

THE FLICKER

VOLUME 11

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NUMBERS 1, 2



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THE FLICKER

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Twin City Regional Editor Robert Upson, Minneapolis
St. Cloud Regional Editor Walter Heibert, Bingham Lake
Duluth Regional Editor Olga Lakela, Duluth Teachers College

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Editor—Charles Evans, M. M., 427 8th Ave. S.E., Minneapolis, Minn.



*downy young of the
broad-winged hawk; gar-
ter snake hanging over
nest. Courtesy, Museum
Natural History.*

*a pair of sparrow hawks
in the downy plumage.
Courtesy, Museum of
Natural History.*



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Ten Years of Nesting Records

By E. D. SWEDENBORG

EACH year since the Minnesota Bird Club was organized in 1929 it has been the custom to publish a record of the nests found by the members. Ten such yearly records have been published and the results are very interesting. The nests of 174 species have been found and young birds of seventeen additional species seen, making a total of 191 species recorded. The following is a resume of these records, together with a listing of the birds known to breed in the state and those considered by Dr. Roberts in the *Birds of Minnesota*, as reasonably sure to be breeding birds, whose nests or young were not found during this ten year period.

Nests of the loon, all the grebes, the double-crested cormorants and all the herons and bitterns were recorded. The white pelican was found nesting on the Ontario side of Lake of the Woods during the summer of 1938. Several nests of the American egret were seen at a colony in southern Minnesota that summer, an outstanding record.

No nests or young of the Canada goose were seen but nests of the mallard, pintail, green-winged teal, blue-winged teal, shoveler, wood duck, redhead, ring-necked duck, ruddy and American merganser were found. Young of the black duck, gadwall, baldpate, golden-eye, and hooded and red-breasted mergansers were seen but there were no records of the canvasback and lesser scaup.

Thirteen species of hawks were found breeding in the state, including nests of the turkey vulture, goshawk, sharp-shinned, Cooper's, red-tailed, broad-winged, marsh, duck, pigeon and sparrow hawks, the bald eagle and osprey, and young were seen of Swainson's hawk. The red-shouldered hawk was missed.

Young of the Canada spruce grouse and nests of the ruffed grouse, prairie chicken, sharp-tailed grouse, Hungarian partridge, bob-white, ring-necked pheasant and sandhill crane were found. Nests of the two common rails, the sora and Virginia, were numerous, but the king rail and yellow rail were successful in hiding their efforts. Coot and gallinule nests were recorded almost every year.

Nests or downy young of all the Minnesota breeding shorebirds were found. This includes young of the Wilson snipe, and western willet, and nests of the piping plover, killdeer, woodcock, upland plover, spotted sandpiper, marbled godwit and Wilson's phalarope. The finding of nests of the piping plover in at least four widely separated areas in the state, Lake of the Woods, Minnesota Point, Douglas county and Mille Lacs, was an important addition to our knowledge of our birdlife. The solitary sandpiper still retains its mystery as a breeding bird in Minnesota.

Only two of our nesting owls went un-

recorded during this period. These were the barn and saw-whet owls. Nests of all the others were seen, that of the great-gray in Roseau County in 1935 being a new record for the state.

Nests of the whip-poor-will, nighthawk, chimney swift, ruby-throated hummingbird, belted kingfisher, and all the Minnesota woodpeckers except the two three-toed species were located. The nest of the American three-toed woodpecker is still to be found in this state. All the fly-catchers were recorded as nesting except the yellow-bellied. This includes one nest of the olive-sided near Deer River in 1930, and several of the Arkansas kingbird. The other species are common nesting birds. The yellow-bellied flycatcher has been seen at several localities in the Canadian zone in summer but the nest of this ground-nesting species has never been found in Minnesota.

Nests of all the species of swallows were found each summer, several colonies of cliff swallows of varying sizes being discovered in the state during this period. The horned lark, blue jay and crow were regularly recorded but the only records for the Canada jay were that of young birds seen in a few localities in the north. Black-capped chickadees and white-breasted nuthatches nested commonly but only two nests of the red-breasted nuthatch and young of the Hudsonian chickadee were found. The brown creeper yielded one nest, in Cook county in 1930.

Young of the winter wren were seen being fed in a few places in the northern part of the state, the most southern locality being a few miles southeast of Onamia. The house wren and the two marsh nesting members of the family were regularly recorded but the rare Carolina wren was not discovered. The catbird and brown thrasher were as usual abundant breeding birds.

Nests, containing eggs, of all the thrushes were recorded, including several of the two Canadian species, the hermit and the olive-backed, the latter in Cook and St. Louis counties. Among the most interesting discoveries of the period was

the finding of two nests of the blue-gray gnatcatcher, one at St. Cloud in 1934, the other near South St. Paul in 1936. Each contained eggs. Five nests of the golden-crowned kinglet were found, in three counties—Cook, St. Louis and Mille Lacs.

One of the outstanding finds was the nest of the Sprague's pipit in Pennington county, June 1933. It held five eggs. Cedar waxwings and migrant shrikes were recorded on each year's list, and the starling which had first appeared in Minnesota in 1929, was found nesting in Winona county, Red Wing and St. Cloud in 1933, at several places in the St. Croix valley in 1934, near Aurora, on the range, in 1936, and at other places since.

Nests with eggs of all the Minnesota vireos, except Bell's and the Philadelphia, were found. Only one nest of Bell's vireo and none of the Philadelphia have ever been recorded in the state.

The warblers succeeded in hiding their nests from the various observers more than any other family of birds. There were no breeding records for the prothonotary, blue-winged, parula, Tennessee, bay-breasted, Connecticut, or palm warblers, and though the Tennessee and bay-breasted are found regularly in the Canadian zone in the state their nests have never been discovered there. Nests of the black and white, Nashville, yellow, magnolia, black-throated blue, myrtle, cerulean, Blackburnian, chestnut-sided, pine and Canada warblers, the Grinnell's and Louisiana water thrushes, ovenbird, northern yellowthroat, yellow-breasted chat and redstart were found; and young gold-winged, black-throated green and mourning warblers were seen being fed. The nests of the chat, cerulean warbler and Grinnell's water thrush were first records for the state.

Nests of the English sparrow, bobolink, the two meadowlarks, yellow-headed, red-winged and Brewer's blackbirds, the two orioles, and the bronzed grackle were recorded regularly, and of course the cowbird was found each summer imposing on its many victims. A few scarlet tanager nests were found.

Many interesting nests of the sparrows and their allies were found. These included the cardinal, rose-breasted grosbeak, indigo bunting, dickcissel, purple finch, pine siskin, goldfinch, towhee, lark bunting, junco, chestnut-collared longspur, and the savannah, grasshopper, Baird's, Henslow's, vesper, lark, chipping, clay-colored, field, white-throated, swamp and song sparrows. Young Leconte's sparrows were seen being fed. Outstanding among these are the Henslow's sparrow nest, near St. Cloud in 1933, the lark bunting nest, containing four eggs, at Madison in 1936, the chestnut-collared longspur nests in Pennington county in 1933 and near Warren in 1937 (first found in the state since 1898), Baird's sparrow nest near Euclid in 1937,

and the two pine siskin nests found at St. Cloud in April, 1938. The latter were the second and third nests of this species found in the state. Not found were the evening grosbeak, the two crossbills, the Nelson's and Lincoln's sparrows, and McCown's longspur. Of these no nest of the longspur has been found in the state since 1899, but one nest of Nelson's sparrow has been found, and though the other four species are found in the Canadian zone of the state quite regularly during their breeding seasons their nests have never been found.

This information as to the breeding status of all these various species has been obtained from Dr. Robert's *Birds of Minnesota*.

Minneapolis, Minnesota.



BIRD AWARD

IN FEBRUARY the Duluth Bird Club was deprived by death of one of its most loyal active members. As a tribute to June Wendlandt, a graduate of the Duluth State Teachers College in 1937, and a charter member of the Duluth Bird Club, the following action was approved at the March seventh meeting.

In appreciation of the keen interest, courageous spirit, and genuine enthusiasm of June Wendlandt, the Duluth Bird Club will award an annual membership to each of four students in order that other young people may have the opportunity to experience some of the joy which was hers in the study of birds.

