

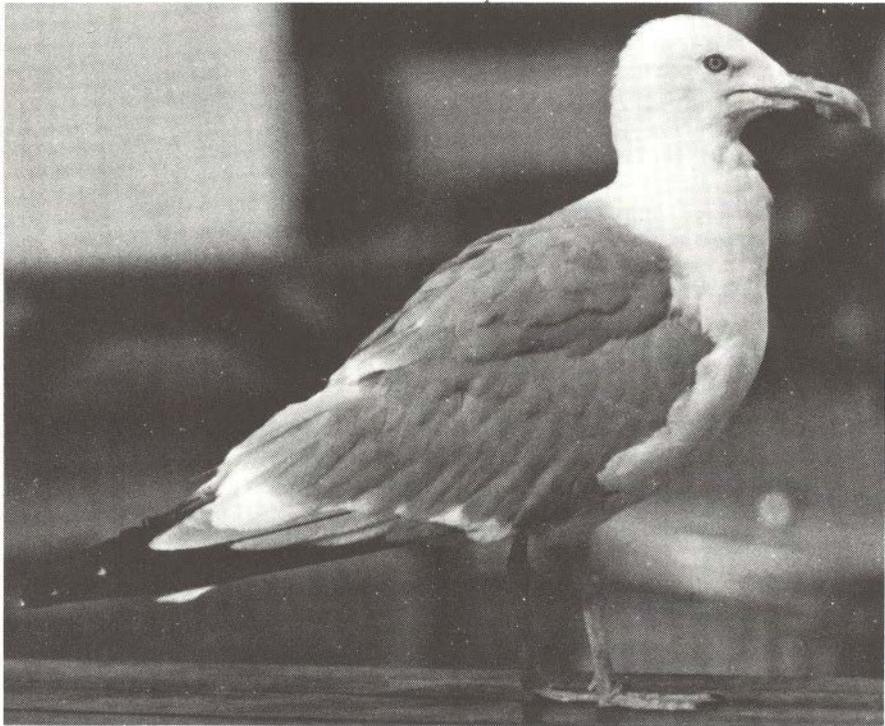
South Dakota Bird Notes

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JUNE, 1974

Whole No. 101



Herring Gull

—Photo by William B. Conger

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South Dakota Ornithologists' Union

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President's Page

THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY meeting at Vermillion was a success in every way. It was attended by a fine turnout of South Dakota birders and by several people from other states. The Vermillion committee headed by Bill Lemons did an excellent job on a program which proceeded without any problems, and this is not always easy. The fine slide series by Willis Hall showing Goshawk predation on cottontail rabbit was an appropriate introduction to the outstanding talk given by Dr. Grier on his studies of reproduction and artificial breeding of eagles. As important as anything was the wonderful weather we encountered over the weekend, and the bird records that were reported during the various field trips.



Many of you will recall that we have not been favored with sunny skies during recent meetings, so getting an entire weekend of good weather for the Spring Meeting is something special. Records for Knot, Whimbrel, Caspian Tern and others are hard to duplicate in South Dakota on any one weekend; there are only two previous records for the Knot and Whimbrel. Now if those involved will follow through with specific notes for publication in "Bird Notes" we will be able to record one of the best meetings ever experienced.

Every field naturalist is well aware of the importance of selected habitat niches in looking for certain species of birds or animals, and I think we all recognize the importance of wildlife habitat generally in providing these special homes for animals. Most of you probably know of

the many thousands of acres of native prairie, pastures, diverted acres, and woodlands that are being converted to cropland this year as a result of increased production of food crops that is being encouraged by the Department of Agriculture. It is difficult to try to dissuade farmers from using every available acre of land when prices are soaring to \$500 an acre in parts of South Dakota.

But how many SDOU members know about the three agencies that are actively acquiring land for wildlife, and that any one of us can be directly helpful in aiding these agencies to procure more and better lands? I want to encourage every one to become more familiar with the land attainment programs of the Department of Game, Fish and Parks, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and The Nature Conservancy. Some comments on each of these might be helpful.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been purchasing lands for waterfowl production and protection since the mid 1930's. They have hundreds of large waterfowl refuges in the United States that are havens for migratory birds of all kinds; Sand Lake, Waubay, and Lacreek National Refuges are examples of the outstanding habitat set aside for wildlife in South Dakota. In addition to acquiring large tracts of land, this federal agency buys small wetlands specifically for waterfowl production—anywhere from 40 acres to 160 acres or larger. Most Waterfowl Production Areas are open to hunting, but, as with any wild area, many species of non-game birds are also produced on such lands. State headquarters for F&WS is in Pierre, with acquisition offices in Aberdeen and Watertown. This agency must purchase

(Continued on Page 43)

1974 Spring Meeting

William E. Lemons

THE ANNUAL SDOU Spring Meeting was held at Vermillion this year on May 24, 25 and 26. After registration at the University of South Dakota's Center for Continuing Education early Friday evening, most of the visitors enjoyed an evening at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Byron Harrell.

