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J. Scott Findley
(President S.D.O.U. 1951)

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South Dakota Ornithologists' Union

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President's Page

THE first Winter Meeting of S. D. O. U. was held at Sioux Falls, January 27-28. Much of the credit for its unqualified success must go, with our thanks, to Dr. David Holden, program chairman, whose plans left us never a dull moment. Our thanks also go to the Sioux Falls members and the Sioux Falls Audubon Club, acting as our gracious hosts, who helped to make the meeting one we will long remember.

Because of the excellent statewide representation, no plans were made for a similar meeting in the western part of the state this year.

At our meeting a decisive stand was taken for wildlife preservation. It was reflected in the resolutions adopted by the unanimous action of the group. S.D.O.U. is to be commended for its strong support of these and related issues—a result of cooperative action in response to committee reports and recommendations.

Study these resolutions printed on page 9. Give them your wholehearted support and publicity.

Be sure to notify Dr. Byron Harrel, Department of Zoology, University of South Dakota, of any non-weedy natural areas worthy of preservation. Re-study articles by him and David Holden in Vol. XIII, page 72-3 on the subject.

Dr. L. J. Moriarty has been appointed committee chairman to study the crane problem further, as it affects South

Dakota, and develop additional recommendations for S. D. O. U. in helping toward an acceptable solution.

A third resolution given unanimous approval by the meeting authorized Dr. Harrel to write the Governor of Iowa, expressing the appreciation of this group for his position on the Big Sioux River straightening project.

The Board of Directors also approved of a suggestion that we invite the Wilson Ornithological Society to the Black Hills for its 1965 meeting.

The 1962 Convention will be held in Pierre, May 26-27. Plan to arrive Friday evening, May 25, for registration and a get-together meeting. Then you will be able to get up early (perhaps 4 a. m.) to meet the bus which Les Berner will charter for us. He hopes to show us the Prairie Chickens on their booming grounds at mating time. The group will return to Farm Island for a pancake breakfast and more birding. This area is worthy of much study, since it may be flooded by the waters of Big Bend Dam.

Saturday afternoon will be set aside for a short program and a business meeting. Alex Walker may be able to come again from Tillamook, Oregon, to show us some of his unforgettable slides.

Early Sunday morning another field trip is planned. There will be a picnic at noon, followed by a compilation of our bird list.

It is encouraging to know that people who once attend one of these Conventions regularly return. Plan now for the date and let's all bring some friends along to this meeting.—**Ruth C. Habeger.**



J. Scott Findley

Carl M. Johnson and H. F. Chapman



Bird-Watcher

J. SCOTT FINDLEY was born at Goldfield, Iowa, February 8, 1891. His father was a United Presbyterian pastor whose service extended from a pioneer pastorate housed in a sod shanty in extreme western Nebraska when he was a young unmarried minister to a long pastorate at Goldfield and on into others in Iowa and Kansas. Naturally, Scott and his younger sister joined in the later migrations with grade schooling and high

school education en route. Then for Scott followed a major in chemistry and graduation from Monmouth (Illinois) College. The University of Iowa was the scene of advanced work in chemistry during summer vacation breaks in teaching in high school and college. The outbreak of World War I "rescued me from teaching," he says.

Scott was commissioned a 1st Lieutenant and served with the 16th Field Artillery, 4th Division, for 15 months in France and in Germany in the Army of Occupation.

When he returned to his homeland and on to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, he got employment with John Morrell & Co., which lasted until his retirement in February, 1956, after various duties such as: paying for hogs, purchasing supplies, organizing and administering the Personnel Department for a number of years, and finally, the Insurance Department for more years. He married and here a daughter, Janet, was born. She now has two sturdy sons in her own home in Indiana.

Logical relationship between some of these statistics and phases in his character may appear.

A growing boy living in the little country town of Goldfield would just naturally find Adventure along the Boone River and among the hardwood timber which then still bedecked the valley. In such habitat the "big kid" from town, tagged by Scott and a pal, carried an old singleshot shotgun and with it killed a "big bird." The youngsters salvaged the "kill" and started

homeward, dragging the too-long specimen. Eventually it was cached and a report at the Findley home lead to a family picnic where the bedraggled but wonderful Great Blue Heron was exhibited. (Wise parents!)

Then there was the big American Elm tree with branches overhanging The River up into which the boy climbed to widen his horizon and explore things arboreal and otherwise. Up there, before his eager eyes, flashed a bright red bird with jet black wings and another, not red, yellow but with the same black wings—the young explorer had discovered a pair of Scarlet Tanagers!!

Among the lush valley vegetation grew patches of jewel weed and to its rich blossoms came a dashing, buzzing, brilliant bit of a bird—a Ruby-throated Hummingbird, to enrich the experience of the wondering boy.

How did Scott Findley identify these different birds? A loving, discerning Aunt Margaret observed the lad's interest in the rich wildlife of a little segment of the mid-continent and presented to him a copy of Apgar's "Birds of United States." This modest work, published in 1896, well illustrated, with a key to each species, is well-marked with records of Scott's observations, the beginnings of a life-list which is now "really something."

This Wonderful Valley was the scene of expeditions for trapping woodchucks and to hunt with a .22 rifle the cottontail rabbits which often "froze" within range. In the big hollow trees were racoon nests to be explored, perhaps a bit fearfully. Here were Indian graves with their brooding silence.

With this rich boyhood background, Scott Findley naturally pursued a career as an amateur ornithologist, or perhaps, better, naturalist.

About this time he was one of the

charter members of O.A.N.C. (Then the meaning of these initials was deeply secret, but Scott now discloses that they stood for Our Agassiz Nature Club.) Other charter members were Scott and Paul MacEachron, Duncan Henry and Robbie Keith. Club meetings were secret but did not last long because they interfered with playing Indian, swimming, and gathering walnuts.

He was interested in the South Dakota Ornithologists' Union from the very beginning. As first chairman of Membership Committee he presented a report which was included in the preliminary publication which preceded Vol. 1, No. 1, (Dec. 1949). SDOU files are replete with evidence of his intelligent, unceasing efforts to bring SDOU to the attention of all who seemed to be prospective members, with success.

Election as Vice President of the organization came in 1950 and in 1951 he became its third President, with service as a Director at various times. He has been a frequent contributor of articles and notes which were published in South Dakota Bird Notes.