Casimir Hero and Margaret Jackson of the Duluth State Teachers College, Betty Watterson of the Duluth Junior College, and Richard Bateman of the Duluth Central High School have been selected as the recipients of the awards for 1939.

WATERFOWL MIGRATION

OBSERVERS who have visited the western Minnesota lakes, principally Lakes Traverse and Mud Lake, report greater numbers of geese and ducks than seen in many years previous. Canada, lesser Canada, blue, lesser snow, and white-fronted were all reported. Mr. W. J. Breckenridge observed a flock of two hundred and fifty white-fronted geese. In addition to the thousands of geese, there were seen thousands of ducks representing nearly every species. The eastern waterfowl migration seems unusually small, very few ducks being seen. The whistling swans were observed in large numbers in the Twin City area during the second and third weeks of April, when they paused on Long Meadow, Yake Minnetonka, Spring Lake, a flood land near Shakopee, and elsewhere.

Winter Bird Census

By G. N. RYSGAARD

DURING the past winter season the various chapters of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union have had representatives in the field gathering interesting winter bird census data, and this report is a compilation of the reports submitted to the editor.

ST. CLOUD. The weather conditions at St. Cloud from December 27, 1938, to February 24, 1939 have fluctuated between extremes. Mild weather with little snow characterized the first portion of this period; the last three weeks witnessed much colder weather with temperatures often falling to -30° F. and once registering -36 . Associated with the cold was an abundance of snow.

The list of birds seen in and around St. Cloud for this period is as follows: December 27th—1 robin; December 28th—2 American mergansers, 1 ruffed grouse; December 29th—10 mourning doves, 1 barred owl, 10 redpolls, 200 goldfinches, 1 tree sparrow, 50 juncoes; January 2nd—6 mourning doves, 1 brown creeper, 6 redpolls; January 28th—1 red-headed woodpecker; January 29th—1 barred owl; January 31st—1 crow; February 6th—100 prairie horned larks, 2000 snow buntings; February 11th—1 red-headed woodpecker (probably same bird); February 12th—50 Bohemian waxwings; February 17th—1 American three-toed woodpecker; February 20th—9 evening grosbeaks; 16 ring-necked pheasants, 1 hairy and 10 downy woodpeckers, 15 blue jays, 20 black-capped chickadees, 10 white-breasted nuthatches, 18 starlings, and many English sparrows observed at various times during the period. Total of 26 species numbering 2512 birds.

Observation records used in this report were submitted by Mr. Charles Metzroth,

Mr. Ralph Sauer, Mr. Herman Erdman, Mr. Richard Voth, Prof. G. W. Friedrich, and Misses Mary and Margaret Ruehle. *John Voth, St. Cloud, Minnesota.*

DULUTH. The weather between the dates December 21, 1938 and December 31, 1938 was fairly mild with a temperature average close to 10° F. During this period, 15 species of birds were observed by the following persons whose contributions comprise this census report: Dr. Olga Lakela, Mr. Casimir Hero, M. Wieisch, Miss Margaret Jackson, Mr. L. J. Kitte, Mrs. C. Olin, Miss Louise Hall and Miss Hulda Adams.

The species observed were the following: December 21st—1 downy and 1 hairy woodpecker, 2 blue jays, herring gulls, golden-eye ducks; December 24th—38 golden-eyes, 5 herring gulls, 1 downy woodpecker, 1 blue jay, 8 black-capped chickadees, 1 robin; December 25th—1 downy woodpecker, 3 black-capped chickadees, 3 red-breasted nuthatches, 18 starlings, 11 pine grosbeaks, 14 redpolls, 2 snow buntings, 5 ruffed grouse; December 27th—2 ruffed grouse, 1 ring-necked pheasant, 3 blue jays, 1 robin, 2 pine grosbeaks, 35 snow buntings; December 31st—1 downy woodpecker, 4 black-capped chickadees, 1 starling, 10 English sparrows.

TWO HARBORS. Weather conditions on December 22, 1938 were mild with a temperature of 15° F., heavy clouds with falling snow late in the day. Eight species were noted between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m., and they are as follows: 1 loon, 2 mallards, 40 golden-eyes, 3 white-winged scoter, 1 American rough-legged hawk, 3 glaucous gulls, 12 herring gulls, 2 downy woodpeckers. *Dr. Olga Lakela, Duluth, Minnesota.*

HAWLEY. Mr. E. A. Palcich sub-

mitted the following observation data for the immediate vicinity of Hawley, Minnesota: December 22nd—1 pine grosbeak; December 23rd—1 robin; January 9th—1 snowy owl; January 16th—1 ring-necked pheasant; January 23rd—1 snow bunting. Other birds observed but for which no dates were given were the red-breasted nuthatch, junco, English sparrow, downy woodpecker, Hungarian partridge, black-capped chickadee, redpoll, and blue jay.

STEWARTVILLE. Five members of the club left Minneapolis early December 22 and drove directly to Stewartville. Here the party, consisting of Mr. Arnold Erickson, Mr. George Rysgaard, Mr. Horace Paul, Mr. Robert Upson, and Mr. Dana Struthers, met Dr. Alden Risser and Dr. Don Mahle. The temperature stood at 23° F. with a strong wind blowing snow.

The following birds were seen within a ten-mile radius from Stewartville between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.: 2 American mergansers, 1 Wilson's snipe, 1 mourning

dove, 1 belted kingfisher, 1 pileated woodpecker, 7 red-bellied woodpeckers, 16 hairy and 20 downy woodpeckers, 31 horned larks, 12 blue jays, 14 crows, 85 black-capped chickadees, 22 white-breasted nuthatches, 1 golden-crowned kinglet, numerous English sparrows, 7 eastern meadowlarks, 6 starlings, 1 red-winged blackbird, 32 cardinals, 1 purple finch, 59 slate-colored juncoes, 9 tree sparrows, 4 Lapland longspurs, and 2 snow buntings.

FRONTENAC. On December 23rd, the party drove to Frontenac to spend a couple of hours tramping along the frozen Mississippi River. The birds observed included 1 ring-necked pheasant, 1 Wilson's snipe, 1 mourning dove, several blue jays, crows, chickadees as well as 1 brown creeper and 1 robin. *G. N. Rysgaard, St. Paul, Minnesota.*

TALMADGE RIVER. On December 6th. 1 pileated woodpecker, 3 downy woodpeckers, 1 pine grosbeak, and 4 chickadees were observed by Alma H. Chesley.

Minneapolis, Minnesota.

DULUTH CHAPTER ORGANIZED

A GROUP of residents of Lakeview met at the home of Mrs. W. E. Olin March 28, 1939, to organize a Lakeview Branch of the Duluth Chapter of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union. Miss Elwell, president of the Duluth Chapter, assisted in the organization by describing the types of constitutions used in other chapters.

The following officers were elected: *President:* Mrs. W. E. Olin, *Vice-President:* Miss Betty Watterson, *Secretary-Treasurer:* Mr. Richard Bateman.

Regular meetings will be held the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Lester Park Library Building. Numerous field trips will be taken to different parts of the city, but the region of major interest will be Lester Park and the hillsides back of the eastern portion of the city.



Mr. Milton Thompson, Curator of the Minneapolis Public Library Museum, recently organized a branch club of about twenty members that plans to affiliate with the Minneapolis Chapter of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union.

A Trip to Canada

By RICHARD VOTH, ERMA SPOTTS,
and G. W. FRIEDRICH

IN THE summer of 1937, members of the T. S. Robert's Ornithology Club visited Heron Lake. While sitting about the campfire the question of the bird trip for next year was raised. Several of us had previously visited the Lake of the Woods along the southern shores, and were curious to learn of the bird life to the north of the lake. Accordingly Canada was selected as the area to explore for the 1938 Ornithology trip.

Twelve persons loaded into two cars one with a trailer attached and left St. Cloud on Saturday, June 4. Members included in the party were Mr. and Mrs. George W. Friedrich, Mary Ruehle, Helen Curry, Richard Voth, Chester Heinzl, and Ralph Sauer all of St. Cloud; Erma Spotts of Mora; Anabel Paine of Brainerd; Lois Zittleman of Minneapolis; Mabel Marks of Kingstons; and Walter Hiebert of Bingham Lake.