On Saturday morning a fairly large number of birders assembled at headquarters shortly after 6 a.m. and departed in four groups led by Dr. Whitney, Willis Hall, Bruce Harris and Dr. Harrell for various places such as the sand dunes near Elk Point, the woods west of High Line Landing and Jake's Island below that site, the game refuge below the city airport on the Missouri River, the Dwayne Mount property near the confluence of the Vermillion and Missouri Rivers, Union County Park, Clay County Park, Burbank Slough (euphemistically called Burbank Lake), and Eisenmenger's Pond. Everybody was provided with maps which located 15 specific sites thought to be excellent for birding.

Charter members were honored on the program at the banquet on Saturday night. Twelve of the 25 surviving charter members attended the dinner, and letters from others included one from Olin S. Pettingill, Jr., which was read to the group by Bruce Harris. Also included on the program were Colin Conner of the US Department of Music, who sang several songs accompanied by guitar, and Willis Hall of Yankton, who showed close-range colored views of a Goshawk feeding on a rabbit. The main feature of the evening was an illustrated address, "Studies of Reproduction in Bald and Golden Eagles," by Dr. James W. Grier of North Dakota State University. During his question-and-answer period Walter A.

Rose of Clear Lake gave some very good impromptu bird-call imitations. Fifty-nine persons attended this affair.

On Sunday morning there were more fieldtrips. Two groups of early risers left headquarters under the guidance of Bruce Harris and Willis Hall. At noon 48 persons assembled for a luncheon followed by the call-off of bird species.

Numerous requests at the registration table for guided groups suggest that these ought to be a regularly planned feature of future Spring Meetings.

One reason for holding the meeting at Vermillion this year was a fear, expressed by SDOU's board of directors last November at Sioux Falls, that the habitat of the Elk Point sand dunes may be seriously affected, if not destroyed, by the plans of the Army Engineers. These dunes are a nesting area for such species as the Piping Plover, the Least Tern, and the Prothonotary Warbler.

Tentative plans were made for holding the Fall Meeting in Pierre on Dec. 7-8.

Registration list at Vermillion:

California

Miss Grenville Hatch, La Jolla.

Iowa

Mr. and Mrs. William Callihan, Davenport; Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Crocker, Storm Lake; Larry Farmer, Westfield; Miss Hilda E. Miller, Rock Valley; Mr. and Mrs. Paul Kleinheksel, Sioux City and Mr. and Mrs. Ed Sibley, Sioux City.

Minnesota

Dr. James W. Grier, Moorhead.

South Dakota

Mr. and Mrs. Everett Montgomery, Aberdeen; Mrs. Margerey Arbogast, Aberdeen; Mrs. Ella M. McNeil, Britton; Dr. and Mrs. David J. Holden and Arthur, Brookings; Mr. and Mrs. Richard Edie, Brookings; Galen Steffen, Burke;



CHARTER MEMBERS AT THE 1974 SDOU MEETING—From left to right, back row, are Mr. Cecil P. Haight, Mr. W.A. Rose, Dr. Herbert Krause, Mr. Bruce K. Harris, Mr. Willis Hall, Mr. Charles H. Rogge, Mr. Harry C. Behrens; front row, Miss Ruth Habeger, Miss Leota Van Ornum, Mrs. Ella M. McNeil, Miss Mary Aberdeen Ketelle, and Mrs. Adelene M. Siljberg.

Ernest Hersman, Centerville; Donald V. Hunter, Centerville; Bruce Harris, Clear Lake; Walter A. Rose, Clear Lake;

June Harter, Highmore; Mr. and Mrs. J.W. Johnson, Huron; Miss Mary Aberdeen Ketelle, Huron; Miss Leota Van Ornum, Madison; Miss Ruth Habeger, Madison; Robert Buckman, Madison; Gervase Hittle, Meckling; Jean Husat, Meckling; William E. Lemons, Meckling; Mr. and Mrs. B.J. Rose, Pierre;

Mr. and Mrs. L.M. Baylor, Rapid City; Dr. and Mrs. N.R. Whitney, Rapid City;

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Behrens, Rapid City; Mr. and Mrs. H.R. Jackson, Rapid City; Dan Hicks, Redfield; Mr. and Mrs. Charles H. Rogge, Sioux Falls; Mr. and Mrs. Robert Trusler, Sioux Falls; Kim Eckert, Sioux Falls; Dr. Herbert Krause, Sioux Falls; Fred Klawiter, Sioux Falls;

Cecil P. Haight, Spearfish; Tom Hays, Spearfish; Dr. and Mrs. Steve Dill, Vermillion; Dr. and Mrs. Byron Harrell, Vermillion; Mrs. Karolyn J. Hoover, Vermillion; Mrs. Adelene M. Siljberg, Vermillion; Mr. and Mrs. Gottfried I. Moller, Vermillion; Mr. and Mrs. Willis Hall, Yankton.

Species in Vermillion Area,

May 24-26, 1974

Bruce Harris, Compiler

Pied-billed Grebe
Double-crested Cormorant
Great Blue Heron
Green Heron
Mallard
Green-winged Teal
Blue-winged Teal
Northern Shoveler
Wood Duck
Redhead
Lesser Scaup
Red-tailed Hawk
Marsh Hawk
American Kestrel
Bobwhite
Ring-necked Pheasant
American Coot
Semipalmated Plover
Piping Plover
Killdeer
American Golden Plover
Black-bellied Plover
Upland Sandpiper
Spotted Sandpiper
Greater Yellowlegs
Lesser Yellowlegs
Knot
Pectoral Sandpiper
White-rumped Sandpiper
Baird's Sandpiper
Least Sandpiper
Dunlin
Short-billed Dowitcher
Stilt Sandpiper
Semipalmated Sandpiper
Western Sandpiper
Whimbrel
Wilson's Phalarope
Northern Phalarope
Ring-billed Gull
Franklin's Gull
Forster's Tern
Caspian Tern
Black Tern
Least Tern
Mourning Dove
Rock Dove
Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Black-billed Cuckoo
Screech Owl
Whip-poor-will
Common Nighthawk
Chimney Swift
Belted Kingfisher
Common Flicker
 a. Yellow-shafted
 b. Red-shafted
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Red-headed Woodpecker
Hairy Woodpecker
Downy Woodpecker
Eastern Kingbird
Western Kingbird
Great Crested Flycatcher
Eastern Phoebe
Willow Flycatcher
Alder Flycatcher
Least Flycatcher
Eastern Wood Pewee
Olive-sided Flycatcher
Horned Lark
Tree Swallow
Bank Swallow
Rough-winged Swallow
Barn Swallow
Cliff Swallow
Purple Martin
Blue Jay
Common Crow
Black-capped Chickadee
White-breasted Nuthatch
House Wren
Long-billed Marsh Wren
Short-billed Marsh Wren
Mockingbird
Gray Catbird
Brown Thrasher
American Robin
Wood Thrush
Swainson's Thrush
Veery
Eastern Bluebird
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Cedar Waxwing
Loggerhead Shrike
Starling
Bell's Vireo
Yellow-throated Vireo
Red-eyed Vireo
Philadelphia Vireo
Warbling Vireo
Tennessee Warbler
Yellow Warbler
Yellow-rumped Warbler
Blackburnian Warbler
Chestnut-sided Warbler
Blackpoll Warbler
Ovenbird
Mourning Warbler
Common Yellowthroat
Yellow-breasted Chat
Canada Warbler
American Redstart
House Sparrow
Bobolink
Western Meadowlark
Yellow-headed Blackbird
Red-winged Blackbird
Brewer's Blackbird
Orchard Oriole
Northern Oriole
Common Grackle
Brown-headed Cowbird
Scarlet Tanager
Cardinal
Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Blue Grosbeak
Indigo Bunting
Dickcissel
Pine Siskin
American Goldfinch
Rufous-sided Towhee (Western)
Lark Bunting
Savannah Sparrow
Grasshopper Sparrow
Vesper Sparrow
Lark Sparrow
Chipping Sparrow
Clay-colored Sparrow
Field Sparrow
Swamp Sparrow
Song Sparrow

Total 141 Species

(Notes about some of the species, e.g., the Knot and Whimbrel, will be published in the September or December issues of "Bird Notes."—Ed.)

Young Western Kingbirds: Their Care and Feeding

Don, Dorothy and Doug Wilson
As Told to Galen L. Steffen

THIS IS an account of how two fledgling Western Kingbirds were fed and cared for by the Don Wilson family until the birds became self-sufficient. The dates and events were obtained from the daily records maintained by Don, and the writer's own observations.

On July 20, 1973, my cousin Don, his wife Dorothy and their 10-year-old son Doug found a young Western Kingbird on the ground near their home in Burke, S. Dak. The bird, fully feathered and short-tailed, was unable to fly.

An adult and two young birds, apparently the little bird's nest mates, were perched on the electric wires above. The adult was seen to feed the young birds on the wire, but it ignored the youngster just below. Finally, the kingbird family flew to some distant trees, abandoning the bird on the ground, and the Wilsons took the little kingbird into their home to try to keep it alive until it would be old enough to fly and feed itself.

The Wilsons are no strangers to this kind of experience, having previously cared for three Purple Martins, an adult Western Kingbird, and a Horned Lark. They were set free as soon as they were self-sufficient. Noteworthy was the young Purple Martin that was rescued from its nest after being abandoned by the parents in early September. It was kept in the house all winter and released in the early part of the summer.

The young kingbird was placed in an old laundry basket fitted with perches that served the other birds the Wilsons had cared for. A towel over the basket made it a roomy cage for the bird, which could see out of the slatted sides and get plenty of light and air.

