

THE DETROIT AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

February, 1954

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings! Beginning with this issue, your quarterly Newsletter will be prepared by a newly formed publication committee under the editorship of Keith K. Kreag, Curator and Editor of Publications of the Detroit Zoological Park, and long-time member of the Board of Directors of the Detroit Audubon Society.

Look to the Newsletter for up-to-date information on happenings of our Society, important dates and events in the near future, and special announcements of interest to all of us.

Homer D. Roberts, President

HELP PROTECT THE HAWKS AND OWLS

Victor Knowles, Conservation Chairman

Thanks to all of you who were so prompt in writing letters to the Senate Conservation Committee and your district senator, S.B. 1086 which calls for protection for our valuable birds of prey was voted out of committee and passed by the Senate. It has been introduced in the House of Representatives by Kenneth O. Trucks and is now in committee in the House. Letters to representatives are very important now, both to those on the committee and your own district representatives. Please write immediately to as many as you can. Members of the House Conservation Committee are, in addition to Mr. Trucks who is chairman, Clyde E. Cooper, Emil A. Peltz, Hugo A. Nelson, Alvin E. Richards, Hugh D. Johnson, Gerald W. Graves, Peter J. Kelly, Harry B. Werner, Joseph G. O'Connor, Frederic J. Marshall, John F. Wood, Clayton T. Morrison, Walter G. Nakkula and William R. Copeland. Address them, House of Representatives, Lansing 2.

Wires or personal calls will also help. Every indication of favorable interest in this proposed legislation will help to get it passed. The following is the text of the amendment of Public Act. 286 entitled "The Game Law of 1929" Sec. 6A. ANY PERSON WHO SHALL MOLEST OR KILL ANY SPECIES OF HAWK OR OWL OR EAGLE, OR WHO SHALL REMOVE OR DESTROY THE NEST, EGGS OR YOUNG OF ANY SPECIES OF HAWK OR OWL OR EAGLE, SHALL BE GUILTY OF A MISDEMEANOR AND UPON CONVICTION SHALL BE PUNISHED AS PROVIDED BY THE LAWS OF THIS STATE: PROVIDED, THAT A FARMER OR LANDOWNER MAY DESTROY HAWKS OR OWLS ON THE LAND HE OWNS OR OCCUPIES WHICH ARE DOING REAL DAMAGE TO POULTRY OR OTHER DOMESTIC ANIMALS.

If we are to keep these majestic birds, we must give them protection. Most of them reproduce slowly and live much longer than song birds, so that it doesn't take much wanton shooting of them to endanger their existence.

Birds of prey are beneficial !! Destructive rodents are their chief food!! Forty-two states already recognize their value by protective legislation!! This action is supported by naturalists, sportsmen, agriculturists, conservationists.

FLOWER SHOW, MARCH 27 THROUGH APRIL 4, STATE FAIRGROUNDS, DETROIT

As in years past, the Detroit Audubon Society in collaboration with the Michigan Audubon Society will stage an exhibit in the annual flower show. The exhibit will show a lake shore habitat featuring shore birds and animals, with cattails and other marsh plants against an evergreen background. The Michigan Audubon will operate their bookstore in conjunction with the exhibit where the latest books on nature subjects may be purchased.

Assistance will be needed to set up the exhibit Fri. Mar. 25 and to dismantle it Sun. Apr. 4. Will anyone wishing to volunteer their services please call Doris McMi ^{acc}. Many people will also be needed to attend the exhibit and explain Audubon work to the visitors during the show. Myrtle Van Buskirk, 1524 Clairmount, Det. 6, ^{bso} is making up the schedule. Please contact her if you can help.

Mrs. Van Buskirk is also handling the sale of advance sale tickets at 85¢. At the door price will be \$1.20. You save 35¢ on each ticket. Tickets may be had in the lobby of Rackham before the lecture, March 13.

John & Doris McMillan, Chairmen

SPRING FIELD TRIP NEWS

Virginia Garst, Chairman

The questionnaires which you filled out at the last Rackham meeting have been quite helpful to the Field Trip Committee in the outlining of the program for this spring. We here submit a program designed to satisfy your wishes insofar as possible. We hope to be able to offer you field trips to meet a variety of interests, and to provide sufficient leaders on each trip so that each of you may have any help you need in order to get maximum enjoyment from your trips. As an aid to increasing these benefits, whether you are with a group or on your own, we have planned a special meeting which will take up the following points:

1. Types of things to be noticed about a bird in order to make your identification more quickly and more definite.
2. References to help you when you want more information about birds, wildflowers, geology, insects, amphibians, reptiles, etc. and where to find these references.
3. Points to consider in choosing binoculars.
4. What to wear on field trips, the physical effort involved (less than you think), field trip etiquette.

Those of you whose field trip experience is limited are especially urged to attend this meeting, and you will notice that the time has been set so that you may attend it before our first scheduled field trip. It is to be held at the Science Bldg. of Wayne University, Rm. 101, at 8:00 p.m. Friday, Feb. 26. (The Science Bldg. is located between Cass and Second Avenues just north of Warren).