Mr. Findley was Editor of Bird Notes for a period of five years, beginning with the number for June, 1954. Those issues were notable for several things, among them the extreme care the Editor exercised to secure accuracy in all reports and articles, as well as the consistent use of photographs of South Dakota birds for cover illustrations.

Eventually an Index, covering the period of the Findley editorship, was published. The quality and scope of the material for which he was thus responsible became apparent as one, even casually, notes the contents of the Index. This project was largely financed by funds raised through the sale of wildlife stationery items by Mrs.

Findley at various bird-watcher meetings.

During all of these years Scott and his wife, Alma Findley, who is a "naturalist" in her own right, have attended all sorts of meetings where ornithologists, amateur and otherwise, are prone to gather. These have ranged all the way from local Audubon Society Screen Tours to annual meetings of American, Wilson, Cooper and other national groups. Their trips have included various state meetings in the mid-continent. There have been vacations in the Black Hills and Northern Minnesota and winters in the Southwest. The Findleys have made trips to the Badlands, up to Duluth for hawk flights, and into the Indiana Dunes, with a sprinkling of Indian pow-wows rich with color, form and motion.

Acquaintance made at these affairs has ripened into friendship with many interesting folks. Not a few of these have been guests in the Findley home, where the greatest of many attractions is the warm, gracious friendliness of the host and hostess, and where there is a notable absence of cocktail glasses and cigarette ashes. The "good talk" may eventually include a war-time story by Scott, perhaps of his visit to the Limoges Haviland China factory, and an experience of Alma's while she was a nurse at the Grenfall Mission in Labrador. Their guest book carries signatures of great, near-great, and garden variety naturalists, all of whom have eaten Alma's fine cookery. The record even contains the pad-print of good old Nip, the Springer. (He liked the food, too!)

The book Aunt Margaret contributed is in the library with many more fine bird books, along with good works on Americana, including Indians, each carrying an attractive book plate by Jacques. Alma's years of service as a

member of the Board of the Sioux Falls Public Library are consistent with such an interest. Even the old powder horn on the wall seems to fit. Scott has a creditable collection of etchings which he may display if properly urged.

Of course, Scott has been a hunter. His joy in this was enhanced by the opportunity to teach daughter Janet to shoot well, and to see her down her first Ringnecked Pheasant. Nip, the Springer, made his contribution to the pleasure of these expeditions into South Dakota's corn fields. Many ducks, geese and grouse have been subjected to Scott's skillful carving, but he has not been a hunter of big game.

Then there are photography, bird-banding and allied activities and for the story we switch to station C-M-J of Rochester, Minnesota.



The first years we birded with Scott were spent largely in field work with emphasis on reporting and photography. We had many pleasant adventures in southwestern Minnesota and adjacent areas of South Dakota, particularly in the slough, pot-hole and lake country.

When I secured my banding permit, Scott helped me struggle through the neophyte state; and when I was able to qualify for my permit, Scott was prepared to band, too. When time for his retirement approached, he, too, applied for his banding permit. With his years of experience and the recommendations of his birding friends, both amateur and professional, it was not long in coming.

With this absorbing interest came years of happy occupation and the satisfaction of adding to the quota of better understanding of bird-life. The elementary principles of netting and trapping were quickly mastered. He

draws effectively on the store of avian knowledge he has accumulated by many years of study and field observation.

Banding freshened his interest in birds. It was a challenge to try to capture rare or elusive species. As one successful venture followed another, his knowledge and experience grew. As those who band know, Scott found that even years of study and observation do not bring to one the sense of intimate relation the bird-bander feels for the tiny creature he holds in his hand.

Date and place are important factors in banding. Carefully recorded and reported schedules of resident and of migratory birds have been accumulated by Scott. In the files of the Fish and Wildlife Department these records are of scientific and historical value and

will be a source of reliable information in the future.

Scott shares with others the pleasures he derives from banding. Youth groups and adult organizations are given interesting and informative demonstrations and lectures on the subject. Within the group of bird-banders, he has instructed the beginner, assisted the regular and inspired all. Distance is never so great that it stops him from joining and actively participating in a bird-banding venture.

Once when the banders were getting together a group for a field project and we were afraid we were destined for failure, Scott wrote, "It may rain or snow, or the wind may blow, but the company will be good." When the Findleys are in the group, the company is truly "good."—C.M.J., Rochester, Minn., HFC, Sioux Falls, S. D.



Mutual Esteem

Winter Meeting

Blanche Baitin

THE South Dakota Ornithologists' first Winter Meeting was a definite success. Registrations including guests totaled 50 and this did not include many who attended only part of the meetings and did not register.

The program opened with a showing of slides and discussion of methods of wildlife photography by Dr. L. J. Moriarty, Willis Hall, and Nelda and Dave Holden. Your reporter became lost in talk of technical matters but appreciated the results.

Informal reports on the 1961 Christmas Bird Count were made by members from the towns participating. In most cases, each group used the same pattern from year to year—division of the territory and assignment of each section to someone familiar with it. Some covered parts of their territory by walking but most of the counting was done from cars. Details of the count will be listed elsewhere but here are a few items that may not be recorded.

Mr. Chilson of Webster reported that since 1954, 75 species of birds have been seen in his area during the Christmas counts. Nearly everyone reported seeing Bohemian waxwings either during the count or since then, and there were reports of their being seen in Missouri and Ohio. A number of evening grosbeaks have also been seen and Nelda Holden reported so many crows in the Brookings area that it must have been a convention. Hawks were reported few.

The Sunday program started with a talk by Dr. Don Progulske of Brookings on the Natural Regulation of Bird Numbers. He explained how

birds are killed by insecticides, road kills, towers, air strips, and weather, but his audience was most interested in the report of lead poisoning from hunter's shot which the ducks pick up from the bottom of feeding grounds, and of the bacterial poisoning at Lakes Whitewood and Henry. Here, as the water receded, the bacteria multiplied in the exposed areas and its poison was eaten by ducks. He showed pictures of the hundreds of ducks found dead on these shores.

Dr. Moriarty acted as moderator for a forum on the Sandhill Crane problem in the northwestern part of the state. In one instance, the birds ate almost all of one farmer's corn crop. Possible solutions were suggested and discussed, and a committee appointed for further work on the problem.

