

The Bluebird

THE AUDUBON SOCIETY OF MISSOURI



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MAY, 1974

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S ROOST

by James P. Jackson

The West-central Regional Audubon Conference at Wichita, Kansas, was a worthwhile gathering even though not as well attended as a similar conference two years ago at Grand Island, Nebraska. Highlighted were sessions on two important Kansas issues: the threat of more channelization and extension of the Arkansas Navigation Project, and the potential for a Prairie National Park in the Flint Hills northeast of Wichita. There were field trips related to both issues, plus a bonus outing--after the Conference--to famed Cheyenne Bottoms, just north of the town of Great Bend. The "Bottoms", as the area is known to Kansans, is a huge marshland of some 19,000 acres managed by the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission. Field trip participants saw nearly 100 species for the day.

It seems to me that the next Regional Audubon Conference, in 1976, should be in Missouri and focus on some of our own environmental issues. We need to get behind this idea and work for it.

In the meanwhile, our tentative plans for a spring meeting of our own Society fell through. This was partly due to the gas shortage, conflict with the Wichita meeting, and--perhaps more important--our lack of effort to make definite plans long enough in advance. Therefore, your president will soon appoint a committee to explore some definite ideas for a spring meeting in 1975, and will expect a report and decision on such a meeting by the time we adjourn from our Annual Meeting next October.

And by the way, in case you do not know particulars about our 1974 meeting, here they are: THE 1974 ANNUAL MEETING OF THIS SOCIETY WILL BE HELD AT CAMP RISING SUN, LAKE OF THE OZARK STATE PARK, THE WEEKEND OF OCTOBER 4, 5, AND 6!

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WINTER SURVEY

December 1, 1973 - March 31, 1974

by Dick Anderson

The weather during these four months was almost uniform throughout the state. Early December was mild with many late species lagging behind. Eastern Missouri had a 12 inch snow on December 19. Then December 30-31 a major storm brought heavy snows to St. Joseph and Kansas City and another 14 inches to eastern Missouri. Extreme cold (25 degrees below at St. Joseph) kept the ground covered for two weeks, which affected some bird life. Late January temperatures were much above normal, while February was near normal. Early March brought summer temperatures in the eighties. This only allowed vegetation to progress far enough to be severely damaged by a late cold snap. St. Louis received another six-inch snowfall and temperature of 4 degrees, while Springfield got down to 7 degrees (all on March 24). Fruit trees and many shrubs were killed or severely damaged.

Grebes through Waterfowl - Up to six horned grebes were commonly seen at Little Creve Coeur Lake at St. Louis during the last half of March (EC et al). On March 14 two eared grebes in breeding plumage were also found there (EC). Three late pied-bills were at Lake Jacomo January 4 (KH), and the first St. Louis migrant was February 18 (SV).

Waterfowl in general stayed late. An estimated 300,000 geese and ducks were still at Squaw Creek December 1 (FL). Late December cold and snow storms drove most of the birds out of the state, but they returned in good numbers by the end of February. Several hundred white-fronted geese had returned to Squaw Creek by mid-February (FL), 115 white-fronts flew over Aurora March 18 (KH), and up to 30 were near St. Louis on March 30 (SV et al). Two Ross' Geese were at Squaw Creek, December 16 (DE), and three were there March 17 (FL). The highest goose migration in five years was seen flying over Sullivan in March (JI). A greyleg goose (wild?) was at Squaw Creek, March 16 (DE).

Diving ducks were down at St. Louis, but up at other locations. The Mississippi River above Alton Dam is beginning to resemble the Missouri River at Kansas City because of its lack of ducks. Both here and Mark Twain Refuge lacked the huge rafts of scaup and ruddies, which had always been taken for granted. However, over a thousand scaup were at Stockton Lake Dam in mid-February (NF). Divers were up at Squaw Creek with a high of over 2000 common mergansers there on February 7 (FL). Two late red-breasted mergansers were at Squaw Creek December 16 (DE). Puddle ducks were abundant at St. Louis in areas where last year's flood waters still remained. One cinnamon teal was at Squaw Creek March 16 (DE), while three (and perhaps five) were found there by F. Lawhon.

Hawks through Woodpeckers - The first turkey vulture was reported at Sullivan on February 1 (JI), but were more commonly found throughout most of the state after March 1. A goshawk was seen at Meramec State Park, December 25 by Stan Dahlke (fide JI). Other accipiters were rarely seen. Most hawks were down this winter with the red-tailed and kestrels holding their own. Marsh hawks were noticeably down at Kansas City (KH), Montgomery City (RW) and St. Louis (DA et al). Only one golden eagle was found near St. Joseph, an immature on January 5 (FL). One was at Lake Jacomo, Jan 12-30 (KH), and at Mark Twain Refuge, December 6-18 and February 15 (SV). Bald eagles were often reported in the Branson lake area (NF), while about 100 were constant residents of Squaw Creek (FL).

Early shorebirds were on time with no unusual sightings. Several hundred ring-billed gulls and one Bonaparte's gull were at Stockton Lake in mid-February (NF). As with ducks, ring-billed and herring gulls were seen in far below normal numbers on the Mississippi River at St. Louis during the period. No "white-winged" or rare species were seen. A groove-billed ani was shot at Greenwood, Missouri, in early December and found its way to Harry Gregory's freezer (KH). The roadrunner is still

reported in the Branson area, but there is no evidence of expansion (NF). Fifteen short-eared owls were at Squaw Creek, January 19 (KH), but the saw-whet there disappeared during the December snow storms (FL). Woodpeckers were near normal, with the red-heads varying considerably, depending on local nut crops. They were especially high in numbers near Sullivan (JI) and the Mark Twain Refuge (SV).

Perching Birds - The first purple martin was reported at Montgomery City on February 27 (RW). We received several reports of small numbers of martins killed by the late March snow storms. A few red breasted nuthatches were found regularly at St. Joseph (FL), but were not reported by other observers. Bewick's wrens returned to Montgomery City, February 27 (RW). Winter wrens were unreported in Kansas City (KH), but were above normal at Columbia (BG) and St. Louis. Carolina wrens suffered somewhat from the January and March snows. Unusual was a brown thrasher at Warrensburg, Jan 14, although there was deep snow. Details supplied by Tom Sappington. There were the usual scattered reports of hermit thrushes, while robins were generally plentiful.

Without doubt, the rarity of the period was a male mountain bluebird found at Squaw Creek by Floyd and Pearl Lawhon on March 23. All field marks were noted at close range for some time. It was later seen by Leo Galloway and photographed the next day by Dave Esterla. Three water pipits were at Mark Twain Refuge, March 31 (SV), and over 100 were near Montgomery City, March 17 (RW). Cedar waxwings were generally scarce. One Bohemian was at Busch Wildlife Area (EC). A yellowthroat was at Squaw Creek, December 16 (DE). All species of blackbirds returned in large numbers.

Fringillidae - Many dead cardinals were found on the Mark Twain Refuge following the heavy January snows (SV). A male rose-breasted grosbeak was found at a feeder in Columbia at the home of R. C. Prewitt. The bird was seen throughout the period after December 18, and by most Columbia birders (EG). A dickcissel was found on the Reed Wildlife Area on the Christmas Count by Chris Hobbs. Purple finches were very common, especially at feeders even as far south as Springfield. Redpolls were widely reported--several at St. Louis, at Sullivan, December 29 (JI), three at Maryville, December 30 (DE), and four at Springfield, March 20-25 (NF). Four were at Independence February 20, and three were at Lake Jacomo, February 23 (KH).

Pine siskins were very common in fall, but apparently moved on during winter, and returned in early spring. Many were found at feeders also south to Springfield. Both crossbills were common at St. Louis, where thistle seed feeders were the popular attraction. Both were also seen at Maryville, December 17-30 (DE), and at St. Joseph during January and February (FL). Juncos were abundant, but many were found dead following the January snow.

A singing Bachman's sparrow was noted at McCormick Lake, March 29 (J. Comfort). Harris' sparrows were down at Kansas City, but normal at St. Joseph, while two came to a window feeder for three weeks in February at the Tucker home in Sullivan (JI). All sparrows were scarce or missing at Springfield (NF). Four Lapland longspurs were near Columbia, January 27 (BG), and small numbers were near St. Joseph in December and February (FL). Two snow buntings were one mile east of Maryville on January 4 (DE).

