

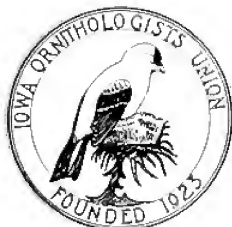
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EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION OFFICE
WINTHROP, IOWA

PASSING OF THE PRAIRIE CHICKEN*

By HUGH ORCHARD

In my time back on Old Orchard Farm there used to be more wild Prairie Chickens than chickens of tame breeds. Nowadays I know a lot of people who have never seen a Prairie Chicken, for they have been gone from Iowa for many years.

But they used to be plentiful. It was one of the commonest things in the world to run onto a Prairie Chicken nest full of eggs. Like snipes, and many other birds, the mother hen tries to fool us to prevent us from finding her nest. Many times as I walked along in the grass, a Prairie Chicken hen would flutter right from under my feet with all the noise she could make, and fall on her side and squabble around in the grass just like she was crippled and could barely fly at all. I would run over intending to capture her alive, and just before I got my hands on her she would give a flounce and light 15 or 20 feet away.

I would be right after her, expecting this time to make the capture. But she would be too quick for me, and away she would flutter—maybe hitting the ground several times before she came down to stay. Then I was sure she was tuckered out, and would run with all my might to pick her up. But when I was about three steps from her she would give two or three awkward flops and rise, maybe 4 or 5 feet from the ground, and fall 40 or 50 yards away. By this means she would fool along with me for a good long way, and then fly off as fine as any Prairie Chicken you ever saw. It was a way they had of getting a person coaxed from their nests so you never could find them again.

A Prairie Chicken hatches out a covey of 15 or so young ones, and they are the cutest little things you ever saw, except young Quails. Prairie Chickens were used to the out of doors, and had good luck raising their young, so they multiplied to beat anything. Every grain field of 40 acres in the country had a drove or two of chickens in it. All summer long you didn't see much of them, only by chance, for they lived mostly in the corn fields and weed patches. But after the small grain had been cut and shocked, they had a habit of coming out there to feed in the cool of the evening.

By August they were half grown, and the men used to go out after supper and hunt them. Two men would generally hunt together to cover more ground. Those chickens were mighty sly, and without a good hunting dog to find them you might just as well have stayed at home. During my first experience on this kind of a hunt I was too young to shoot a gun, so I just went along to carry the game.

John Cappes came over to our house and joined my big brother Joe and me for the hunt. John had borrowed a fine setter from a German named Henry Rawhert who had lived in this country only a short time and could just scarcely talk our language. But his dog seemed to understand everything the boys said to her.

Joe had a double-barreled breech-loader he had bought from Rawhert, who had set up a gunsmith shop on his farm down the lane. The left barrel was choke-bored and was made to get the game if you missed with the right barrel. That choke-bored barrel shot mighty close, and we had to be careful not to use it first or we might blow the game to pieces. Joe got a set of

* This is reprinted from the book, "Old Orchard Farm," through the courtesy of the publishers, the Iowa State College Press, Ames, Iowa. The book, published in 1952, is a fascinating story of country life in Des Moines County, Iowa, in the 1880's, written in autobiographical form. We heartily recommend the book to our readers. The author, Hugh Orchard, acted as toastmaster on the banquet program of our Cedar Rapids convention, May 8, 1931.—Ed.

tools for reloading the brass shells, and these shells, when they were empty, had a smell about them that I liked better than almost any other smell. I used to help him reload on rainy days, by passing him the powder jar, or the shot sack, or the box of caps. I fully expected that some day he would let me shoot that wonderful gun. He did, too.

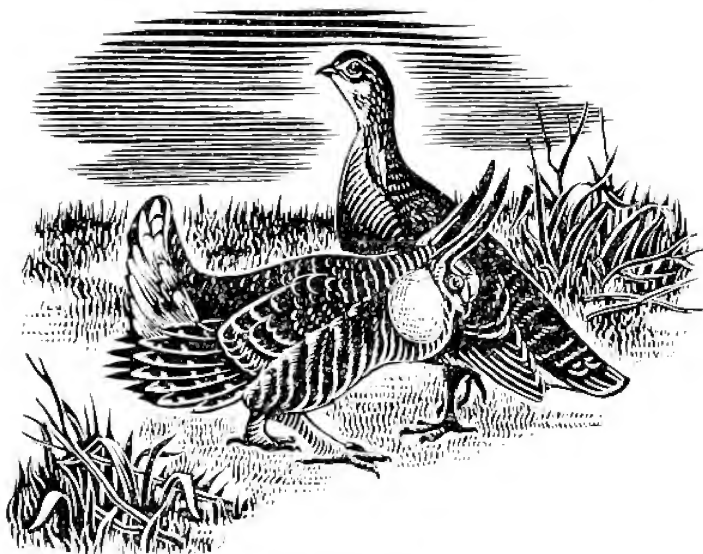
Early that evening of my first hunt we went out to the back oats field. The boys spread out about 50 feet apart, a short distance from the edge of the corn. The oats stubble was about 8 inches high but many weeds had grown up since harvest and stuck up about a foot above the stubble in places. The dog was turned loose and went on ahead and away off to each side, and I trailed along behind.

We sauntered along that way for as much as a hundred yards or so, without finding anything to shoot. John Cappes allowed maybe it was a little too early in the evening. Joe was just starting to tell about a fine flock of young chickens he had seen in that very field earlier in the season when the setter stopped running, crouched down pretty low, and went crawling forward at a snail's pace.

I thought maybe she was getting tired or something. But the boys cocked their guns and got ready, for they said the dog was "setting game." It was all Greek to me. I had supposed that hunting dogs were used to catch game by running it down, like our blue dog did rabbits.

The setter stopped dead still, kind of crouched down, with her tail sticking out straight as a ramrod and one front foot lifted up. The boys walked a few steps closer. Then the setter went a little farther ahead, just creeping along. Then she came to a dead stop and wouldn't move a peg. We all slipped up to within a half dozen steps of her, and still she stood like she was paralyzed.

Then Joe gave her the word to "put it up." That meant, I soon saw, to scare the chicken out of the stubble so he could shoot. When he said this, that setter gave a forward spring, and out flew a fine young chicken. It flew up on John Cappes' side, so he shot, missing with the first barrel but



PRAIRIE CHICKENS

A drawing by John Huseby, reprinted from "Old Orchard Farm."

bringing the chicken down with the second. I supposed that the hunt was all over, as no other birds flew up—and if there were any more there, I thought the crack of that gun would stampede them. But the dog stood like she was tied.

Joe motioned for the dog to go ahead, and she crept a few steps forward, while we all stood still and watched. Within ten seconds she came to another dead stop, and Joe again gave her the word. She sprang in and another chicken flew up. Joe downed it with his right barrel. Just then two other chickens came out of the stubble at the same time and the boys had a shot together. Joe missed with his right barrel, and then, taking plenty of time, he let that choke-bored barrel loose. The chicken fell 70 yards away.

That blessed setter dog worked back and forth all over that stubble, and one by one scared up about 16 Prairie Chickens. It was a covey of an old hen and her brood. I don't remember how many the boys shot, but at least ten or eleven.

My first thought after four or five had been killed was what a job it was going to be to find all those dead chickens scattered all over the place for a hundred yards around. But to my surprise the dog did the work. As soon as the shooting was all over, Joe sent the setter out to bring in the game. The boys called this "retrieving." What surprised me was that the setter never stirred to go until she was told. She would go surging off, fast as she could run. I wouldn't think she could find anything at that pace, but all at once she would stick her nose down and bring up a chicken. Laying it down at our feet she would go at it again, 'til she had the last one of those chickens piled up. I thought that the German who had trained the dog must be a pretty smart fellow.

Some August evenings—especially if the weather was a little drizzly—we could hear guns booming in all directions, as the farmers brought down young Prairie Chickens by the hundreds. They never killed more than they wanted to eat, and we never could see that there were any fewer chickens the next year. Business men from Burlington, Mediapolis, and Morning Sun used to come out to hunt, for every farmer allowed hunting on his farm. There seemed to be no end of chickens.

But it was in the fall of the year that we saw real flocks of Prairie Chickens. When frost came and the fodder was shocked, with winter just around the corner, many coveys of Prairie Chickens joined forces. I have seen as many as a thousand in one flock. They sometimes came early in the morning and alighted on our barn, in the apple trees, and even on our house. A big walnut tree down in the field used to be a wonderful place for the chickens to light. I have seen that big tree so full of chickens I couldn't see through it, and hundreds more would be on the ground.

Sometimes when we were shucking corn a great flock would come flying over and we could hear the whistling of their wings and see the stripes on their necks. They usually flew about 15 or 20 feet above the ground and always in a straight line. It was a pretty sight in the dead of winter to happen onto a great flock of Prairie Chickens sitting on the snow and talking to one another in chicken language. I have seen whole hillsides literally covered with them.

Early in the spring they disbanded as great flocks and simmered down to little bunches, sometimes only two or three. During this season we heard them sing, if that is what to call it. It wasn't really much of a song, but sounded a whole lot like "Bum, bum, boo." Along between sundown and dark, in April or early May, we could hear them out in the pasture somewhere, "Bum, bum, boo; bum, bum, boo." And they would keep that up until after dark. Once I happened to be near a covey to discover that it was

the roosters who sang. They seemed to swell up around the neck, put their heads back and do their "bum-booing" much like a tame rooster crows.

Several things contributed to wiping out the Prairie Chicken from the country fields. One thing was the passing of wild prairie grass, which was their natural home. Another was the improvement in guns. As long as the farmers had to load their guns by hand—from the muzzle—right out in the field, there wasn't a great deal of danger to the chickens. But when the time came that everybody had a breech-loader or two, it was just too bad for all game birds.

The telegraph and telephone wires killed thousands. These wires were strung on poles about exactly the height that Prairie Chickens flew, and the poor things would fly right into them and break their necks. We boys found this out once when we went with Pap to a sale over in the Dode Miner neighborhood. Dode's boy took us out along the railroad and we found three or four dead Prairie Chickens lying right under the telegraph wires. Mother never would cook any of them for us, for she said you couldn't tell how long they had been dead. But we liked to find them anyhow.

THE BURTIS H. WILSON JOURNALS

As Studied by JAMES HODGES

DAVENPORT, IOWA

The first printed list of importance on the avifauna of the Davenport region is an annotated list in the "Wilson Bulletin" (1906; 18:1-11), by Burtis H. Wilson, entitled "The Birds Of Scott County, Iowa." This list was composed of 157 species—nesting, 62; migrant, 70; winter visitor, 9; and resident, 16.

Burtis Wilson conducted his observations on bird life from 1884 to 1904 in Scott County, Iowa, and adjacent areas. From the records which he left, we can conclude that he was an accurate observer and did a great deal of collecting, although his son informed me that this collection does not exist so far as he knows. On September 10, 1940, he passed away and his entire collection of bird books, periodicals, and his journals were given to the Davenport Public Museum by his family. It is from these journals that I have obtained much of the material for this paper. I have also used his 1906 published list.

The journals are composed of five bookkeeping ledgers, kept in the form of a daily record of bird life. Every bird that he shot is listed; every one is measured in inches, and unusual plumage or any other pertinent information is given. He records 249 individuals which were collected; these were composed of 54 species.

The purpose of this paper is to present a picture of the bird life of an area of the Mississippi Valley as it was recorded daily by an active observer for a period of 20 years. Twenty-seven species are extracted from his journals, making his total number of birds observed in this area 184 species.

Wilson pictured Scott County as follows: "Scott County lies on the north bank of the Mississippi River, which flows westward in this part of its course. The country consists mostly of rich, rolling, farming land, with a few pieces of second-growth oak timber, and much willow, maple, and elm timber along the river bottoms and on its islands. High bluffs interrupt the narrow border of rich bottomland over which the river often spreads during high spring water. During the first ten years of my studies, the country roads were nearly everywhere bordered by osage hedges, but during the past ten years the most of these hedges have been replaced by the more useful and effectual barbed-wire fence. These hedges and the orchards and shade trees surrounding the farm houses formed excellent breeding places for many species.

"A muddy creek, called Duck Creek, which is usually nearly dry during the summer, but from 10 to 20 feet wide during the rest of the year, flows easterly just north of the city of Davenport

"The city of Davenport, which occupies about 10 square miles of the county, has several large parks, and there are many shade trees in the yards and along the streets, forming ideal resorts for the town-loving birds, as well as for many rare stragglers which occasionally stop. Fully half of my observations were made within the city limits, but many of them were made in the thinly settled outskirts."

If Wilson could retrace his steps today, a half a century later, he would find many changes. The rich, rolling, farm land is still there. However, the small stands of timber are now very rare. The country roads are bare of osage-orange hedges (see Northern Shrike in list) and have been replaced by hard-surfaced roads and speeding automobiles. The abundant trees within the city limits have made way for industrial and residential growth. The trees in the parks have been reduced in number. The banks of Duck Creek were once abundant with trees and birds. The creek is now being destroyed for a flood-control project.

One difficulty in preparing a list of this sort is trying to identify some of the common names of birds in use at that time. Thus, the Bay-winged Bunting is now the Vesper Sparrow, Pine Goldfinch is now Pine Siskin, Yellow-winged Sparrow is the Grasshopper Sparrow, *ad infinitum*.

Pied-billed Grebe. Common migrant but no nesting records.

White Pelican. On April 17, 1888, he observed a large flock flying over the city of Davenport. One shot on October 3, 1893, on the Mississippi River below Davenport.

Double-crested Cormorant. A tolerably common migrant, but more common during the fall than spring.

Great Blue Heron. Rather uncommon. On June 19, 1890, he found four nesting pair on the Scott-Muscatine Railroad line.

American Egret. He does not list this species nor does he give any data on it in his journal with the exception of the possible reference to a "great white heron."

Little Blue Heron. No mention made in his list, but in a summary of the year 1888 in his journal he wrote: "Several times during the summer I saw some herons fly over the Mississippi River just at dusk. They were larger than Green Herons, but not as large as the Great Blue Heron." He also knew the Black-crowned Night Heron. This species should probably be placed on a hypothetical list.

Green Heron. A common summer resident arriving in the latter part of May. Young were out of the nest by June 24, 1887.

Black-crowned Night Heron. A common summer resident, but no mention is made of a colony.

American Bittern. A rather rare summer resident. One nesting in Muscatine County on June 19, 1890, and he shot one at Davenport on May 29, 1899, that contained two eggs the size of large peas. He thought it to be rare because of the few favorable breeding sites.

Whistling Swan. Recorded in the published list, but he wrote in his journal that he found it several times below New Boston, Illinois.

Canada Goose. An abundant migrant in the spring, but rare in the fall.

Snow Goose. A rare migrant. Always seen in flocks with the Canada Goose.

Mallard. Quite a common migrant.

Black Duck. A few were found every spring.

Blue-winged Teal. A common migrant.

Lesser Scaup Duck. An abundant migrant.

Canvasback. Quite rare.

Bufflehead. One of the more common ducks on the river from the middle of November to the start of the spring migration.

American Golden-eye. Saw one on February 6, 1888.

Ruddy Duck. One collected on April 1, 1900.

Hooded Merganser. One observed on November 20, 1888.

Sharp-shinned Hawk. Rare and seen only during the fall.

Cooper's Hawk. A common resident, but found more often during the fall. Four eggs on May 1, 1892, three eggs on May 9, 1891.

Red-tailed Hawk. A common resident, but no exact breeding records.

Broad-winged Hawk. Tolerably common migrant in the spring and rare in the fall.

Golden Eagle. On October 14, 1900, one was shot in adult plumage on a farm near Edgington (18 miles south west of Rock Island, Illinois.) It was later mounted and put on display.

Bald Eagle. A rare straggler, seen during every season of the year. To his knowledge none nested in the area though he thought they might be nesting.

Marsh Hawk. During January and February of 1890 he saw one.

Sparrow Hawk. A tolerably common summer resident.

Ruffed Grouse. He mentioned it several times in his journal in a somewhat casual manner with no details.

Prairie Chicken. A tolerably common resident. His records were: a few at Pine Hill Cemetery; June 9, 1888, at Pine Hill Cemetery a nest containing seven hatched and one addled egg; March 14, 1889, two birds; October 18, 1890, one bird; March 30, 1891, three; October 23, 1891, a group of eight; "May 29, 1898, out near Milan, Illinois, while walking through the grass about 2 feet high near the edge of the slough in an oat field, I stepped partly on a Prairie Chicken as she left her nest at my feet. The nest was on the ground between tufts of slough grass and was composed of grass. The 14 eggs which it contained looked as if they were ready to hatch. A short time later, after leaving the slough, I saw a pair flying toward the neighborhood of the nest."

Bob-white. A common resident, with a great increase since 1900.

Sandhill Crane. On August 23rd, 1894, while making a boat trip between Burlington, Iowa, and New Boston, Illinois, he saw a great many individuals of this species on the sand flats along the river.

King Rail. Rare migrant.

Virginia Rail. Rare migrant. For many years he recorded that the bird was shot in large numbers by hunters in a chain of swamps near Nahant in Rockingham Township. He also collected a number.

Sora. Uncommon migrant. As with the Virginia Rail, it was shot in large numbers in this vicinity.

Yellow Rail. One shot on September 20, 1890, the only record for this area.

Coot. Fall migrant.

Killdeer. Not common summer resident.

Golden Plover. A rare migrant; one bird found dead in the fall of 1889.

American Woodcock. Rare summer resident.

Wilson's Snipe. Abundant migrant.

Upland Plover. Not a common migrant, but he did collect a female that was ready to lay on May 11, 1890. He mentioned that he had no fall records.

Spotted Sandpiper. Common summer resident.

Solitary Sandpiper. Abundant migrant.

Pectoral Sandpiper. Abundant migrant.

Least Sandpiper. Rare spring migrant.

Ring-billed Gull. May 20, 1890, five on the river.

Caspian Tern. Saw four on September 21, 1890.

Black Tern. During 1892 he saw a number during the spring migration on the river as well as one shot at the mouth of the Wapsipinicon River.

Mourning Dove. An abundant summer resident, with a few birds wintering. Found nesting as early as April 12.

(To be concluded in the June issue)

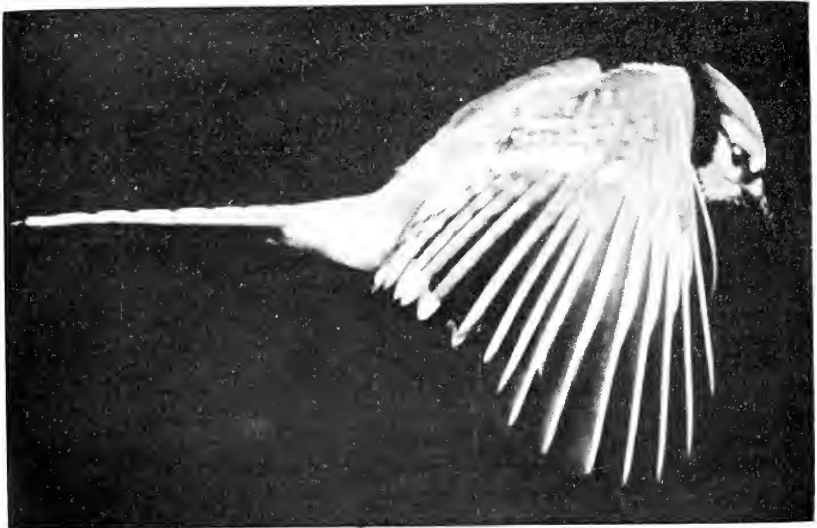
THE 1953 CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS IN IOWA

Compiled by FRED J. PIERCE

The Christmas bird census of 1953 broke our existing records, which are based on the years 1937 to 1952 as published in "Iowa Bird Life." The latest census established the highest total of species—89—with 136 observers in the field. The previous high was 86 in 1952, with 101 observers making the count. Davenport came up with the all-time high of 67 species; the previous high mark was 55 species recorded by Des Moines in 1952.

An unusually warm fall with very little snow extended through the month of November and part of December. Most streams remained open until late December, and the larger rivers had open water all through the month. This accounted for the large numbers of ducks of 15 species that were found on the census. Other important records were made, as will be noted from a careful study of the tabulated returns. We find that 17 species appeared at one station only, and 15 species appeared at two stations on the list. Only five species—Downy Woodpecker, White-breasted Nuthatch, Starling, Slate-colored Junco and Tree Sparrow—are found on all 18 lists.

The Oregon Junco was listed at Davenport and Sioux City. We are reluctant to accept sight records of this species, as many color shades and var-



BLUE JAY COMING IN TO A BIRD FEEDER

The dark background is due to the strong "Strob" light at close range which did not carry far enough back to show other objects (it was a cloudy day as well). Photographed by Fred W. Kent.

iations are to be seen in the juncos of the mid-west. We feel that the species, or subspecies, should be determined by collected specimens only (see the article, "Concerning Mongrel Slate-colored Juncos", by William Youngworth, Iowa Bird Life, 1949, pp. 72-73, which covers this subject quite well).

Data on place, time, weather and the observers who reported in the 1953 census are given below.

1. BACKBONE STATE PARK (Delaware County). Jan. 3, 1954; 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Cloudy most of the day; temp. 25° at start, 27° on return; fairly strong SE wind; about 3 miles on foot, 50 by car; trip included an auto ride from Winthrop to the park and return by a different road, with roadside list included in the census. Observers together most of the time. Earl Freeman, Paul Pierce, F. J. Pierce.

2. CEDAR FALLS (Snag Creek, Goose Lake, Union Bridge, Josh Higgins Park, Cedar Heights; river bottom forest 50%, upland forest 25%, savannas 15%, fields 10%). Jan. 1, 1954; 8 to 12 a.m., 1 to 4 p.m. Partly cloudy; temp. 28° to 42°; no wind; practically no snow on ground, rivers and ponds mostly frozen over. Total party hours, 17 on foot, 2 by car; total party miles, 20 on foot, 55 by car. Observers in three parties. Martin L. Grant, Frances Crouter, Eleanor Eifert, Russell Hays, Margaret Knoll, Jean Martin, Eleanor O'Connell, Beulah Rugg (Cedar Falls Audubon Society).

3. CEDAR RAPIDS (Cedar Lake, Cedar River south, C St. woods, Beverly, Manhattan, and intervening roads). Dec. 30; 8 a. m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear in a.m., snow flurries in p. m.; temp. 4° to 22°; light NW wind; ground mostly clear; party hours, 12; party miles, 8 on foot, 40 by car. Observers in one party in a. m., two parties in p. m. Emma Doornink, Dr. Karl Goellner, Dr. Alfred Meyer, Robert Norton, Cynthia Pattee, Mrs. Alice Petranek, Lillian Serbousek, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Vane, David Weekley, Bill Wernimont, Myra Willis.

4. COGGON (Pike dooryard and walk 3 miles northwest of town). Dec. 30; 8 a. m. to 4 p. m. Very cold and windy, snowing in p. m. Observations at home bird feeders by first observer, walk taken by second observer. Walter Pike, Robert Pike.

5. DAVENPORT (Blackhawk State Park, Rock River at dam and marshes, Barstow area, Mississippi River at Hampton, Ill., River Drive in Moline, Moline Airport, Port Byron hills, all the preceding in Illinois; scattered urban areas in Davenport, Credit Island, Davenport Municipal Airport, Nahant marshes, Locks and pools Nos. 14 & 15, Duck Creek Park, Oakdale, Pine Hill, Memorial Park, Holy Family and Fairmont Cemeteries, Giddings woods, Devil's Glen Park, scattered farm areas; deciduous woodland 35%, river shoreline 30%, open farmland 25%, coniferous woodland 5%, urban areas 5%). Dec. 27. Cloudy, high overcast; temp. 29° to 40°; wind S-SW, 10-25 m. p. h.; snow on ground where protected or drifted; river 75% frozen, open mostly below locks; party hours, 33 on foot, 24 by car, 3 miscellaneous; party miles, 34 on foot, 348 by car. Albert Baily, Lang Baily, Harry Carl, Dick Carlson, Clark Ehlers, Leo Doering, David Fawks, Elton Fawks, Jeanette Graham, Norwood Hazard, James Hodges, Fred Kent, Tom Kent, Gretchen Klamme, Dick Lorenz, Jerry McConoughey, Lowell Miller, Tom Morrissey, Peter Petersen Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Pete Petersen, Joe Schropp, Roland Schropp, Don Swensson, Ron Swensson.

Duck Hawk was seen by Clark Ehlers and Dick Carlson; identified by speed, size, pointed wings and shape. Carolina Wren found in a roosting nest in feeder at Credit Island at dusk by Hazard, Lorenz and Petersen, Jr. Northern Shrike was seen at Lock No. 14 by Miller, Graham and Hazard. Evening Grosbeak seen by Mr. and Mrs. Petersen at Davenport airport.

6. DES MOINES (Walnut Woods State Park, Waterworks Park, Impounding Reservoir, Pine Hill Cemetery, Fisher's Lake, Sycamore Park, Dove Woods, Kinglet Woods, 28th St. woods, Smouse Woods, Crocker Woods, Wagona Woods, Gray's Lake, Lovington, Morningstar, Meredith estate, Harding and Euclid, Glendale Cemetery; wooded areas, wooded streams, open fields, lakesides). Dec. 26; 8 a. m. to 5 p. m. Clear, to partly cloudy; temp. 30° to 43°; wind SW, 10-15 m. p. h.; total hours, 36 on foot, 10¾ by car; total miles, 33½ on foot, 101 by car. Observers in six parties. 1) Albert Berkowitz, Woodward Brown, George McGill; 2) Mrs. Harold Peasley, Mrs. Tom Pettitt, Mary Ellen Warters, Bruce Stiles, Mr. and Mrs. Lester Haskell; 3) Oliver Graves, Mrs. Toni Wendelburg; 4) Olivia McCabe, Mrs. Gladys Nicholson; 5) Dorothy Anderson, Ruth Chapman, Mrs. Schuyler Hunter, Mrs. Thos. Bond; 6) Dick Hanson, Lynn Willcockson.

7. DUBUQUE (Linwood and Mt. Calvary Cemeteries, Eagle Point Park, City Island, Mississippi River sloughs in Wisconsin; open fields 10%, coniferous woodlands 15%, deciduous woodlands 40%, river sloughs 35%). Dec. 27; 7:30 a. m. to 3 p. m. Mostly cloudy; temp. 25° to 35°; wind W, 12-18



WAITING FOR THE CENSUS-TAKER

Photograph of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker taken in color stereo by Fred W. Kent.

m. p. h.; 2 to 4 in. of old snow on ground; river open below dam, and 15 acres above dam in three places; total hours, 7 on foot, $\frac{1}{2}$ by car; total miles, 9 on foot, 5 by car. Observers in one party. Clifford Johnson, Bill Filter, Lois Lampe, R. K. Lampe, Floyd Wharton, Jack Bennett, Dale Wagner, Ival Schuster, Pauline Ruegnitz, Mr. and Mrs. George Crossley.

8. FAIRFIELD (Waterworks Park area). Dec. 27; 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Clear and mild; light wind. Observers together. Mr. and Mrs. Ben Taylor, Faye Lawson, Floyd Von Ohlen.

9. HARPERS FERRY ($7\frac{1}{2}$ -mile radius centering on $S\frac{1}{4}$ corner Sec. 15-96-3, from McGregor to U.S. Govt. Lock & Dam No. 9, including parts of Bloody Run Creek, Yellow River and Mississippi River bottoms; town suburbs 5%, pasture 10%, plowland 20%, overflow bottoms 30%, deciduous timber 30%, coniferous timber 5%). Dec. 27; 7 a. m. to 4 p. m. Cloudy; temp. 28° to 36°; wind SSW, 5-12 m. p. h.; ground bare; some fresh water open; total hours, 7 on foot, 2 by car; total miles, $11\frac{1}{2}$ on foot, 52 by car. Observers together. O. P. Allert, A. J. Palas, F. R. Palas.

10. IOWA CITY (City Park and river bottoms near by, Lake Macbride State Park, Swan Lake marsh; open farmland 45%, deciduous woodland 45%, coniferous woodland 10%). Dec. 30; 7 a. m. to 5 p. m. Clear in a. m., snow flurries in p. m.; temp. 10° to 20°; wind SW, 2-8 m. p. h.; ground clear of snow except on north slopes; ponds frozen, rivers with some open channels; total party hours, 13 on foot, 12 by car; total party miles, 15 on foot, 158 by car. Observers in four parties. Tom Kent, Fred Kent, Dr. and Mrs. Peter Laude, James Decker, A. Lang Baily, Norwood Hazard, Thomas Morrissey, Peter Petersen, Jr.

11. MARSHALLTOWN (Iowa River in and near city, also roadside list of 70 miles). Jan. 5, 1954; 9:30 a. m. to 2 p. m. Mostly clear; temp. 40°; no wind; 2 miles on foot, 74 by car. Observers together. Mrs. Wallace Norman, Mrs. J. Ray King.

1. PINE HOLLOW STATE PARK (Dubuque County). Dec. 26; 7:30 a. m. to 12:30 p. m. Clear, cloudy to partly cloudy; temp. 25° to 30°; wind W, 15 m. p. h.; 2 to 5 in. old crusted snow on ground; about 4 miles on foot, 35 by car, including trip from Farley to the Park and return. George Crossley.

Species on the roadside list but not seen within the park boundaries: Ring-necked Pheasant, Horned Lark, Starling, Meadowlark, English Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

13. PINE LAKE (region about Eldora, and roadside list; woodland 60%, open country 40%). Dec. 29; 9:20 a. m. to 4:45 p. m. Temp. 20°; wind NW, strong; 5 miles on foot, 67 by car. Observers together. Mrs. John Barlow, Mrs. J. Ray King.

14. SIOUX CITY (15-mile diameter; deciduous timber, hilly woodland and park areas 40%, wooded streams and springs 15%, coniferous cemetery and park areas 10% marsh country 5%, open fields and open country 20%, city and urban areas 10%). Dec. 20; 8 a. m. to 5 p. m. Overcast, with occasional rain; temp. 23° to 39°; wind SSE, 12 m. p. h.; ground bare, some snow patches; small lakes and small streams frozen, some open water in larger lakes and rivers; total party hours, $25\frac{1}{2}$ on foot, $10\frac{1}{2}$ by car; total party miles, 26 on foot, 157 by car. Observers in 10 parties. Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Barrett, Mr. and Mrs. George Marsh, Jeanette Marsh, Dr. and Mrs. J. L. Schott, Louis Nickolson, R. A. Jensen, Gertrude Weaver, Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Lambert, Mrs. Paul Moore, Herrold Asmussen, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Moir, Mr. and Mrs. Darrell Hanna, Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Schatz, Carl Kuhlman, Mr. and Mrs. Willis Howard, Robert Nickolson (Sioux City Bird Club).

15. SWEET MARSH (near Tripoli, and Wapsipinicon River bottoms near Readlyn; marsh 50%, river bottoms 40%, roadsides and farmland 10%). Dec.

(Continued on page 14)

	1. Backbone State Park	2. Cedar Falls	3. Cedar Rapids	4. Corcon	5. Davenport	6. Des Moines	7. Dubuque	8. Fairfield	9. Harpers Ferry	10. Iowa City	11. Marshalltown	12. Pine Hollow State Park	13. Pine Lake	14. Sioux City	15. Sweet Marsh	16. Tama	17. Webster City	18. Winthrop
Double-crested Cormorant					3									1				
Snow Goose			310		91	8000				18			.40	.2500	.5			
Mallard			4		12									.11				
Black Duck																		
Baldpate			2		5													
Pintail																		
Shoveller																		
Redhead			1		4													
Canvas-back																		
Lesser Scaup		1	19		69	12												
American Golden-eye					.452	.20	1											
Buffle-head			1		2													
Old-Squaw															2			
Ruddy Duck			1		1													
Hooded Merganser																		
American Merganser			1		110	1												
Red-breasted Merganser					.25													
Sharp-shinned Hawk					1													
Copper's Hawk					3													
Red-tailed Hawk			1		22	12	1		.21	.5			.4	.2	.2	.2	.1	1
Red-shouldered Hawk			5		4	3			3	1				1	1			
Rough-legged Hawk					2				3	1				1	1			
Bald Eagle					.46		3		2	4				3	3			
Marsh Hawk					1*													
Duck Hawk					3	.4				1					.1	1		
Sparrow Hawk																		
Ruffed Grouse					13	20			.1					.25				
Bob-white			3		20	1			3	.31			.9	.4	.3			
Ring-necked Pheasant		9			1													
American Coot			2		1	.15												
Killdeer																		1*
Herring Gull					17		.5											
Ring-billed Gull																		
Mourning Dove		2			109	1		.12						1			.21	
Screech Owl			3		2													
Great Horned Owl		1	3		1	2			1	1				2	.4			2
Barred Owl					7	6	1		1	4				1		1		
Long-eared Owl					1				2	2								
Short-eared Owl					3					4								
Saw-whet Owl																		
Pelted Kingfisher		1	4		9	1	2							2	1	2		1
Flicker (Yellow-shafted)		4	14	2	10	.25	2	2	3	.23	1	1	1	51	6			.12
Pileated Woodpecker		1																
Red-bellied Woodpecker					2	.21	7		1	.17	.15	5	.5	1	11	1		.6
Red-headed Woodpecker		3	6	2	21				1	.37								
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker					6	.4	.10		1						.19	1		

	1. Backbone State Park	2. Cedar Falls	3. Cedar Rapids	4. Corcoran	5. Davenport	6. Des Moines	7. Dubuque	8. Fairfield	9. Harpers Ferry	10. Iowa City	11. Marshalltown	12. Pine Hollow State Park	13. Pine Lake	14. Sioux City	15. Sweet Marsh	16. Tama	17. Webster City	18. Winthrop
Hairy Woodpecker	2	14	6	3	28	16	3	1	2	8	21	1	1	17	21	3	2	1
Downy Woodpecker	3	24	5	3	56	82	10	1	6	80	15	4	5	29	51	4	6	1
Horned Lark	1	1	1	1	19	4	1	1	1	6	1	5	1	860	1	1	1	1
Blue Jay	5	24	3	6	101	51	22	2	15	44	13	24	1	117	47	6	2	6
Crow	40	325	83	2	274	93	15	4	27	55	39	17	8	8,600	39	12	32	16
Chickadee	2	17	56	4	95	293	18	4	41	109	33	5	8	175	91	6	44	16
Tufted Titmouse	1	19	6	1	41	56	4	2	1	20	3	3	1	19	70	4	19	8
White-breasted Nuthatch	10	63	30	6	32	70	8	5	20	46	8	9	5	2	3	3	1	1
Pied-breasted Nuthatch	2	8	4	1	30	11	1	1	1	2	1	3	2	21	8	3	1	1
Brown Creeper	1	1	1	1	8	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Winter Wren	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Carolina Wren	1	1	1	1	2	13	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	950	2	1	1	
Catbird	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	49	3	1	1	
Robin	1	1	1	1	2	13	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Bluebird	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	2	6	1	1	10	7	6	1	1	1	6	2	1	9	2	1	1	
Bohemian Waxwing	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Cedar Waxwing	150	32	37	12	5	3	12	5	3	3	1	1	1	30	10	1	1	
Northern Shrike	15	78	1512	4	1231	234	38	6	8	800	200	40	50	2500	25	100	63	7
Starling	160	216	185	30	471	991	79	366	200	150	87	15	2000	75	200	87	25	
Myrtle Warbler	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
English Sparrow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Meadowlark	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Western Meadowlark	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Red-winged Blackbird	15	1	1	1	562	13	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Bronzed Grackle	1	32	5	2	83	192	23	6	47	77	26	25	2	31	6	8	14	
Cardinal	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Evening Grosbeak	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Purple Finch	15	4	1	1	1	9	12	19	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Pine Siskin	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Goldfinch	14	15	2	16	40	4	4	4	27	98	105	3	6	20	1	1	1	
Red-eyed Towhee	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Slate-colored Junco	5	240	88	6	483	325	46	9	171	193	75	15	30	800	67	25	85	
Tree Sparrow	159	110	13	5	619	818	39	3	379	263	99	28	20	270	180	15	170	
Chipping Sparrow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Field Sparrow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Harris's Sparrow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
White-crowned Sparrow	5	4	4	4	4	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
White-throated Sparrow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Fox Sparrow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Swamp Sparrow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Song Sparrow	10	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	
Snow Bunting	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Number of Species	23	31	42	17	67	52	31	13	22	43	22	21	22	50	30	20	25	15
Number of Observers	3	8	12	2	25	19	11	4	3	9	2	1	2	24	6	2	1	2

*See data under station in body of article.

Total Iowa list 89 species.

29; 7:45 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. Clear early with broken clouds, cloudy in p. m.; temp. 32°; wind NW, 10-25 m. p. h.; ground frozen, with small patches of snow; Sweet Marsh frozen, water running in Wapsipinicon; party miles, 20 on foot, 67 by car. Jack Heifner, Dr. Martin Grant, Russell Hays, Marvel Leach, Ettalee Hazlett, Myrle M. Burk.

16. TAMA (city limits, drive through Indian reservation, within 4-mile radius). Dec. 26; 4 hours. Mr. and Mrs. W. G. MacMartin.

17. WEBSTER CITY (6-mile radius including Graceland Cemetery, Kendall Young Park, Brewer Creek, Brigg's Woods, and areas along the Boone River north and south of town; deciduous woodland 55%, open farmland and fields 40%, city area 5%). Dec. 26; 7:30 a. m. to 12, 12:40 to 5 p. m. Clear to partly cloudy; temp. 26° to 39°; wind SW, light to moderate; light snow on ground in sheltered areas; rivers and creeks open in a few places; 6¾ hours on foot, 2¼ by car; 12 miles on foot, 38 by car. Dennis L. Carter.

The Killdeer was found along the Boone River about 5 miles south of Webster City on Dec. 20, as well as on the day of the census. It was carefully observed on the ground and in flight, and the characteristic call notes were heard.

18. WINTHROP (and vicinity, Buffalo Creek woods and roadsides). Dec. 27; 9 to 11 a. m., 2 to 3 p. m. Cloudy; temp. 30° in a. m., 35° in p. m.; brisk SW wind in a. m.; ground bare; 3 miles on foot, 15 by car. Paul Pierce, F. J. Pierce.

ADDITIONAL BIRD NOTES WHICH ACCOMPANIED THE CENSUSES.

Cedar Falls.—Bald Eagle seen in the area on Dec. 24, by Margaret Knoll.

Davenport.—Vesper Sparrow, one seen on Duck Creek on Dec. 23, by Lang Baily and Peter Petersen, Jr.; Hooded Merganser, one seen at Lock No. 14, by Norwood Hazard, Tom Morrissey and Petersen Jr., and one Ring-necked Duck, same location and date, by Hazard and Morrissey.

Des Moines.—Bald Eagle seen over Impounding Reservoir two days after Christmas; Red Crossbills seen in Waterworks Park, same day.

Dubuque.—Killdeer seen in the area on Dec. 26.

Iowa City.—Three of the four Saw-whet Owls seen on the census were banded.

Pine Lake.—Mrs. Barlow and Mrs. King saw a Carolina Wren at this place on Dec. 7.

IOU ANNUAL MEETING IN DES MOINES

The 32nd annual meeting of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union will be held Saturday and Sunday, May 15 and 16, in Des Moines. Headquarters for the meeting will be at the Hotel Kirkwood. The program will include talks and films in indoor sessions on Saturday, starting at 9:30 a.m. and concluding with the annual banquet Saturday evening. All sessions and the banquet will be at the hotel. Sunday will be devoted to our usual field trip, and there are many excellent areas in the Des Moines territory.

At this writing there are still places on the program, and the Program Committee requests that members who have papers or program material they would like to present at this meeting, please contact the chairman immediately. Final closing date for the program itself will be April 20. Send your requests to the program chairman, A. C. Berkowitz, 1912 Grand Ave., Des Moines 14. Don't be bashful about offering your material, as members of the society have first call on program time.—A. C. B.

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

By the time you read this issue of "Iowa Bird Life" our annual spring meeting at the Kirkwood Hotel, Des Moines, on May 15 and 16, will be but a few weeks away.

In reviewing our committee accomplishments during the past year, we have reason to take pride in the work of our Iowa Distributional Check-list Committee. With everyone's help, their efforts can be made more accurate and complete and eventually be published in "Iowa Bird Life." However, our Membership Committee, which includes all of us, has only seven new members as of February 15, 1954. I am sure that we can do better than seven. Remember that the strength of our organization depends on our interest and membership. Let's renew our efforts during these last few weeks, so that we can be proud of our membership drive in 1954 by the time of our May meeting. From the current activity displayed by the Des Moines Audubon Society, our Hosts, the meeting promises to be one of our best.—EDWARD L. KOZICKY.

GENERAL NOTES

A Wintering Mockingbird at Emmetsburg.—My wife and I have fed birds in winter for many years, but it was a great surprise to us when a Mockingbird appeared in our backyard about December 1, 1953, for we knew it was far out of its winter range. It was probably the most unusual visitor we have ever had. It came to our yard irregularly after its first visit, and fed on multiflora rose hips in a hedge, as well as suet, but it seemed to prefer the small blue berries from our juniper trees. We have numerous junipers among our trees, and their berries are a favorite food of many birds. For some reason, perhaps the dry fall months, most of the juniper berries fell to the ground. The Mockingbird, along with a Cardinal and the always present Blue Jays, fed on them many times as we watched from our kitchen bay window. Neighbors saw the Mockingbird and mistook it for a Robin and a Catbird. But the white flashing on its wings and tail when it flew made it easy to identify.—GILBERT KNUDSON, Emmetsburg, Iowa.

Another Record for the American Scoter in Iowa.—On November 23, 1952, E. C. Graham of Davenport killed an American Scoter (*Oidemia americana* Swainson) while duck-hunting on the Mississippi, at a point called the Outer Basin across the river from New Boston, Illinois. He brought the bird, a female, to the Davenport Public Museum, where it was identified by Lowell Miller, director of the Museum. It is now in the general collection of the museum. In 1950, Mr. Graham shot a King Eider at the same spot (Iowa Bird Life, XXI, 2). We are much indebted to him for his interest and cooperation.

Anderson (Birds of Iowa, 1907) lists three reliable records of this species in Iowa during the 1880's and 1890's. DuMont (Revised List of the Birds of Iowa, 1934) gives an additional sight record for the Missouri River near Omaha in 1927. I can find no recent records. Mr. Graham's bird would appear to be the fourth record for the State and the only specimen actually preserved.—THOMAS MORRISSEY, Davenport, Iowa.

Blue Jay Breaks Ice.—On the morning of January 9, 1954, it was 3 above zero at West Des Moines, Iowa; during the day the temperature did not rise above 15 or 18 degrees. When I got up, the bird bath which had been about half full was frozen solid. I took out a teakettle of water and poured it on top of the ice; this provided open water to the depth of an inch or two for a short time, but it soon froze over with a coating of ice so strong that the birds could walk around on it and were no longer able to get a drink.

I saw a Blue Jay hammering on the ice with his bill in almost exactly the manner of a woodpecker. Soon he had a hole through the ice and after

satisfying his thirst he flew away. I measured the thickness of the ice and found it to be three-sixteenths of an inch. The hole was about an inch in its greatest dimension and of irregular shape, showing clearly that the ice had been broken and not chipped out.—BRUCE F. STILES, Des Moines, Iowa.

Notes from Wheatland and Cedar Rapids.—In May of 1953, Myra Willis, Lillian Serbousek and I watched a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher building a nest in a hawthorn a few miles north of Wheatland.

During the Christmas holidays, 1953, Dolly and I waded deep snows in deer-tracked woods near Wheatland on two afternoons. We saw 27 species of birds: Red-tailed, Red-shouldered, Marsh and Sparrow Hawks, Ring-necked Pheasant, Barred Owl, Flicker, Pileated, Red-bellied, Red-headed, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Belted Kingfisher, Horned Lark, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Starling, Meadow-lark, Cardinal, Goldfinch, Slate-colored Junco, English, Tree and Song Sparrows. A dozen Red-headed Woodpeckers were feeding in a wind-swept area of a soybean field.

On January 23, ten Cedar Rapids Bird Club members saw 26 species along the Cedar River. Among them were Killdeer, Belted Kingfisher, Cedar Waxwing, Flicker, Mallard, Pintail and Golden-eye Ducks, and four Blue-birds eating poison-ivy berries.—C. ESTHER COPP, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Late 1953 Summer Notes from Sioux City.—The meager, but main fall flight of Orchard Orioles seemed to take place a bit later this year with the most birds being seen on August 20 and 23; the latter date was the last time they were seen this year. The main, heavy flight of Baltimore Orioles hit the Sioux City region between August 28 and 31, with occasional stragglers seen until September 12. August 29 and 30 found the Yellow Warbler flight in full swing, but it was quickly over, with the last stragglers being recorded on September 7 and 8. The Eastern Kingbird fall flight apparently took place on September 3 and 4. On the latter date we saw many dozens of Kingbirds in Iowa and across the Missouri River in Dakota County, Nebraska, but that was the last day they were seen.

The Nighthawk migration is a more prolonged affair. The first heavy flight was noticed on August 29, and occasional birds from then till September 10, when there was another heavy flight. By heavy flight I mean in the dozens or hundreds. The Nighthawk fall migration often continues until early October; my records show that out of 22 years when I have Nighthawk records, the birds have been recorded 11 years after October 1, with the latest date being October 11, 1926. On September 16, 1953, I watched a Nighthawk roost in a backyard tree from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., when it departed at the time several other Nighthawks came silently flying over. The bird perched about half the day, cross-wise on a small limb about the size of a pencil, and he sat comfortably in deep sleep. Shortly after noon the wind came up very strongly, and tossed the small limb around. This seemed to bother the bird and it flew 3 feet to another limb about 3 inches in diameter; here it perched lengthwise on the limb for the rest of the day. During the waning afternoon, this bird often woke up and preened itself quite vigorously. I have noticed one curious thing about the difference in the spring and fall migration. The Nighthawks joyously announce their spring arrival by giving their sharp "peent" call as they fly northward. But in the Fall they seem to fly over as silently as ghosts. I have yet to hear one give this call during an actual fall migration flight.

In the upper Missouri River valley we know that many migrating warblers pass through our area every fall, for we often hear them calling as they fly over during the night. But it is not often that conditions are just right at the time the warbler flight is passing through this region. The night of

September 2, however, furnished the right combination. Before the sun set that evening the mercury hit a plus 96 degrees F. During the early evening hours the wind switched to the north, bringing a heavy rainstorm and a resultant drop in temperatures so drastic that the next morning it was a shivering 47 degrees. This was truly a magic sequence for a bird watcher as it grounded everything in the way of small, night-migrating birds. Upon looking out into the yard on the morning of September 3, I was really amazed at what I saw. The low bushes were literally full of warblers and I could hear others chipping loudly in the general vicinity. I soon discovered there were not very many species involved, but there were large numbers present of the species represented. The most numerous were Redstarts, then many Wilson's Warblers, next Chestnut-sided Warblers, and bringing up the rear were several well-plumaged Black and White Warblers. Amid all the warbler band was a flock of Olive-backed Thrushes, nearly a week ahead of my earliest previous fall arrival date. Most of these birds stayed around in the vicinity that day, but the next morning they were all gone. I had been privileged to witness an uncommon fall warbler flight in western Iowa. I had entered in the record book the fall records of two warblers which I had never before listed as fall migrants.—WM. YOUNGWORTH, Sioux City, Iowa.

Late Fall Records from Northwest Iowa.—During the hunting season, a late movement of Red-tailed Hawks was noticed, with 3 being counted on November 11, 1953, in Osceola County; 7 counted on November 12, O'Brien County; 22 seen on November 18, Sioux and Lyon Counties. The species was on the move southward, as the weather grew colder. American Rough-legged Hawks were moving into the area, with 3 live ones and one dead one seen on November 11; 3 noticed on November 12; 8 listed on November 18, 4 listed on November 30, and 7 logged on December 31. Marsh Hawks and Sparrow hawks were seen on several occasions. Killdeers were around until November 18, and Wilson's Snipes were flushed on November 12 and again on November 30 in Sioux County. Mourning Doves and Meadowlarks were seen on most trips, with 32 larks counted on November 18, and 10 listed on November 30. Wintering Harris's and Song Sparrows were seen on several occasions during November. Lapland Longspurs were seen on most trips, but hadn't moved into Iowa in numbers, as far as I could ascertain. The largest number was a flock of about 500 seen on November 11, just south of the Minnesota line in Osceola County.—WM. YOUNGWORTH, Sioux City, Iowa.

Wintering Waterfowl in Woodbury County.—On January 29, 1954, Bob Nickolson, W. R. Felton, Jr., and I made a hurried trip to Brown's Lake to look over the assembled wintering waterfowl. This was our last field trip with Bob, as his army leave was up and he was leaving shortly for overseas; therefore we were glad to be able to report a good trip. A large flock of Mallards, numbering in the hundreds, possibly thousands at times, had kept a large patch of water open. We didn't realize it was so large until we walked out on the ice toward it. Mallards by the hundreds started taking off as we neared the hole; with them were one perfectly sound Lesser Snow Goose, and several Pintails. The interesting species, however, were a well-plumaged male Shoveller and a male Lesser Scaup. These latter two birds stayed long after the Mallards had left. They finally flew away and we three were satisfied with our identification.—WM. YOUNGWORTH, Sioux City, Iowa.

Snowy Owl Record from Cedar County.—The University Museum received a nice Snowy Owl (large male) shot by a farmer near Tipton in Cedar County. He reported that it had taken two of his ducks, but when it

took one of his wife's pet Pekinese, that was too much and he shot it (February 18, 1954).—FRED W. KENT, Iowa City, Iowa.

Three Records from Scott County.—*Gavia artica pacifica*, Pacific Loon: An immature unsexed bird has been located among the mounted specimens belonging to A. W. Housman of Pleasant Valley, Iowa. The bird was given to him in the flesh as being taken nearby on the Mississippi. Mr. Housman reports that he received the specimen during the winter of 1951-1952. This constitutes the first record of the species for Scott County.

Colymbus g. holböllii, Holboell's Grebe: Two birds of this species were observed on December 15, 1953, diving in the slush ice of the Mississippi at Lock No. 14. One specimen was secured and on examination proved to be an immature female. The bird has been placed in the skin collection of the Davenport Public Museum.

Plectrophenax n. nivalis, Snow Bunting: Though reported a regular winter visitor to Iowa, the Snow Bunting appears to be of rare enough occurrence in Scott County to merit attention. Two birds were observed on December 15, 1953, under paint test racks at Lock No. 14. Later observations by members of the Tri-City Bird Club recorded four buntings throughout the latter part of December in the same vicinity of testing racks, the birds evidently preferring the shelter proffered by the open structure.—A. LANG BAILY, Davenport, Iowa.

Glaucous Gulls in the Davenport Area.—Bruce Stiles added the Glaucous Gull (*Larus hyperboreus* Gunnerus) to the list of Iowa birds when he collected a female in Lewis Township, Pottawattamie County on March 27, 1941. This specimen is in the Morningside College collection in Sioux City. On December 8, 1953, with Right Rev. Thomas Feeney and Rev. Edward Greer, I visited Lock and Dam 14 on the Mississippi River 10 miles above Davenport. We found a large flock of 375 Ring-billed Gulls and 75 Herring Gulls which customarily appear there to feed on the disabled gizzard shad that appear as the river begins to freeze. With these gulls we also observed a single Franklin's Gull. However, our attention was soon directed to a very large, white gull which showed no black on the primaries. This gull stood out distinctly among the others because of its conspicuously larger size and pure white appearance. Although there were more than 100 gulls in the air, we had no difficulty locating and following this individual which frequently soared in a clumsy, hawk-like manner. It finally alighted on the water near two Herring Gulls beside which it seemed noticeably larger, whiter, and with a larger, heavier bill. We were able to watch it through a 20X 'scope and on one occasion I caught a glimpse of its yellow eye-lids. Father Greer noticed that at rest the bird's wings did not extend beyond the tail. There seems no doubt that this was an adult Glaucous Gull.

On December 10, 1953, Lang Baily of the Davenport Public Museum and I were unable to find this bird. However, on December 12, Pete Petersen Jr. and I found two large gulls flying about the boat basin at Lock 14. Neither of these birds showed dark primaries and their over-all appearance was light tan, much lighter than any of the young Herring Gulls which they somewhat resembled. With the aid of a 20X 'scope it was seen that the color was due to a very fine, dark vermiculations. The terminal one-fourth of their bills was black; their feet pink. Whether flying or swimming, the absence of black primaries was very noticeable. Fuertes' plate of immature Glaucous Gulls (No. 5 in the Birds of New York) depicts these birds perfectly. We concluded that these two birds were first-year Glaucous Gulls. Later the same day I found the adult of December 8 as it flew with a flock of 250 Ring-billed Gulls from the ice along Smith's Island.

Baily and Lowell Miller, director of the Museum, made an attempt to collect the birds December 15 but were unsuccessful. By December 16, the freeze-up of the river, which had proceeded in gradual stages, was complete. All but a few Herring Gulls had left the Lock and Dam and the Glaucous Gulls were not observed after that date. Glaucous Gulls have been recorded in the last two winters near St. Louis (Audubon Field Notes) and there is a possibility that they are regular but very rare transients along the Mississippi in early winter.—THOMAS MORRISSEY, Davenport, Iowa.

Unusual Records from the Davenport Area during 1953.—We wish to continue our series of reports on birds which are new to the Davenport Area or so unusual as to merit publication of their occurrence. We have also included some information on migratory waves in the belief that it will be of general interest.

SNOWY EGRET. One was seen at Nahant feeding along a mud-flat in company with shorebirds on May 23, 1953. However, one was reported with the very large flocks of American Egrets at Credit Island on April 18 by a member of the Illinois Audubon Society visiting the city. We disregarded this report along with two subsequent observations of a very small egret as attributable to an unusually small American Egret. It is possible that the Snowy Egret had been in the area since mid-April.

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON. On May 14, while driving along U.S. Highway 67 at the point where it crosses the Wapsipinicon and enters Clinton County, we saw two Yellow-crowned Night Herons feeding in the muddy ditch along the south side of the road. Both birds were adults. On July 5 an adult was seen at precisely the same spot.

WHISTLING SWAN. Six were observed on April 4 on one of the bays just above Lock and Dam 13 above Clinton, Iowa. This species must be considered a regular but uncommon spring and fall migrant in that area. We have had records for every migratory season since the spring of 1950.

CANADA GOOSE. On May 2 we found a flock of about 75 Canada Geese in an overflow area north of the McCausland Cemetery. Two of these birds were wearing bright green neck bands about 3 inches in width. We reported this observation to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and were informed that these geese had been banded in the winter of 1952-1953 at Cambridge, Maryland. Apparently these Atlantic Coast birds had crossed into the Mississippi Flyway by following the chain of lakes created by the T.V.A. project. On the same day we observed a flock of 10 Mallard-sized geese of the Canada Goose complex. These geese, which seemed little larger than the Scaups which they accompanied, sat very high upon the water and carried their rather short, delicate heads and necks very erect. Their bills were quite stubby. All in all, they gave a quite different impression than any other waterfowl. These birds were almost certainly referable to Hutchins's Goose (*B. c. hutchinsi* Richardson) for which we have had only three other records since 1938.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK. Other observers may be interested in comparing their own records of this hawk's migrations with ours: April 19, 1; April 21, 20 in the evening, a loose flock; April 22, two compact flocks of 18 and 22 at mid-morning; April 23, 1. The three larger flocks followed the course of the Mississippi River in east-west direction at the point of observation.

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER. Ten of these plovers were seen May 12 in the company of some Golden Plovers and in the same field in which Golden Plovers had been observed since May 7. This field, about $\frac{1}{4}$ section in area, is unusual in that every year it attracts shorebirds, even when it is quite dry as it was in 1953. Black-bellied Plovers began to appear in numbers about the second week of September on the mud-flats in Pool 13 above Clinton. As

many as 50 could be seen daily in this area. A few were found at the mud-flat in Credit Island harbor as late as October 13. We regard this species as a regular but rare spring migrant and a not uncommon fall migrant.

SANDERLING. This shorebird has been considered a very rare migrant in eastern Iowa. We have only one spring record. However, Sanderlings began to appear on the mud-flats in Pool 13 above Clinton after the middle of September, and by early October they were one of the commonest and most conspicuous birds in the area. Two flocks of 50 were observed, and as late as October 13, 30 birds were counted.

FRANKLIN'S GULL. On October 13 and October 30 we saw flocks of these gulls resting on a mud-spit in the Spring Lake Refuge in Pool 13. On one occasion a flock of 16 was observed and on another occasion 30 birds were seen. We are accustomed to recording only one or two birds per season.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH. One of these nuthatches was observed in May. In December, 5 were recorded as wintering in the Davenport area. Red-breasted Nuthatches are cyclic in their occurrence in Iowa. Apparently the cycle is a two-year type. The 1953 invasion, however, was less noticeable than that of 1951.

WINTER WREN. This wren is not reported to be affected by population cycles. Nevertheless, our 1953 records indicate a period of unusual abundance. A total of 11 was observed on 6 occasions between April 2 and April 30, and 3 were observed in December. Between 1938 and 1952 we had a total of only 17 observations.

PINE WARBLER. