

SOUTH DAKOTA BIRD NOTES

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of

SOUTH DAKOTA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION
(Organized 1949)

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~~No. 1~~



Photo by C. A. Van Epps, Huron, S. D.

CANADA GOOSE

Nesting on Waubay National Wildlife Refuge

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*"The purposes for which this corporation is formed are to encourage study of birds in South Dakota and to promote the study of Ornithology by more closely uniting students of this branch of natural science."
Articles of Incorporation, South Dakota Ornithologists Union.*

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SOUTH DAKOTA ORNITHOLOGISTS UNION

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President's Page

GERALD B. SPAWN

BROOKINGS, S. D.

To all members and friends of South Dakota Ornithologists' Union I convey my sincere greetings.

We are now in our second year as an organization. SDOU was given an excellent start under the very capable leadership of our past-president, Herman Chapman. We should take advantage of that beginning. I realize that the first few years of a corporation such as ours are usually the most difficult ones. We are still on the "proving grounds" and we need the active participation of each and every one of our former members as well as of the newcomers.

South Dakota Ornithologists' Union is an organization which assists in forming friendships between people who are interested in knowing and understanding more about birds. It can serve to bring together, as a unit on a state-wide basis, all our people who share a common interest in birds. Such a group should include representatives from many families in the state.

South Dakota Bird Notes, our official journal, serves as a medium for the publication of interesting facts about birds and for the recording of important and sometimes unusual observations made by our members. The articles deal with South Dakota birds as they are seen under local conditions. The pages of this publication already carry important records in the natural history of South Dakota.

"Bird watching," as a hobby, provides a most interesting form of recreation—one which is not restricted to the wealthy. No one is so poor that he can-

not learn to know and enjoy birds. One does not need to be a "professional" in order to be an interested member of our group.

The out-of-doors is ours—ours to enjoy to the utmost. That enjoyment can be greatly increased by an additional interest in the birds that make their homes in our community and those that pay us a brief visit while migrating through our area.

We know there are a great many people in South Dakota who are interested in birds and who are not yet members. We believe these people need this organization and the club needs their cooperation in an active membership status.

To each former member I suggest, if you have not already done so, that you now send in your \$3.00 check for 1950 membership dues. Please give your mailing address so you will receive your copies of South Dakota Bird Notes. In addition to this, won't you tell your friends about our club and ask them to join? No formal application for membership is necessary. Ask them to make their \$3.00 checks payable to SDOU, which you can send with their names and mailing addresses to J. S. Findley, SDOU Membership Chairman, 1201 South Center Avenue, Sioux Falls. Names and addresses of friends not living near you, who should be interested in SDOU, will also be appreciated. If every member will really do his or her part, we can increase greatly our present membership. Keep your name on the membership list (see Bird Notes, Volume I, No. 1, July, 1949).



—Photo by Cruickshank
(Cut, Courtesy Audubon Magazine)

SNOWY OWL IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Charles H. Rogge
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

THE Displaced Snowy Owl Invades Northern United States!! Recent issues of *Life and Time*, as well as many nature magazines, have given us some information on the Snowy Owl and its habits.

This bird is approximately twenty-four inches from head to tip of tail and has a sixty-inch wing-spread. The male is nearly pure white, with transverse spots or bars on the shoulders; the female may be much darker.

Nyctea scandiaca lives in North America, breeding from far inside the Arctic Circle south through most of the Canadian provinces. A slight depression on a knoll is often the site of the nest, lined with a few grasses and feathers. Here, also, it does its most persistent hunting, preying upon small rodents, ptarmigans, ducks and other waterfowl.

National Audubon Society predicted an invasion of central United States by the Snowy Owl in December, 1949. It was explained that this species moves into this territory in cycles of approximately four years. A large migration occurred in 1946. The reason for these cycles is a reduction in population of lemmings and other rodents of the Arctic region. The pangs of hunger force

the owls to move south where food is more abundant.

J. W. Enger states in the North Dakota journal *Outdoors* that the Snowy Owl usually visits the state each year, first arrivals being seen there this year in November, but they are not so common in South Dakota. The South Dakota Ornithologists' Union has gathered data on the presence of the Snowy Owl in this state during the past winter, having had the assistance of a fine cooperative corps of Field Wardens and other bird students.

Clair T. Rollings, Manager of Sand Lake Refuge, states that the largest invasion of Snowy Owls in that area in a period of thirty years occurred during the past winter. He reports at least one owl for each two sections of land, or about 500 in that location. Mr. Rollings said, further, "on Sand Lake the Snowy Owls were most commonly seen along the dikes or in isolated trees. Carcasses of lead-shot-poisoned ducks apparently furnished much of the food for the 'big whites!' Ducks crippled by hunters were probably taken by the owls, but most of these ducks would not have survived the winter anyway, so the loss was more apparent than real."