Feeding the little bird meant finding some substitute for its natural diet of insects until a supply could be obtained. No problem. The bird found bits of lean, raw hamburger mixed with the yolk of hard-boiled egg quite to its liking. Egg-shell, ground to a fine powder, was added to about every fourth bit of meat and yolk mixture. At first, the kingbird had to be force fed, but Don's wife Dot, as she prefers to be called, is quite good at getting birds to eat and soon had this one eating. Water was given by means of putting a few drops in a teaspoon, holding the bird's mouth open, and letting a drop or two at a time trickle down its throat. After about two hours the bird was taking food without objection.

The second Western Kingbird was found July 23, 1973, as I was driving to Don's house. The bird was sitting in the middle of the street and my car passed above it before I could stop. When I walked back to where the bird huddled I found it was another youngster unable to fly. There was no sign of its parents or nest mates in the vicinity so I took the bird to the Wilson home.

When the new bird was placed in the cage with the other one it was obvious that my kingbird was several days younger. It tried to adopt the older bird for a foster parent, getting as close as possible, gaping, chirping, and calling as though it expected to be fed. The larger bird did not favor the newcomer at first, moving away from him and even trying to peck him when he got too close. After a night and day together in the cage the younger kingbird was accepted, and the two got along well. The smaller bird was fed and watered by the same method

used for the older kingbird and was soon eating and drinking.

The kingbirds became almost inseparable, always sitting close to each other on the perch or on the rim of the basket when the cover was removed at feeding time. They kept up a constant chirping and calling, especially when someone was near the cage. Seemingly unafraid, they could be picked up and handled at will. They liked to sit on a finger or hand when being fed, and acted as though they really enjoyed human company.

The birds spent a lot of time cleaning and preening their feathers during the first week. They grew rapidly, and with good reason. They always seemed to be hungry, and their appetities were enormous. Along with the bits of lean meat and egg yolk, they devoured small grasshoppers and other small insects. The Wilson family made daily trips to the fields near their home to catch the grasshoppers, and Don estimated that 50 to 75 were required each day to meet the needs of the hourly feedings.

At the end of the first week the birds had longer wing and tail feathers and were able to make short flights around the kitchen. On July 30, Don decided it was time to take the kingbirds outdoors to see what they would do in natural surroundings. The cage was placed on a grill, and, when the cover was removed, the birds hopped up to the edge of the basket where they begged to be fed. After they were given some grasshoppers they still did not seem to realize they were free to go. Finally, the larger bird made some short flights over the yard, always coming back to perch on the basket. Then the smaller bird decided to try it. Soon both birds were making short flights, but reluctant to move too far from the cage. The Wilsons were surprised; they had expected the birds to fly out of the neighborhood. Later on, the larger bird flew across the street to perch in a tree, a location about 100 feet from the Wilson house. The smaller bird trailed after him, and the two friends could be seen



Doug and Young Kingbirds

—Photo by Don Wilson

sitting side by side in the tree.

Don had to leave so he asked Dot to watch the birds and to note where they went if they left the tree. She watched for about an hour, but they remained on the perch. At two o'clock, approximately two hours after leaving the basket, both birds returned to their perch on the cage where they clamored to be fed. After Dot gave each one six or seven grasshoppers they flew back to their tree across the street. It was the only time the birds returned for food that afternoon.

When Don came home at six o'clock he took some grasshoppers and went to try to coax the birds to come to him. The larger bird came down to a place near the food being held out for it, but it would not get on Don's hand. Finally, by standing on a lawn chair, Don was able to give the insect to the kingbird. He coaxed the bird to sit on his finger, then moved over to the perch of the younger bird. After some hesitation, it fluttered down to land on Don's shoulder. The kingbirds were returned home where they were kept in the house that night and, because Don was out of town, all of the next day.

● On August 1, the kingbirds and their cage were taken outdoors at noon. After being fed, the birds made several short flights around the yard, then flew across the street to their favorite tree. They came back to the basket for food at two o'clock and four o'clock. After the second feeding, Dot put them in the basket and took them indoors because of an imminent storm. They were kept in the house all night.

The next day the birds were again taken outdoors at noon and set free. They were gaining confidence, and were seen flying to different areas in the neighborhood during the afternoon, coming back to the basket every two hours to be fed. ● On this day an important change occurred; the birds were allowed to remain outdoors all night, apparently roosting in a hackberry tree in the yard next door.

On the following morning Don could hear the kingbirds chirping and calling from their favorite tree across the street, having presumably moved there soon after daybreak. When they saw Don in the yard they flew to the basket, perched on the rim, and were ready for their first meal. During the day, the birds returned approximately every hour for food and for a drink from the water cup in the cage. If Dot did not see them when they came for food they would sit on the basket rim to chirp and call until she responded. At that time, grasshoppers made up most of their diet, but they still liked the egg yolk and powdered egg-shell mixture.