Our route led us through Brainerd, Aitkin, Grand Rapids, Hibbing, where we visited the big open-pit iron mine; Mountain Iron, and then to Gappa's Landing of Lake Kabetogama where we camped the first night.

The next morning we crossed the national boundary at Fort Francis, first however, having our cameras, field glasses and other special equipment checked by immigration officers. The rough topography of the land—its series of black spruce swamps, rocky hills, and clear lakes—were breath-taking views. The drive is a most picturesque one with roads winding in and out and up and down the forested rocky hills. Motion pictures were taken of interesting Nestor Falls. Toward noon we located an ideal spot for the setting up of camp on the shore of the beautiful Lake Kakagi or more commonly called

Crow Lake. Here the rock bottom and the lake's rocky shore rise abruptly from the water. We wanted to "get away from civilization," and we did. The site selected was an awe-inspiring, beautiful spot. Herring gulls, nesting birds of the island of the lake, flew gaily about. The mighty glacier-carved wooded prominences, and the crystal-clear blue water entranced us. A practical job had to be done, that of making a camp on a bare rock face. Tent stakes, we found, would not readily drive through rock; finally we resorted to weighting down the ropes with stones. "Dick" Voth cooked his famous Hunter's Stew for supper to the delight and satisfaction of the ornithology crew. One of the members of the party who remained in camp while we were making a field trip saw a deer stroll into the camp, proving that we were really roughing it in a wild country. We cached our food in a tree as bears were quite common in this vicinity. A lodge owner had captured a young cub from this area a week previous to our arrival and the mother bear was still in the neighborhood. Moose were common, though we were not fortunate enough to see one. Our water for cooking, washing, and drinking was dipped from the lake as the Indian and the occasional trapper secured it in their time. The water, needless to say, was clear, clean, cold and good to drink.

Early Monday morning Anabel Paine and Erma Spotts went on an exploring trip of their own. They were rewarded by the beauty that was reflected in the morning sunshine and the hundreds of birds trilling their songs from the trees. They recorded several scarlet tanagers, bluejays, juncos, scores of myrtle warblers, killdeers, kingfishers, and two hairy

woodpeckers together with their nest in a hole of a poplar tree. Robins were there as well as yellow warblers, rose-breasted grosbeaks, chipping sparrows, loons, and herring gulls.

After breakfast the bird students split into two groups with the intention of spending the day in the study of birds. Walking was most difficult because of the great amount of underbrush, rock, and dead and down timber, so we followed the shore line of Lake Kakagi. Toward noon a cold drizzly all-day rain set in and further exploring was made impossible. A thoroughly soaked and disappointed group was forced to trek back to camp, there to kill the day in bridge and black jack. However, during the several hours we were in the field the following birds were recorded: loon, blue-winged teal, killdeer, herring gulls, ring-billed gulls, black terns, kingfishers, hairy-woodpeckers, tree swallows, blue-jay, crow, blackcapped chickadee, white-breasted nuthatch, black and white warblers, myrtle warblers, oven-bird, blackburnian warbler, scarlet tanager, tree sparrow, white-throated sparrow, and song sparrow. We were very fortunate in hearing the song of the junco. We were quite disappointed not to find a greater variety of species in this woodland paradise, but upon reflection came to the realization that the time of year was still a bit early for the arrival of some of the summer birds. Apparently our migration was faster than many of the warblers and other birds that one should expect to find in this area. Often we heard birds in tree tops that we could not see because of the dense foliage, which led us to think that more species were about us than are recorded in our lists. A number of porcupines were seen. The carcass of a deer was found which had the appearance of having been eaten by a wolf. Many of the wild flowers which were in bloom a month earlier in St. Cloud were still in the bud state here. At night while seated about the campfire we heard the eery cry of the loon, a sound most in keeping with the wild country of which we were a part.

Two days later we broke camp and reluctantly left Kakagi behind. Traveling through beautiful country, we came to Kenora on the evening of June 7. We set our tents within two hundred feet of the shore at the extreme northern tip of Lake of the Woods. The weather was most disagreeable, the temperature having dropped to 34 degrees and snow and rain fell intermittently. The next morning as we cooked our breakfast, a large black raven silently kept guard over us. It perched on a huge white pine tree for more than an hour and not until his curiosity was satisfied, did he leave us. With weather conditions still bad for bird study, we drove to Winnipeg. Some miles west of Kenora, the forested area dropped off abruptly, and level plains planted with the wheat of Manitoba stretched out before us.

At Winnipeg, our camp was pitched on the shore of the Red River of the North. The large number of Franklin's gulls that were swimming and flying along the river quite surprised us. In the early evening as they flew about overhead, some at great heights, the "delicate salmon pink varying to a beautiful rose hue" was easily seen. Many of the more common perching birds were found among the willows along the river bank, and a catbird's nest was located. While in Winnipeg, we visited the Zoological Garden and there saw many captive animals and birds common to Canada. We purchased many sets of bird pictures, duplicates of those found in Taverners' *Birds of Western Canada*. We all agreed that the people of Canada with whom we came in contact in our marketing, camping, and traveling were a most courteous people.

Leaving Canada on June 9, we next headed for Holt, the town nearest the Mud and Thief Lake Refuge in Minnesota. Mr. George Karvonen, Superintendent of Schools at Holt and former Ornithology Club member, bid us to use the school house as our headquarters. Early the next morning, we drove to the headquarters of C.C.C. Camp at Thief Lake. Long before we reached the refuge

itself, ducks, grebes, coots, and rails were observed in the ditches at the sides of the road. The group was eager to stop and watch them, but at the suggestion of Mr. Karvonen we hurried on to our objective. There, Mr. Mattson, a specialist in game management, furnished us with suggestions and advice as to where the waterfowl might be most abundant. He told us where we might expect to find the various nesting places of ducks and the Canadian goose. The nest of an eared grebe was found at the camp about three feet from the shore of the lake. The nest was a typical one and was unprotected from wind and wave. The female stayed within 50 yards of it during the period that we visited and photographed it. The nest held three eggs.

The day was spent in studying the two refuges. Nests of many species of ducks were observed. The incubation of the coot seemed to be at its height, as numerous nests were found containing eggs. Great numbers of blue-winged teal and mallards flew overhead; and in the patches of open water, flocks of ducks were observed swimming. Most of them remained so close to the road that the use of field glasses became unnecessary. At various points we stopped to investigate likely places for nests of Canada geese, but our efforts were not rewarded. Deep in the refuge we saw a brood of young mallards, three to four weeks old, swimming about. Upon our approach, the little birds dived and swam about, partly submerged. It was difficult to locate them among the reeds and algae-filled lagoons. We were able to capture one, and it was snapped with still and motion picture cameras much as a human celebrity is photographed when on tour. The mother gave a splendid exhibition of the well-known broken-wing act, in the hope of luring us from her brood. Next we saw a large loosely knit colony of eared grebes. As we drove along the embankment, we counted more than forty nests of these birds within a distance of a half mile. It was impossible to study the

whole colony, as the water at this place was more than ten feet in depth. Judging from the great number of birds seen, this colony, undoubtedly, consisted of a thousand or more birds, most of which were nesting. The birds were not all shy and would not swim or fly away except when we approached them too closely. There were many ducks in the air at all times; green-winged teal were seen wheeling low over the marshes as were also the loud-quacking mallards; pintails, shovelers, and other surface feeders dabbled in the waters. We stopped from time to time to wade out into the water, each hoping to be the first to find a nest of an uncommon water bird. While attempting to examine a ruddy duck's nest, Ralph Sauer, one of our members, stepped off into a drainage ditch and was completely submerged. Lucky for Ralph and the rest of us, he was a good swimmer. Generally speaking, the conditions for wading were ideal; water in the rushes seldom exceeded three feet in depth, and the bottom was solid and level.

Following is the entire list of water and shore birds we observed at the Thief and Mud Lake Waterfowl Refuge: eared grebe, pied-billed grebe, American bittern, mallard, gadwall, baldpate, pintail, green and blue-winged teal, shovelers, ruddy ducks, sora, coots, killdeers, Franklin's gulls and black tern.