One of the first Snowy Owls seen in South Dakota this winter was reported by E. Nesson, Arlington, S. D. in the December, 1949, issue of South Dakota Bird Notes. This bird was seen near Hayti, S. D. in late November. In December the main migration started across the state. Bob Kolb of Clear Lake states he saw the first of the Owls in December, and counted eight or nine during the winter in Hamlin County. Kenneth Krumm, of Martin, reports that the owls reached the Lacreek Refuge in Bennett County in December and set up winter quarters then and there. From Claude Van Epps of Huron comes word that Leo Purse, a state game technician, Aberdeen, saw between twenty and thirty Snowy Owls on January 24, 1950, around Eureka and the Sand Lake area. A. K. Dahlgren, of Huron, also a game technician, counted fourteen on the same date near Sand Lake.

W. E. Ritter reported seeing two Snowy Owls south of the Wall Lake corner, 10 miles west of Sioux Falls, S. D.; and F. H. Sundling reported a pair sighted in the Newton Hills area, south of Canton. These birds probably visit this area more or less regularly and are not necessarily a part of the big migration, as Mr. Sundling stated that he did not feel the birds came earlier or later than usual. Leslie Jensen, Field Warden in Charles Mix County, was of the opinion that the Snowy Owl was almost a native of South Dakota. He remembers these birds coming to his area during the last thirty-four years. Albert Schmidt of Selby reports seeing the Snowy Owls each winter since 1917, although they have been more numerous since 1945. He says, "I found them frequently in tree claims where we had a large concentration of pheasants. Under the trees in which the owls roost I find a lot of pellets, with pheasant feathers most of the substance."

An interesting incident was recorded by Reuel Janson, game technician at Mobrige. He was out in the storm of

January 17, 1950, and saw a Snowy Owl following a hen pheasant. The birds spent some time "playing hide-and-peek around a telephone pole before the pheasant found satisfactory cover." Birds that remain on the ground are usually able to elude the owl, but one stroke from its mighty claws is sufficient to kill even larger birds in the air, and the Snowy Owl is exceedingly swift in flight.

Other scattered reports show that the owls have been seen recently near Brookings, Onida, Rowena, Presho and in rural Mellette County.

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The following is a tabulation of reports received by E. R. Lampster of Pierre from game wardens on the presence of the Snowy Owl in South Dakota during the winter of 1949-1950:

Robert Kolb, Clear Lake.....	8
E. L. Woods, Miller.....	2
L. C. Richardson, Aberdeen (estimate) in county.....	500
H. H. Deblon, Watertown.....	2
L. C. Bristol, Firesteel.....	5
G. K. Peterson, Burke.....	0
Joe Earl, Plankinton.....	2
I. R. Wiley, Huron.....	2
Orville Randall, Lemmon.....	1
W. B. Elley, Hot Springs.....	0
Roy L. Clennon, Sturgis.....	1
A. L. Tew, Sisseton (estimate)....	50
Kenneth Scissons, Winner.....	0
Norman Merriweather, Wess. Sprgs.	0
L. J. Baldwin, Salem.....	1
Wm. Halliday, Jefferson.....	0
C. B. Gunderson, Yankton.....	0
Ury Dahling, Webster (estimate)....	10-12
Howard W. Morrison, Isabel.....	1
Merle Thompson, Chamberlain...	occasionally
Harry Henderson, Belle Fourche... .	2
Albert Schmidt, Selby.....	4
Fred Curtis, Redfield.....	0
Al Kimlicka, Redfield.....	10
Henry Voss, Tripp.....	1
W. E. Ritter, Sioux Falls.....	2
Leslie Nelsen, Lake Andes.....	0
A. N. Englebert, Martin.....	3
C. A. Ferguson, Mitchell.....	0
Darrel Brady, Philip.....	0
J. G. Krumm, Mitchell.....	0
F. H. Sundling, Canton.....	2

(Continued on page 7)

Sanctuary! Sanctuary!

WAUBAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

F. T. Staunton, Refuge Manager

Waubay, South Dakota

WAUBAY is an Indian word that means "nesting place for birds." It is designated to the early Sioux an area that was outstanding because of the presence of many species of nesting waterfowl and other birds.

To the white men who came here seeking virgin agricultural land, the wildlife provided a welcome change in their monotonous diet. But they changed the ecology of the land to one more suited to their life's pattern, and the changes did not benefit wildlife. Limited numbers of the birds and mammals have been preserved only through the untiring efforts of forward-thinking persons and organizations, including the legislators who enact the protective laws and the people who observe them.

Wildlife refuges or sanctuaries, whether Federal, State or private, are of recent origin, as is the technical study of wildlife management. Refuge sponsors seek to develop suitable natural habitat for beneficial types of wildlife and to create isolated biological islands for study of the habits and lives of the various species present. Refuges also provide areas, free of human disturbance, in which wildlife can mate, nest, rear their young, feed, rest or travel without interference.