Les Berner, now Federal Relations Specialist for the S. Dak. Game, Fish and Parks Dept., told of the problems arising when the natural wildlife habitats are destroyed by the dams and canals and of the department's plans directed to seeing that wildlife receives due consideration in these areas.

Dr. Olof Ryberg of Sweden aided by the Holdens, who ran the projector and tape recorder, illustrated a number of European birds and their calls.

The meeting closed with a short business meeting during which the resolutions which follow, were presented and adopted. Thank you's to the Sioux Falls hosts had to be cut short as everyone hurried to the showing of the Audubon Screen Tour "Teton Trails" by Charles Hotchkiss. But we can take space now to say that they were wonderful hosts, providing an excellent

meeting place and serving refreshments at every session "break."

A RESOLUTION

By the South Dakota Ornithologists' Union at its Meeting in Sioux Falls on January 27-28, 1962.

WHEREAS, critical habitat for prairie birds and animals, a resource in decreasing supply, is constantly being lost through drainage of wetlands, and,

WHEREAS, a reported 6 million dollars worth of crops have been purchased and are being stored at government expense and,

WHEREAS, additional drainage further aggravates the surplus crop problem through increasing crop yields,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that all government assistance for drainage of wetlands be eliminated.

A RESOLUTION

By the South Dakota Ornithologists' Union at its Meeting in Sioux Falls on January 27-28, 1962.

WHEREAS, the migratory flights of Sandhill Cranes are a spectacle of immense esthetic value and,

WHEREAS, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers' construction of Oahe Dam will cause flooding of Missouri sand bars which now are resting places for these birds and the flooding will adversely affect these birds, and,

WHEREAS, these birds now stop nowhere else in the State of South Dakota and,

WHEREAS, there is an existing Crane depredation problem in South Dakota needing immediate and positive action and,

WHEREAS, A NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE would greatly aid in solving the problem, while preserving the esthetic values for the present and future citizens of the nation,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

MARCH, 1962

that immediate action should be taken to have the Corps of Engineers compensate for their flooding of the River habitat of these Cranes by acquiring lands suitable for a Wildlife Refuge at Pollock, South Dakota, on Spring Creek, corresponding to U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service plans. Also that land south of Mobridge designated as the East Blue Blanket Area and the West Blue Blanket Area in the Oahe Reservoir "Plan for Fish and Wildlife" report of the U. S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, the State of South Dakota Department of Game, Fish, and Parks, and the North Dakota Game and Fish Department be acquired as described in the plans forming a part of said report and managed for wildlife use by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

* * *



Rough-Legged Hawk

—E. W. Steffen

Our Juniors

Dear Juniors:

I am sure you enjoyed Ronald Highstreet's true story about his "Muddy Friends" as much as I did. Of course we must remember what our editor pointed out: That birds with parents able to care for them should not be bothered. We are still waiting for more letters from you telling of your bird experiences or observations.

The morning of November 18, 1961, I saw a pair of Evening Grosbeaks in our backyard, eating on the ground. I sprinkled a mixture of bird seeds containing millet, milo, sunflower seed, oats, buckwheat, peanut hearts, and wheat around for them. I also put a cupful on the feeder about four feet above the ground.

They were around all day and were joined by several more. I am not at home during week days but, so far, I have not seen them eat from the feeder. They get on well with the English sparrows—probably because they are both finches—but I don't believe the sparrows have led them to the feeder yet.

The first Sunday in October Elizabeth Southmayd and I were birding off Highway 16 south of Rapid City, along Spring Creek. It was a windy day. We saw four Eagles riding the air currents. Since their heads were dark we judged they were Golden Eagles. But we also remembered that young Bald Eagles have dark heads too.

As they wheeled around we could see one white tail with the dark band at the end that marks the immature Golden Eagle. This one showed some white under the wing, also a mark of

the immature Golden Eagle. The four could have been two young out with their parents on a training mission.

The most thrilling bird experience I have had this fall, besides the Evening Grosbeaks in our yard, happened during a field trip with the Black Hills Audubon Society on September 24. Six third and fourth grade girls were with me. We were on our way home, a few miles east of Rapid City.

We saw a Killdeer at the edge of the road. As I slowed the car, I glanced toward the field on the right and noticed a lot of little stones scattered around. A second look told us they were really Killdeer. The girls and I counted at least 125. I had never seen so many Killdeer at one time before.

We knew fall had come that day for sure because we also saw several large flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds and a small flock of 100 Sandhill Cranes going over.

On October 22, thirteen boys and girls from my school went on the field trip led by the Black Hills Audubon Society. We went west of Rapid City to Hisega. We saw only seven species of birds that day but one was the Water Ouzel, or Dipper, and that was excitement enough. None of the young people had ever seen one before. Have you? He is very comical. We watched two of them standing on rocks in the water, bouncing up and down as if they would like to dance and didn't know how. When you come to the Hills, you must look for them.

I have been thinking it would be interesting as well as helpful to us all if

you would let Mr. Johnson or me know about your success in feeding birds during the winter. Perhaps you can describe your feeder or tell what different kinds of food you have used to attract the birds.

If you were able to join a group and help take the Christmas Count, tell us about that too.

Good birding to all.—Clara Yarger, 2742 St. Anne St., Rapid City.

* * * *

PINE GROSBEAKS

Mary Karlins, Age 9

On December 10, 1961 I saw some Pine Grosbeaks in our evergreen tree. They were females. I didn't know what they were at first and I couldn't find them in my bird book. But Herman Chilson found them in his Peterson bird book.

Mrs. Clara Harris also saw some in her yard the next day.

Also, on December 10, three red crossbills were in the conifers in our yard. They were tame enough we could see them easily. Again, on the 13th, five were in the same place.—Webster

* * * *

NEW VISITORS AT OUR BIRD FEEDER

Kathy Barry, Age 14

On Sunday, January 7, 1962, around noon, our family had been watching the bird feeder that we had on the clothesline outside the window.

It was fun to watch the birds, mostly Sparrows, Chickadees, and Nuthatches and interesting to see their different markings. My brother, Billy discovered that we had a couple of new visitors that we couldn't recognize at first.

We thought they were Grosbeaks but couldn't find their picture in our books. These birds were very tame,

and seemed right at home eating the sunflower seeds from our feeder. They were yellow, with a black head, and black and white wings. There was a patch of gold like a mask across the eyes, and they were about the size of a robin. One thing we noticed about them that was so different was their bill. It was large and white and shaped like a cone.