Our original idea was to spend two or more days at Thief and Mud Lake, but rainy weather prevented more than one day's exploration of the refuges. Cars cannot keep to the roads in the refuge during rainy weather as the slippery gumbo makes travel dangerous and impossible, and the area is too extensive to travel about on foot with any hope of getting a correct picture of the actual bird activity. That night a heavy rain fell, determining for us that further refuge exploration must wait another year. We left Holt behind, and by evening were back in St. Cloud.

Notes of Interest

Editor's Note . . . The following observations were recorded by Robert Nord during the summers of 1936 and 1937 while engaged in field study in the upper Michigan peninsula.

July 20, 1936: Today I chanced upon a female myrtle warbler in the spruce swamp. She did not notice me for a moment, and when my presence was detected, she tumbled from the small tree in which she was sitting. In the act, she uttered a most agonized sound of distress and fluttered her wings in an attempt to lead me from the nest, which I was unable to discover.

Soon the male bird arrived carrying a large insect in his bill. Although he acted perturbed, he made no attempt to lead me from the site of the nest by such antics as did the female.

August 2, 1936: While I sat in the truck this evening, waiting for the train and our daily quota of mail, an evening grosbeak alighted upon the road beside me. It was a male bird with most striking coloration.

June 29, 1937: I had the good fortune this evening to hear the song of the willow thrush or veery from beginning to end. This particular song differed from any I had heard before in that each phase of its song was raised just slightly in pitch. I must have listened for fully three minutes; and each time the thrills were repeated, they were raised about one-half note on the scale, until finally, when the song reached a very high pitch, the bird repeated the same key two or three times before raising the pitch again.

At last it reached what seemed to be the high note on its scale. Here it stopped singing, moved away, and began a new song at a different location. The favorite perch of the veery when singing was high above the surrounding swamp forest in the top-most limbs of a spruce or tamarack snag.

June 30, 1937: For some time I have heard a song in the vicinity of the headquarters grounds that was a mixture of the notes of the winter wren and of the house wren. This evening I determined to find the source of this unusual song. I soon found the bird, a house wren, and the location of its nest in a hole in the top of a fence post. The cheerful little fellow would sing a repertoire composed of its own song and that borrowed from the winter wren while sitting on the top of the post above its nest. Having completed its own song, it would disappear into the hole, presently to reappear like a "jack-in-the-box" to mock the wild, tumbling, exuberant song of its neighbor, the winter wren.

Truly a neighbor was the winter wren, as she had her nest in a small spruce pocket just behind the headquarters grounds. It was the habit of this bird to sit in the top of the very tallest spruce in the stand and sing its song, and often its song could be heard at the same time as that of the house wren. It was then that the evident mockery in the song of the house wren could be detected.

AMERICAN THREE-TOED WOODPECKER

THE temperature was between 10 and 15 degrees below zero on February 28, 1939, as I walked home from school. On the way I watched for birds and was well-rewarded with an excellent view of a "ladder-back" or American three-toed woodpecker which was seeking food in an averaged sized bur oak. I was not more than ten feet from the bird and watched it carefully for nearly ten minutes.

In an article by Mr. Nestor Heimanz appearing in *The Journal of Minnesota Ornithology*, April, 1936, I discovered that there were but two previous reports of this species in the St. Cloud area, these recorded March 10 and March 29, 1935. Charles Metzroth, St. Cloud, Minnesota.

NESTING RECORD

AS HAS been the custom in recent years, nesting data will be collected, compiled, and the published in *The Flicker*. Although no one has yet been appointed to compile the data, all records may be sent directly to George N. Rysgaard, Camp Miller, Sturgeon Lake, Minnesota on or before August 15, 1939. Records mailed after this date should be addressed Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

A little care and consideration on the

part of the contributors of nesting data will save many hours of time for the compiler of the data. The best form of submitting this material is in typewritten and tabular form as illustrated below.

Robin: May 30: Minneapolis: 3 young half grown: B. B. Jones.

Additional information may be appended. If the A. O. U. check-list order is followed in making out your reports, it will facilitate accuracy in the final compilation.

Persons having information on the nesting, migration, feeding habits, etc. of Wilson's snipe are urged to contact Arnold B. Erickson at the Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota, who is attempting to make a life history study of this species. Internal organs taken from snipe shot during the hunting season are also desired.

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THE FLICKER

Organ of the MINNESOTA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

Published Quarterly in March, May, October and December

Edited by Arnold B. Erickson

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Twin City Regional Editor Kenneth Carlander, St. Paul
St. Cloud Regional Editor G. W. Friedrich, St. Cloud
Duluth Regional Editor Olga Lakela, Duluth Teachers College

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Editor—Arnold B. Erickson, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minn.

THE FLICKER

VOLUME II

DECEMBER, 1939

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More Minnesota American Egret News

By W. J. Breckenridge

Any marked change that is taking place in a bird's range is always an event that is watched with considerable interest by bird people, and a real thrill goes with one's discovery of a bird, or more especially a nesting pair of birds, beyond the present known range of that species. And it is doubly thrilling when that bird happens to be such a strikingly conspicuous species as the American Egret.

For several years late summer and fall records of egrets wandering north of their breeding range after the nesting season have come from various points in southern Minnesota. At first Minneapolis marked the farthest north record. Then, in 1938, one was seen in southern Isanti County by Miss Lillian Boettcher. And now, 1939, we have a record of one seen by Mr. John Dobie on Lake Pokegama in Pine County. This seems to be the farthest north that the species has been recorded in eastern Minnesota to date.

Not only are we having records of non-breeding fall birds, however, but now, to our great satisfaction, credible breeding records of this species are coming in. In 1938 (Dr. T. S. Roberts' article "The Season" in *Bird Lore*, Sept.-Oct. 1938) we find that an acquaintance of Dr. G. H. Luedtke of Fairmont, Martin County, reported a small colony of egrets nesting near East Chain Lake, southeast of Fairmont. Dr. Luedtke was not informed of this early enough to verify the actual nesting but did find egrets in the vicinity and felt that there was every reason to accept the record.

During the 1939 season wildlife enthusiasts were disappointed by the report from Fairmont that the egrets did not nest there

this year. Their hopes that the egret would become a nesting species here were buoyed up again, however, by well-authenticated reports of their nesting in the vicinity of Winona. The writer, on July 17, visited this nesting place under the guidance of Messrs. A. Pulling and A. Schmidt of the staff of the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge. The present note on this nesting is made with the kind permission of Mr. Ray C. Steele, Superintendent of the Refuge. Here three pairs of American Egrets were nesting in the heart of a rookery of Great Blue Herons, Black-crowned Night Herons, and Double-crested Cormorants. The nests were within 100 feet of each other and were about 30 to 40 feet up in the tree tops. At the date of the first visit, the young were large, well feathered out, and appeared much like small adults in coloration even to the yellow bill, which shows that the young of the year would be indistinguishable from the adults as soon as they became strong on the wing. A blind was constructed near two of the nests and the larger part of a day was spent observing and photographing them from a distance of about 30 feet. A colored movie record was made of the nesting which is now in the motion picture library of the Minnesota Museum of Natural History at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

So it appears that we now have a firm basis for our hopes that this egret will not only become a regular fall visitor to Minnesota, but that we may also be fortunate enough to have it become an established nesting species within our limits.

Minnesota Museum of Natural History,
University of Minnesota.

Summer Birds of the Lake Vermilion Region

By E. D. Swedenborg

In the northeastern part of St. Louis county lies beautiful Lake Vermilion. The surrounding region affords a great variety of topography. Here are found spruce and tamarack swamps, rocky hillsides, meadows, many smaller lakes, rivers, creeks, pine forests, and almost every variety of landscape found anywhere in Minnesota. All this makes the region a paradise for birds. Practically all of our Canadian species are found there and it is therefore very surprising to come upon open country where the melodious song of the bobolink is heard mingling with the lesser efforts of the Brewer's blackbird, clay-colored sparrow, and such other species usually associated with the farmlands of the southern part of the state.

In this region Mrs. Swedenborg and I spent from June 5th to the 12th, 1928, with Dr. C. C. Prosser; and from June 9th to 21st, 1939, with Mr. and Mrs. C. R. Proctor. During these two periods we found one-hundred species, all of which were apparently nesting. The following is an annotated list of the birds found.

Loon—Seen several times on Lake Vermilion and nearby lakes.

