

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings from your president! Thank you for your excellent cooperation and help. Many of you have sent in worthwhile suggestions and ideas that would aid our organization. A.O.S. is as good as each member makes it. We are a growing organization, and to remain so, each one must continue to be a useful and responsive member.

When there is a bill in Congress to protect, e.g. . . . the Golden Eagle, let's voice our written approval to our Senators and Congressmen. We shall have occasion for such action over the year to endorse similar conservation measures.

Continue to send in your articles on birds to the editor. Send other bird news and news about yourself to the president for inclusion in the next newsletter.

A.O.S. needs chapters over the state. A committee is working on the idea that present nature and conservation groups may be affiliated with the Alabama Ornithological Society. A chapter does not have to be large. Where even two or three are interested in "birds," a chapter could be formed.

The fall meeting will be at that "best birding spot in Alabama," Dauphin Island. The date is October 28, 29. The birding will be good. The meeting has been planned, and the success of the weekend depends upon your participation. Come and bring a friend.

—HARRIET H. WRIGHT

MINUTES OF A. O. S. SPRING MEETING

The semi-annual meeting of the Alabama Ornithological Society was held on April 21-23, 1961, at DeSoto State Park. Tom Imhof presided at the business meeting which was held Saturday night. In the absence of the secretary, no minutes were read, but these had previously been published in Alabama Birdlife. Clustie McTyeire was appointed to serve as secretary for the meeting.

The treasurer reported a balance of \$142.11. Opportunity was given to pay dues. There were twenty-one members present.

Under **old business** came a discussion of ways to increase our membership. There was also discussion concerning our publication. Suggestions were offered relative to a change in the number of issues per year, type of the issues, type of printing, etc. No action was taken at this time.

New business decided that the next issue of Birdlife would probably be published in September, since the Editor would leave on June 1 for Europe. A motion was made by Clustie McTyeire that a committee be appointed to study the constitution and any necessary improvements be recommended for adoption by the membership. The motion was seconded by Blanche Chapman and the vote carried. The committee appointed is as follows: Clustie McTyeire, chairman; Margaret Robinson and Tom Imhof.

A motion was made by Tom Atkeson that no specific locations for meetings be set. The motion was seconded by Jim Robinson. The vote carried. A discussion followed. The general feeling was to have the spring meeting in the central part of the state and the autumn meeting to alternate between the northern and southern parts of the state. This will be considered further by the committee to study the constitution.

The report of the nominating committee was read as follows: President—Harriett (Mrs. D. O.) Wright; Vice President—Bob Skinner; Treasurer—Margaret (Mrs. James C.) Robinson. The nominating committee consisted of Clustie McTyeire, chairman; Blanche Dean and Idalene Snead.

The president requested nominations from the floor, but none were made. A motion was made by Clustie McTyeire and seconded by Blanche Chapman to approve the report as read.

Following the business meeting, Mr. George Kyle, now with the U.S. Forest Service, discussed the role of the National Forest Service and showed how it affects every citizen. After his interesting and informative talk, slides were shown by Jim and Margaret Robinson of some interesting birds they had netted and banded.

A compilation of the birds observed by the various groups concluded the program. A report of 105 species was made.

Respectfully submitted,
CLUSTIE McTYEIRE, Acting Secretary

SOME INTERESTING NESTING RETURNS

While many species of passerine birds are "permanent residents" throughout the state, others, perhaps the majority of species which nest here, are only "summer residents." This is particularly true of the warblers and vireos, most of which winter in Central and/or South America. During the past seven years I have had the opportunity to band a small number of these "summer residents" and to retrap some of them in later years. Below is presented a list of such returns (warblers and vireos) with one exception. Pine Warbler (*Dendroica pinus*) returns have been omitted since I consider those birds which have been retrapped to be "permanent residents." This list includes all birds captured before September 7, 1961. They are listed by band number, date of banding, and date of recapture, in that order.

Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*):

61-39008—June 20, 1958; July 16, 1960.

Kentucky Warbler (*Oporornis formosus*):

52-67693—July 5, 1957; June 12, 1958.
61-39009—June 20, 1958; June 10, 1959.
61-39086—June 10, 1959; July 2, 1960.
61-39088—June 10, 1959; July 20, 1960.
61-39088—June 10, 1959; June 14, 1961.
64-18135—July 16, 1960; June 13, 1961.

Hooded Warbler (*Wilsonia citrina*):

61-39004—June 12, 1958; July 13, 1960.
61-39022—July 4, 1958; September 14, 1959.
61-39024—July 8, 1958; July 27, 1960.
61-39038—September 5, 1958; September 16, 1959.
61-39095—September 2, 1959; July 2, 1960.
61-41505—September 12, 1959; September 14, 1960.
61-41508—September 14, 1959; July 18, 1960.
61-41508—September 14, 1959; September 6, 1961.
64-18121—July 2, 1960; June 12, 1961.

Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*):

54-140072—May 10, 1955; September 12, 1959.
56-112617—July 2, 1957; June 10, 1959.
57-136108—June 18, 1958; June 14, 1961.
57-136124—June 28, 1958; July 2, 1960.
57-136145—July 11, 1958; June 14, 1961.
57-136155—July 27, 1958; July 2, 1960.
58-172610—July 7, 1960; June 13, 1961.

White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*):

55-82567—May 12, 1955; July 5, 1957.
61-39005—June 18, 1958; June 12, 1959.
61-39087—June 10, 1959; July 18, 1960.
61-39094—September 2, 1959; July 13, 1960.
61-41509—September 14, 1959; September 6, 1961.
61-41512—September 14, 1959; September 13, 1960.

Since individuals of all these species have been captured during migration, as well as during the nesting season, one must be careful in drawing conclusions about percent of banded birds returning. Migrating birds are seldom if ever retrapped in subsequent years, while the "summer resident" birds are often recaptured. At the time of capture it is often possible to determine whether or not the bird is a migrant. In some cases it is not possible. Thus, I am listing total birds banded (through 1960) separately and not with the returns. These figures must be used merely to indicate percent returning, and one must not draw any definite conclusions with respect to actual percent returning. The totals are: Black-and-white Warbler, 12; Kentucky Warbler, 24; Hooded Warbler, 36; Yellow-breasted Chat, 29; and White-eyed Vireo, 37.

Several other species of "summer resident" warblers and vireos have been banded, but these have not yielded any returns. They are: Worm-eating Warbler, 6; Yellow-throated Warbler, 1; Prairie Warbler, 5; Ovenbird, 1; Louisiana Water-thrush, 2; Common Yellow-Throat, 4; Red-eyed Vireo, 15; and Yellow-throated Vireo, 1.

These returns show not only the ability but also the persistence with which birds return to their familiar "territories." We may conclude that this phenomenon must have strong selective value in the lives of most birds.

—J. BOLLING SULLIVAN, III, 3416 Sherwood Road, Birmingham 13, Ala.

WINTERING OF LINCOLN SPARROW AT LIVINGSTON

For two seasons now the Lincoln Sparrow has fed at my tray in Livingston. He first appeared on October 17th, 1958, and fed daily at the tray and drank and bathed in the bird bath until January 5th, 1959. I saw him thirty-one different days during this period. The next time I saw this bird at my tray was March 30th, 1961, and I observed him daily through April 15th, 1961. I have seen the Lincoln Sparrow to such good advantage and over such long periods of time now that I feel as familiar with him as I do the House Sparrow.

—JENKINS JACKSON, Livingston, Alabama

MORE ON BALTIMORE ORIOLES AT LIVINGSTON, ALABAMA

The Baltimore Orioles arrived at Livingston on April 17th, 1961, which is about an average date for their Spring arrival, although many species of birds ran a few days late this year, evidently due to bad weather.

There are two nesting territories of Baltimore Orioles within the corporate limits of the town that have been occupied for four successive years that I know of as I have gathered four nests from each. One territory is on the East side of town and one is on the South side, embracing my home. In "Alabama Birdlife" issue of September, 1960 (Vol. 8,—No. 3), I wrote of observing the rearing of the young in the East territory last year. The birds there have nested now three successive years in a Chinquapin Oak and once in a Durand Oak a few feet from it. An Orchard Oriole has nested two years in the same Chinquapin Oak. Last year the nests of the two species were only fifteen feet apart, this year about thirty feet.

The nest of the Baltimore Oriole last year was a marvel of bird ingenuity. The bird obtained a cord almost as large as the little finger, doubled it and laid it over a little twig. Into the dangling ends she wove a nest mostly of grey horse hair, through which ran smaller cords securely tied with numerous knots, the whole nest matching in color the grey-green under side of the leaves. The female doing this wonderful work lived to see her young only a week old, but the male brought them off with literally "flying colors" at the end of the second week. I then took this nest down.

This male did not secure a new mate this year until the first day of June when I discovered her starting a nest (and where?) on the end of the very same branch where I had sawed off the nest last year. This nest is made of white hair so thinly woven that it looks like white lace. On June 28th the young was able to sit on a twig above the nest and in a few days was gone. I carefully took this nest down (leaving a third branch for the next one!) and how striking the contrast with darker nests placed in trees of darker leaves.

I have every reason to believe that the young are returning to settle here, as I have apparently discovered this year two more territories on the West side of town, but will not be able to prove this until the leaves drop and I can find the nests.

—JENKINS JACKSON, Livingston, Alabama

REGIONAL WINGBEATS

DECATUR — Tennessee Valley weather, over-wet during the past winter, continued wet throughout the spring and most of the summer, though showers became more widely spaced in late July and August. On the first weekend of June, a lock wall collapsed at Wheeler Dam and this had much the same effect on Wheeler Reservoir that pulling out the stopper does on a bath tub. Bankful from spring storage, the reservoir dropped quickly to about the 548 foot contour, its lowest level in over 20 years. Waters have remained low, and the thousands of acres of exposed mudflat have grown to dense stands of rank vegetation ranging from two to seven feet in height. This will furnish a wealth of waterfowl food, if reflooded this fall and winter.

A number of interesting bird notes have turned up since this report was last written in early February. These include a lone White-fronted Goose that walked about the Wheeler Refuge headquarters lawn on February 16 and 17. On April 13, Louis Nebrig, a local farmer, telephoned to say that three strange birds were walking about his pasture near the southeastern edge of Decatur. Charles Parker, Henry Grammer, William Depreast and Tom Sandlin investigated and found three fine examples of the Cattle Egret, complete with the reddish wash on heads, necks and backs, the first record for northern Alabama. On April 20, Paul Robinson spotted a Golden-winged Warbler on Trinity Mountain, the first positive local record. Yellow-crowned Night Herons were noted earlier than ever before and were seen at the Triana nesting colony by William Depreast on March 31. There were five interesting late records: an Old Squaw noted by William Depreast and Phillip Kyle on April 11; a flock of eight Buffleheads on April 20 by David Hulse; a Horned Grebe on May 10 by Henry Grammer and Tom Sandlin; an American Bittern on May 24 by Henry Grammer and a Laughing Gull on June 8 by Hulse. None of these birds were cripples.

Two early arrival records included an Indigo Bunting by Paul Robinson on April 19 and a Dickcissel by William Depreast on May 25.

A few Greater Yellowlegs and Willets have remained here throughout the summer, possibly due to food made available by low water. Except for Common Egrets and Green Herons, most of the wading birds have been unusually scarce, probably because mudflats have volunteered to rank vegetation. Though local dove numbers seem normal, there have been losses to Trichomoniasis throughout the summer. The Iranain Pheasants stocked by the State on the Swan Creek hunting area have scattered widely, seem to have survived well and at least one brood has been reported. Duck nesting on Wheeler Reservoir increased, with many broods of Mallards, Black Ducks and Wood Ducks noted here.

—THOMAS Z. ATKESON, Wheeler Wildlife Refuge, Decatur

HUNTSVILLE — (Ed. note—Since much of this is a banding report it might more properly be included in the Banders' Corner, but I am including it in Regional Wingbeats to remind any of the rest of you who may have some observations to report, that especially during migrations a running day-to-day account of what is seen, what passes through, is not only a record for comparison another year, but is of interest to other people. So please record and send in to Alabama Birdlife your records to share with the rest of us.)

News from the Huntsville area is rather sparse for the spring and summer, with only banding news and whatever incidental observations were made during banding operations. February was uneventful. In fact, repeats on Slate-colored Juncos were so numerous that the nets were taken down.

In March activity improved and a total of 112 birds were banded, still mostly Juncos and White-throated Sparrows. On the 15th male and female Cowbirds were seen and their squeaking, gurgling songs were heard. On the same day Chickadees were observed picking up dog's hair for nesting material. A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was seen on the 19th. At this time a Loggerhead Shrike moved into the banding area and for several days attacked birds caught in the nets—some were killed. The shrike managed to avoid capture. Among captures were a Brown Creeper, Purple Finches, and a Screech Owl. We sighted a Golden-crowned Kinglet on the 26th, and a Black and White Warbler on the 29th. On the 30th, we had a return of a Black and White Warbler banded in August, 1960.