The next few days were much the same, with the birds remaining outdoors at night and returning to be fed during the day. On Aug. 5, about 4 p.m., a sudden heavy shower caught the birds sitting on an exposed perch in the neighbor's hackberry tree. They soon were so water-soaked that they fell to the ground. Don was watching, so he rescued the birds and took them indoors for the night.

Another important step in the kingbirds' progress occurred after they

were released the following day. The birds were observed catching flying insects, and thus at last were able to feed themselves. However, they still came back to the basket to be fed, but less frequently.

During the next four days the kingbirds remained about the neighborhood, and were seen associating with another Western Kingbird. The new bird would perch on a wire and stare with what seemed to be amazement when his friends flew down to sit on someone's hand or arm to get a free meal of grasshoppers.

There was little difference in the size of the young kingbirds. Don said the older bird could be identified by its somewhat darker back and head.

● On Aug. 11, the older kingbird was observed only three times. It seemed to be ranging further and further from the neighborhood. Both birds were in the Wilson yard in the evening, and were fed grasshoppers before darkness fell. That was the last time the family saw the older bird, but their neighbor said that both kingbirds were in his yard early the next morning.

The younger kingbird lingered in the vicinity through Aug. 14. However, he became more cautious and seldom perched on anyone's hand. When grasshoppers were offered he would swoop down and take the insect without landing.

On Aug. 15, at 9:30 a.m., Don gave the bird several grasshoppers, and that was the last time anyone saw the kingbird. The Wilsons kept a close watch every time they were in the yard during the following week, hoping to see the birds again. But the birds did not return.

Because they became so attached to the kingbirds during the three weeks of care and feeding, the Wilson family experienced some sadness when the birds departed. However, they also had a sense of satisfaction in knowing that the young Western Kingbirds had a chance to survive.—Burke

Falconry and Literature: A Reclamation

Gervase Hittle

—I—

I RATHER suspect there are those whose principal calendar is not the Gregorian calendar but is rather one determined by the presence or absence, for example, of the Eastern Kingbird, woodpeckers, Mourning Doves, Brown Thrashers, immature Red-tailed Hawks, gulls, Cardinals, Canada Geese, juncos, and Bald Eagles. Probably there are those who would leave their jobs rather than miss seeing the migration of the Sandhill Cranes. And doubtless there are some whose interests lie in ecology and the conservation of various species and who act and encourage others to act in ways conducive and beneficial to avian life, i.e., increasing habitat, supplying food—particularly on a winter emergency basis—creating nest sites, and working for the legal recognition and protection of some favorite species.

All of us know that even a moderate interest in almost any phase of ornithology leads one into exasperation, frustration, and physical discomfort—sometimes followed by a tremendous sense of accomplishment and joy from the identification of some heretofore-at-this-location-and-time unknown bird; the observation of an apparently extraordinary, unanticipated or previously unobserved pattern of behavior; the flash of recognition by sound. All of these are important, and I wish to deal with them in the particularized contexts created by two of the hats I wear: that of the English professor and that of the practicing falconer.

Falconry is and has been for centuries considered an art. It has in the present

day become nearly inundated with modern technology, that is, with telemetry, with behavioral psychology in breeding projects, with scientific wildlife management, with necessary medical knowledge. The array of traditional, mostly leather equipment used in the past has often been replaced by nylons, canvas, light-weight metal alloys, and plastics, which were not available when the art of falconry flourished, when its language and ways of seeing the natural world were a viable part of everyone's everyday life.

I am not disparaging the development of our technology. Certainly our ancestors employed every bit of technology at their disposal for the care, handling, treatment, and protection of birds of prey in general and their trained hawks in particular. They established breeding projects and also ways to trap birds without damaging them. They developed equipment to be used and techniques of training which have yet to be surpassed. What I deplore is the loss to us, the deprivation from us of the language and perception, the knowledge of falconry from our every day life that makes us the worse for it.

I do not disparage the fact that today we have several national and international organizations dedicated to the preservation of both falconry and birds of prey, nor that these organizations sponsor and participate in various kinds of projects financed with governmental, private, and general monies. There is the exchange of all manner of study information, data, and knowledge. Most of this knowledge and

information is gathered and disseminated by scientifically trained biologists and naturalists—as it should be; but sometimes the sense that falconry is an art and that the individual falconer is at least an inspiring artist becomes obscured and the fact that the study, observation, handling, and care of birds have profited from information developed from falconers' observations and knowledge tends to be overlooked.

Even though we have lost from our everyday life much of the language and awareness of falconry, poets and literature have retained it and perpetuated it in such a way that offers us a chance to reclaim a part of life we have nearly forsaken or lost.