Great Blue Heron—Quite numerous.

Mallard—Not common. A nest sunk in the moss of a spruce-tamarack swamp held eight eggs, June 8, 1938. A female with eight small ducklings was seen at a nearby beaver dam, June 10, 1939.

Ring-necked Duck—A female with five males at Elbow Lake, June 10, 1939.

Canvasback—A pair on Vermilion, June 1938.

Lesser Scaup Duck—A few seen on a small lake near Vermilion, June, 1938.

Sharp-shinned Hawk—One seen, June, 1938.

Cooper's Hawk—One seen, June, 1938.

Red-tailed Hawk—A few seen, June, 1939.

Broad-winged Hawk—Seen both years.

Osprey—At least one pair seen several times, June, 1929.

Sparrow Hawk—The most numerous of the hawks.

Ruffed Grouse—Only one seen, June, 1938; none 1939.

Killdeer—Quite a few seen each year.

Spotted Sandpiper—Quite numerous. Nest, 4 eggs, June 10, 1938. About fifty feet from the lake.

Herring Gull—Quite numerous on Pelican, Rainy and Vermilion lakes. Seen on their nests on the rocky islands of Vermilion, 1938.

Black Tern—One at Pelican Lake. Several in the southern part of St. Louis county, June, 1939.

Black-billed Cuckoo—Individuals seen each season at Haley and Wakemup Bay.

Chimney Swift—Two flying over a spruce swamp, June, 1939.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird—One seen, June 10, 1938.

Belted Kingfisher—Common. Several nesting burrows found.

Pileated Woodpecker—One seen near Tower, June 18, 1939.

Red-headed Woodpecker—A pair nesting at Wakemup Bay, June 15, 1939.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker—Several seen.

Northern Flicker—Quite common. One at its nesting site, June 10, 1938.

Hairy Woodpecker—The most numerous member of the family. Nests with young seen, June 5 and June 6, 1938.

Downy Woodpecker—Only one pair seen each year.

Eastern Kingbird—A few seen, 1938. Almost abundant, 1939. A finished but empty nest, near Tower, June 18, 1939.

Crested Flycatcher—A pair at Wakemup Bay, June, 1939.

Phoebe—At every desirable place. Nest, four large young, June 5, 1938; nest, 5 eggs, June 11, 1939. Many other nests found.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher—Several seen along the lake shore and in the swamps

- each year. The species must nest in this vicinity but we were unsuccessful in our quest for a nest each June.
- Least Flycatcher—Abundant. Nest, 4 eggs, June 6, 1938. Nest, finished, empty, lined with wool, 8 feet up in a jackpine, June 19, 1939.
- Wood Pewee—Common.
- Olive-sided Flycatcher—Unexpectedly numerous in the spruce swamps.
- Tree Swallow—Common. Several nests found in boxes at clearings.
- Bank Swallow—A small colony nests at Wakemup Bay.
- Rough-winged Swallow—A pair building in a kingfisher runway, June 10, 1938. Two pairs nesting in a cut at Wakemup Bay, June, 1939.
- Barn Swallow—Quite common. Nesting in a barn north of the lake, 1939.
- Cliff Swallow—Two colonies found, June, 1939. At Haley at least fifty birds were nesting under the eaves of a barn. North of Vermilion, less than fifteen miles from the border, two nests were found on a garage.
- Purple Martin—Abundant. Nesting at almost every farm. Two Martin houses at a farm north of the lake had at least 80 compartments and most of them were occupied, June, 1939.
- Canada Jay—Two adults seen feeding two large young a few miles north of the lake, June 13, 1939.
- Blue Jay—Quite common. Nest, four large young, June 11, 1939.
- Crow—Common.
- Black-capped Chickadee—Quite common. Young, out of nest, being fed, June 19, 1939.
- Red-breasted Nuthatch—Heard calling several times on the ridge above a nearby spruce swamp, June, 1938.
- House Wren—Common. Several nests found each year. A martin house held nests of this species, English sparrows and grackles, June, 1938.
- Short-billed Marsh Wren—Quite numerous in its usual haunts.
- Catbird—One pair at the cottage in 1938; two pairs, June, 1939.
- Brown Thrasher—One at Lake Vermilion, June, 1939.
- Robin—Abundant. At least a score of nests found. Young left their nest, June 7, 1938.
- Hermit Thrush—A few seen each year. Nest, one egg, June 6, 1938. This nest was on high ground, surrounded by pine needles, and made of twigs, rootlets and grasses. Seen carrying food, June 11, 1939.
- Olive-backed Thrush—Not as numerous as in Cook county. Two nests found, both on June 10, 1938. One was six feet up in a balsam, with one egg.
- Veery—Abundant. Nest, 4 eggs, June 5, 1938; nest, June 10, 1939, 4 eggs; nest, 4 eggs, June 12, 1939.
- Golden-crowned Kinglet—Quite common in the spruce swamps. Nest, 5 young, near the top of a thirty foot spruce, June 10, 1938.
- Cedar Waxwing—Common. Two pairs building, June 18, 1939.
- Starling—One seen not far from Crane Lake, and a nest with large young was found at Lake Vermilion, June 17, 1939.
- Blue-headed Vireo—Not common. Two nests were found in 1938. One was still unfinished on June 10, 1938. It was situated about six feet up in a tamarack in a swamp. The other was on high, dry ground. It was about five feet up in a balsam and held three vireo eggs and one cowbird egg.
- Red-eyed Vireo—Common. Several nests in varying stages of construction found.
- Black and White Warbler—Common.
- Tennessee Warbler—A few seen in 1939. One pair was unquestionably nesting, but, though we looked for several hours, we could not find the nest.
- Nashville Warbler—Quite common.
- Parula Warbler—A nest, with three eggs, was found at Wakemup Bay, June 15, 1939. It was 18 feet up on a dead cedar. This pair and an individual seen during the previous June were the only parulas noted.
- Yellow Warbler—Common. Nest, 4 warbler eggs, one cowbird egg, June 8, 1938. Nest, 4 eggs, June 14, 1939, etc. A nest found in 1938 held two warbler eggs, one with a small hole in it; no cowbird eggs, but the warbler was building another sec-

- tion over the eggs.
- Magnolia Warbler—Quite numerous. Two nests were found on June 10, 1938. Each held two cowbird eggs and three warbler eggs. One was about five feet up in a balsam, the other less than three feet up in the same kind of a tree. Each was placed close to the trunk.
- Black-throated Blue Warbler—One singing male seen, June 10, 1938.
- Myrtle Warbler—Quite common. Nest, 4 eggs, June 5, 1938. This was placed on a small branch of a jackpine, 10 feet up. Nest, four small young, June 10, 1938; at the top of a black spruce. Nest, 4 eggs, Elbow Lake, June 13, 1939; eight feet up in a cedar, four feet from the trunk, and lined with feathers.
- Black-throated Green Warbler—Quite common.
- Blackburnian Warbler—Common.
- Chestnut-sided Warbler—Very common.
- Pine Warbler—Found wherever good-sized pines were still present.
- Ovenbird—Abundant.
- Grinnell Water Thrush—Quite numerous along the lake shore in 1938 but only seen twice in 1939.
- Connecticut Warbler—A singing male seen and at least one female flushed in a swamp, June, 1938.
- Mourning Warbler—A few found during 1939.
- Northern Yellowthroat—Not common. A partly finished nest on which a bird was working was found at Black Lake, June 13, 1939.
- Canada Warbler—Numerous in 1938, only seen twice, 1939.
- Redstart—Common. Finished but empty nest, June 7, 1938.
- Bobolink—A few seen in a meadow a few miles from Crane Lake. Also seen at several other places during 1939.
- Eastern Meadowlark—See below.
- Western Meadowlark—Both meadowlarks were found at Vermilion, the eastern apparently most numerous.
- Yellow-headed Blackbird—Not seen at Ver-
- milion, but one seen near Virginia, June, 1938.
- Red-winged Blackbird—Common.
- Baltimore Oriole—Quite common.
- Brewer's Blackbird—Several seen in nearby meadows.
- Bronzed Grackle—Common. Nesting in martin boxes.
- Cowbird—Quite common. Eggs found in yellow and magnolia warbler and blue-headed vireo nests in 1938.
- House Sparrow—A few nesting about farm buildings and cottages.
- Scarlet Tanager—Quite common. Nest, forty feet up in a jackpine, at Wakemup Bay, June 15, 1939.
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak—Not common. Nest, 2 eggs, June 10, 1938. Nest, 3 eggs, June 10, 1938. The latter was placed ten feet up in a balsam, close to the trunk.
- Purple Finch—Quite common, but no nests found.
- Pine Siskin—A few individuals seen, 1938; none, 1939.
- Goldfinch—Not common.
- Savannah Sparrow—Numerous in the low-lying meadows.
- Vesper Sparrow—Quite numerous.
- Slate-colored Junco—Not numerous. Nest, with one small young, sunk in the moss in the swamp, and covered with Labrador tea, June 7, 1938. Young, out of nest, unable to fly, being fed June 11, 1939.
- Chipping Sparrow—Common. Nest, 4 eggs, June 7, 1938; nest, 4 eggs, June 15, 1939, etc.
- Clay-colored Sparrow—Not seen at the lake in 1938, but a few individuals seen to within a few miles of the Canadian border in 1939.
- White-throated Sparrow—Common. Nest, 4 eggs, June 6, 1938. This was on the ground, under the branches of a spruce that had been cut down.
- Swamp Sparrow—A few seen each year.
- Song Sparrow—Abundant. Nest, 5 eggs, June 12, 1939. Nest, 4 small young, June 19, 1939. Minneapolis.

