audubon grade schoolers, and birders in general.

Final plans for the checklist were formulated at the winter meeting of the K.O.S. Board of Directors. It was decided that the list should include all birds known to be breeding in Kansas and all others of which there are five or more specimen records. This will result in a list of about 325 species including some that will be unfamiliar to many eastern Kansas birders. How many "easterners" have seen in Kansas, or elsewhere, a Harris' Hawk, Mountain Plover, Lewis' Woodpecker, Dusky Flycatcher, Pinon Jay, or Green-tailed Towhee?

Printing of the list will be under the direction of Max Thompson. Any group or individual wanting a thousand copies should contact him at Southwestern College, Winfield, Kansas, 67156. Sales in smaller quantities will be through the Museum of Natural History at the University of Kansas. The price will be 3 cents each or 50 for \$1.00. Larger orders will probably be cheaper. Lists may be purchased from Max immediately or at the spring meeting which will be held in Lawrence on Mar 4 and 5.

K.O.S. Board Meeting

Carl S. Holmes*

The annual winter meeting of the Board of Directors was held in Junction City on January 7, 1968 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph White. A delicious dinner was served by Mrs. White. Following the dinner the meeting was called to order by President Zimmerman. Present were: Betts, Ely, Holmes, Platt, Roth, Thompson, White, Zimmerman. Absent were: Edwards, Rice, Rising, Johnston, Schwilling.

Since the treasurer was unable to attend financial matters were not discussed. Ely reported that the "Newsletter" will be back on regular schedule at an estimated cost of \$15.00 per issue. The status of the newly initiated Life Membership was discussed at considerable length. A new field checklist to cover the entire state was proposed. Upon general approval of the Board the preliminary list compiled by Betts was discussed and amended. After review by Johnston and Rising it will be sent to Thompson who has arranged its publication in Winfield.

The spring meeting was discussed briefly because very little information was then available. It will be limited to an afternoon business and paper session and the annual banquet. Cheyenne Bottoms was suggested as the most desirable place for the fall meeting if the details can be arranged.

* (Actually my summary of his more detailed minutes, Ed.)

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Old News: Notes from Spring 1967

Amelia Betts reported that the spring migration in the Baldwin area was unusual in several ways. Such species as Franklin's Gulls, Forster's Terns and Goldfinches were abundant and long staying. Warblers were scarce in quantity and species. A cattle pen (with temporary ponds) and the fish farm at Lawrence had more than the usual number of shorebirds including Dunlin and Ruddy Turnstones. A pond two miles east of Baldwin had a Black-bellied Plover. A possible Golden-crowned Sparrow (with a flock of Goldfinches) was seen by her brother on May 10 but later attempts to find the bird were unsuccessful.

Ted Anderson reported the following at Walcott, Kansas:

March 30 - White Pelican (20)	May 1 - Indigo Bunting
April 15 - House Wren; Myrtle Warbler; Warbling Vireo	2 - Eastern Kingbird; Red-eyed Vireo; Yellow-throat; Rose-breasted Grosbeak
18 - Green Heron; Swainson's Hawk; Barn Swallow; Orange-cro. Warbler	9 - Western Kingbird; Bell's Vireo; Yellow- breasted Chat; Ovenbird
19 - Catbird	12 - Traill's Flycatcher; Nashville Warbler
23 - Scissor-tailed Flycatcher; Yellow- Warbler; Baltimore Oriole; Dick- cissel (singing)	23 - Song Sparrow (fledged 1 young)

Marvin D. Schwilling reported the following at Cheyenne Bottoms: Kittiwake - April 22, 26, 28; Fulvous Tree Duck - May 1. He also reported that Virgil Patterson saw a Road-runner 4 miles West of Boicourt, Linn County on April 17, 1967.

Virginia Salt of RFD, Olathe, Kansas reported the following: Pied-billed Grebes - Mar. 27; White-fronted Goose - Apr. 2; Snow Goose - Mar. 27 (several huge flocks); Blue-winged Teal - Apr. 25 (still on home pond); Baldpate - Mar. 18; Canvasback - Apr. 1 (S.H.M. Lake); Redhead - Apr. 18 (8-10); Lesser Scaup - Apr. 1; Coot - Mar. 18, Apr. 1; Solitary Sandpiper - Mar. 26, Apr. 21; Lesser Yellow-legs, Apr. 22; Killdeer - Mar. 2; Mourning Dove - Apr. 2 (wave); Chimney Swift - Apr. 22; Brown Thrasher - Apr. 22; Red-wing - Mar. 3; Cowbird - Mar. 22; Tree Sparrow - Mar. 3-10 (wave); Chipping Sparrow - Apr. 21; Field Sparrow - Mar. 15; Lark Sparrow - Mar. 24; Harris Sparrow - Mar. 3-10 (wave on 17th).

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Editor's Note

Deadline for the April "Newsletter" will be March 20 and any contributions received by that date will definitely be included. If time and space permit we will try to include material received later, but spring will be a busy season for all of us. We have been giving priority to recent Kansas observations but will include older "news" and material from neighboring areas whenever possible.