Waubay National Wildlife Refuge in northeastern Day County, South Dakota, is administered by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a branch of the Department of the Interior. Refuge headquarters is in the northeastern part of the Refuge, ten miles north of Waubay, S. Dak. The staff consists of a Refuge Manager and a clerk-patrolman, and two part-time employees occasion-

ally in the spring and fall.

Geologically the Refuge is in the Coteau or the Sisseton Hills, a glacial moraine lying 1800 feet or more above sea level. This triangular area of high, rolling prairie covers about 60 townships.

Geographically the Coteau is a continental watershed from whose northern slopes the headwaters of the Red River of the North start toward Hudson Bay, on the south the Sioux River flows to the Missouri, and the Minnesota River, originating on the eastern slope, finds its way into the Mississippi. Aside from these on the outer edges of the moraine, there are few drainages or water courses more than a few miles in length and they usually end in some glacial sump or kettle.

The whole Coteau is pock-marked with potholes varying in size from a part of an acre to 120 acres, and some of the larger depressions form lakes and marshes of considerable size. The chain of glacial sumps, marshes and potholes extends many miles both north and south of the Coteau. As it narrows to a width of about 45 miles at the part where the Refuge is located, migrating waterfowl and other birds are funnelled through the Refuge. During times of drought it provides the only route, except the Missouri River, across the state where waterfowl in migration can find suitable habitat.

Undoubtedly, the Sisseton Hills region is one of the most important nesting areas for ducks in the entire country, and nesting concentrations along the shores of its potholes and marshes have equalled, and in some instances

surpassed, any that have been reported from Canadian avian locations.

The Refuge and adjoining territory are in the upper portion of the Transition Life Zone and support many forms of plant and animal life common to that Zone. Because its altitude is higher than that of the country immediately to the east and west, its spring comes about two weeks later and fall starts ten days earlier there.

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When the Refuge was established it was an important gathering place for migrating waterfowl, but it was not attractive to nesting birds because of the heavy over-grazing on marsh edges and lake margins and extensive farming operations. After the Refuge was established agricultural activities were eliminated when inconsistent with good game management. Grazing by domestic livestock was stopped to give native grasses a chance to recover and reseed, and the forest understory a chance to develop. Farming was limited to food plots where crops were grown only for the benefit of wildlife and to improve the depleted soils and harvesting was regulated to avoid conflict with the nesting season of birds. Haying was restricted to tracts already planted to alfalfa.

Waubay Refuge was established primarily as a waterfowl area, with upland birds, deer and furbearers in minor roles. About one-third, 1800 acres, of the Refuge is water area. Of an original 670 acres of fallow farm land, a part has reverted to sodded grass land. About 730 acres is scrub timber and brush, principally scrub oak, green ash, elm and such deciduous shrubs as chokecherry, buffalo berry, june berry and sumac. None of the remaining 400 acres of native grass has ever been cultivated.

The Refuge provides safe nesting for fourteen species of wild ducks and a sizable flock of full-winged Canada

geese. (See front cover.) Three species of grebes: Western, Holboell's and Pied-billed, nest in the area, and Horned and Eared Grebes are common during migrations. White Pelicans and Double-crested Cormorants occasionally nest here, the former with notable lack of success. Two hundred sixty-four species of birds have been observed and identified at the Refuge during the past 12 years. The species attracting the most attention by bird students are Canada Geese, Holboell's and Western Grebes, and American Golden-eyes. Whistling Swans can be found on the Refuge in small numbers only in early spring or late fall during migration and rarely stay more than two weeks.

Any person desiring information about the best locations for seeing any of the species common to this locality can obtain suggestions at Refuge headquarters. Refuge personnel are always happy to assist anyone who is interested in birds, particularly waterfowl.

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SNOWY OWL

(Continued from page 5)

Later Reports:

Dr. J. A. Eckrich, Aberdeen, late Feb. several in McPherson and Edmunds Counties.

Alvin Wight, Watertown, March 2, 1, north of Lake Kampeska.

Ken Marso, Harrold, March 3, 1, inside city limits of Harrold.

Robert Adama, Hazel, March 15 and earlier, 7, near Hazel.

L. G. Roggenbuck, Big Stone City, March 12, 1, near city.

—C. H. R.

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"The simple truth about birds is interesting enough; it is not necessary to go beyond it."—The Migrant (Tenn.)

SDOU News

Second Annual Meeting

The second annual meeting of SDOU was held at Huron, S. D., on January 16, 1950, in the Recreation Center Building. While sub-zero weather reduced anticipated attendance, Secretary Mallory registered 70 people from 71 communities in South Dakota. That's about double the figures for the organization meeting held a year ago.