When we couldn't name them for sure, we called Herman Chilson, who is a great bird lover, and he recognized them right away from our description. He said they were called Evening Grosbeaks. Mr. Chilson came over to look at them and said he had only seen them twice before, both times at Pickerel Lake.

We found out later that Mr. E. A. Sewell, who lives within a block of us, had also seen the birds later that same day. It is now the 12th of January and the birds are still our constant visitors.—Webster.

* * * *

GREAT BLUE HERON

David Leland, Age 12

On September 6, 1961, John Harmel and I were walking along the James River for a scouting hike. We had just passed the Third Street Bridge when a loud noise made us jump.

It was a Great Blue Heron. We both saw the large gray wings, the green legs outstretched, the long neck, and the dark feathers in the head. As it flew up we could hear the loud croak of its voice.

I went back several times to see if it had come back but never saw it.

On November 7, Mike Ormsby and I found it, or a bird like it, dead in the city dump.—Huron.

Christmas Count, 1961

	Armour	Brookings	Higmore	Huron	Lareck	Madison	Milbank	Rapid City	Sand Lake	Sioux Falls	Sturgis	Webster	Yankton
Trumpeter Swan (Captives) ..					27								
Canada Goose (47 Captives)					147								
Mallard					800			148	150	13			5097
Gadwall								14					
Lesser Scaup					2			3					
Common Goldeneye					23			8					700
Hooded Merganser								2					
Common Merganser					1			6					
Turkey Vulture											2		
Red-tailed Hawk					1					9			2
Harlan's Hawk					1								
Rough-legged Hawk	1		2		2				1				
Ferruginous Hawk				1									
Golden Eagle	6				4				1	1			
Bald Eagle					1								13
Marsh Hawk					2								
Prairie Falcon					1								
Peregrine Falcon				1									
Pigeon Hawk								1					
Sparrow Hawk		1				2	1			3			1
Greater Prairie Chicken									1				
Sharp-tailed Grouse					1			2					
Pheasant	14	138	208	545	153	118	99	1	1200	573	2	6	53
Gray Partridge									1	6			
Killdeer								2					2
Common Snipe								3		2			3
Ring-billed Gull													1
Mourning Dove										12			1
Screech Owl		1				1							
Great Horned Owl	2	4		4	2	3	1		2	38			2
Snowy Owl					2				1			1	
Short-eared Owl		1			1					10			

Flicker, Y-s.		3		1					1	44			2
Flicker, R-s.			2	1									
Red-bellied Woodpecker		1								11			
Hairy Woodpecker		12	4	2		2	3	4		77		3	1
Downy Woodpecker	1	25	4	3	4	5	9	8	4	93		4	2
Horned Lark		507	50	280	4	416	183		20	453		15	58
Blue Jay		2	1	1		4	4	17	1	40	3	1	1
Black-billed Magpie					1			24			5		
Common Crow	10	218		12		12	3	4	1	171			13
Pinon Jay								23					
Black-capped Chickadee		59	12	7		31	29	57		663	8	18	13
White-breasted Nuthatch		2	6	4		11	2	8		130		2	2
Red-breasted Nuthatch			2	1		3		17		27		1	1
Brown Creeper		1						3		17	2		2
Canyon Wren								1					
Robin		2		1		1			1				
Golden-crowned Kinglet											7		
Ruby-crowned Kinglet										1			
Townsend's Solitaire				2				5					
Bohemian Waxwing		2	50	50		15	10	14				100	
Cedar Waxwing	36	10	15			120		25					
Northern Shrike		1			1					3			
Starling	25	35	40	244	4	203	31	24	5	617	9		71
House Sparrow	50	185	400	1106	13	271	300	177	1250	2578	32	4	92
Western Meadowlark	1	1		3	2	6	1		1	23	3		4
Yellow-headed Blackbird									1				
Red-winged Blackbird					85	1	2		310	16			
Brewer's Blackbird									5				
Common Grackle			1			1			52	2			
Brown-headed Cowbird									1				
Cardinal		2		1		3				71			7
Evening Grosbeak		2	6		4			7		22	7	2	1
Purple Finch				2				6		6			
Pine Grosbeak										1			
Common Redpoll	20	55		6	60			18		67			
American Goldfinch				19						2			
Pine Siskin					1					36			
Rufus-sided Towhee										2			
White-winged Junco								16			1		
Slate-colored Junco		8		4		15	2	7		205		2	15
Oregon Junco								33		21			
Gray-headed Junco								1					
Tree Sparrow	6	83		53	4	92	5	9	51	123	10		61
Chipping Sparrow										30			
Harris' Sparrow										11			
Song Sparrow				1				2		20			
Lapland Longspur		2		384			1			24			76
Snow Bunting				1			5			2		6	

South Dakota Birds with Teeth

Morton Green

Museum of Geology, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology

IN 1872, Professor O. C. Marsh of Yale College announced the discovery of the remains of a large fossil bird near the Smoky Hill River in Kansas. He named it *Hesperornis* which means "western bird." Since the skeleton was headless Marsh did not know, then, that he had found a bird that had teeth. Shortly after this he published the discovery of a second fossil bird. This one was also incomplete and was small. It was named *Ichthyornis* ("fish-bird," in allusion to its alleged fish eating habit). Still later that year Marsh described the jaws and teeth of a small swimming lizard (a mosasaur). Early in 1873 Professor Marsh decided that these jaws were not those of a mosasaur but belonged to the partial skeleton of *Ichthyornis*, they having been found together. A few months afterward Marsh published a figure of the jaw plus a figure and description of a *Hesperornis* with teeth.

All of these specimens were collected in the Upper Cretaceous chalk deposits of the Niobrara formation in Kansas. This chalk was deposited on the bottom of an ancient sea which covered much of central North America about 85 million years ago.

Recent studies by Professor J. T. Gregory, now at the University of California, Berkeley, show that Marsh was right the first time. The jaws referred to a mosasaur do belong to one. This leaves the strange occurrence of a correct conclusion based on incorrectly identified specimens. Marsh's "first" toothed bird is not a bird. However, his "second" toothed bird is, and is therefore the "first." Actually, neither

is the first known toothed bird because of a peculiar mix-up regarding *Archaeopteryx*, the oldest known bird from the Upper Jurassic slates of Solnhofen, Germany. But this is another story, so let us return to the story of South Dakota birds with teeth.