—II—

Thus I come to several works of art in which falconry figures, and I do not know which is the more important: (1) that the study of literature sharpens a sense of birds and nature by participating through the literary work in the falconer's world view, or (2) that the practice of the falconer's art sharpens a sense of literature by participating through falconry in the world view of the literary work. For instance in Shakespeare's "Macbeth" (II, 2) a wise old man refers to the murder of the king,

'Tis unnatural
Even like the deed that's done
On Tuesday last
A falcon towering in her pride of place
Was by a mousing owl hawked at and
killed.

If we understand "towering" to mean, as it does in falconry, spiralling or "ringing up" high above the falconer and "waiting on" or remaining there "in her pride of place," we can the more readily and more fully feel the sense of awe, disbelief, despair, and helplessness of the falconer seeing his hawk killed by a "mousing owl," the same sense that

stuns the king's followers upon knowledge of his death.

The Anglo-Saxon poem, "The Battle of Maldon" (c. 991 A.D.), extends to us a more subtle significance.

He (Byrhtnoth) bade a
warrior abandon his horse
And hurry forward to join the fighters.
Take thought to his hands and a stout
heart.
Then Offa's kinsman knew that the earl
Would never suffer weakness or fear;
And he let from hand his beloved hawk
Fly to the forest, and made haste to the
front;
By which one could know the last would
never
Weaken in war when he seized a sword.'

This passage has been variously translated, but its meaning in regards to the release of the hawk remains constant and includes knowing that because the hawk is the center of the falconer's life, he plans his daily activity around his hawk. Thus the symbol established here in the releasing or freeing of the hawk is also the freeing of the man's mind from obeisance to two masters: his hawk and his lord. The freeing of the "beloved hawk" to the forest then is the freeing of the man to the battle. But there is another element here. If the man should return unscathed from battle, he is still somewhat the loser, for he has forsaken "his beloved hawk." Should he find the hawk and reclaim or "take it up," his joy would equal that of the realization that he has emerged from battle unscathed.

Most poetic references to falconry are much more concrete than the two just cited. For instance, there is in "The Franklin's Tale" of Geoffrey Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" a passage describing what a man was shown in a magical vision.

He saugh
These fauconers upon a fair ryver,
That with his haukes han the heron slayn.
(11. 487-489)

A knowledge of hawking increases an understanding of this passage in two ways. First, because of the selection of quarry, the "haukes" are either Peregrines or Gyrfalcons.

"The gerfalcon and peregrine were flown at herons, ducks, pigeons, rooks, and magpies; the goshawk was used for hares and partridges; while the smaller kinds, such as the merlin and hobby were trained to take blackbirds, larks, and snipe." 2

Second, by deducing from the heirarchy of titles and hawks, we can fairly accurately establish that the party was led by a king, a prince, or an earl.

"To the king belonged the gerfalcon; to a prince, the falcon gentle; to an earl, the peregrine; to a lady, the merlin; to a young squire, the hobby; while a yeoman carried a goshawk; a priest, a sparrowhawk; and a knave or servant, a kestrel." 3

And, of course, there is the very practical and worldly wise statement of Chaucer's *Wife of Bath*: "With empty hand men may none hawkes lure . . ." 4

This statement gives rise to a practical consideration, the lure. Short-winged hawks are generally flown to the fist. The lure is food. The long-wings are generally flown "to the lure," that is, they are exercised and trained to wait on by flying them to the lure, which is usually leather, resembling a bird silhouette and garnished with food. The hawk's fiercest attempts to catch the lure being swung on the end of a line by the falconer are usually steep, fast, often long dives, called stoops. Thus the lines,

We are not sure of sorrow,
And joy was never sure;
Today will die tomorrow;
Time stoops to no man's lure . . . 5

take on new significance.

In George Herbert's famous religious poem, "Easter Wings" (1633), an emblem poem, an understanding of the meaning relies upon knowing a fairly common activity in falconry, imping, the repairing of damaged wing and tail feathers. The sinful narrator prays to God:

With thee
Let me combine
And feel this day thy victory:
For, if I imp my wing on thine,
Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

Lord Byron's poetry is generally of a less religious bent. Nevertheless a knowledge of falconry often helps the reader to greater understanding and appreciation of the poet. For instance in the "Dedication" to "Don Juan" (1818) Lord Byron refers directly to the poet, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and his very difficult "Biographia Literaria."

And Coleridge, too, has lately taken
wing,
But like a hawk encumbered with his
hood,—
Explaining metaphysics to the nation
I wish he would explain his Explanation.

The significance of this passage comes not so much in the reference to Coleridge, a hooded hawk, but rather to the fact that a hawk which somehow gets on the wing while hooded characteristically rings up, circling higher and higher until out of sight:

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold
. . . 6

And the hawk drifts downwind until exhausted and then falls, doomed, to earth unless by chance its hood comes off or else it is located by its bells and thence is taken up.

—III—

There are other parts of a falconer's equipment and activity and a hawk's fittings and furniture which find their way into literature: jesses, mews, perches, but the bells have a significance which is tremendously difficult to know. Most literary references indicate that the bells instill fear in the quarry. I rather doubt that. They become a major source of information about the hawk to the falconer. The bells are traditionally hand made. Each has its own sound. Thus by knowing the bells on a given hawk, the falconer knows the disposition of that hawk and what it is doing without needing to see the bird. Whether it is walking, rousing, lifting one foot; whether it is gliding or beating its wings in flight; whether it is on a quarry and whether or not the quarry is dead can all be discerned by listening to the bells. The bells are thus more important than a mere aid to locating a hawk on a kill out of sight. They are a language indispensable to the falconer, and if for some days a falconer has searched for a lost hawk and hears suddenly those familiar bells, his joy sings his hawking call: "Hey, Hawk, wha wha" like his lure leaps in his hand.—Dept. of English, USD, Vermillion

LITERATURE CITED

- 1 Trapp, J.B., ed., "Medieval English Literature," "The Oxford Anthology of English Literature," Frank Kermode and John Hollander, gen. eds., Oxford University Press (London, 1973), p. 106.
- 2 Harting, James E., "The Birds of Shakespeare," Argonaut Inc., Publishers (Chicago, 1965), p. 56.
- 3 "Ibid.," p. 49. (I might note that in a somewhat looser form this hierarchy of

title and hawk is still followed, in that special permits must be obtained from state or federal authorities in order legally to possess certain birds, notably eagles, Gyrfalcons, and Peregrines. And in South Dakota a young person 12-16 can only fly an American Kestrel.)

- 4 "The Wife of Bath": Prologue," 1. 421.
- 5 Swinburne, A.C., "The Garden of Proserpine," 11. 73-76.
- 6 Yeats, W.B., "The Second Coming," 11. 1-3.

CORRECTIONS

BN, 26:17—The last sentence of the first paragraph, right-hand column, should read: "Clicking is the best description I could give to them. It seems to me that a person might mistake the calls of the Lapland Longspur for those of the Smith's, at close range, but the opposite situation would not occur once the birds are well known."

BN, 26:19—The lists of birds observed during count week and count period are part of the Pierre count and should precede the Cresbard and Webster Christmas Counts.

COVER PICTURE

William B. Conger, Cincinnati, Ohio, has a hobby of photographing gulls in Maine each summer, and SDOU appreciates his generosity in sharing with us some of his pictures of Herring Gulls, a bird that is also present in parts of South Dakota.—Ed.

General Notes of Special Interest

MAGPIE INVASION IN NORTHEAST COUNTIES, WINTER 1972-73—Magpies have been observed in several northeastern counties regularly during the winter months for the past 25 years. Homer Dusing first reported them near Britton during the winter of 1946, when he caught one in a trap set for mink. Dusing observed magpies in Marshall County each winter thereafter, usually only one or two each season. They probably occurred regularly also in Brown and northwest Roberts County during these years, although records are lacking to substantiate this. In other areas in the northeast magpies have been reported sporadically during the winter months, but there is nothing to indicate that they have turned up annually. One record every third or fourth year might be a fairly accurate estimate of their distribution in eastern South Dakota.

During the late fall and winter of 1972-73 a large scale movement of magpies invaded the northeastern counties, west to Brown County and south at least to Kingsbury and Brookings counties. The earliest record was by Conservation Officer Stanley Lundquist in Hamlin County on Oct. 4, 1972; Lundquist also observed another bird on Dec. 14. In Deuel County, Mark Harris and I saw the first magpies on Oct. 21 (SDBN, 24:86). From that date through March 9, 1973 I observed this species on seven occasions in six Deuel County localities. Usually one or two birds were observed, but on Nov. 3 a group of five was recorded near Crystal Springs Ranch. A flock of eight or 10 birds in Marshall County was reported by Conservation Officer Binger, who observed magpies a number of times during the winter. Conservation Officer Wicks reported magpies in north Roberts County on several occasions during the period (no dates available), and Conservation Officer Waddel observed a

flock of 20-25 birds in Day County on Nov. 20. I saw a single bird near Standburg, Grant County, on Dec. 14.

This unusual irruption of magpies to eastern South Dakota was part of a region-wide movement, as was indicated by reports of magpies in 13 out of 15 Christmas Bird Counts in North Dakota ("American Birds," 21:631), and "unprecedented numbers" reported throughout Minnesota during the winter of 1972-73 ("The Loon," 42:14). It is likely that the species wandered to other counties in eastern South Dakota during this invasion year, which was also remarkable for the number of Goshawks, falcons, and northern finches reported in the area, and a massive invasion of Boreal Chickadees in northern Minnesota brought the first records of this species to South Dakota during this outstanding season (SDBN, 24:83)—Bruce Harris, Clear Lake

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WHOOPIING CRANES NEAR WEBSTER—Jerry Streckfuss greeted me, "I have just seen four Whooping Cranes. Where have you been?," as we met on Main Street in Webster the evening of April 20, 1973. Jerry is Assistant Regional Supervisor for South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department. He had tried to call me several times but I was trimming trees at our lake home. Jerry told me that the Whoopers were three miles south of the Day County line at a place located 17 miles south of Webster on Highway 25, six miles east on Highway 20, then one-half mile north.