During the forenoon a number of members were getting acquainted and some committee work was done. There were some really interesting exhibits, too. Dr. J. F. Brenckle, of Mellette, S. D., displayed a variety of traps used in his bird-banding operation, ranging from a much-used example of his famous water warbler trap to a little contrivance for use on a feeding tray. Director J. ●. Johnson had assembled several large panels of his remarkable collection of photos of South Dakota birds and their nests, and these were spread on a big table where they were viewed with much interest. Mr. Adrian C. Fox, of Lincoln, Nebr., president of the Nebraska Union and a member of SDOU, presented 20 outstanding bird photo enlargements, mainly of nests and young, with several others in color portraying the close relationship between soil conservation and birdlife. A display of books and magazines dealing with various phases of bird-study was contributed primarily by members of the Huron Club.

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The formal session was opened at 1:30 p. m., and, after a few preliminary announcements, the program was under way. The reports of the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Membership Com-

mittee, being found good, were accepted. A set of new by-laws was presented by a special committee composed of Mr. J. S. Findley and Secretary Mallory. The principal change was in the method of selecting officers, the proposal being to select 15 directors this year, being three groups of five each, with staggered terms of three years, and these directors to elect the officers each year from their number. The redraft of by-laws was adopted without further discussion.

Next came a proposal to incorporate the Union. Secretary Mallory made a brief but clear statement of the details, whereupon that plan was approved and the officers were authorized to take the necessary steps to complete the incorporation.

With this background, the report of the Nominating Committee was listened to with close interest. The proposed 15 Directors were elected, and the Board then chose the officers, all of which is shown in the Directory elsewhere in this issue. So much for matters of business!

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Dr. Spawn then conducted a Symposium on Bird Banding. The panel consisted of four other experienced banders: Dr. J. F. Brenckle, W B. Mallory, A. R. Lundquist, and Rev. H. W. Wagar. These men told of their experiences and something of their methods. Dr. Spawn spoke briefly on the record-making procedure and returns. Special interest in this phase of bird-study was shown by a group of students at State College who are taking work with Dr. Spawn.

Mr. James W. Kimball, Coordinator of Pittman-Robertson Projects, Pierre, S. D., presented two reels of colored films, one dealing with "West River Country" wildlife matters, the other showing many thrilling views of the courtship and nesting activities of Western Grebes on Waubay National Wildlife Refuge. "Jim" then gave a short message which was truly inspirational, which is printed in full in the March issue of South Dakota Conservation Digest.

"The Sparrows of South Dakota" was the subject of a discussion by Dr. Wesley R. Hurt, Director of the W. H. Over Museum at the University of South Dakota, Vermillion, S. D. This was illustrated with scientific skins from the Museum. Many expressed the hope to hear more such helpful lectures by Dr. Hurt.

Mr. Kenneth Krumm, Manager of the Federal Refuge at Martin, spoke briefly of the Whooping Crane situation. He told of duck hunters reporting the presence on the Refuge of a large white bird which might possibly have been one of the small group of known survivors of that species. The Refuge is in the line of flight north from the Platte River.

Audubon Screen Tours, their scope, purpose, financing, and conduct, were discussed briefly by Mr. William Ferguson, of Omaha, Nebraska. Sioux Falls and Huron Clubs are sponsoring these programs this winter, and it is believed some other South Dakota groups will join the movement next season.

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The Board of Directors, with nine members present, was called into session immediately following the general program. It was determined that a meeting would be held at Brookings on May 20th, with a field trip in the Oakwood Lake region on the 21st.

Mr. C. A. Van Epps, President of the Huron Club, presided at a turkey dinner which was served by the ladies of the

Episcopal Church. He presented the newly-elected officers of SDOU and then invited the group to attend the Audubon Screen Tour Lecture by Mr. Ferguson, as guests of the local club. A splendid colored film showing various thrilling aspects of the out-of-doors in the Colorado High Country was supplemented by Mr. Ferguson's entertaining and instructive lecture. The second annual meeting of SDOU was then a matter of history.—H. F. C.



—Photo by Huron Recreation Board

S.D.O.U. OFFICERS 1950

(Left to right—W. B. Mallory, Secy.; Gerald B. Spawn, Pres.; S. H. Rames, Treas.; E. R. Lamster; J. O. Johnson, Director. Seated, H. F. Chapman, Editor.)

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The annual meeting of South Dakota Academy of Science will be held at Augustana College, Sioux Falls, S. D., April 28-29, 1950. The guest speaker for the Friday evening session will be Dr. Whitney of the U. of Ill. A. L. Haines, 224 Cherry St., Vermillion, S. D. is the Academy Secretary.

NOTES ON THE SANDHILL CRANE

Stephen Sargent Visser

(Note: In *Natural History*, Oct. 1949, Henry Sheldon stated that S. S. Visser's description of the courting dance of the Sandhill Crane "has been called the best account of this performance."—Ed.)

THE Sandhill Crane (*grus mexicana* and *g. canadensis*) is one of the most conspicuous birds of the prairie region. Every farmer boy knows its call, and on fair days has seen large flocks soaring at great heights, slowly passing northward. Constantly their unsurpassed calls drift down to earth. When only a slight wind is blowing, these rich, bugle-like notes can be heard farther than the bird can be seen. Several times I have examined, for some moments in vain, the horizon before the authors sailed in view. On windy or rainy days, the flocks fly low and swiftly in a direct line, and each individual croaks in turn. Thus slowly the music moves along the undulating, curving line.