Banding Hawks and Owls

By James A. Struthers

The first raptors that I banded were 3 young great horned owls. My brother Dana located the nest of these owls on March 4, 1939, near Minneapolis. At that time there were 3 eggs in the nest, which was in the top of a hollow stump some 12 feet from the ground. Our next banding experience was with long-eared owls. On April 23, while seeking for crows' nests, we found the nest of an owl of this species; it held 5 eggs. When we returned to the nest several weeks later there were 3 young which I banded. The old owls were very bold, sometimes permitting us to get close enough to touch them.

The day after we banded the long-eared owls we were on a field trip to Highland Lake south of Minneapolis, where we hoped to find red-tailed hawks. Instead of finding hawks we flushed a young great horned owl from the ground not far from a hollow tree where I had banded 3 owlets a few weeks previous. The owl flew into a tree, and it was only by throwing sticks at the tree that we were able to frighten it out. It had not yet acquired its full powers of flight, and in trying to fly across a small bay of the lake it became tired and was forced to land on the water. Dana waded out and rescued the bird. Since there was no band on its leg, I banded it and placed it in a tree.

The horned owl that we saved from the water was the last bird that we banded before our hawk expedition to Powell's lodge on Lake Saganaga in July, 1939. The object of this expedition was to get pigeon hawks to train for falconry. Bill Powell showed us an island in the lake where we might expect to find pigeon hawks nesting.

The next day as we approached the island a female pigeon hawk flew out and screamed at us; she was soon joined by the male. After climbing several trees with nests in them, we found one which held four half-grown young. Two of the young fluttered to the ground, and Dana carried down a third. The fourth bird, which remained in the nest, I banded; the other three we carried back to the camp and banded.

Bill Powell also directed us to the nest of a broad-winged hawk. We banded the 3 young that it held. Several days later we found one of the young hawks tied to a perch, which stood back of the lodge. Powell told us he had taken the bird from its nest in order to save it from the attacks of a red-tailed hawk that he saw sailing above the nest. He took for granted that the one young broad-winged hawk that was missing from the nest had been filched by the red-tailed hawk.

The last 2 birds that I banded were marsh hawks. When their nest was first found at the Carlos Avery Game Refuge in Anoka County on June 20, it held 3 eggs and 2 young. On our second trip to the nest we found two of the young hawks eating the remains of their two smaller nest companions. The adults seemed to have disappeared, and for that reason we took the young home with us. When they were full grown, we took them to the country and released them.

Many nests of hawks were destroyed this spring by storms, and for that reason I did not band as many hawks as I had hoped to. In order to use some of my spare bands I am going to attempt to trap hawks during the fall migration. Minneapolis.

Second Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union

The second annual meeting of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union was called to order by the Vice-President, Mary I. Elwell, in the auditorium of the State Teachers College at Duluth, Minnesota, May 27, 1939. After a brief welcome by Miss Evelyn Jones, President of the Duluth Bird Club, the program as printed, with the omission of paper number four, was given.

Dr. and Mrs. Thos. S. Roberts' unexpected attendance was a great delight to members of the Union and visitors. Dr. Roberts' extemporaneous talk about his very early experience in the Lake Superior Region added much interest to the morning's program.

At the business meeting the nominating committee composed of Mr. A. B. Erickson, Dr. Gustav Swanson, Mr. Richard Voth, Mr. Charles Metzroth, Mrs. Wm. Wernowsky, and Miss Evelyn Jones brought in the following slate of officers.

G. N. Rysgaard, President.

G. W. Friedrich, Vice-President.

Mary I. Elwell, Secretary-Treasurer.

Arnold B. Erickson, Editor of *The Flicker*.

A telegram from Mr. G. N. Rysgaard, convalescing from scarlet fever in Ancker Hospital in St. Paul, expressing his regret over his inability to be present and his wish for a successful meeting, was read by the Vice-President. A group of three members composed of Mrs. W. C. Olin, Chairman, Mrs. Wernowsky, and Miss Jones was appointed to send a message from the Union to Mr. Rysgaard.

Dr. Roberts extended a cordial invitation to the members of the Union to hold their 1940 meeting at the new Museum of Natural History now under construction at the University of Minnesota. A motion was made and carried to accept Dr. Roberts' invitation.

Meeting adjourned.

After the luncheon the college students of Dr. Olga Lakela's ornithology class presented Dr. Roberts with a skin of the Herring Gull for use at the Museum of Natural History at the University of Minnesota.

PROGRAM OF THE SECOND ANNUAL MEETING

Duluth, Minnesota May 27, 1939
Morning Field Trip—Minnesota Point—
Leaving College at 5 A. M.
Program—Duluth State Teachers College
Auditorium—9:30 A. M.

1. The Birds of Heron Lake other than Franklin's Gull.

Mr. Nestor Heimenz, St. Cloud

2. Bird Life on Minnesota Point in Pictures.

Miss Margaret Jackson, Duluth

3. Nesting Marsh Birds, Minnesota Point.

Mr. Casimir Hero, Duluth

4. Water Fowl Migration in Minnesota in the Springs of 1938 and 1939.

Mr. Arnold Erickson, Minneapolis

5. The Nesting of Piping Plover on Minnesota Point.

Dr. Olga Lakela, Duluth

6. Temperature—Bird Arrival Relationship.

Mr. Ewart Grove, St. Cloud

7. The Importance of Lead Poisoning in Minnesota Waterfowl.

Dr. Gustav Swanson, St. Paul

8. A Motion Picture Reel on the Migration of Canadian Geese.

Museum of Natural History,
University of Minnesota

9. Business Meeting.

Luncheon Washburn Hall 12 A.M.
Afternoon Field Trip—Minnesota Point—
Leaving College at 1:30 P. M.
Bird Exhibits in Room 312

ATTENDANCE ROSTER OF THE
SECOND ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE M. O. U.