Prior commitments prevented me from driving down on Saturday, April 21, but I looked forward with eager anticipation to seeing them on Sunday if they were still there. On Easter Sunday afternoon, April 22, my son, Charles, his father-in-law, Karl Kostman, and my son-in-law, James Iverson, accompanied

me to the site where the Whooping Cranes had been seen. As we turned off Highway 20 for the last one-half mile north, I warned them to be on the look-out for large white birds. We were fortunate to see them right away. They were so large that they looked like three white ponies out in the field. We glassed them for over half an hour before they circled, showing off their black primary wing tips. They flew north over the ridge and out of sight.

We drove north and met Robert Johnson, manager of the Waubay Federal Wildlife Refuge, who had been "mothering" the four Whooping Cranes for the past 24 hours. Bob loaned us his spotting scope and all of us had close-up views of the beautiful cranes who were now resting in a slough. This was the first time that any of us had seen Whooping Cranes in the wild.

I called the Refuge Monday and Ed Fromelt informed me that the cranes left on Monday morning, April 23, at approximately 11:00 o'clock.—Herman P. Chilson

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TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE IN GREGORY COUNTY--The first sighting of a Townsend's Solitaire last winter occurred at Burke Lake, Dec. 28, 1973. The bird was on a small apple tree, and I studied it carefully for five minutes at a distance of 30 feet. It showed no fear as I walked slowly around it for an excellent view with the 8x binocular.

I noted the conspicuous white eye ring, the white edging on the tail, the light buff areas on the wings and the overall gray color of the bird. The identifying marks left no doubt that I was seeing a Townsend's Solitaire.

I had five sightings of Solitaires at the same location in January, 1974. They involved single birds, and may or may not have been the same bird each time.

A Townsend's Solitaire was observed at the same site in December, 1972 (BN, 25:30).—Galen L. Steffen, Burke

President's Page

(Continued from Page 31)

lands that consist of at least 20 percent water, and they cannot buy streams or natural drainage areas.

The Department of Game, Fish and Parks purchases lands for waterfowl hunting, upland game, deer and parks, with no restriction on habitat types. They seldom buy less than 40 acres; fencing and maintenance costs increase with smaller tracts. Emphasis at the present time is on lakeshore and wetlands, but it is likely that more woodlands, coulees, and brushy habitats might be purchased in future years. Especially if good prices are obtained, which might be the case with lands west of the Missouri River. Notify your local Conservation Officer if you know of any available lands.

The Nature Conservancy is relatively new in the land acquisition business, but they have gained hundreds of fine tracts in eastern states. They prefer native prairies or habitats unique to a particular area, especially those that are endangered by commercial developments. The Conservancy has a regional office in Minneapolis, and Dr. David Holden, Brookings, a long-time SDOU member, is an active coordinator in South Dakota. Brochures describing the work of The Nature Conservancy are available from Dr. Holden or the writer. Currently, the organization has only two tracts in South Dakota, but they are interested in purchasing other areas.

The agencies pay appraised values for lands, but they gratefully accept habitat as gifts or at reduced prices. If you or your neighbor have some acres that might be available for wildlife habitat, please ask the appropriate agency for more information about their programs—Bruce K. Harris, Clear Lake

In Memoriam

DR. JOHN M. GATES

July 10, 1933-February 2, 1974

Dr. John M. Gates came to South Dakota in September, 1970 as an assistant professor in teaching and research at South Dakota State University. He was appointed Chairman of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences in 1972. One of John's outstanding traits was his ability to teach. The usual comment from students who took a course that he taught was "best course I ever had." There is no higher tribute to a teacher. John was raised in Minnesota and received a B.S. degree from the University of Minnesota. He worked on Gadwall at Utah for his M.S. degree. John distinguished himself with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources where he served as research planner, supervisor, administrator and management consultant.

John published numerous articles on his work with pheasants. However, his publications also included papers on waterfowl, Gray Partridge, and other birds. He received his Ph.D. in 1971 from the University of Wisconsin. His dissertation on pheasants in Wisconsin is to be published in three parts as bulletins and will be available soon.

John was recognized nationally for his contributions to wildlife conservation. A Symposium on pheasants was held at the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference last December. Those Proceedings are to be published as a book, "Pheasants of North America." The book will be dedicated to Dr. Gates; an illustration of his stature as a professional wildlife worker.

—Raymond L. Linder, SDSU, Brookings

(The above tribute was part of a message that accompanied the posthumous presentation of a plaque to the Gates family from the South Dakota Chapter of the Wildlife Society.—Ed.)