The Sandhill Crane feeds upon grasshoppers, frogs, worms and other life of the open, nearly all of which is considered harmful to man. While feeding they follow certain fixed rules. They always keep on open ground, either on an elevation or on an extensive flat. At least one of the group keeps watch while the others feed. This one stands still most of the time, with its head raised high in air and doesn't try to feed. Apparently there are shifts of watchers.

The mating habits of this bird are very interesting. In Sanborn County, South Dakota, I have often watched the mating dance; each time with increasing interest. In the early spring, just after break of dawn, the groups that were separated widely, for safety, during the night, begin flying towards the chosen dancing ground. These flocks of six or eight fly low and give constantly their famous, rolling call. The dancing ground that I knew best was situated on a large, low hill in the mid-

dle of a pasture of a section in extent. From this hill the surface of the ground for half a mile or more in every direction could be seen. As soon as two or three groups had reached the hill a curious dance commenced. Several raise their heads high in the air and walk around and around slowly. Suddenly the heads are lowered to the ground and the birds become great bouncing balls. Hopping high in the air, part of the time with raised wings, and part with drooping, they cross and recross each other's paths. Slowly the speed and wildness increases, and the hopping over each other, until it becomes a blurr. The croaking, which commenced only after the dancing became violent, has become a noise. The performance continues, increasing in speed, for a few minutes, and then rapidly dies completely out, only to start again upon the arrival of more recruits. By seven o'clock all have arrived, and then for an hour or so a number are constantly dancing. Occasionally the whole flock of two hundred or so break into a short spell of crazy skipping and hopping. By nine o'clock all are tired and the flock begins to break into groups of from four to eight and these groups slowly feed to the windward, diverging slowly, or fly to some distance.

Just before nightfall the flock again convenes, but after a half hour or so of spasmodic dancing, groups fly silently away in different directions to grassy depressions, where they spend the night.

One pair nested in this vicinity and I was fortunate enough to find the simple nest. It was upon a slight rise in a large moist meadow. The two yellowish green, brown-spotted eggs were kept off the ground only by a few blades of grass."—*Wilson Bulletin*, June, 1910.

Pioneer Prairie Ornithologists

An Early Egg Collector

HARRY BALCH BAILEY (1853-1928), a native of Boston, for many years was one of the leaders in American ornithology. He assisted in organizing the Nuttall Ornithological Club in 1876; in the winter of 1877-8 he joined in founding the Linnean Society of New York; and with some 20 other enthusiasts he launched the American Ornithologists Union in 1883. He was associated in some manner with several organizations throughout his adult lifetime.

His interest seemed to have focused on the collection of eggs, and it is in this connection that H. B. Bailey becomes of particular interest to South Dakota ornithologists.

In *The Auk* for April, 1929, Mr. Bailey's portrait was published as the frontispiece and the opening article was a memorial to him by Dr. A. K. Fisher. We read therein:

"In 1888 Bailey made a collecting trip to the Dakotas and California and was fairly successful in securing choice material. In 1887 a branch of his New York shipping house was opened in Newport News to which place he moved in 1889 . . . On leaving for the South he sold his collection of eggs, which at the time was considered one of the finest in the country, to the American Museum of Natural History. He was one of the first to arrange the smaller eggs with the nests. . ."

Reading this reference to "the Dakotas" led to recent correspondence with the American Museum. Soon, through the fine cooperation of Assistant Curator Dean Amadon, the original catalog of the entire Bailey collection was sent to us for study. This big led-

ger-type book is filled with many entries in fine penmanship, showing the date and place of acquisition, name and address of the collector, measurements of each egg with the condition as to freshness, and the habitat in which the nest was found, with a brief description of the nest in some instances. Many of the "places with strange-sounding names" are listed as collection locations. SDOU members find special interest in the numerous entries showing G. S. Agersborg of Vermillion, Dakota, as a collector during 1872-1878. Then in May and June, 1882 (not 1888 as Dr. Fisher says) H. B. Bailey is recorded as collector at Vermillion and near-by points and at Flandreau. There are but few references to the collection of birds, and Dean Amadon reports that no bird specimens were acquired with the eggs by the Museum from Mr. Bailey.

The 48 species, the eggs of which were obtained by these two men and which went into the American Museum of Natural History of New York are listed below. Collector is shown by "A"(gersborg) or "B"(ailey) and locations as "V"(ermillion) or "F"(Flan-dreau).
—H. F. C.