DA - Dick Anderson
EC - Earl Comfort
DE - Dave Easterla
NF - Nathan Fay
BG - Bill Goodge

KH - Kelly Hobbs
JI - Jim Irvine
FL - Floyd Lawhon
SV - Salle Vasse
RW - Rea Windsor

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER

by Kelly Hobbs

The scissor-tailed flycatcher has extended its range in Missouri during the past 25 years while other species have extended or retired from their ranges. I was raised in southwest Missouri, living in Lawrence, Stone, Jasper and Vernon counties until 1950. My mother continues to reside in Aurora, and I make several visits there each year, so I believe I am familiar with the progress the scissor-tail made prior to 1950. From 1950 until 1963 I was in the St. Louis area and in Jefferson City, neither of which has ever had a scissor-tail to my knowledge.

During the period 1935 to 1950 there were a few of these long-tailed birds in the extreme southwest corner of Missouri and along the Kansas-Missouri border about even with Jasper. When I moved to Independence in 1963 there was a pair at the Western Electric plant in Lees Summit which had been seen regularly since 1958, and another pair at Missouri Town at Lake Jacomo which had located there in 1962. In 1970 when I-435 was opened around the south side of Kansas City a pair was discovered at the Missouri-Kansas border adjacent to I-435. All three pairs have been seen each summer since they were first located.

Prior to 1950, I had never seen a scissor-tail east of Carthage or north of Missouri highway 126. By 1953 they had moved as far east as La Russell and as far north as Lamar. The big jump came about 1957 when I found them at Miller, Stotts City and Aurora. It is to be assumed that the 1958 pair that came to Kansas City were not stragglers but the northern-most pair of the numerous pairs that now dot the entire prairie region of western Missouri south of the Missouri River.

This species can now only be classified as "fairly common" in Missouri from the Missouri River south and eastward from the Kansas border approximately 70 miles. It is not at all uncommon to see a pair or two between Kansas City and Aurora on any trip during the summer. There are probably 100 different routes I've taken between these two points, and the scissor-tails are apt to be seen on any of them. I consider them quite common in Missouri south of Taberville Prairie and west of US 13.

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WHAT A DAY!

by Estelle Snow

On Sunday morning, October 21, I drove to Columbia, Missouri, where I joined thirty-one members of the Audubon Society and their friends. We went by bus to Swan Lake Wildlife Refuge for a day's birding.

As we neared the refuge we could see fields and pastures where Canada geese were resting and feeding. Hundreds and thousands of geese on the ground is an unforgettable sight.

Before we reached the refuge we had another surprise--a flock of cattle egrets gathered around a herd of cattle in a pasture. They seemed to be eating insects. One man on the bus had seen cattle egrets in Louisiana, but never in Missouri. I feel safe in saying that it was a first for most of us on the bus--at least in Missouri.

We drove into the grounds of the refuge and went to the look-out tower, from which water birds on the lake were easily seen. Along the fence, between the tower and the lake, we saw ruby-crowned kinglets, cardinals, and a white-crowned sparrow (my first). In the trees along the lake shore we saw a yellow-shafted flicker, a red-headed woodpecker, robins, and bluejays. Standing near the shore of the lake we could see many coots, some ruddy ducks, and a few mallards.

The most exciting part of the trip was our ride from Swan Lake to Silver Lake

and through the mud flats. The count of Canada geese that day was somewhere between 110,000 and 120,000. Snow geese and blue geese numbered some 20,000. They were milling about in the grain fields, in the mud flats and in the air.

An extra thrill was the sighting of two immature eagles in a dead tree with a third one nearby in another tree. They were, supposedly, golden eagles.

We also saw several deer very near the road. They were standing in a thicket and seemed quite gentle.

On the mud flats we saw golden plovers, greater yellow-legs, killdeer, and long-billed dowitchers, prodding with their long bills in the mud and water.

We watched a coyote chase the Canada geese across a muddy field. What a sight! As he ran forward at full tilt the geese would rise off the ground in waves before him. Not one old goose or one cripple was left behind for him. During the chase someone on the bus yelled "Walt Disney!" but this was far more exciting than a picture on a screen.

We ate our lunch on the shore of Silver Lake (a beautiful place) while the "honkers" serenaded us as they flew overhead.

The beautiful birds and animals, the peaceful lakes, an ideal Indian Summer day, and a congenial crowd of birders made it a day that will long be remembered with much happiness.

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BOOK REVIEW

by Dick Anderson

BIRDING FROM A TRACTOR SEAT by Charles T. Flugum; published by the author.