Seventy-three members and friends of the M. O. U. attended the second annual meeting and field trip at Duluth on May 27, 1939. Of these members 41 were from Duluth, 25 from St. Cloud, and 7 from the Twin Cities. The following is a list of those who attended the meeting. DULUTH—Hulda R. Adams, Mrs. Howard Alaspa, Clara Bahnsen, Odin Brendengen, Margaret Brown, Mrs. C. L. Cecil, Alma H. Chesley, Mira Childs, Mrs. Earl G. Christiansen, Verner Curtis, Mary I. Elwell, Hugh R. Engstrom, C. H. Frazee, Marie J. Gleason, Leroy Haglund, Louise Hall, Orr R. Hamilton, Casimir Hero, Margaret Jackson, Evelyn Jones, Marguerite Kittredge, Mrs. T. J. Kitts, Olga Lakela, Catherine E. Lieske, Mrs. W. C. Olin, Leonard Ostrom, Mrs. J. A. Paine, Mrs. L. M. Pankhurst, Martha Raatikka, Mrs. Arthur R. Reinke, Dean Reinke, Doris Robie, Julia M. Seipel, Clara Simon, John C. Sippola, Mrs. Lee Taylor, Dorothy Thomas, Norma Utley, Catherine Vavra, Betty Watterson, Mrs. Wm. Wernowsky. ST. CLOUD—Emil Berger, Earl Bohm, Beatrice Bouelle, Alice Erickson, D. Erickson, George W. Friedrich, Albert Gasperlin, Ewart Grove, Jeanette Gruber, Anne Hackett, Barbara Harding, Lorraine Hartmann, Nestor M. Hiemenz, Virginia Kaerwer, La Verne Kay, Evelyn Larsen, Eugene Luckemeyer, C. J. Metzroth, C. J. Rosenberger, Mary Ruehle, Alice Saunders, Iris Vanstrom, John Voth, Richard Voth, N. Wendt. TWIN CITIES—Arnold B. Erickson, Dr. Thos. S. Roberts, Mrs. Thos. S. Roberts, Dana Struthers, Gustav A. Swanson, Mrs. Gustav A. Swanson, John L. Zorichak.

LIST OF BIRDS SEEN

The members of the M. O. U. made two field trips to Minnesota Point on May 27, 1939, one in the early morning and the other in the afternoon. Despite the rain and fog an interesting, and in some respects unusual, list of birds was seen, especially shore birds. The following is a list of 75 birds observed on the fieldtrips: loon, canvasback, lesser scaup, red-breasted merganser, sora, piping plover, semipalmated plover, killdeer, black-bellied plover, ruddy turnstone, spotted sandpiper, knot, Baird's sandpiper, least sandpiper, red-backed sandpiper, semipalmated sandpiper, buff-breasted sandpiper, Hudsonian godwit (*May 25*), sanderling, herring gull, ring-billed gull, common tern, black tern, night-hawk, flicker, red-headed woodpecker, downy woodpecker, kingbird, least flycatcher, wood pewee, horned lark, tree swallow, bank swallow, barn swallow, purple martin, blue jay, crow, red-breasted nuthatch, house wren, catbird, robin, olive-backed thrush, willow thrush, bluebird, cedar waxing, starling, Tennessee warbler, Nashville warbler, yellow warbler, myrtle warbler, Blackburnian warbler, bay-breasted warbler, palm warbler, oven-bird, mourning warbler, northern yellowthroat, Wilson warbler, redstart, English sparrow, western meadowlark, red-winged blackbird, Baltimore oriole, bronzed grackle, cowbird, scarlet tanager, rose-breasted grosbeak, purple finch, goldfinch vesper sparrow, chipping sparrow, clay-colored sparrow, Harris' sparrow, white-crowned sparrow, song sparrow, Lapland longspur (*May 26*).

Respectfully submitted,
Mary I. Elwell,
Secretary-Treasurer

Synopsis of a Bird Nest Census

By Edward A. Palcich

My primary object in carrying out this bird nest census was to observe and study the nesting birds of the Iron Range in St. Louis County. The census was conducted over a period of approximately five weeks from June 14 to July 21, 1939. During this period the temperature ranged from a low of 65° F. to 92° F.; the precipitation was heavy during the first three weeks.

The census area, which consisted of three square miles of territory, was a typical cross section of Iron Range country. It was made up of various habitats, but three predominated: swamp, deciduous forest, and open fields. I included a fourth habitat, a piece of farm land, and there I obtained information on many of the farm-loving birds.

As the nests were located, each was given a number. I visited each nest every day until

the birds abandoned it, noting any changes that occurred. Nearly every day brought some new and interesting story at the nests, so many, in fact, that it is impossible for me to relate them in this brief report. I paid particular attention, however, to the habitats in which the nests were located and to the construction of the nests. The data for each nest relating to the date first observed, number of eggs, date of hatching, number of eggs that hatched, date that the birds left the nest, and remarks on the habitat are given in Table I. Because I had to terminate the study on July 21, the data for some nests are not complete. I regret this, but I hope to spend a full summer some year in carrying out the complete study.

(Continued on Page 24)

The annual nesting article has been held for the next number of The Flicker. All nesting data should be sent in at once to Mr. Hugh Engstrom, Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota.

The various chapters of the M. O. U. should plan to conduct winter bird censuses in their respective regions. The census should be made around the 25th of December, and should be completed in one day in an area not greater than 15 miles in diameter. The number of species and the number of individuals of each species should be listed, as well as a statement of weather conditions and the personnel of the trip. Interesting observations made before or after the day of the census should be reported too. One member of each census party should be appointed to prepare the report for publication in The Flicker. For a sample report, see The Flicker for May, 1939, page 6.

NOTES OF INTEREST

SPRUCE GROUSE AT GRAND RAPIDS, MINNESOTA. Over the 1939 4th of July week end, I was at the North Central School Station at Grand Rapids with the Botanical Society, and one of our trips while there was to a very extensive black spruce and tamarack swamp about 20 miles north of Grand Rapids. This swamp borders the road for several miles, and is reported to extend at least 9 miles back. It is quite inaccessible, and as a result, has maintained a wild condition. We were shown several species of orchids while there. Hearing the song of a Nashville warbler, I left the rest of the party to observe its author. While following this bird, I saw a grouse and 5 chicks. At the time I thought it was a ruffed grouse, but after seeing my Nashville warbler, I returned to get a better look at the grouse, and discovered it was a female Canada spruce grouse. She was most bold, and fluttered around me in a most excited manner, sometimes sitting up in much the pose of the spruce grouse male in display, holding her head away back, puffing out the feathers on her chest, raising her wings slightly and holding her tail erect, and from time to time spreading it into a complete fan. Realizing that the chicks must be close by, I stood still for a moment and watched the hen. She continued to flutter about clucking constantly. I then became aware of clear two-note whistles from 5 different places in the sphagnum about me. The hen flew at me and then over each of these places. I chose a nearby spot and approached it carefully. The hen became frantic, for the chick was not maintaining a still pose, but was running through the sphagnum. When I picked it up, it continued its high two-note whistle. The hen flew up to a perch about 3 feet from my face, fluttering her wings beside her in a manner suggesting the drumming action of the ruffed grouse, tail down, and clucking constantly. The chick was of a buff color with a conspicuous brown patch on the top of its head. When released it flew weakly to a fallen tree 15 feet away, and ran up and down the trunk in clear view, calling constantly.

MILTON D. THOMPSON, Minneapolis.

THE MAGPIE IN MINNESOTA. *Pica pica hudsonia* (Sabine), the American magpie, has been observed periodically in Minnesota. According to Dr. Thomas S. Roberts, in *The Birds of Minnesota*, Vol. 2, pp. 66-67, the species has been reported from 24 different countries. Itasca and St. Louis Counties may now be added to the list. Mr. Verner C. Curtis, a member of the Duluth Bird Club, observed a flock of 16 magpies at Bovey, Itasca County, during the last week in August, 1939. The birds remained in the vicinity for some time. The author observed 2 magpies on October 3, 1939, on the campus of the Duluth State Teachers College. It will be interesting to see whether the 1939 invasion of this species will be as extensive as that of 1921 when 51 individuals were reported to the Museum of Natural History.

OLGA LAKELA, Duluth.

THE RED-THROATED LOON IN MINNESOTA. There are only a few previous records of *Gavia stellata* (Pontoppidan) from the state. Mr. Lloyd Hackl, a Duluth taxidermist, placed the species materially on record by collecting a specimen from Lake Superior on Minnesota Point at Duluth, on June 17, 1939. At that time he observed a flock of some 15 individuals flying in scattered groups. The specimen was donated by the Department of Biology of Duluth State Teachers College to the Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota.

OLGA LAKELA, Duluth.