Horned Grebe B F
Eared Grebe A V
Pied-billed Grebe B F
Green Heron B F
American Bittern B F
Mallard A V
Blue-winged Teal A V; B F
Shoveller A V
Redhead A V
Ruddy Duck B F
Swainson's Hawk A V; B F
Marsh Hawk A V; B F
Prairie Chicken B V and F
Bob White A V
Sora B F

(Continued on page 15)

Books and Articles About Birds

A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There. By Aldo Leopold. Illustrated by Charles W. Schwartz. Oxford University Press, Inc., New York, 1949: xiii, 226 pp. \$3.50.

A collection of essays by one whose interest in Nature grew from that of an Iowa boy roaming the fields and timber, through the ideals of advanced forestry administration, finally maturing in the philosophy of a lecturer in great Wisconsin University where he held the chair of Game Management.

The Almanac, Part I, discloses some of the rich experiences on a run-down sandy farm where the author and his family refreshed their souls during week-end hidings-out. We are shown, with cameo sharpness, just a few of the events on Nature's calendar, through the full twelve-month. Mr. Leopold died in 1948 while helping fight a grass fire on a neighbor's farm.

In Part II., Sketches Here and There, is portrayed the tragedies of land waste and the growth of Leopold's deep concern about the remedy, perhaps misnamed by some "conservation."

"The Upshot" is the title for Part III., in which he points out the progressive steps (1) respect for one's fellow-man; (2) regard for one's fellow-men, the community—both accepted and now common; and (3) understanding, respect and love of and for the land—the land ethic—something still passionately prayed for.

Yes, there are birds: Chickadees, Canada Geese, the much-loved Upland Plovers, Prairie Chickens, Western Grebes, Cranes, Passenger Pigeons, a lone Black Duck, and many more, all flying between the lines of his challenging philosophical observations.

My owl-feather book-mark moved ever so slowly; there was and must still be much re-reading of this "classic in wildlife literature."—H. F. C.

"North Dakota Outdoors," published monthly by the State Game and Fish Department of North Dakota, Alice Latimer, Editor, is definitely worthwhile reading. The January, 1950, issue, for example, contains a number of items of direct interest to bird students. One article deals with water conservation

and habitat development; there is a list of 79 species of birds observed in the state by 3 Maryland hunters during October, 1949; four fine photographs illustrate a short statement on winter cover for game birds, by Adrian C. Fox, president of Nebraska O. U. and a member of SDOU; Prof. O. A. Stevens of Fargo contributed an illustrated description of "Trees in Winter," and there are two splendid articles on "Rough-Legs" and "Eagles" with excellent illustrations. For a year's subscription send 50 cents to the Department at Bismarck, N. D. by check or money order—no stamps.—H. F. C.

Trees. The Yearbook of Agriculture, 1949. The table of contents shows "nary a feather" and the index has but two entries under "birds." Nevertheless, bird-students can profitably consider some of the many tree facts so interestingly told and colorfully illustrated. This 900 page annual report of the Department of Agriculture is a revelation of how a government document can be so different that it is good! It is free through our Senators and Representatives so long as the supply lasts. If one is curious, or even merely acquisitive, it is perhaps possible to obtain a copy of "Grass" the 1948 Yearbook, too.—H.F.C.

The Bibliography of South Dakota Ornithology, by Stephens, was designed to present in chronological order the titles of all literature bearing on South Dakota bird life, published up to and including 1944. Dr. Stephens was engaged in compiling this material during a period of over 25 years. His annotations increase its value.

There is no other like compilation of this information. SDOU has copies of this exceptionally valuable index to source material for sale to members of SDOU or subscribers to Bird Notes at \$1.00 postpaid.

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Correspondence relating to bird-banding permits should be addressed to Bird Banding Office, Patuxent Research Refuge, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Laurel, Maryland, not to Washington, D. C.

General Notes of Special Interest

CARDINAL INCURSION CONTINUES.—I have a report of a Cardinal coming each morning, early, to eat suet at 404 4th St. S. E., Watertown, S. D. Dr. Moriarty reported seeing them at his home in Watertown during the summer and fall of 1949, but he has not seen any during the winter. It would be most unusual to see them here at any time.—J. O. Johnson, Watertown, S. D.

"Mrs. Lloyd Young reports that a large number of Cardinals have been seen this winter (1949-50) near Fort Pierre, South Dakota. She reported that she has counted as many as 16 at one time."—Museum News, U. of S. D., Vermillion, S. D.

SNOW BUNTINGS.—On S. D. Highway 38 near Spencer, S. D. on January 29, 1950, I saw a flock of about 25 Snow Buntings. This is the only flock of this species I have seen this winter.—Paul Mallory, Huron, S. D.

FIRST RECORD OF GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER FOR SOUTH DAKOTA.—
● On May 10, 1933, while on an early morning walk along the "Dells," about half a mile south of Dell Rapids, S. D., some warblers were noted feeding about thirty feet up in some ash and maple trees. After observing them for some time with bird glasses, it became evident they were not any of the migratory warblers that were familiar to me. In order to make their identification certain, I collected one



A male Golden-winged Warbler

of the birds and found it to be a male Golden-winged Warbler. This is the first record of this bird for South Dakota. There appeared to be four birds of this species in the immediate vicinity, two males and two females. Identification was confirmed by Dr. T. C. Stephens. Mr. William Youngworth made the specimen into a skin, and this was donated to the collection of the State Museum at Vermillion.

—Edwin C. Anderson, Dell Rapids, S. D.

(The foregoing note is taken from the Wilson Bulletin, Dec. 1933. The photo, by Roscoe W. Franks and Lawrence E. Hicks, was published in the same issue. The cut is by courtesy of Iowa Bird Life.—Ed.)

GYRFALCON IN NORTHEASTERN SOUTH DAKOTA.—A white Gyrfalcon was observed near Big Stone Lake on September 8, 1949.—Dr. John D. Donahoe, Sioux Falls, S. D.

GYRFALCON IN CENTRAL EASTERN SOUTH DAKOTA.—On January 13, 1950, a few miles northwest of Forestburg, S. D., I observed a grey Gyrfalcon. In "Birds of South Dakota" by Over and Thoms it is stated this is a rare winter visitor in South Dakota, and that the two specimens in the W. H. Over Museum of the University of South Dakota at Vermillion, S. D. were taken in Miner County, which is only a few miles from where I saw this falcon. I identified a Goshawk while I was taking a Christmas bird census on December 26, 1949, about 5 miles northwest of Canton, S. D.—W. B. Mallory, Canton, S. D.

GYRFALCON KILLED NEAR SIOUX FALLS, S. D.—During the last week in December, 1949, Field Warden W. E. Ritter, of Sioux Falls, S. D., brought to my office a white hawk which he had obtained at a local taxidermist's shop. The proprietor stated that it had been brought to him on December 19, 1949, by a farmer living near Baltic, Minnehaha County, S. D. who stated that the bird had been shot a couple of weeks earlier while it was eating a pheasant near the farm home. It had been kept frozen and was in almost perfect condition, except that the eyelids had been destroyed, possibly by mice.

Including what must have been a recent full meal, the weight was 3¾ pounds. The overall length was approximately 22 inches, although exact measurement was not possible because of the frozen condition of the bird. The wing tip of the first primary to the wrist-bend measured 14½ inches. The wingspread was said to have been 52 inches. The tail was 9 inches long and definitely narrow.

The bill was dull light blue. Both mandibles were notched or toothed. The eyes apparently had been very dark brown or black. The feet were dull light yellow, except for the claws proper which were light grayish blue with a faint pinkish tinge.

The plumage was generally white--entirely so below from lower throat to tail tip, except for some dark dots on the throat and under-wing coverts and black tipping on some of the primaries. The upper parts were generously marked with dull brownish-gray. On the scapulars these markings were widely-spaced, broad, shallow, V-shaped bars. On the back of the head and nape, as well as in the primary coverts, they were closely-spaced spots. On the tail they were spots, widely scattered. The first primary was indented for about two inches from the tip, while the second and third primaries were but very slightly emarginated. The crown appeared flat, while the forehead looked round or bulgy because of the bristling of the fine feathers of that area.

By some ornithologists the specimen would doubtless be identified as a White Gyrfalcon, *Falco rusticolus* "candicans," but Todd and Friedmann (Wilson Bulletin 59: 129-159) have recently pointed out that white birds are only a color-phase, so until careful comparisons can be made the bird may best be called an American Gyrfalcon, *Falco rusticolus* *obsoletus* in white phase of plumage.—H. F. Chapman, Sioux Falls, S. D.

GOLDEN EAGLE NEAR CANTON, S. D.—Field Warden F. H. Sundling reports that he saw an immature Golden Eagle on several occasions in December, 1949, in Newton Hills near Canton. He stated that it was apparently feeding on the carcasses of beavers which had been trapped in the Sioux River. This bird was not seen during late December or in early January, 1950, but late in January and in February it has been seen by several observers on various occasions and is evidently wintering in the Newton Hills area.—W. B. Mallory, Canton, S. D.

SEX RATIO AMONG FALL MALLARDS.—During the latter part of the fall of 1949 there was a heavy concentration of migrating ducks, principally mallards, on the Wall Lake Refuge, twelve miles west of Sioux Falls, S. D. One Sunday a strong wind caused the birds to loaf in the lee of a sparsely wooded high bank from which they were easily observed, even without glasses. (A car is a good blind if you stay in it!) With spotting scope in fixed position several counts were made in an effort to determine the sex ratio among the birds within the field of the glass. The results, admittedly inaccurate, confirmed the impression there was a predominance of males. The ratios were 3 or more males to 2 females. A study of breeding ducks, before nesting, was made in Saskatchewan during the spring of 1935 by O. C. Furniss. The results, published in *Wilson Bulletin*, Dec. 1935, showed a ratio for mallards of 1.7 males to 1 female while for all species of ducks observed it was 1.6 to 1. The article refers to findings by E. A. McIlhenny as to sex ratio among wintering birds on the Gulf Coast which were published in *The Auk*, July, 1934, but does not quote the figures.—H. F. Chapman, Sioux Falls, S. D.