Surprisingly, *Hesperornis*, the American toothed bird is primitive mainly in the possession of teeth. In practically all other respects, it is a bird. What is more, for such an ancient bird it is extremely specialized. It had vestigial wings, useless for flight. Its limbs were permanently directed to the rear, a beautiful arrangement for diving. The long slender head with its rows of sharp conical teeth was perched on the end of a longish neck, all in all an amazingly efficient machine for catching and eating fish.

In recent years, *Hesperornis* has been found in South Dakota. The South Dakota birds are from the Pierre formation which lies above the Niobrara formation. Consequently, the muds of the Pierre formation are younger than the chalk of the Niobrara foundation and were deposited on the sea bottom about 75 million years ago. The South Dakota specimens appear to be the same species as those found in Kansas. These birds swam in the shallow Cretaceous seas of western North America not far from the shoreline. The first discovery was made in 1946 not far from Fairburn, South Dakota, by the late James D. Bump, Director of the Museum of Geology at the School of Mines and Technology. This specimen consisted of a nearly complete hind leg. In succeeding years Dr. Bump diligently searched the area

and was occasionally rewarded by the discovery of another specimen. Sometimes, a piece of a limb bone, another time a partial backbone. By 1952 a pelvis had been added to the accumulation of skeletal parts. In 1953, a new site was found near Buffalo Gap, South Dakota. Dr. J. R. Macdonald, formerly curator in the museum made a "first discovery" similar to Dr. Bump's. It was a hind leg. On the strength of this find, Dr. Bump visited the locality and collected the most complete skeleton of *Hesperornis* found in South Dakota until that time. Parts of both hind legs, the pelvis, some vertebrae and ribs were recovered. Other visits to the site led to more finds of legs and other skeletal parts.

Two boys, James and Thomas Warren, of the Warren Ranch just a few miles south of Rapid City made the discovery in 1955. These boys brought in an ankle bone and toe bone of *Hesperornis* mixed in with other bones and some mineral specimens. The bones had come from a site in the vicinity of Spring Creek. It was not known then but *Hesperornis* bones from the Spring Creek vicinity were to come into prominence later on.

Dr. Bump and Harold Martin, the latter now Associate Director of the Museum, made several trips to Buffalo Gap in 1956 and again met with success. This time a string of vertebrae, a pelvis, and part of a leg of one individual and vertebrae and ribs of another individual were found.

The year 1957 brings us back to Spring Creek. On the George Brown ranch young Kenneth Brown was beginning to take an interest in fossil collecting. His first *Hesperornis* discovery consisted of an ankle bone and a piece of a leg bone.

At this time Dr. Bump renewed his

interest in *Hesperornis* and was determined to find a skull. Enough material was now on hand for a mounted skeleton to be placed on exhibit if a skull could be found. The time now was 1958. An unknown airman from Ellsworth Air Force Base told Dr. Bump about some bones he had seen north of Rapid City in Meade County while he was collecting rocks. Bump and Martin went to the site and thought that at last the skull had been found. The pelvis was exposed and a string of vertebrae was heading into the ground. Surely, they thought, like the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, a skull of *Hesperornis* would be at the end of the string of vertebrae. This good luck was denied them for the vertebrae gave out 9 short of the total of 23 needed and consequently there was no skull. Return visits netted only a few other parts. Even a return to the locality near Fairburn resulted in nothing new.

No finds were made at all in 1959 and 1960. In the early Spring of 1961 Kenneth Brown made a new find in the Spring Creek locality. Although this consisted of only miscellaneous vertebrae and ribs Museum personnel urged Kenneth to continue his searches. This paid off, for late in the spring Kenneth stopped in the Museum on his way home from Rapid City High School and brought in a few bones. By now, he had learned how to recognize some of the bones of *Hesperornis*. He told Martin and the writer that he had picked up the loose bones and had begun to uncover some more. When he saw that part of a skeleton was there he remembered the Museum's advice—"Cover it up and tell us. We will collect it properly. If it is of scientific value we will keep it. If not, we will fix it up so that you may have it in good condition." This is a procedure

preferred by museums as too often the amateur collector will destroy a fossil specimen in his attempts to collect it.

During April a field party from the Museum went to the Brown Ranch and collected the specimen. It has since been prepared by me and is one of the most complete South Dakota *Hesperornis* skeletons yet found. Again, unfortunately it does not have a skull with it. Some vertebrae and ribs, a sacrum, pelvis and leg bones are present. Museum officials are still hopeful that a skull may be discovered by some intrepid collector like Kenneth Brown. Museum of Geology scientists

urge all rock hounds, ranchers, bird watchers and other people who happen to walk on the black shale of the old sea bottom to be on the lookout for the bird with teeth, *Hesperornis*. Then Jim Bump's dream of a mounted *Hesperornis* display will come true.

(In reply to a note about illustrations, Mr. Green wrote: "We looked at the material here. Regrettably it is not photogenic and none of the previously published figures are suitable for copying. I would like to suggest that interested people are welcome to visit the Museum and ask to see those bones not on display."—Ed.)



White-Throated Sparrow

—E. W. Steffen

Birds' Nests of South Dakota

L. J. Moriarty

A. O. U. #225 AVOCET *Recurvirostra americana*

THIS interesting long-legged wader nests very commonly in the lake region of northeastern South Dakota, at least as far west as Faulkton and, less commonly, in other areas of the state, apparently restricted only by lack of suitable habitat. It prefers to nest on the rather open shores of the alkali lakes and sloughs.

The nest is rather hard to find at first as the breeding birds come out to meet the intruder and fly about, uttering their characteristic cry, not just the pair nesting in the immediate area, but those from half a mile or more away. They put on the broken wing or cripple act and seldom lead one to the nest.

They often nest on the bare alkali flats, on the water-deposited vegetation at last year's highwater mark, and on gravely or rocky points or islands.

One good way to find them is to study carefully those areas from afar with strong glasses. When one learns what to look for, the incubating bird is often easily spotted.

Another good method, when one feels sure he is within a few hundred yards of the nest, is to sit down with the glasses for half an hour, watching carefully without much movement, and the incubating bird will usually go to the nest and settle. Mark the location carefully, for the eggs blend into the nest, which is often a mere depression in old drift material.

