

THE BLUE BIRD

THE AUDUBON SOCIETY OF MISSOURI

Vol. 38, No. 4

November, 1971

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S ROOST

By James P. Jackson

At Camp Rising Sun, during our October 2nd annual meeting, we hosted Mr. Carl Noren, Director of the Missouri Department of Conservation, and Mr. Ed Stegner, Executive Secretary of the Conservation Federation in Missouri. Together they informed our membership about the Citizens Committee for Conservation effort to secure additional funds for conservation in Missouri by means of a soft drink tax. Our membership, already affiliated with the Conservation Federation, then voted \$100.00 to the cause. Some of us have also been helping with a petition drive to get the soft drink tax proposal on next year's ballot. This is a most worthy cause. Anyone who wishes to help should contact the Citizens Committee for Conservation, 312 East Capitol Avenue, Jefferson City, Missouri 65101.

Members who participated in last spring's joint meeting with the Missouri Prairie Foundation and the Nature Conservancy have suggested a repeat -- another joint meeting in 1972. Such may be in the offing, depending upon the plans and pleasures of the other two organizations.

Meanwhile, members should be aware that the National Audubon Society, in lieu of a national meeting in 1972, is planning some outstanding regional meetings. Ours is to be at Grand Island, Nebraska, on the weekend of March 18-19. A major emphasis at this meeting will be to save the Platte River from Bureau of Reclamation plans for a series of dams. A field trip is being planned to seek some of the 200,000 sandhill cranes which migrate across the Platte during mid-March. Specific information regarding this meeting may be secured from National's regional representative, Ron Klataske, whose address is Route #2, Alma Kansas 66401.

Some time ago it was agreed by your officers and directors to make more judicious use of the George E. Moore scholarship fund. Thus we would like to offer two week campships to one of the National Audubon Camps; this would be to pay fees for one Audubon Camp session but not transportation to and from the Camp. Nominations are sought especially from the ranks of teachers and teachers-in-training, and the minimum age must be 18. If you know of a worthy candidate, please submit his or her name, plus support information, to the President no later than January 1, 1972. Final selection is at the discretion of the officers and regional directors.

One more item of importance from your President: How about securing one or more new members? We need to grow.

HOLIDAY IN THE NORTH

By Frances Stout

Since Curtis and I have returned from a most enjoyable trip to Alaska on July 24, I thought you might be interested in some of our general observations. We drove out through the beautiful Black Hills and Montana to Glacier National Park during the latter part of June. In Glacier National Park we first noted the profusion of Bear Grass. We also enjoyed the beautiful Harebell, Larkspur, Sage Brush Buttercup, Western Yarrow, Indian Paintbrush, Northeast Cinquefoil, Shinyleaf Spirea and other flowers which we did not identify. Either in the Black Hills area or the Glacier National Park, we are not sure which, we did see and identify lovely purple Dame Rockets. Glacier National Park would be a rich field to stop and study the wildflowers alone, but since we were just passing through on our way to Alaska, this we could not do. The Wild Rose was present throughout most of our trip. However, our Prairie Wild Rose, with its large lovely pink blossom is our favorite. The Oxeye Daisy, also a favorite of mine, nodded at us along the roadside throughout most of our trip through the upper 48 states, but not in Alaska or the Yukon.

Alaska and the Yukon Territory have lovely flowers during the short growing season they have. The Fireweed grows everywhere and they are lovely blue Lupines and Vetches along the Alaska Highway as the motorist comes in from Haines. Sometimes they were next to a yellow flower, probably a Cinquefoil or the white Cotton Grass and it made a lovely picture along the roadside. In McKinley Park we saw the Twin Flower, Star Flower or Pyrola, the Dwarf Dogwood (one hiker thought it was a Strawberry Plant), Golden Ragwort, Shrub Cinquefoil and varieties of Arnica. The Indian Paintbrush in Alaska and the Yukon that we saw was not red, but rather a bronze. At the very end of the Alaska Highway, just before we got to Dawson Creek, we saw some Yellow Clover and budding Goldenrod.

We missed not seeing our Cardinal in Canada or Alaska. We did not see the Mourning Dove until we were coming toward home at Radisson, Saskatchewan, although, of course, they were plentiful in the upper 48 states. The Red-winged Blackbirds were one of the most numerous and general of birds across the upper states. We did not see any Bluebirds on our trip, but we did see Red-headed Woodpeckers several places in the Midwest. We saw many Lark Buntings in the upper states (especially in Montana), Western and Horned Larks, Shrikes, etc. This side of Fort Peck, Montana on the way from Glendive, and which is quite uninhabited, antelope, Ring-necked Pheasants, a Sage Hen and chick, Blue Herons, gulls and Dickcissels were observed. While trying to find some of those jade rocks near the Fraser River in Lytton, B. C., we saw a couple of Cedar Waxwings.

On our ferry trip from Prince Rupert, we sighted approximately 10 Bald Eagles near Juneau, Alaska. Alaska has many ravens, gulls and swallows, mostly Bank Swallows, and some Magpies. We were interested in seeing for the first time the Varied Thrush, Rusty Blackbird and Steller and Gray Jays in Alaska and the upper Yukon. We saw many Slate-colored Juncos in Alaska, a lovely Yellow-crowned Sparrow near Homer, Alaska, a White-crowned Sparrow and some Yellow Warblers. We were so sorry our film ran out on our ferry trip from Valdez to Whittier and we were unable to photograph the thousands of gulls nesting on the side of a high cliff. This ferry trip we would recommend to all travelers in Alaska. Also near Valdez we saw Arctic Terns flying over the slough where they say they are nesting, as well as some Water Ouzels

enjoying a beautiful stream nearby. - Another sight in the old Valdez part is the stacks of 789 miles of pipe purchased in Japan for use in the North Slope pipeline to Valdez. When talking to residents of Alaska, they will express great pride in the preserved wilderness of their state and in the next breath berate "politics" that prevent getting on with the pipeline.

We even enjoyed the long trek back over the graveled Alaska Highway (in retrospect, anyway) and found the roadside scenery beautiful and interesting. Near Lake Muncho we took pictures of wild mountain sheep, but throughout our trip we saw no bears, moose or Dall Sheep. There were many Snowshoe Rabbits and some marmots and beavers. We did not see the ptarmigan, Alaska's state bird. On the sloughs and lakes in northern Canada we saw many young ducklings, mostly Mallards and some Buffleheads. One lake south of Dawson Creek had several female Pintails with their young.

At Dawson Creek we asked about the Trumpeter Swans and were told they nested in some of the lakes and sloughs around Grand Prairie. We drove off the highway at Clermont to try to find some. We drove around a large lake and stopped at a farmhouse, but the housewife told us they did not nest there, just migrated through. If we had tarried, I feel sure we might have found them in the area. We did discover the Saskatoon berries, which are somewhat like blueberries, but grow on large shrubs.

Near Volga, South Dakota we saw a Western Grebe among other ducks on a lake and we saw several Ring-necked Pheasants on our way home. It was a lovely trip, although Alaska is a long way from home. I would like to go back to see what we missed, but, of course, we probably never will - we were so fortunate to make it and have such good weather while there.

It was with a great deal of sadness that we learned about the loss of a long-faithful member and Regional Director. A. Dean Cole passed away on October 12. We will remember Dean as a most congenial friend, an enthusiastic birder and a dedicated conservationist.

REFLECTIONS FROM OUR ANNUAL WEEKEND MEETING

By Paul E. Bauer

More than 100 people journeyed from various parts of Missouri and Arkansas to attend the annual meeting of the Society on the 2nd and 3rd of October. Again this year, the setting was Camp Rising Sun nestled in the woods overlooking Lake of the Ozarks. This enthusiastic group was composed of all ages; from youngsters and teenagers, to young marrieds and oldsters. The largest group came from Kansas City and the St. Joseph area; second place went to the eastern portion of the state, represented mostly by St. Louis area people. However, sizable groups also came from Springfield, Columbia, Jefferson City, Rolla and southeastern Missouri.

On Saturday afternoon, Missouri Conservation representatives described their current efforts to provide meaningful wildlife experiences for ALL CITIZENS of the state. The mechanics of putting this referendum movement on the ballot was explained. All of the members present agreed that this bold step was necessary and represented outstanding conservation leadership. An appeal was made for volunteers to circulate petitions and the response was excellent. Here is an activity that warrants the whole-hearted support of every member of our society. Make sure your name is on this petition; better yet, write to Citizens Committee for Conservation, 312 E. Capitol Ave., Jefferson City, Mo. 65101 and ask for a petition to circulate.

A short and effective business meeting was presided over by Jim Jackson our president. (His comments on matters related to this part of the meeting are detailed earlier in this issue). Richard Anderson, our new BLUEBIRD editor, was introduced and an appeal was made to support Dick with articles about your local birding activities.

In particular, Anderson would like articles describing good birding areas in various sections of the state. How do you get there; what are the best times of the year; what are the general types of birds seen there; what unusual types of birds have been seen there; what other features make your place good for nature study? Each of us are "experts" in our own local areas. Here is your opportunity to pass special information on to others so they may share your enjoyment. PLEASE SUPPORT OUR NEW EDITOR WITH ARTICLES; A GOOD PUBLICATION MAKES A STRONG ORGANIZATION.

After the business meeting we adjourned to the dining hall. The cooking reputation of the National Guard volunteers was again excellent this year.

The evening program consisted of two exciting topics. Robert Dwyer presented a vividly illustrated talk explaining how each of us can make nature study more meaningful to ourselves and others. He illustrated numerous approaches to nature study and discussed the relative merits of each. What Bob was really doing was providing insight on techniques that will make nature study exciting to youngsters. We all must realize that unless the next generation is instilled with our enthusiasm and respect of the remaining wild resources, all of the cumulative efforts to date will have been wasted. Bob was provided with able support in his presentation by a panel of three other science teachers; Ed Murray, Dwayne Kelly and Jim Jackson. Our thanks go to all of these men for their excellent efforts.

The final portion of the evening was a colored slide nature adventure entitled "Mayan Jungle Safari" presented by Paul Bauer. Paul took us on a

serious birding trip into the states of southern Mexico near Guatamala, where Nancy and Jerry Strickling and he had seen 375 species of birds in just 20 days. Highlights of the program included; photographs of over 60 species of Mexican birds, the Olmec ruins at Villahermosa, and some of the history of the unique city of Mayan ruins at Palenque.

On Sunday morning everyone was eager for more nature walks and just the pleasures of an autumn stroll in the woods. Lisle Jeffrey led one group interested in wildflowers and botany. Dick Anderson and Jim Jackson led groups looking for birds. I believe the total weekend bird list included almost 80 species, including quite a few warblers. If you missed the fun this year, make a mental note to join us next year.

79 Species at State Meeting

Floyd Lawhon tabulated a list of 79 species at our fall meeting October 1-2 at Lake of the Ozarks State Park. The warm weather apparently delayed many of the ducks and sparrows normally seen and the high lake level held down the rail-shorebird count. However, many more land birds were recorded.

A family by family summary shows: four herons (including yellow-crowned night heron), three ducks, five hawks (including red-shouldered and broad-winged), both cuckoos, three owls, seven woodpeckers, four flycatchers, four vireos, fourteen warblers and seven Fringillidae.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Homer R. Bolen

Balances as of October 1, 1970	\$ 3,619.12
Receipts for fiscal year	1,313.56
Disbursements for year (including printing, postage, dues, etc.)	869.10

Balances September 30, 1971		
General Fund	\$ 2,464.67	
Sanctuary Fund	549.91	
Moore Scholarship Fund	<u>1,049.00</u>	4,063.58

CHRISTMAS COUNTS

All compilers of Christmas Counts are urged to send a copy of their report to your BLUEBIRD editor as soon as the count has been tabulated. We are fortunate to have Dave Easterla agree to be our Christmas Count editor. A complete summary will appear in the BLUEBIRD.

CORRECTION: The last BLUEBIRD was printed as Volume 38, Number 2. It should have been Volume 38, Number 3.

DEFOLIATION OF MISSOURI TREES

There was a lot of comment (and confusion) at the State Meeting regarding defoliation of the trees in our state. The best explanation your editor has seen appeared in Len Hall's column in the St. Louis Globe Democrat. Most of this column was a quote of Assistant State Forester John E. Wylie's letter to Len. We quote the highlights of this letter.

"I have checked defoliation and it is caused by the variable oak leaf caterpillar. Fall is always the season of insects, from tiny spiders to monarch butterflies and it is a rare leaf that doesn't have a hole chewed in it at this time of year.

"However, I have never seen this much defoliation in Missouri and from all reports I would say that two million acres have been stripped and another million seriously affected. Part of the problem is the coincident epidemics of different species. The walking sticks, usually just a curiosity, are in tremendous numbers. They clean up after the oak leaf caterpillar and are sometimes actually worse as defoliators.

"In addition to these two insects, in west-central Missouri the fall webworm has worked on persimmon, walnut and hickory. Worst of all, however, is the variable oak leaf caterpillar. The Lake of the Ozarks area from Eldon to Camdenton has been largely stripped.

"Fortunately, this insect has an approximate 20-year epidemic cycle and the last major outbreak was in the early 1950s. We may have another bad year before the epidemic runs its course. Fortunately, defoliation occurs late in the growing season and its impact on the trees is relatively light. However, trees under stress or repeatedly defoliated may be killed.

"The foresters are not unduly concerned about this late-season epidemic, except in and around the towns where it is unsightly."

THE BURNING QUESTION

By Homer Bolen

For decades I had burned our autumn leaves. In recent years I have hauled them at greater effort to a spot where they might decay and rebuild the soil from whence they came. But old habits are hard to extirpate. In a lazy moment I dumped a load of leaves at the incinerator and touched a lighted match to them. I watched with fascination as the flames leaped high. My reverie was broken by the plaintive voice of my four-year old neighbor, Jimmy, "Why are you burning your leaves?" I pretended not to hear. But again, "Why are you burning your leaves?" In conscience-stricken desperation I stammered, "I'm trying to clean up the yard." "But that makes air pollution."

In that moment the scales fell from my eyes. I saw myself as an air polluter as guilty in kind, if not degree, as the industrial magnate whose smokestacks belch forth billows of black pollution. Gone was the pleasantness of burning leaf fragrance. I stood ashamed and confused before this child with his question and simple statement of fact. Then I repented of my wrongdoing and resolved to sin no more against our environment.

BIRD SURVEY

By Dick Anderson

As stated in the last BLUEBIRD this survey will include the summer of 1971, plus three old surveys in a briefer form. This will bring them up to date. In the future the BLUEBIRD will contain only the current survey.

Summer 1971

Missouri weather was rather hot and dry during June and early July. Western Missouri was dryer than eastern. A change in the jet stream brought much needed rain and much below normal temperature from mid-July through early August.

Pelicans through herons - White Pelicans started to move into Squaw Creek in late July. A flock of up to 60 Pelicans was at Stump Lake, Ill. (25 mi. northwest of St. Louis) June 9 to June 12 (S.V.). Herons were considered down by most observers, but some post-breeding numbers were encouraging. 250 Great Blue Herons were at Squaw Creek in late July (H.B.). 65 were on the Mark Twain Refuge August 15 (S.V.). Little Blues were down. 30 were at Squaw Creek (F.L., M.R.), 65 at Mark Twain (S.V.) and only ten on the levees south of St. Louis (P.B., D.A.). These counts in mid-August should have been higher. Common Egrets likewise were down, while Snowy Egrets were non-existent. Yellow-crowned Night Herons were down slightly in near St. Louis (S.V., D.A., E.C.), but were common at Squaw Creek (F.L.). Most encouraging was over 50 juvenile Black-crowned Night Herons on the Illinois levees near St. Louis August 20 (P.B., D.A.). A sub-adult Louisiana Heron was found at Squaw Creek August 12 by Mark Robbins (later by F.L. & H.B.). A Glossy Ibis was studied at East St. Louis, Ill. July 22-25 by E. Comfort and many others.

Waterfowl through rails - Young Mallards, Pintails, Blue-winged Teal and Wood Ducks were found at Squaw Creek (H.B.). Out of season ducks were a pair of Redheads at Squaw Creek June 12 and a male Ruddy Duck at Maryville July 5 and July 24 (M.R.). Hawks remained scarce. An exception is the Mississippi Kite which appears to be increasing in southeast Missouri. Four were seen in Mississippi County June 3 (M.R., F.L.) and eight were counted there a week later (P.B., D.A.). Sparrow Hawks are down, but several nesting sites were successful. A total of eight were fledged in two families on the Missouri University campus at Columbia (A.J.). Broad-winged Hawks were common in southern Missouri in early June (M.R.). Bobwhites were scarce near Springfield (N.F.), but were doing well in most other areas. King Rails bred in East St. Louis, Ill. (E.C., etal). Both King and Virginia were present at Squaw Creek all summer (F.L., M.R.).

Shorebirds through woodpeckers - Shorebirds in July through mid-August were normal and routine. Of interest was 37 Buff-breasted Sandpipers and two Avocets at Squaw Creek August 15 (F.L.). An out of season gull was a Bonaparte's on July 31 at Squaw Creek (F.L.). A few Least Terns were observed at Squaw Creek several times during the summer with an immature on July 31 (H.B., M.R.). Eight pairs of Least Terns bred on a sandbar in the Mississippi River at St. Louis. Photographs of egg, chick and partially grown young were taken on August 8 (P.B., D.A.). Several small flocks of Black Terns were on the Missouri River near Jefferson City August 10 (I.A.). Yellow-billed Cuckoos were common, while Hummingbirds and Kingfishers continued to decline (all reporters). Red-headed Woodpeckers apparently had a very successful year with their numbers at a high level.

Perching birds - Fifteen Western Kingbirds were concentrated in a one mile area near St. Joseph August 1 (F.L.). Scissor-tailed Flycatchers seemed to be holding their own near Springfield, although harrassed continuously by Mockingbirds. They seem to do best in isolated trees on high prairie, sometimes in overhanging trees (N.F.). An early Olive-sided Flycatcher was at Squaw Creek August 8 (F.L.). The "way-be-o" type of Traill's Flycatcher was found feeding young at McCormick Lake in southern Missouri in early June (Jim Comfort). Most swallows (except Barn) were down in numbers. Purple Martin reports varied, but were generally bad. Martins were normal at St. Joseph (F.L.) and increasing at Maryville (M.R.) and at Nathan Fay's area near Ozark, Missouri. They have dreceased for the last seven years and had no local breeders this year. Alice Jeffrey and Dr. Elder both report heavy declines in the Columbia area. Ike Adams did see several hundred near the Capitol Building at Jefferson City on July 10. Numbers at St. Louis have decreased about 50% in the last three years (D.A.).

Many birders observed Fish Crows in southeast Missouri during the summer. 17 Fish Crows were seen on the Illinois side of the Mississippi south of St. Louis August 20 (P.B., D.A.). Cedar Waxwings were found north of Canton, Missouri on June 25 (Jim Comfort). Carolina Wrens fledged on an early date of April 30 at Columbia (A.J.). Bluebirds were scarce near Springfield (N.F.) but did well at Columbia (A.J.). As noted in a separate article 195 bluebirds fledged from the farm of Burrell Pickering near Foristell.

Most birders consider warblers as only a spring migrant and few realize how many breed in our state. For instance Jim Comfort found 14 species (out of a total of 18 species that breed in Missouri) of warblers nesting at McCormick Lake Campground in Mark Twain National Forest. Most common was Blue-winged with Parula, Kentucky, Prothonotary and Cerulean following. Pine Warblers were here as well as in stands of pine trees in Ripley, Carter and Shannon Counties (M.R., F.L.). A late Blackpoll was at Trail of Tears State Park June 2 (F.L., M.R.). At least four singing male Swainson's Warblers were observed at Big Oak Park in early June (P.B., D.A.). (A tape recorder is a big help in seeing a Swainson's).

Bobolinks again nested near St. Joseph (F.L.). Painted Buntings nested west of Springfield (N.F.) and in Stone County (M.R., F.L.). Grasshopper Sparrows are either increasing or birders are learning where to find them. Fewer fields being put into crops may account for an increase. About 20 pairs of Henslow's Sparrows bred at Tucker Prairie this June (Elder, M.R., F.L.). Breeding Vesper Sparrows were more numerous in Nodaway County this summer (M.R.). Many observers noted a decrease in Dickcissels this year.

SUMMER 1970

Summer weather was characterized by above normal temperature and below normal rainfall.

A Common Loon which lingered well into June at Busch Wildlife was extremely late (E.C., D.A. etal). Herons of note include 123 Great Blues on August 8 and 11 Cattle Egrets June 14 at Squaw Creek (F.L.). 54 Cattle Egrets were seen on the Illinois levees in mid-July by Bob Dwyer. Early at Squaw Creek were six Double-crested Cormorants on August 15 (F.L.).

A Black and Red-headed Duck were out of season at Squaw Creek on June 28

(F.L.). Six Hooded Merganser ducklings were observed on the Mark Twain Refuge June 12 by Sally Vasse. Two Swainson's Hawks were near Lake Contrary June 14 (F.L.). A Peregrine Falcon was found on the Illinois levees in mid-July by Bob Dwyer. A pair of King Rails with three downy young were found at Squaw Creek on July 5 (F.L.).

Ten species of shorebirds were at St. Louis by July 16, but no rarities were reported (E.C.). 23 species of shorebirds were seen at Squaw Creek during the summer. Included were three Buff-breasted Sandpipers on August 1 and six Avocets on August 15 (F.L.).

Western Kingbirds near Lake Contrary varied from three on June 14 to 12 on July 26 (F.L.). Eight Fish Crows were found on August 11 on the Illinois levees by Marge Self. Probably nesting Bobolinks were found near St. Joseph in June on a breeding bird survey by Floyd Lawhon. Yellow-headed Blackbirds were common breeders at Squaw Creek (F.L.).

FALL 1970

September rains ended a summer drought. October was mild and November much above normal in temperature. This undoubtedly contributed to many late records.

Common Loons were common. A Red-throated Loon was found on Swan Lake, Illinois on October 24 by Sally Vasse. Probably the same Red-throated showed up at Alton Dam on November 11 (D.A.). The bird was with a Common Loon for good comparison and was seen by most St. Louis birders until November 19. 153 Pied-billed Grebes were counted on Lake Contrary September 13 (F.L.).

Four Cattle Egrets were at Squaw Creek August 29 (F.L.), but the big news came from the Illinois levees just south of St. Louis. Cattle Egrets numbered 106 on August 29, at least 180 on September 5 (Ruschill) and over 300 on September 12 (K.A.). A late bird was at Busch Wildlife on November 22 (K.A.). A late Yellow-crowned Night Heron was at Maryville October 10 (M.R.).

Small numbers of Ross' Goose were seen at Squaw Creek during late November (H.B., F.L., M.R.). A very rare Old Squaw was at Maryville November 15 (M.R.). A White-winged Scoter was found at Little Dixie Lake October 17 (I.A. et al). A Harlequin Duck was reported from Little Dixie Lake November 22 by Adams and Goodge, but no details were given of this accidental species.

A good hawk flight was reported by most observers. Approximately 300 Broad-winged Hawks were counted at Busch Wildlife September 27 (Ruschill, et al). Floyd Lawhon supplies good details of a Ferruginous Hawk he and his wife studied on October 2 near St. Joseph. A Peregrine Falcon showed at Squaw Creek several times in October (H.B., F.L., M.R.). Unusual were two Pigeon Hawks at Squaw Creek September 7 (F.L., H.B.).

Shorebirds increased sharply in early September at St. Louis. Buff-breasted Sandpipers were in unprecedented numbers with some local flocks numbering up to 50 birds. A rare Knot was at Swan Lake, Illinois September 11 (S.V.). 29 Avocets were at Squaw Creek September 12 (F.L.).

An early Sapsucker was at Camp Towanyak on August 29 (M.L.M.). Nine Scissor-tailed Flycatchers (evidently a migrating flock) were seen near Fortuna, Morgan County, Missouri on September 9 (D.E.). An early Brown Creeper was at St. Joseph on September 11 (F.L.). A few Red-breasted Nuthatches were seen at St. Louis (E.C.), but few elsewhere and none at St. Joseph.

Warblers and vireos peaked in mid-September and there were many late dates. A Wilson's on November 17 near Bourbon, Missouri (E.C.); a Black-throated Blue was at Shaw's Garden in St. Louis on October 21 (Marge Richardson), a Black-throated Green was at St. Joseph October 28 (F.L.), an Orange-crowned was at Maryville November 28 to December 1 (M.R.) and a Cape May was seen on October 31 at Maryville and stayed until December 1 (M.R.).

A late Baltimore Oriole was at St. Joseph November 23 (F.L.). A lone Lark Bunting was at Squaw Creek September 7 (F.L., etal). A Black-headed Grosbeak was found on November 28 near Montgomery City, Missouri by Rea Windsor (fide E.C.).

WINTER-DECEMBER 1970 to JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1971

Nothing unusual in loons, grebes and herons. One exception was an American Bittern in St. Charles County January 28 (E.C. etal). White-fronted Geese wintered at Busch Wildlife (E.C., D.A. etal) for the first wintering records for St. Louis. One White-fronted wintered at Lake Springfield (N.F.) Several thousand Snow Geese wintered at Schell-Osage, but had moved on by February 20 (N.F.). Two Ross' Geese were at Squaw Creek December 6 (F.L., M.R.). Rare winter ducks included Old Squaw; two at St. Louis January 18 (E.C. etal), one on the Missouri River near Columbia January 11 (F.A.). Two White-winged Scoters were at Alton Dam January 25 (B. Croxford & M. Schaefer). A Surf Scoter was at Squaw Creek February 21 (M.R.).

Bald Eagles were numerous on the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers and many were at Schell-Osage area (N.F.). Seven were near Piedmont, Missouri January 7 to February 23 (S.O'Kelley). For the first time eagles were numerous in the Camp Towanyak area (M.L.M.). Most hawks and especially Rough-legged were reported in good numbers. A Common Snipe was out of season in Holt County (northwest Missouri) on January 16 (M.R.). Rare gulls at Alton Dam included a Glaucous on January 26 (S.V.) and an Iceland on January 28 (E.C. etal). A very early Franklin's was at Alton in early February (M. Schaefer). The only Snowy Owl was near Hardin, Illinois on January 7. A Saw-whet was at Squaw Creek from mid-January through March (F.L., M.R.).

An early Tree Swallow was at Piedmont, Missouri February 23 (S.O'Kelley). A few Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported from St. Louis area, but none from western Missouri (St. Joseph, Maryville or Camp Towanyak). Carolina Wrens were scarce at Springfield (N.F.), but were common to abundant elsewhere. A Northern Shrike was at Squaw Creek from January into March (F.L., M.R.). An Orange-crowned Warbler stayed at Maryville until December 1 and a Cape May stayed until December 11 at Maryville (M.R.). Myrtle Warblers were common at Piedmont from January 30 through February 28 (S.O'Kelley). All blackbirds, even Starlings, were down at Springfield (N.F.). Pine Siskins as well as rarer finches were absent from the state. The only exception was one Evening Grosbeak at Maryville on December 12 (M.R.) and some at two homes in Springfield (N.F.).

OBSERVERS

D. A. - Dick Anderson	N. F. - Nathan Fay
I. A. - Ike Adams	A. J. - Alice Jeffrey
K. A. - Kathryn Arhos	F. L. - Floyd Lawhon
P. B. - Paul Bauer	M. L. M. - Mary L. Myers
H. B. - Harold Burgess	M. R. - Mark Robbins
E. C. - Earl Comfort	S. V. - Sally Vasse

PURPLE MARTIN STUDY

Mississippi State University in co-operation with the Laboratory of Ornithology is conducting a national study of the Purple Martin. In 1970 many hundreds of people from 32 states (only four from Missouri) reported data from many thousands of martin apartments. More co-operators are needed to make the study meaningful. For complete information and survey forms, write to:

Dr. Jerome A. Jackson
Department of Zoology
Mississippi State U.
State College, Miss. 39762

Dr. James Tate, Jr.
Cornell University
Laboratory of Ornithology
Ithaca, New York 14850

INVITATION FROM SPRINGFIELD

Every Saturday of the spring and fall finds members of the Springfield Audubon Club searching the trees and fields and lakes for signs of birds. We have a regular schedule of weekly field trips September through December and January through May. If you're visiting or vacationing in this part of the state some week-end, join us. We can't guarantee any strange or exotic birds, but we will guarantee a warm welcome. We'll show you our favorite "hunting-grounds". Write for information or call when you're in town.

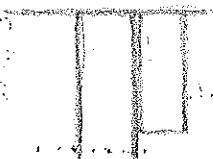
Mrs. Rebecca Matthews
Route 2, Box 128, Springfield, Mo.
417-869-1000

34 California Condors, including at least four immatures, were sighted last month in the annual count directed by the California Fish & Game Department, in conjunction with federal authorities and National Audubon. These counts attempt to cover a very large and inaccessible area in the mountains of Southern California and over the past seven years the results have ranged from 28 to 53 birds sighted. It is extremely difficult to interpret these figures and most experts say no clear pattern has yet emerged; their best estimate is that there are between 40 and 60 of these rare giants left in the state.

The Coalition to Tax Pollution has been fighting for clean air on another front -- support of an effective tax on pollution, in particular, on sulphur

emissions. A flyer that explains what the pollution tax is, what the group feels are the types of pollution that should be taxed, etc., is available from them at 620 C. Street, SE, Washington, D.C., 20003.

- Pres. - James P. Jackson, 105 Terry Lane, Washington, Mo., 63090
- Vice-Pres. - Paul Bguer, #4 Club Grounds So., Florissant, Mo. 63033
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