SOME WINTERING BIRDS.—On March 4, 1950, near the south end of Wall Lake, 12 miles west of Sioux Falls, S. D., Mr. Rogge and I observed a flock of about 60 birds, including Redwings, Grackles and Starlings. They were in trees around farm buildings and the farmer told us that quite a flock had wintered there but that the number had increased recently. This confirms a report that Redwings and Yellow-headed Blackbirds had been observed at this location on January 8th. On muskrat houses in a slough immediately southwest of Wall Lake we saw three birds which we identified as female Cowbirds.—Mrs. Charles Rogge, Sioux Falls, S. D.

EARLY EGG COLLECTOR

(Continued from page 11)

Coot A V; B F
Killdeer A V
Upland Plover A V; B V
Wilson's Phalarope B V
Black Tern B F
Mourning Dove B V and F
Burrowing Owl A V
Short-eared Owl A V; B F
Belted Kingfisher B F
Northern Flicker B F
Eastern Kingbird B F and V
Arkansas Kingbird B F
Hammond's Flycatcher A V*
Violet-green Swallow A V
Bank Swallow B F
Rough-winged Swallow B F
Purple Martin B F**
House Wren B F
Catbird B V and F
Brown Thrasher B V and F
Yellow Warbler B F
American Redstart B F
Western Meadowlark A V; B F
Yellow-headed Blackbird A V; B F

Redwing B F
Orchard Oriole B F
Bronzed Grackle B V and F
Cowbird B V and F
Grasshopper Sparrow A V***
Lark Sparrow A V; B V and F
Song Sparrow B F
Swamp Sparrow B F
Chestnut-collared Longspur B F

*May be Trail's; **Nest in tree; ***Called 'Yellow-winged'

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The total of all species reported in the 1949 Christmas Bird Count for all of South Dakota, was 47, as against 41 for 1948.

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SDOU sight record sheets, 8½ x 11, punched for 3 rings, available to members on request.—W. B. Mallory, Secy. SDOU, Canton, S. D.

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The American Ornithologists Union will meet in Minneapolis, October 10-13, 1950. SDOU members should make every effort to attend.

I Remember

BY W. B. MALLORY

CANTON, S. D.

BIRD observers must always expect the unexpected, even in birds' use of nesting materials and in the sites used for the nests.

I remember placing a sack of chick feed on a brace in an open shed. I opened the sack by raising the top flap slightly and almost immediately a House Wren built a nest on top of the chick feed and under the flap. Of course I bought another sack of feed and did not disturb the nest until after Jennie took her family away. A somewhat similar event took place a short distance north of Canton when a House Wren built a nest in a clothes pin bag hung on the line. Many years ago an account was published in "Bird Lore" telling of House Wrens attempting to build a nest in a pair of overalls hung on the line to dry. In this case the nesting materials dropped out of the bottom of the leg until some one tied a string around the leg just below the nest site.

I remember seeing a nest of Eastern Kingbirds on the abandoned running gear of a wagon. I also saw one of the same species in a small tree in a water-filled ditch, and in this case I believe that the young birds reached land safely despite the water.

Often Bluebirds and Purple Martins are very trustful of humans when they settle on nesting sites. I remember a Bluebird's nest in a hollow tree about four feet from the ground and three feet from a busy city sidewalk and another in an abandoned wooden pump. A pair of Purple Martins once nested in a

hollow sign on the principal business street of Canton, S. D. The nest could have been reached easily by anyone, but the birds' faith was justified and no one disturbed the nest.

(In "Wild Acres" Kopman refers to "the eagerness and trustfulness that go with the most critical stages of the nesting season.—Ed.)

I remember a Robin's nest on a stringer of a railroad bridge about twenty inches from the rails and a part of the time about that far from the water. Still the family was brought through safely and launched successfully. I once found a Yellow Warbler's nest about eighteen inches from the ground on the single stem of a raspberry bush.

The unexpected also happens in birds' use of nesting materials and in nest construction. I once had a Baltimore Oriole's nest which was beautifully woven and intricately constructed entirely of horse-tail hairs. Even the loops by which the nest was suspended were made of that material.

We think of English Sparrows as building their nests only in boxes or in places at least partially protected by some covering, yet I watched a pair of these birds build a nest in the unprotected crotch of a tree. The nest was made of the usual collection of grass, string, paper and other trash and when finished the bulk was at least a half bushel. Dr. Over reports several instances of English Sparrows resorting to this kind of nest construction. Perhaps it hints of their connection with the weaver birds of Europe.

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"All outdoors and the living things in it belong to me. They become mine as I learn . . . of the fascinating habits of wild things, their struggle for a place in the world, and that these animals are individuals, with dispositions as different as yours and mine."—Lynn Trimm, Audubon Magazine.