Box 30039, St. Paul, Minnesota 55175. 435 pages, 20 line drawings by
by W. J. Breckenridge. 1973. \$8.95

This well written book contains 137 chapters, which are actually copies of a monthly column written for The Community Magazine of Albert Lea, Minnesota. The chapters of three to four pages in length make for easy reading and cover a period from January, 1952, to April, 1964. The author is originally from Iowa, but after attending the University of Minnesota has spent most of his life farming in southern Minnesota. Much of his writing would appeal to Missouri residents, as well as most midwest states.

After much correspondence with Missouri "farm boys", a lot of his writings have a familiar ring in his observations, which allows a man on a tractor to become much closer to many species of birds than the average birder. The author's keen observations are backed up by an obvious amount of "homework" with reference books to make each chapter a good bit of education and life histories.

This book, which should have an attraction to all birders, should be required reading for every farmer and rural resident in all states. Whether a chapter deals with one species or group of species, or some aspect of birding, it gives a good lesson in practical ecology and conservation. With so many chapters it is possible to jump around at will.

The line drawings by Breckenridge are, of course, excellent, but draw the only negative criticism, because they are not individually labeled. The cover design, which is supposed to be a red-tailed hawk, is quite different from another interior red-tailed drawing, and appears to be a Swainson's hawk. A drawing in the chapter, "Migrant Shrike", appears to be a Northern shrike. A drawing of a pair of Wilson's phalaropes in the chapter, "An Iowa Field Trip", may be confusing to a new or non-birder. These are all of minor consequence for a fine book, which is highly recommended. Order direct from the author.

JOHN AND ALICE BANGHART

by Jim Comfort

For many years two of the more faithful participants in the activities of the Audubon Society of Missouri were John and Alice Banghart of Kansas City. They regularly attended the annual meetings and were active in the Burroughs Club.

John was an employee of the Kansas City Park Department and his responsibilities included the Nature activities in the parks. He retired seven years ago and they assumed a role as vagabonds. The Bangharts have a comfortable travel trailer which has been their home on wheels since that time. Their journeys have carried them to all parts of the United States as well as much of Mexico and Canada and into the jungles of British Honduras (Belize) and Guatamala.

John has become an accomplished photographer and has accumulated a collection of Kodachromes which enable him to put together a number of extremely interesting slide shows. As a bird watcher first, he has many bird photos. All I have seen are very fine. Some are of rare birds, some of our more familiar friends. These bird pictures are interspersed with wildflowers, scenic views and human interest photos at his showings.

It was our good fortune to run into John and Alice at the Bentsen State Park in the lower Rio Grande Valley of Southern Texas. We met quite accidentally when our nightly walk was interrupted when we found a slide show on Mexico was being given in an open pavillion in the park. We were surprised to find that John was the Major Domo. We found that our trailer and his were only a few spaces apart, and we were close neighbors for the next couple of weeks. Nearly everyone in the park feeds birds, and there is a good natured competition to entice the rarer kinds. John and Alice were among the "top dogs". They were keepers of one of the few stations visited by the rare black-headed orioles.

We were happy to renew acquaintances with these fine people and to recall our mutual friends in the Kansas City area.

The Bangharts are spending more and more time in south Texas. John has an eye problem (cataracts) which is limiting his activities to a degree, but feels hopeful that surgery will correct this in the near future.

Like most full time travelers, they maintain a mailing address from which mail is forwarded to them. The address: John and Alice Banghart, 5450 Phelps Luck Drive Columbia, Maryland 21045. The Bangharts hope to be able to attend the annual meeting in October, but in the meantime would enjoy hearing from old friends.

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MERAMEC RIVER PROPOSAL RESTUDIED

reported by Jim Jackson

At the Annual Convention of the Conservation Federation of Missouri, with which we are affiliated, an attempt was made to reverse the Federation's stand in support of building a dam on the Meramec River. It was the big issue of the Convention, and though we failed in getting the Federation to officially oppose the dam, it was close. The resolution to oppose such a dam was defeated by a narrow margin, but the gathering of delegates did agree to re-study the entire issue. Hunting and fishing groups were aligned with Audubonites and Sierra Club groups, while most fishing groups (though not all) aligned in favor of the dam. This summary merely points up the importance of keeping environmental groups active within the framework of the Conservation Federation's influence. Our affiliation may yet help to turn the tide against environmentally destructive porkbarrel dams on remaining natural streams. The Conservation Federation is Missouri's biggest voice in environmental affairs, a point to remember.