At other times the nest is placed be-

tween granite rocks spotted with dried tan algae, much the color of the eggs.

The usual number of eggs is 4 but 3 and 5 are also found. Five is the greatest number I have found but others report 7 and 8, probably the product of more than one bird.

The eggs are usually pyriform or elongated ovate, with the pointed ends to the center of the nest. They are of a deep olive-buff ground color with spots and blotches of many shades of drab. The spotting tends to be rather small, with not many large blotches evident. Some eggs have a rather pale greenish gray base color but I find no variations in the same nest. As with nearly all shore birds the eggs have such protective coloration as makes them hard to see. They are about 50 x 35 millimeters in size.

The saucer of the nest is usually about one inch deep and about 5 to 6 inches across the inside.

The young are precocial and will leave the nest and hide as soon as dry.

Some of the sure locations for finding them in our area are Marsh Lake by Hayti, Long Lake, Horseshoe, Nicholson, and Medicine Lakes about 15 miles northwest of Watertown, Bitter Lake by Waubay, Big Rush Lake by Webster, and many of the small alkali lakes in that area.—**Watertown.**

General Notes of Special Interest

WHIP-POOR-WILL IN BROOKINGS COUNTY—Checking my mist nests in a thicket next to my home on October 5, 1961, a bird flushed from the ground. Immediately I knew it belonged to the Goatsucker Family by its flight and appearance.

This bird was flushed the next couple of days in about the same area of the thicket. The second day it flew only a short distance and landed on the ground again allowing me to approach quite closely. Yes, it was definitely a goatsucker but did not have the long wings of the Nighthawk. Its wings appeared quite rounded in flight with no "windows."

Then Sunday, October 8, I felt ready to verify this bird as a Whip-poor-will. After stretching my mist nets, I circled through the thicket and sure enough the bird flushed from the same area and flew directly into one of my nets. I was truly thrilled for now the bird would be a good record of a Whip-poor-will in Brookings County.

I was astounded at its huge mouth which it opened to hiss at me while being removed from the net. Its overall color was brown with many buffy spots in its plumage. The edges of its tail were buffy instead of white, so my bird was a female. After banding the bird and calling Orena Cooper and the Franklin Shaw's who came down to see the bird, we took several colored pictures of it with two coming out beautifully.

We did not see the bird again; so its experience with us made it depart to another area. Of course I was

thrilled to have had a bird in my hand that most people hear but never see.

Over in his book, *Birds of South Dakota*, says "Its call, a repeated "whip-poor-will," has been heard from the woods along the Missouri River and as far north as Brookings."

In looking through past issues of *South Dakota Bird Notes* I find the following on the Whip-poor-will. Carl M. Johnson says, "A few Whip-poor-wills summer in Newton Hills, Lincoln County" and are very rare in Bon Homme County (VII:52 & X:53). The Whip-poor-will summers in the eastern part of South Dakota according to the Checklist of South Dakota Birds (VIII:16).

William Youngworth states "The Whip-poor-will is another species which long has been a summer resident of the Missouri River Valley and on up into Canada where there are many records in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Coues found it common along the international border back in 1878, and many observers have found it since in North Dakota. In the Sioux City area it has become uncommon and seems to have deserted all but the most favorable timbered areas." (VIII:63). Doris Gates reports hearing it near Hill City in 1960. (XII:35). — **Nelda Holden, Brookings, S. Dak.**

* * * * *

PINE GROSBEAK AT STRANDBURG —January 5, 1962, an unusual bird was feeding in the road. I caught it twice and felt it might have something

wrong with it, though I could see nothing. However, it seemed very alert and was fighting mad when caught.

It was about the size of a robin, maybe a little smaller, a gray bird with its underparts just a little lighter than its back. It had white wing-bars, a short stout bill, and the top of its head was brown; also, above the tail, it was brown. It had a deeply notched tail. I identified it as a Pine Grosbeak, female, as it had no pink or red.

I wrote Mr. Elliott to confirm my identification, which he did. But he believed it was an immature young bird rather than an adult female.

For two days it sat and fed on the road, eating small flat seeds from nearby trees, probably ash. I chased it off several times but it always came right back. It could fly and went into the tops of trees.

The third day it was gone and I have not seen it again.—Mrs. Elmer Linngren, Strandburg.

* * * *

EVENING GROSBEEK AT BELLE FOURCHE—If an ornithologist were to give the complete range of the evening grosbeak, he should include "Belle Fourche area of Northern Black Hills." And the "range" includes breeding.

Roger Tory Peterson, for instance, puts it thus in his Western Field Guide to the Birds:

"Breeds in spruce belt of northwestern Canada to northern Michigan, winters erratically south and east to Missouri, Kentucky, Ohio, Virginia and rarely in New England."

Other authorities vary a bit from that, particularly on the New England phase.

We believe that we have seen the evening grosbeak adopt this area as its home site, and do it in the past 10 years, by degrees, until now the bird nests here and uses the area for home

quarters in winter, as truly a Belle Fourche area bird as the bluejay.

About 15 years ago we saw our first flock of evening grosbeaks feeding in hackberry and Russian olive trees. It was during a stretch of mild days in late February. Had a flock of blue and red parrots landed in our trees we could have been no more surprised and delighted. The black, white and burnished gold of the male evening grosbeak is every bit as striking as any bird the tropics ever produced.

The first flock, we recall, stayed a few weeks, until rough weather moved in. For several years following, the procedure was the same—the flock of about 30 appeared to stay thru mild spells in late winter and early spring; then disappeared until the next year.

About six years ago, the grosbeaks began to appear in late fall and off and on through December and January, in addition to the February and March visits. Four years ago, one pair of grosbeaks stayed on our hill all summer and apparently nested, although we never found out where.

The next year the whole flock hung around until nesting time, and the number of evening grosbeaks seen in the yard in summer increased, leading us to believe that the whole flock nested near—probably in the ponderosas to southwest of town.

Thus far, no grosbeaks have nested in the row of ponderosas on our hill, still young trees, but last summer one pair held out in the tallest of the row so long that we thought they were going to nest there. The hope this year is that they will.

Fall and winter flocking of the grosbeaks too has changed. The flock appears early in the fall and is around the town most of the time. Every day since October we have seen one or more. There have been test periods,

as well. For instance, after the late October snow and cold, we thought the flock surely would be gone. But it was still here, digging thru the snow to find berries on the ground under the olive and hackberry bushes. Sometimes a lone bird appears. Sometimes it's a small flock. Sometimes it's the full flock which must number around 50. During the bitter, windy days the first of the week, lone grosbeaks appeared at feeders around town, birders calling us to say, "Had a grosbeak looking over the menu this morning." And the grosbeak flock was feeding on our hill when we left today.

We believe we've seen evening grosbeaks become native here. And why? Because they like it, the way the rest of us do.—Irma G. Weyler, *Daily Belle Fourche Post*, Jan. 13, 1962.

* * * *

SPRAYING HELD UNSUCCESSFUL FOR DUTCH ELM DISEASE CONTROL—The attempt to stop the spread of Dutch elm disease by DDT and other insecticidal sprays has failed. Annual losses of up to five percent of a community's elms are experienced despite the most intensive spray programs.

The Society's interest in efforts to control the Dutch elm disease, as well as that of other conservation groups, aside from the loss of the beautiful trees to the deadly agent, is that the common method of attacking the infection involves the application of insecticides to the trees and their foliage. The insecticides kill birdlife, sometimes in substantial numbers.

Dutch elm disease is spread from tree to tree by elm bark beetles that attack limbs either for feeding or for egg laying. The control of the disease is based principally on destroying elm beetles by spraying. Of the two methods of spraying, mist application and hydraulic application, the mist treat-

ment is the most preferable because less poison is used and it does not have a large dripoff which contaminates the soil.

The prompt removal of and burning of dying and dead branches and trees, is preferable to spraying. This has provided very good control in many areas, especially when combined with good fertilization and care of the trees. In Buffalo it has been especially successful. Toledo is relying upon sanitation after several years of spraying was found ineffectual in saving its elms. Sanitation avoids poisoning of birds and other animal life and eliminates known as well as potential risks to the biological community and to humans as well.—Massachusetts Audubon Newsletter

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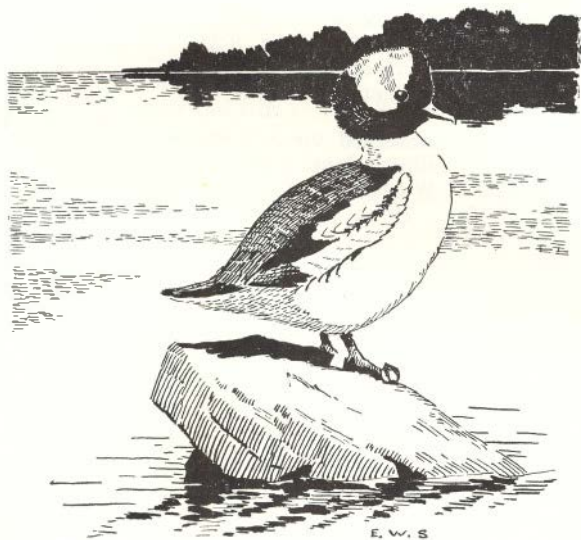


Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker

—E. W. Steffen

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION—MIGRATION OF BUFFLEHEADS—A study of the Bufflehead is under way, and information on the migration of that species is needed. Data required include first arrival dates, peak date of migration and peak numbers, and departure dates. Only birds actually believed to be migrants should be listed, but, where pertinent, other data on wintering or summering numbers should be included. If only infrequent visits are made to areas frequented by Bufflehead, the statement "present by (date)" is preferable to "arrival (date)", and "last seen (date)" to "de-

parture (date)". Information is solicited particularly for the spring migration of 1962, but it is hoped that interested observers will report any data they may have obtained in the past; requests for fall migration data will be made later. It is planned to color-mark some Buffleheads in Maryland, New York, and Oregon during the winter of 1961-62, and observers should take particular note of any Buffleheads bearing bright patches of red, yellow, or orange. Please send information on the Bufflehead to—A. J. Erskine, Canadian Wildlife Service, P. O. Box 180, Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada.



Bufflehead

—E. W. Steffen

BIRDS AT HIGHMORE, 1961—Dates following the species are those of the observation. Undated species are assumed to be summer residents and such might also be true of some of those actually seen only on the day or days shown. This is properly a fall migration list.

Grebe, Pied-billed	Black-capped Chickadee,	Bobolink
Great Blue Heron, 8-26	10-24	Meadowlark, Western
American Bittern	White-breasted Nuthatch	Yellow-headed Blackbird
Ducks:	Red-breasted Nuthatch,	Red-winged Blackbird
Mallard	8-25	Brewer's Blackbird
Pintail	Brown Creeper, 10-30	Orchard Oriole
Blue-winged Teal	House Wren	Baltimore Oriole
Wood Duck, 8-26	Mockingbird, 9-20	Rusty Blackbird
Canvasback	Catbird	Grackle, Common
Goshawk	Brown Thrasher	Brown-headed Cowbird
Rough-legged Hawk	Robin	Blue Grosbeak, 9-5, 9-6,
Peregrine Falcon	Olive-backed Thrush, 9-13	9-7
Sparrow Hawk	Bluebird, Eastern, 10-15	Pine Grosbeak, 9-21, 22
Pheasant	Golden-crowned Kinglet,	Evening Grosbeak, 11-6,
American Coot	10-2	11-21 on
Upland Plover	Ruby-crowned Kinglet,	Purple Finch, 10-33
Killdeer	8-31	American Goldfinch
Mourning Dove	Sprague's Pipit	Rufus-sided Towhee, 9-10,
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Bohemian Waxwing, 8-20	11
Nighthawk, 8-24 through	Cedar Waxwing, 8-23	Lark Bunting
8-31	Northern Shrike, 11-5	Sparrows:
Ruby-throated Humming-	Loggerhead Shrike, 9-1	LeConte's, 8-29
bird, 8-25	Starling	Vesper, 9-6
Flicker, Y-s.,	Red-eyed Vireo, 9-10	Lark, 10-7
Flicker, R-s.	Philadelphia Vireo, 10-3	Slate-c. Junco,
Red-headed Woodpecker	Warblers:	Tree, 9-26
Hairy Woodpecker, 10-15	Black and White, 8-31	Chipping, 8-26
Downy Woodpecker, 8-29	Orange-crowned, 9-27	Clay-colored, 8-26
Eastern Kingbird	Tennessee, 8-22	Harris', 9-25
Western Kingbird	Parula, 9-14	White-crowned, 9-11
Least Flycatcher, 8-26	Yellow, 9-6	White-throated, 9-10
Olive-sided Flycatcher,	Myrtle, 9-20	Fox, 8-31
8-31	Palm, 9-8	Lincoln, 9-8
Western Flycatcher, 8-26	Kentucky, 9-10	Swamp, 9-29
Eastern Wood Pewee, 9-8	Mourning, 9-12	Song, 8-26
Horned Lark	Wilson's, 8-26	Chestnut-collared
Barn Swallow	Northern Yellowthroat	Longspur
Cliff Swallow	Yellow-breasted Chat,	Common Crow
Blue Jay	8-31	

Further, in regard to the Mockingbird and the possibility that a Townsend's solitaire might have been seen instead: In the new edition of Roberts: *Birds of Minnesota* is a color plate showing the Catbird, Mockingbird, and

Townsend's Solitaire; a very good picture.