The schedule of our spring field trips follows:

- March 20 - (Saturday) A half day trip to Belle Isle, to see ducks and other water birds. Meet at the large parking place near the Casino by the river at 1:00 p.m. If you haven't a car, come by bus to that spot, and we'll fit you into cars there. And if you've been looking for a trip in which you won't be called upon to walk, this is it.
- March 28 - (Sunday all day) - Harsen's Island and North River Road. Go out Gratiot past Mt. Clemens to the Selfridge Field Rd. Follow this road through New Baltimore. The ferry is designated by a large sign on the right. We'll meet at the island end of the ferry landing at 10:00 a.m. This trip also will be devoted chiefly to water birds, with the addition to the Belle Isle list of the later-migrating ducks, and almost certainly, whistling swans. Bring your lunch.
- April 10 - (Saturday all day) - Kensington Park. To get there, go out Grand River beyond New Hudson, past the main entrance to the Park and across the bridge to the next road to the right; enter the park here and go approximately one half mile to the "Nature Trails" sign. If you are one of our many members who has never before participated in a field trip, be reassured. The group will be divided into several groups, each with an experienced leader, and you may go with a group of other novices if you so desire. Bring your lunch.

The following field trips (with the exception of the campout) are rather tentative as yet; but mark them on your calendar now. Any changes, and all details, will reach you with the next newsletter; information on all of the trips will reach you with notices of Rackham programs, by announcements there and at the WWJ meetings.

May 1 (or 2) - Haven Hill, wildflowers, photography and, of course, birds.

May 7-9 - Spring campout at Camp Tyrone, near Fenton

May 15 and/or 16. All-day trips to Point Pelee at the height of migration.

June 5 and/or 6, St. Clair Game Area. Good place to study songs of resident birds.

And remember this - the only weather conditions which discourage us are these: typhoons, tidal waves, and (seriously now) heavy and long-continued rains.

The field trip committee invites your suggestions; a postal card will reach me at _____artment 411, Detroit 2, Mich.

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NOTES ON CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS

Dan S. McGeen, Chairman

This year's count was significant in that an unusually high total count of 60 species and 10,217 individuals was recorded. The warm weather of the fall and winter may be partly responsible, but the fact that 78 observers were in the field also contributed to better coverage of assigned areas.

A number of new species were added this year to the all-time Christmas Census list. Some of the less common winter birds seen on the Census were: Pied-billed Grebe, Virginia Rail, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Bluebirds, Robins, Meadowlarks, Myrtle Warblers, Red-eyed Towhee, Rusty Blackbird and Swamp Sparrow.

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NATURE STUDY COURSE--JUNIOR AUDUBON

Millie Reynolds, Chairman

Twice a year, during the spring and fall seasons, practical nature courses are given by our Society. These classes are very informal and you need no previous training. All you need is the time and the willingness to learn. This spring's course consists of nine successive weeks, beginning Jan. 29th. Classes are held every Friday from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. in Rm. 204 Liberal Arts Bldg. Marygrove College, 8425 McNichols Rd. The course is divided into three sessions of three weeks each: the first for the study of birds, the second for the study of rocks and soils and the third is devoted to plants, trees and crafts. Two field trips will be included during this class period. Registration fee is \$1.00. There is still time for you to join the class. We hope you will come and meet other naturalists and enjoy this practical study.

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HOST TO MICHIGAN AUDUBON SOCIETY

Hats off! to Elsie Townsend for her wonderful job in organizing the program and general arrangements for the Mich. Audubon Society's 50th annual meeting which was held at Wayne Univ. Jan. 29-30. We are not forgetting the work done by many others in the Society, but Elsie deserves special mention for her accomplishments.

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AUDUBON YOUTH SALUTE WILLIAM MUSSNIG

Audubon Youth of Detroit wish to pay tribute to their benefactor, Wm. Mussnig. With sincere gratitude we acknowledge his generosity in providing the group with the permanent use of a cabin located on his farm northeast of Lapeer. There are a variety of habitats accessible for field trips.

Our first overnight campout, Jan. 9-10, brought a capacity turnout. Fourteen boys, girls and two adults were accommodated on three cots, a davenport and twelve built-in bunks. Mrs. Harold McCotter receives our hearty thanks for her assistance on this weekend when the weather was near zero.

The davenport and chair given to the Audubon Youth by Ray and Mildred Bacheller, kept us off of the floor, and the electric range presented by Ed and Ann Boyes helped us keep well fed on the campout. There are a few items that we still need to furnish the cabin. If anyone should happen to have any of these to spare, Audubon Youth would appreciate them: dining and work tables, straight or folding chairs, cot pads, dishes and "silverware".

The "Indian" name WAN-NA-COM-BAK was chosen for our cabin in a contest among the members. And all who have been at the Cabin say it is a perfect name.

If you have sons and daughters in your family who are interested in the out-of-doors, please give us their names so that we can let them know what Audubon Youth is doing. Every year we lose a number of our members because they grow up and go away to college, so new members are always welcome.

Our thanks to all who support Audubon Youth scholarship fund with their purchases of bird feed at Rackham Aud. At your service are Roger Erickson, Ch. of Ways and Means, and his helpers Bob Graham, Tommy Teeter, and Dave French.

Sponsors of Audubon Youth are: Mac and Gladys Cutler, chairmen, Bill Mussnig, Bob and Lida Jane Merriam, Harold and Marjorie McCotter and Albert and Hortense Damm.

See us in action on Audubon Youth Night at WWJ Auditorium, Apr. 20, 8:00 p.m.

Mac and Gladys Cutler, Chairmen

Frank Damm, President