BIRDBANDING WITH THE DIGGSES IN 1973

by Hazel Diggs

This past year has been one of the most enjoyable years for us since we started banding birds ten years ago. The more one learns about birds, the more eager he is to learn; the more birds he bands, the higher he sets his goals, and the harder he strives to get new species. Or, so it is with us. Then to use the knowledge gained and not feel the expended energy was a total waste, we incorporate this knowledge with the pictures we've taken to document our efforts, and in some fashion impart it to others in the form of programs or nature talks to groups in the field. A lot of hard work? Yes! Enjoyable? Indeed! Rewarding? Very much so!

You will note from our tabulation list, that we send in for Missouri and Iowa together since we are state-line residents, and birds know no such lines. A new project this year was banding bluebird fledglings from Bud Oehler's nesting box trail. The Oehlers live at Clarinda, Iowa, and maintain a 51 nesting box trail around the countryside, trying to promote an increase in the bluebird population. Bud keeps excellent records of boxes used, number of clutches to the box during the season, number of eggs in each clutch, and, if the nest was successful, how many birds fledged. If not successful, he tries to determine why. Maybe some boxes are taken over by wrens or chickadees, or house sparrows destroy the eggs and claim the location. Some even kill the parent bluebirds. By our banding the fledglings he can determine whether they come back to the area where they were hatched. Much can be learned from his records, and we are glad to have a part.

In 1972 we noticed a pair of barn swallows building a nest in the barn. Some time later Fitzhugh was greasing an instrument near the driveway of the barn where the swallows were going in and out. As I stopped by, I noticed the excited behavior of the birds. Investigating, we found a blacksnake hanging from the nest. After a picture or two he was disposed of. Still the birds wanted none of it. They followed us to the house and tried to start a new nest under the patio roof, but were unable to get their mud to cling to the slick paint. Again, Fitzhugh came to their rescue by nailing up a small board for a ledge for their nest. By evening they had an inch of the bottom completed. They raised two clutches that summer.

After they had accepted our help, we wondered if the same pair would return in 1973. They did, and after refurbishing the old nest went about laying and incubating a clutch of 5 eggs, only to have them carried off by a blue jay the second day after they hatched.

Another serious talk, and the pair decided to try again. A new nest lining was soon in place, and this time they met with success. Soon another, the third, clutch of eggs was laid, which in due time hatched. The parents became very busy feeding the wee ones, but it was getting late in the season, and soon would be the time for the flocking of all swallows. An SOS was sent out to "swallow land" for feeding help. In they came, adults and hatching year birds alike, to help fatten up these little fellows for flight.

We had read and been told that the first hatch would help feed the later brothers and sisters. Now was the time for "proof positive." We decided to encase two sides of the patio with nets. Needless to say we were soon in business, for the feeding must go on. After we had caught many swallows and I was removing one from the net, I noticed a wasp daubing at a swallow that was caught. I grabbed the dust bomb and got him, only to find the pop had scared all of the nestlings from the nest except the last one hatched. His protectors fed him until he nearly popped, he was so full. Finally, when his mother brought a big insect he was so full he refused it and lay his little head on the edge of the nest to sleep. She would fly to a limb on a nearby tree, rest and come back to try again. After five trips, she ate the insect herself. In a couple of days the little 'loner' left to join the flock, and our books showed exactly 30 birds. 20 of that number young birds, had come to help

feed these five nestlings. We were eyewitnesses to all this. Do we need more proof? This nest is still in place and we are anxiously waiting to see if they return to it this spring.

You can see from our list that the Carolina chickadee, white-eyed vireo and evening grosbeaks were first for us last year. If the birds don't come to you, you go to them wherever they are.

The Carolina chickadees we found at Appleton City. It was so interesting to sit and watch them and hear their songs as well as hand study them. At the same time, we were recording the antics of the mockingbirds via colored slides. After a full day of high winds on this June 27th, we were about to chalk up our trip to bad timing. Just before dark, Mabel Ott and I (the John Otts of Lincoln had joined us there) were checking nets and each had a cardinal. We were on our way back to the banding station, when we saw this colorful bird high in one of the nets. Calling the fellows, we finally stirred them out of their visit, and had them running to our rescue. To our amazement and delight, we discovered we had a male painted bunting. All of a sudden a pair of cardinals seemed very unimportant. Fitzhugh and I had banded a female painted bunting at our home, Diggs' Domain, in 1966. Our highest aspiration since had been to get a male so we could study and photograph him. A high climax to a miserable day, and we could say in all sincerity, "mission accomplished!"

We went down to Camp Rising Sun in the Lake of the Ozarks State Park in October for the annual meeting of the Audubon Society of Missouri. Thinking it would be quite educational, especially to the non-banders, to have some birds in the hand to be studied, we finally secured permission to band in the park. We selected sites to place our nets and put up some. All of a sudden a rush came, and our nets filled. Removing them we found we had 5 cardinals, 22 white-throated sparrows, 5 Myrtle warblers, 1 Nashville warbler, 4 rufus-sided towhees, and 1 white-eyed vireo, totaling 42 birds. Our fingers flew, and when we came to the vireo we decided pictures were a must, since none of the four of us had ever seen a white-eyed vireo. He was the silver lining to that rainy day.

Our activities in Nebraska deserve mentioning. We were asked to come band birds at Chet Ager Nature Center in Pioneers Park in Lincoln in May, and demonstrate and give talks on bird banding to the school groups taking nature walks through the center. This particular day four groups of 150-160 school children and teachers snowballed to ten groups of 432 people. We banded 100 birds, let 5 get away and had ten returns from our 1972 bandings there. A real workday, but very rewarding.

We were invited to visit our friends, the John Otts, who live in the heart of the Lincoln residential area, on March 27 to celebrate Fitzhugh's 75th birthday and band birds. These friends are great ornithologists and feed the birds. In their forty foot square backyard, having one 12 by 24 inch feeder, we banded 234 birds of nine species--American goldfinch, starlings, juncos, cardinals, bluebirds, pine siskins, red crossbills, purple finches and a robin. As many as 25 of these birds of all the species would be eating at the same time. One month later in the same yard we banded 185 birds adding grackles, a Harris sparrow, house sparrows, a cowbird, downy woodpecker, and black-capped chickadees to our list. The Otts decided this was an expensive hobby.

We were also asked to band at Fontennelle Forest in Bellevue, Nebraska, near Omaha. There we banded a red-tailed hawk, a common night hawk, a long-eared owl, two great horned owls, and six screech owls.

The climax to our activities in Nebraska came when we were able to net and band a black-throated sparrow in Omaha, December 17. This little visitor arrived at the Bruce Meier's patio to feed December 4. He came daily for two months. This "little

"feller", as he came to be known, was well documented, and we are happy to have him wearing our band - 1320-57162. We wonder what possessed this little visitor from the arid southwest to come to a cold, windy hill in the big city in eastern Nebraska to feed for so long.

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BIRD BANDING TABULATION
OF
HAZEL AND FITZHUGH DIGGS, HANBURG, IOWA
1973 - Missouri and Iowa

pigeon hawk	1	catbird	84	house sparrow	4
kestrel	1	brown thrasher	56	Western meadowlark	3
mourning dove	6	robin	99	red-winged blackbird	7
yellow-billed cuckoo	13	wood thrush	7	orchard oriole	13
black-billed cuckoo	1	hermit thrush	2	Baltimore oriole	53
screech owl	4	Swainson's thrush	135	Brewer's blackbird	1
long-eared owl	1	gray-cheeked thrush	27	common grackle	6
belted kingfisher	1	veery	2	brown-headed cowbird	21
yellow-shafted flicker	31	Eastern bluebird	84	scarlet tanager	1
red-bellied woodpecker	16	golden-crowned kinglet	16	cardinal	89
red-headed woodpecker	10	ruby-crowned kinglet	30	rose-breasted grosbeak	61
yellow-bellied sapsucker	2	loggerhead shrike	4	blue grosbeak	1
hairy woodpecker	11	starling	6	indigo bunting	54
downy woodpecker	46	*white-eyed vireo	1	painted bunting	1
eastern kingbird	5	Bell's vireo	1	dickcissel	16
great-crested flycatcher	7	solitary vireo	1	*evening grosbeak	1
Eastern phoebe	9	red-eyed vireo	3	purple finch	4
yellow-bellied flycatcher	1	Philadelphia vireo	4	pine siskin	21
Acadian flycatcher	13	warbling vireo	13	American goldfinch	163
Traill's flycatcher	1	black and white warbler	10	rufous-sided towhee	6
least flycatcher	26	Tennessee warbler	5	grasshopper sparrow	3
Eastern wood pewee	17	orange-crowned warbler	13	Le Conte's sparrow	1
olive-sided flycatcher	2	Nashville warbler	10	lark sparrow	2
rough-winged swallow	7	yellow warbler	11	slate-colored junco	158
barn swallow	53	magnolia warbler	5	Oregon junco	1
cliff swallow	30	Myrtle warbler	54	tree sparrow	54
purple martin	7	blackpoll warbler	2	chipping sparrow	23
blue jay	121	palm warbler	1	field sparrow	26
black-capped chickadee	28	ovenbird	16	Harris' sparrow	61
*Carolina chickadee	6	Northern waterthrush	4	white-crowned sparrow	23
tufted titmouse	25	Louisiana waterthrush	1	white-throated sparrow	74
white-breasted nuthatch	13	Kentucky warbler	1	fox sparrow	9
brown creeper	22	Connecticut warbler	2	Lincoln's sparrow	40
house wren	44	mourning warbler	11	swamp sparrow	2
Carolina wren	1	yellowthroat	9	song sparrow	9
mockingbird	14	yellow-breasted chat	2		
		Wilson's warbler	6	TOTALS:	
		Canada warbler	3	species	110
		American redstart	11	individuals	2360

* Indicates species banded the first time by us.

DEEP WOODS NEED OPENINGS

by Joel M. Vance

It's a popular misconception that the heart of an immense stand of trees is where wildlife is likely to congregate. It's far more probable that most of Missouri's wildlife species are likely to be found along the edge of the woods where trees meet crops, pastures or other openings.

The ideal situation for most forest wildlife is woodlands which are broken with openings. That's the crux of the "Missouri Plan," a unique proposal to manage Missouri's million and a half acres on the Clark and Mark Twain National Forest and 200,000 acres of State Forests for the maximum benefit of both timber and wildlife.

The Plan would break the forest into percentages of plant growth with different benefits to wildlife. Some trees would be allowed to grow beyond their ideal harvest age so they could provide habitat for some types of wildlife--woodpeckers and squirrels, for example. Fifty different species of Missouri birds depend on that kind of forest growth during some part of the year.

At the other end of the scale, some areas would be kept in young growth stages--old fields and forest openings--to provide habitat for such creatures as deer and turkeys. Still another stage would be the bushy stage; home and nesting area for many species of woodland song birds.

A report on the Plan was the highlight of a recent three-day symposium of foresters and wildlife managers in Columbia. It is a unique proposal in the United States. Many of the ideas proposed by the two national forests and the Department of Conservation, which cooperated on the Missouri Plan, were echoed by one of the symposium speakers, Dr. Laurence Jahn, vice-president of the Wildlife Management Institute. Jahn offered several methods of improving wildlife habitat in the nation's public and private forests.

Jahn said foresters should retain buffer strips of timber along streams and highways to prevent erosion and retain esthetic values, as well as wildlife habitat.

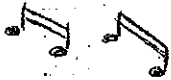
He also recommended keeping clearcut areas to 50 acres or less. Extensive clearcutting--the taking of all trees off an area--has been widely criticized by environmentalists. "When clearcutting is fitted into the landscape," Dr. Jahn said, "the value to many kinds of wildlife is unquestioned."

Dr. Jahn also advocated the maintenance of stands of old, diseased, dying, and dead trees. He said such trees provide nesting habitat for many kinds of wildlife, both birds and animals, and the organisms which serve as wildlife food. In some places, he said foresters should girdle rather than fell large trees not of commercial value to create snags which would be perching spots for eagles, hawks and other birds which prey on mice and other creatures which plague foresters.

In addition to the creation of forest habitat, the Missouri Plan provides for a cool drink for the woodland creatures. Since 1961, the Department of Conservation and the Forest Service have cooperated in creating almost 2000 ponds on State and National Forest land. Despite the many rivers and springs, much of the Ozarks is water-poor, especially the uplands, and the pond program alleviates that problem. The idea is to have a permanent source in every square mile of the woods.

The Missouri Plan was passed by Congress in 1972 after it had received wholehearted support from conservationist and government officials, including the Missouri Legislature.

The foreword of the Missouri Plan says, "We are confident if we work together, we can insure the sustained production of multiple products and services, including improved quality of habitat for wildlife, the presence of which refreshes man's spirit and enhances the quality of his life. We can do no less if we are to keep the trust of all the people."



NOTES AND FEATHERS
(that fall on the editor's desk)



Birdwatching is always rewarding, but sometimes there is a special prize, even to veteran birders. Floyd Lawhon reports finding his: "On Saturday afternoon, March 23, my wife, Pearl, and I were making what I could almost call our customary rounds of the roads at the Squaw Creek NWR. We were just getting ready to leave when a bluebird flew down in the road in front of our car. I said, 'There's a bluebird for our list, the first one for the day.' As we neared it, the bird flew to a nearby bush. It was then that although in good color I noticed how light it was. At once I said, 'Pearl, I hope the bird turns around so I can see his breast.' After flushing it again, it turned to face us and then we could see, even without our binoculars that it was a mountain bluebird!"

Telephone wires hummed as word was passed along. See the Winter Survey, p. 3

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A note from Mark Robbins adds this comment concerning the barheaded geese which were recently seen in the Kansas City area and reported in the last issue of The Bluebird. ". . . I feel obligated to comment on the paragraph about the bar-headed geese. These birds are commonly kept in captivity (see Birding, Vol. IV, No. 4, 1972, p. 160). The two birds at Trimble were most likely escapees from a zoo or a private collection which had joined other geese and migrated with them. These birds should not be treated as wild birds."

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Robert A. Gaede of Dexter, Mo., reports that a barn owl had been found dead on the highway between Dexter and Sikeston by Mr. and Mrs. David Schwendemann last November. This bird, rare for the area, was stuffed by taxidermist John Cooper and now proudly resides in the biology department of the local high school.

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Nathan Fay of Ozark has come to the defense of the lowly dandelion. In a recent letter he said, "We had about 75 pine siskins in our front yard, coming to the bird bath and eating dandelion seeds. Just think what a blessing dandelions are! Each plant lives only two years, the roots add humus and improve the soil. They come in the first place because the grass is thin. A good thick turf will prevent the parachutes from making a good landing.

"Ever since I can remember, it has been a sin to have one dandelion in your yard. I say, 'forget 'em! enjoy 'em!'"

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CONGRATULATIONS! "Wild Chorus", a movie about the Canada goose made by the Missouri Department of Conservation, was voted as best wildlife movie of the year by the North America Wildlife and Natural Resources Association, and was named best wildlife film of the year by the Wildlife Society.

Much of this truly beautiful movie was filmed in Canada by Charles and Elizabeth Schwartz and Glenn Chambers.

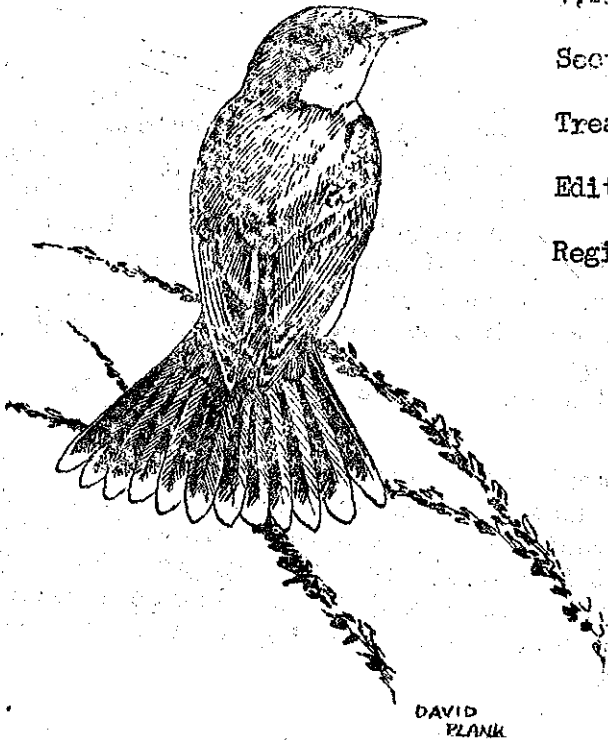
. ♂ .
Mark your calendars now: Fall Meeting of the Audubon Society of Missouri, October 4, 5, 6, Camp Rising Sun, Lake of the Ozark State Park. Details next issue.

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"Thanks!" to all who have sent articles and contributions for The Bluebird. And to those of you who haven't yet, please do. We've enjoyed your letters and comments. Keep them coming. rm

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