RACHEL, A YOUNG BALTIMORE ORIOLE. One Saturday morning early in July, 1939, I heard the insistent calls of young Baltimore orioles. After listening for a while I called some of the neighborhood children, and together we sought the young birds. We followed the sound until we located them in a poplar tree close to the nest. Mrs. Burgess, on whose property the nest was situated, told us that the young were crying because of hunger. She had found 2 of them on the ground, had taken them in and fed them, and then discovered that they were so louse infested that her hands became covered with lice when she fed the birds. She followed the same rules for raising young orioles as she used for chicks—fresh grass to discourage the lice and a mixture of bread crumbs and oatmeal soaked in water to sustain the birds. They were ravenously hungry and ate every time that she fed them, never seeming to get enough. As we left her house I heard another young oriole in the woods; soon we found it too. I intended to give it to Mrs. Burgess to keep with the other young, but my young son begged to keep it.

We proceeded to care for our bird according to Mrs. Burgess' directions. But the next morning, when she came and told us that both of her birds had died in the night because of overfeeding, we changed our tactics. We fed the little one very sparingly and saw a great improvement; we got rid of most of the lice by dusting her with canary lice powder.

We called our bird Rachel because her yellow breast seemed to indicate that she was a female. We kept her outdoors most of the time; in a few days she learned to clamor for food whenever the screen door slammed. We continued to feed her on oatmeal and bread soaked in water, varied by an occasional fly or berry. At first she was unable to feed herself, and we had to put the food into her mouth. This procedure was satisfactory except that her face got covered with food, and I had to wash it with a wet cloth after each meal.

We were much pleased that she was growing and improving steadily, and we answered phone queries of, "How's Rachel this morning," with the boastful reply, "Fine, her mother couldn't care for her better." But her mother would never have made the mistake we made. One morning we found her little body with her neck encircled by a piece of long grass. She had been strangled during the night.

It is with the keenest regret that I think of it even now. We had planned to band her before liberating her, and we felt sure that she would return to us the following spring because we had been kind to her. I can not think of a greater thrill than to be recognized the next spring by a bird that you befriended the previous fall.

MRS. A. R. REINKE, Duluth.

THE WOOD THRUSH AT DULUTH. The wood thrush, *Hylocichla mustelina* Gmelin, is gradually extending its summer range farther north. There are previous northern records of relatively recent years, one from Deer River, Itasca County. On June 9, 1939, the author discovered the species in Duluth in a maple-basswood forest on Skyline Parkway east of Beck Road. The song was verified by locating the bird. It was not possible to search for the nest; however, the birds were seen and heard in the same area throughout the summer. This observation is the first record of the wood thrush for the Duluth area, where the hermit thrush nests in swamps a few miles north of the city.

OLGA LAKELA, Duluth.

A XANTHOCHROID SCARLET Tanager. I spent July 2 and 3, 1939 in the St. Croix River Recreational Area, Pine County, Minnesota, taking pictures and birding. Towhees and scarlet tanagers were very common, and their songs and calls were heard almost continuously. One tanager that I chanced to see sat in the dry top of an oak. His song was similar in tone and quality to those of other tanagers that sang round about, and he gave the same hoarse *chip chur* call. But his plumage was most unusual. Instead of the normal scarlet plumage, he was clad in bright yellow, with just a suggestion of red before the eyes. His tail and wings were black as in the normal bird. Xanthochroism, or a dominance of yellow pigment over the normal, in this case red, is of rare occurrence in the scarlet tanager. In the study collection of the Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota, however, there is a skin of a xanthochroid tanager; the wings and tail of this bird are pale brown. It is pictured in the tanager plate in Dr. T. S. Roberts' *The Birds of Minnesota* and in *Bird Portraits In Color*.

ARNOLD B. ERICKSON, Minneapolis.

HORNED LARK OBSERVATIONS. At 6:00 A.M. on April 23, 1939, a group of six of us drove to Minnesota Point, Duluth, to watch for ducks; while sitting in the car we saw a female horned lark. As we watched she pulled up some dry grass and carried it to her nest which she was just starting to build. It was located on the ground by the guard rail of a parking area. Two days later we visited the nest again. It was completed and held one egg. On April 27th and 29th there were 3 and 4 eggs respectively; this led us to think that the last egg had probably been laid on April 28th. Neither time did we see the parent birds, nor did we see them on May 7th when we again visited the nest. Susan Lovald found 4 newly hatched larks in the nest on May 10th, and 3 days later I saw the young. Their skins were black and partially covered with down; their eyes were open; and the insides of their mouths were a bright orange. On May 18th the young were covered with a black down that was spotted with brown; this plumage was similar in color and pattern to that of the young turkey. When I last visited the nest on May 20th, neither the young larks nor their parents were present.

MRS. WALTER C. OLIN, Duluth.

THE DICKCISSEL IN MINNESOTA. The dickcissel is one of those interesting birds which for some unknown reason invades Minnesota some summers in considerable numbers, and then is scarce or absent for a few years, suddenly to reappear in numbers. This summer has been one of those interesting years when the dickcissel has been abundant, and reports have been coming in from bird students all around Minneapolis concerning the presence of this bird, which is found abundant in the vicinity of sweet clover and alfalfa fields.

On Friday and Saturday, June 16 and 17, 1939, while accompanying the State Historical Society's tour to southern and eastern Minnesota, I found the dickcissel abundant at Rochester, along the road from Rochester to Harmony, from Harmony to Preston, along the Mississippi River from Preston to Frontenac, and from Frontenac to Minneapolis. The bird is thus not only abundant in our Minneapolis area but is also visiting Minnesota in considerable numbers over an extensive area of the state. The farthest north that I observed them was at Milaca during the first week in July.

MILTON D. THOMPSON, Minneapolis.

Table I. Summary of Nesting Observations Made Near Chisholm, Minnesota
June 14 - July 21, 1939

Name of Bird Nest	Date First Observed	No. of Eggs	Date Eggs Hatched	No. of Eggs That Hatched	Date Birds Left Nest	Remarks
Vesper Sparrow	June 14	4	June 20	3	June 30	Nest on ground; made of dry straw.
Vesper Sparrow	July 18	5	July 18	5		4 eggs hatched at 6:00 P. M.; the 5th at 6:25 P. M.
Robin	June 15	1				Nest in Am. Mt. Ash, 4' above ground. Egg gone on June 22; nest abandoned.
Robin	June 20	2	July 5	2	July 15	Nest in Mt. Ash 3' up.
Robin	July 5			4	July 15	Nest in paper birch 10' up; young 8 days old when first seen.
Robin	July 6			4	July 15	Nest in maple 3' up. 3 young on July 6; 4th egg hatched July 8.
Robin	July 10	2	July 15	2		Nest in maple 6' up.
Robin	July 11	1				Nest in balsam fir 10' up.
Robin	July 11	3				Nest in balsam fir 3' up.
Robin	July 11	3				Nest in ash 6' up.
Robin	July 12	3	July 21	3		Nest in balsam fir 4' up.
Robin	July 12	4	July 14	1		Nest in alder 2' up.
Robin	July 15	3	July 20	3		Nest in balsam fir in a swamp, 3' up.
Robin	July 21	3				Nest in willow 3' up.
Least Flycatcher	June 15	3	June 28	3	July 11	Nest in quaking aspen 6' up.
Least Flycatcher	June 17	3	June 20	3		Nest in aspen 6' up; young killed by heavy rain June 21.
Least Flycatcher	June 20	4	June 30	4	July 15	Nest in paper birch 6' up.
Least Flycatcher	June 27	4	July 15	3		Nest in paper birch 10' up.
Least Flycatcher	July 12			4	July 15	Nest in aspen 10' up. Large young on the 12th.
Catbird	June 27			4	June 29	Nest in balsam fir 9' up; made of twigs.
Catbird	July 6	3	July 15	3		Nest in balsam fir 2.5' up.
Catbird	July 11	3	July 20	3		Nest in balsam fir 3' up.
Kingbird	June 27	2	July 6	1	July 15	Nest in paper birch 12' up.
Migrant Shrike	June 20			2	June 20	Nest in willow 2' up. Young out of the nest when first seen.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	July 8			2	July 15	Nest in alder 8' up; built of twigs.
Cedar Waxwing	July 10	5				Nest in alder; lined with moss.
Barn Swallow	July 11			2	July 11	Nest on a rafter in a barn.
Barn Swallow	July 21	5				Same nest as above; second brood.
Flicker	July 7			4		Nest in a post; young several days old.
Brown Thrasher	July 12	4	July 15	4		Nest in the lower branches of balsam fir.

¹Hawley, Minn.