After looking at it, Nanci (16) still felt sure she had seen a Mockingbird. In the accompanying text we find that mockingbirds have gone as far north

as the Canadian border and when they do wander north it is in the colder months.

The Blue Grosbeaks: There were five of them here for three days during the first week in September. They stayed together and didn't seem too happy about me watching them. They were in the brown and blue mixture and just plain homely.

The Pine Grosbeak: Nanci was out trying to find something besides the flock of towhees that were here. She was standing beside a mulberry bush when she saw this bird perched in there. It was close enough she could have touched it. It was a rosy color with two white bars on the dark wings. The beak was the conical finch type and black.

It didn't seem a bit concerned about her standing there watching it. The only thing that didn't fit the description of the pine grosbeak was the size. It looked to her about $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and the size given for it is $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

However, the picture of that bird was the only one that looked like the bird she had seen. The next day there was a bird in the bath that fit the description of the female Pine Grosbeak.

(It has been my experience that the Pine Grosbeak is comparatively unafraid when it appears in this area. The one we saw here November 4, 1961 allowed us to approach as close as our 7 x 50 glasses would focus without showing alarm. See also Mrs. Linn-gren's note in this issue.

It is also common experience that even familiar birds, seen at extremely close range, impress with their surprising smallness of appearance. So Nanci's estimate of $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches for a bird that is usually $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches, made from an arm's length view, is not evidence

against the correct identification as a Pine Grosbeak.—Ed.)

The Sprague's Pipit: We saw it as we were driving through the pasture of our ranch southwest of Highmore. We will try to find it next summer, take pictures, and get more information.—Mrs. M. Harter, Highmore.

* * * *

GIFT FOR S.D.O.U.—Just received a nice gift from Clifford Fiscus of Seattle 2, Washington: The Proceedings of the First, Second, and Third annual meetings of the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union, which have now been placed in our library.—Herman P. Chilson, Librarian, Webster.

* * * *

MOCKINGBIRDS AT HURON—Sunday afternoon, April 30, 1961, we had a telephone call from John Kennedy, 680 Oregon SE, who was sure he had just seen a Mockingbird on the Country Club golf course, north of Huron.

With detailed instructions for finding the spot we hurried out to see, afraid it would be a shrike.

At the described little group of junipers we had a glimpse of a bird moving and heard thrasher-like singing. A closer approach coincided with the passing of some golfers and the bird flushed, to be joined by another of similar white and gray pattern.

One of the two lit on the edge of a distant raised tee, some 18 inches above the natural ground, where it strutted briefly. The attitude was that of a mockingbird and not a shrike but the bird was not close enough to justify a final decision.

While Lucille moved closer I went back for the car, expecting to use it as a blind for an approach. But the bird had moved on before we had a much better view. Then it joined the other

and both turned back to the junipers.

turned the car in the trail and moved back cautiously. This time one of the birds was strutting back and forth on the grass no more than fifty feet from the car, which I had pointed toward it and stopped.

While we both had lived our early years in areas where mockingbirds were common, the display we now watched was new to us.

The bird strutted, in classic drum major style, back nearly vertical, head back, tail horizontal. Every few steps it would raise its wings like a Upland Plover and turn, as though displaying first the white patch on top of the wing, then the larger and whiter wing lining. It appeared conscious of the car but not afraid, watching it as though the display were for our benefit. The other of the pair we had seen was not visible but must have been near.

After some ten minutes of this performance, we had studied the bird from all sides through 7x50 binoculars, checked and remarked on the long thin, dark bill, with the down-curved upper mandible, the dark eye that seemed to extend the bill backward, that we were close enough to see the light gray between the base of the bill and the eye, the fact that the head and bill were totally unlike that of a shrike, but shaped much like a thrasher's though slimmer, the color of brownish gray instead of bluish gray, the long tail with white at the sides.

* * *

Our next thought was of others who would want to see the bird and check its identification for themselves. We left the Mockingbird in the middle of its best efforts.

In less than an hour we were back with Blanche Battin, Jean Jonkel, and Mrs. H. M. Pierce. But it was now 3:30 p. m. Passing golfers were numer-

ous and the birds were not immediately visible at the junipers. Beyond, in some deciduous trees not yet leafed out we saw a couple of birds that took off and faded into a farther line of trees. The gray and white pattern was barely visible. We had no doubt they were our birds but the view was not good enough for our purpose. We drove around to other birding spots and spent an hour or more.

The area around the junipers was temporarily deserted when we returned. And on a small limb of one, in clear sight, was one of the Mockingbirds. This time it was singing.

We could see the long beak open for song, see it close while the bird looked about as though listening, and open again in further song. The singing was of numerous repetitions of brief songs as described by Peterson.

The bird continued to sing while all present studied it at some fifty feet with 7x50 binoculars. Never was there any doubt about the identification as a Mockingbird, a male on territory, by its behavior. Every mark we knew or could find in Peterson or Pough was checked there with the books and bird before us, without a single question.

Subsequent weekly checks of the territory during May gave no sight of these birds and it appears that they found the territory not to their liking.

—J. W. Johnson, Huron.

* * * *

A number of requests have been received for a new printing of the list of members. Such a job never seems to get done right, no matter how many times it is checked. We will start on it; but, in the meantime, you can help by getting in now those friends who are about to become members. It will save later partial lists and, besides, we have to have them if we are to continue to give you 24-page issues without an increase in price.—Editor.