

## NEWSLETTER

## KANSAS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Department of Zoology  
Fort Hays Kansas State College, Hays, Kansas, 67602

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## Membership Notes

Amelia J. Betts

Only two hundred members had paid their K.O.S. dues by March 15. This number included about twenty new members, hence over one hundred members are fast becoming delinquent. For several reasons, K.O.S. officers hope that all members will pay promptly after this reminder:

- 1) as soon as most members do pay, address labels will be printed -- thus easing the work of the editors;
- 2) a future Newsletter will contain the membership roster and it should be as complete as possible;
- 3) postage has gone up again which means more expense for your Society when delinquent notices have to be sent;
- 4) when migration gets heavy, your treasurer and membership secretary are likely to put birding above receipt writing;
- 5) the K.O.S. year begins on January 1, not May 1 as it did 15 years ago. How long should we wait for dues payments?

You still have time to become the first Life Member. A single payment of \$100.00 or four consecutive payments of \$25.00 per year will give someone that honor.

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## News from Udall, Kansas

Max C. Thompson

The Kansas Field Check-list is finally off the press. You can obtain them by writing the Editor at the University of Kansas. For small quantities the price remains the same as previously published. If you are interested in obtaining 500 or more the price drops to \$15 per thousand. We have sold 4,000 to date which pays about half the printing bill of \$134.00. We encourage everyone to write for a supply so that you can give them to prospective birders and use them for the upcoming migration.

Mentioning the migration, it has started here in south-central Kansas. The first Purple Martin that I saw was on March 17 and we have other unconfirmed reports. The first Phoebe also was spotted on March 17. On the night of March 2, large flocks of Killdeer could be heard flying northward overhead. However, to date, no large concentrations of waterfowl have been observed.

If any of you are planning on attending the AOU meeting in Fairbanks, Alaska, this summer, I can highly recommend the Pribilof Islands trip. The cost of the trip is pegged fairly high but this is because of the possibility of relatively few people applying. If we had 70 people we could charter the plane for about \$60. per person. The usual air fare to St. Paul is \$270.00 !! I will be on St. Paul to show you around if the trip goes through.

The winter in south-central Kansas was fairly mild. We had the largest number of Bluebirds wintering that I can remember. The usual wintering species like longspurs and crossbills were absent.

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## Wichita Audubon Society Field Trip

Carl S. Holmes

The Wichita Audubon Society had a field trip to the Cheney Reservoir area on the afternoon of February 24th. Fifteen people participated and 26 species were recorded - among them a Prairie Falcon. Other species observed were: Canada Goose, White-fronted Goose, Mallard, Pintail, Redhead, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Common Merganser, Red-tailed Hawk, Marsh Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Bobwhite, Herring Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Horned Owl, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Horned Lark, Loggerhead Shrike, Starling, House Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Western Meadowlark, Red-wing, Tree Sparrow, Field Sparrow. My wife and I saw the Prairie Falcon again on the 25th.

There did not seem to be as many birds around this winter. On January 27th and again on February 17th I saw a Ferruginous Hawk in the Cheney Reservoir area. Last Saturday there was considerable woodpecker activity in Oak Park. There were lots of Canada Geese and ducks at Cheney and a large flock of Canada Geese were observed flying up the Big Arkansas River.

Tuesday evening at the Wichita Audubon Society meeting a member reported seeing a Western Kingbird on the 18th. Wally Champney saw Sprague's Pipits along the river near his mill in Oxford. Purple Martins were also reported at Wellington.

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#### Fall and early winter observations from Shawnee

Elizabeth and Dean Cole

This report covers November, December and January, excluding the Christmas count. Ducks were regularly seen on Shawnee Mission Lake until it froze in January, then nothing but a few Common Mergansers in late-February.

Common Loon (19-23 Nov.)	Brown Creeper (13 Nov., last date)
Pied-billed Grebe (16 Dec., 1)	Robin (through 9 Nov.; 16 Dec.; 1; 26 Jan., 1)
Blue Goose (5 Nov. 41)	Bluebird (26 Nov.; 16 Dec., 2 males; 26 Jan., 1)
Canada Goose (11 Dec., 20)	Golden-cro. Kinglet (5 Dec., 1; 28 Dec., 2)
Mallard (16 Dec., 12)	Loggerhead Shrike (Nov. & Dec.; none in Jan.)
Gadwall (16 Dec., 50)	Starling (Nov., 600; Dec., 100; Jan., 10)
Ring-necked Duck (16 Dec., pr.)	Myrtle Warbler (11 Nov., 1)
Bufflehead (16 Dec., 3)	Eastern Meadowlark (Nov., 6; Dec., 30; Jan., gone for 2 wks; 35)
Ruddy Duck (19 Nov., 11; 16 Dec., 9)	Western Meadowlark (11 Nov., 1)
Red-breasted Merganser (19-23 Nov.)	Rusty Blackbird (1 Jan, 4 .M., 3 F.)
Hooded Merganser (16 Dec., female)	Common Grackle (16 Nov., 3000; early Dec., 1; 2 Jan., 2)
Rough-legged Hawk (19 Dec., 1)	Slate-colored Junco (Nov., 4-8; Dec., 5-7 avg.; Jan., 6-13 avg.)
<u>Ferruginous Hawk</u> (17 Dec., 1 - considered most unusual bird for K.C. area for 1967).	Tree Sparrow (Nov., 0; Dec., 16; Jan., 1st two weeks)
Marsh Hawk (29 Dec., 3)	Harris Sparrow (Nov., 1-4; Dec., 3; Jan., 2)
Peregrine Falcon (25 Nov., 1 Quivira L., 1 of 10 best birds, 1967)	Field Sparrow (1 Nov., last date)
Bobwhite - 6 through November; 5 during early December; disappeared by 12-18 December (cat in barn).	Lapland Longspus (29 Dec., 40).
Coot (16 Dec., 2)	
Mourning Dove (29 Dec., 1)	
Screech Owl (heard December)	
Barred Owl (heard 16 Jan.)	
Horned Lark (29 Dec., 150)	

The following species were seen regularly during the period: Red-tailed Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Horned Owl, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, House Sparrow, Cardinal, Goldfinch.

The Christmas census on Dec. 30th added the following species: Pintail, Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser, Cooper Hawk, Harlan Hawk, Killdeer, Herring Gull, Short-eared Owl, Kingfisher, Brown Thrasher, Cedar Waxwing, Red-wing, Pine Siskin; White-throated Sparrow, Lincoln Sparrow, Song Sparrow. Two inches of snow was then on the ground and snow remained through 26 Jan. No Purple Finches, sapsuckers, nuthatches or White-crowned Sparrows were seen during the three month period.

#### Observations from Central Kansas

Marvin D. Schwilling

More than 300 White-necked Ravens are wintering at the Liberal city dump about one mile Northeast of that city. (January 21, 1968).

For three consecutive winters (January-February) 1,000 Mallards have been banded at Lake McKinney in Kearney County. During the trapping of these 3,000 Mallards other ducks caught included: 204 Pintail, 79 American Widgeon, 9 Green-winged Teal, 2 Wood Duck, 1 Black Duck. Meade County State Lake bandings included the following ducks: 1,882 Mallards, 219 Green-Winged Teal, 174 American Widgeon, 21 Pintail, 1 Black Duck.

Glaucous Gulls are again fairly regular at the Cheyenne Bottoms Waterfowl Management Area this spring. One bird appeared on the area January 30 and was seen almost daily until February 20 (2 were here on February 15). Two were again recorded on March 13 and have been seen regularly since.

Hybrid waterfowl seemed to be more abundant than usual this year. The Kirwin National Wildlife Refuge reported a Blue-winged Teal X Cinnamon Teal hybrid in addition to the hybrids reported in February. Harold Burgess and I observed a Snow Goose X Canada Goose at Quivira NWA on January 4. We trapped a Mallard X Muscovy and a Mallard X Pintail here at Cheyenne Bottoms WMA.

Among the season's firsts at Cheyenne Bottoms were the following: Blue-winged Teal - Feb. 27; Sandhill Crane - Feb. 28; Coot - Mar. 6; Baird Sandpiper - Mar. 7; Ruddy Duck - Mar. 11; Lesser Yellow-legs - Mar. 12; Greater Yellow-legs - Mar. 14; Dowitcher - Mar. 15 - - so the parade has begun.

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New "Biographies" available

Amelia J. Betts

The Baldwin Bird Club will have ready for distribution at the spring meeting of K.O.S. the third booklet of "Biographies of People for Whom Birds have been Named." These biographies have been compiled by Dr. Raymond F. Miller, a retired physics professor at Baker University after many hours of research in libraries at Baldwin, Lawrence and Kansas City.

Booklet Number One was published in 1966 and contained 27 of the more obvious people-names -- those which were a part of the common names assigned to birds, such as Audubon's Warbler. The second booklet, published the next year, went a step further and included among its 28 biographies some persons whose names appear in the scientific, but not the common, name of several species, for example Junco aikenii Ridgeway.

The third booklet covers 48 more biographies, many of which deal with subspecies nomenclature. Dr. Miller also includes in this issue a list of related name-people. From this we learn that LeComte's Sparrow was named for the father, LeComte's Thrasher for his son. Over a hundred copies of the first two booklets have been sold, but reprints have been run and all three will be available at Lawrence on May 4 and 5.

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Fall and Winter Birding

Elizabeth and Dean Cole

In order to get any good birding we've had to travel some distance. In September we spent almost a week in Duluth for the "perfect" weather and wind conditions to see kettles of broad-wings on the 21st. Had 4,000 hawks in three hours! While we waited we enjoyed quantities of warblers, many of them in the hand (thanks to our new found friend, Ben Bashem who was mist netting and banding). For a western Missouri gal (or eastern Kansas) it was a treat to see 7 Chestnut-sided Warblers in one bush and 5 Bay-breasted in as many minutes! The birders we met in Duluth tell me it's a birder's dream in May because swarms of warblers come through before the trees leaf out!

February 18th we heard of the record-breaking finds in St. Louis the Thursday before so we came home from the Nature Conservancy board meeting at Jeff City . . . by way of St. Louis! It was cold, windy and miserable Monday morning but we carefully combed the hundreds of gulls near Alton Dam on the Mississippi. Couldn't locate the Iceland Gulls seen again on 22nd by St. Louis birders but we saw the prize of them all . . . an immature Kittiwake. He was orbiting close to the wall of the locks so we crossed the river and saw him in perfect light. Could even see the little black feet tucked against his snowy breast, his neck crescent and that beautiful "W" mark from wing to wing! They also had Glaucous and Great Black-backed on Feb. 15th.

March 7 - had to go all the way to Squaw Creek to see a pair of Saw-whet Owls. I'd seen them twice before . . . almost 20 years ago when John Bishop had a Boy Scout in his troop who found their nest in K.C., Kansas. It was just a silhouette in the moonlight . . . a small owl without tufts. Then one night in Johnson County I saw one feeding in the road, blinded by my headlights; he paused a minute and so did I . . . This time we could see every mark just three feet away. Burgess (Refuge Manager) is planning to put up a box and hope's they'll nest.

The first large flocks of geese (Blue & Snow) arrived on March 9th. Saw 5 large flocks of migrating blackbirds on route to Squaw Creek (over 1000 each). Most were male Red-wings with a few hundred cowbirds and others but no grackles. Geese have been flying every day the past week (15 March). Nesting Eastern Meadowlarks returned to our fields just yesterday. Most of our wintering meadowlarks are Western visitors. This winter they were scarce with only a fragment of the usual wintering population. During the first 15 days of January weather was bitter and none were recorded but they may have been hiding out in sheltered spots. Also scarce were Bluebirds - - our breeding pair returned March 8th. The bulk of the returning Robins showed up on the third week of February.

Had an immature Bald Eagle over our house on March 10th; saw 24 at Squaw Creek on March 7th. The Ferruginous Hawk was seen again on February 12 and Harlan Hawks were seen on the same date.

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#### Dodge City Notes

Mrs. A. R. Challans

We saw a Raven on our Christmas Bird Count. Goldfinches have been unusually numerous this winter. We also had small flocks of House Finches and a few are still here. On January 25 we spotted a Great Blue Heron along the Arkansas River. We have seen it occasionally since then so it has apparently wintered here. On February 15 we had several hundred on the campus feeding in cedar trees. They have remained in the area to the present time. For the first few days we saw Bohemian Waxwings in the flocks. We have also seen several Short-eared Owls at times during the winter and spring.

Migrating ducks were scarce in our region this spring - - the fewest I have seen any year - - probably due to the very dry weather. We had some migrating Sandhill Cranes early in March. Pine Siskins are here but we did not have a single Solitaire all winter.

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#### Short Notes

Weather down here (Marathon, Florida) is beautiful. Migration has started and birds change daily. Yesterday we had 50 catbirds in the yard - all thirsty; today 6. We will be home by April 1st. Celia White.

On 24 September 1967 I collected a juvenile Eastern Wood Pewee at Lone Star Lake. According to Johnston (Directory to the birds of Kansas, 1965:35) this represents the latest fall record for Kansas. On 3 March I observed Lesser Scaup on Osage County State Lake and Redhead on Lake Shawnee, Topeka. Donald K. Ricker.

Although none of us has gotten out much here, it does not appear that too much migratory activity has yet started through the Lawrence area. The weather has perhaps been too unpredictable for most of the birds. A few sightings follow: Blue & Snow Geese (after 27 January; very common in early March); Pintail (migrating on 28 January); Redhead (3 March); Lesser Scaup (3 March); Ring-necked Duck (16 Mar.); American Merganser (16 Mar.); Killdeer (7 March); Robin (27 Feb., large flocks); Red-wing (15 Jan.); Cowbirds (15 Jan.); White-throated Sparrow (17 Mar.); large flocks of grackles, cowbirds, etc., 18 Mar.). Jim Rising.

The late-winter season at Hays was uneventful. More "summer species" wintered than usual, (towhees, Brown Thrasher) and none of the unusual wintering species appeared. A House Finch was seen on 4 March; Purple Finches on 1st and 19th (M. Rolfs). Migration is just getting underway. Eight species of ducks were recorded on 8 March; 3 more arrived by the 9th but nothing unusual. Cranes were first seen on 26 Feb.; Swainson Hawk on 17 March; Common Grackle on 25th. Longspurs were still present on 14 March; Rough-legs on the 25th. Pine Siskins are singing on campus; resident robins are arriving. Charles A. Ely