

AN ANNOTATED LIST OF BIRDS SEEN AT THE
NATURE CAMP AT DeSOTO STATE PARK

JUNE 1 TO 9, 1956

By JULIAN L. DUSI

The Nature Camp is a meeting place where those interested in the many phases of natural history can get together for an enjoyable week of study and relaxation. Under the direction of Mrs. Blanche E. Dean, a varied program was planned so that beginners and experts alike could participate and profit from the experience.

A number of program leaders were present. Each explained his own field of specialization. For example: Dr. John A. Fincher, Howard College, led the group in studies of aquatic biology; Dr. W. E. Glenn, Birmingham Southern College, talked about astronomy and led the group on a star gazing trip; and Mr. George Huey, Soil Conservation Service, showed the camp the Denton farm, which is an excellent example of soil conservation planning and farming. Many other professional and amateur biologists were present and each had his opportunity to lead the group.

Those attending the camp varied in age from children to those who could talk of experiences they had during the preceding century; they varied in profession from students to teachers and to those in non-educational professions. The writer and his wife were present for the purpose of becoming better acquainted with that part of the state and to collect data for a research study of the birds and mammals of Alabama, which the writer is conducting through a Grant-in-aid research program at the Alabama Polytechnic Institute.

The birds of DeSoto State Park and the surrounding area were especially interesting to the writer. A number of birds were nesting there that are migrants only, in the Southern part of Alabama. Most of the birds were methodically identified by close observation with binoculars and the aid of the bird's song. Only the Black-throated Green Warbler and the Ovenbird were collected. Following is an annotated list of the birds positively recorded by the writer:

Wood Duck—One was seen flying along the river in the park.

Turkey Vulture—These were commonly seen soaring.

Sharp-shinned Hawk—One individual clearly seen soaring over the park lodge.

Cooper's Hawk—One individual reported.

Broad-winged Hawk—One individual studied as it soared closely over the group as they visited the Denton farm.

Bob-white—Fairly common on the farm lands, especially the Denton farm.

Eastern Turkey—One hen was heard calling by the writer.

Killdeer—Several were seen near the pond north of Fort Payne.

Mourning Dove—Fairly common. A total of 20 listed by the writer.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo—Fairly common.

Whip-poor-will—Heard singing in the park.

Chimney Swift—Frequently seen flying overhead.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird—Rarely seen. One nest was found near the park lodge.

Flicker—Rather uncommon. Only five individuals listed by the writer.

Pileated Woodpecker—Quite commonly seen and heard for this species.

Red-bellied Woodpecker—Only a few individuals seen.

Red-headed Woodpecker—Several were seen at the Denton farm.

Downy Woodpecker—One was seen at the Denton farm.

Eastern Kingbird—Commonly seen on farm lands especially.

Crested Flycatcher—Fairly common.

Phoebe—Quite common. Nests were seen.

Wood Pewee—Fairly common.

Rough-winged Swallow—Seen nesting in roadside banks and commonly seen flying along the gorge.

Barn Swallow—Two were seen flying over a pond north of Fort Payne.

Purple Martins—Commonly seen, especially at the farmhouses which had supplied nesting sites.

Blue Jays—Common.

Crow—Commonly seen in groups of ten or twelve.

Carolina Chickadee—A fairly common species.

Tufted Titmouse—Frequently seen and heard.

Brown-headed Nuthatch—Seen and heard in the pines near the gorge.

Carolina Wren—Only a few individuals were seen. One nest found at the Hassel's home.

Mockingbird—More restricted to farm land, in average abundance.

Brown Thrasher—Rather common. A nest found in the multiflora rose fence at the Denton farm.

Wood Thrush—Commonly heard singing.

Bluebird—Found rather commonly on the farms visited.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher—Fairly common. A nest with young was found at the Denton farm.

Loggerhead Shrike—A few were seen along the roads near farms.

Starling—Present at some of the farms we visited.

White-eyed Vireo—Frequently seen and heard in woodland areas.

Yellow-throated Vireo—Seen and heard infrequently. One was seen coming from a typical nest at the Denton farm.

Red-eyed Vireo—A fairly common bird. A nest was located near the lodge in the park.

Black and White Warbler—Common in the rhododendron habitat. They were seen feeding young on several occasions.

Parula Warbler—Commonly heard and seen.

Black-throated Green Warbler—A common breeding bird of the park.

Yellow-throated Warbler—Fairly common.

Pine Warbler—Commonly seen and heard in pine woods.

Prairie Warbler—Common in the brushy old field cut-over areas.

Ovenbird—Common in the woodlands. One nest was found by the writer.

Louisiana Water-Thrush—Several were seen along the river in the park.

Kentucky Warbler—Seen in rhododendron thickets.

Yellow-throat—Heard and seen on brushy hillsides.

Yellow-breasted Chat—Common on brushy hillsides.

Hooded Warbler—Fairly common in the rhododendron thickets.

English Sparrow—Present at the farms we visited.

Meadowlark—Common in the fields.

Red-winged Blackbird—Seen at the pond just north of Fort Payne.

Orchard Oriole—Fairly common near farm land.

Cowbird—A few seen at the Denton farm.

Scarlet Tanager—One or two seen.

Cardinal—A common resident.

Indigo Bunting—A common resident of the brushy uplands.

Goldfinch—A few individuals were seen and heard.

Towhee—Present in most woodland habitats.

Chipping Sparrow—Common residents often seen feeding young.

Field Sparrow—Seen and heard in brushy habitats.
Department of Zoology-Entomology, A.P.I.
Auburn, Alabama.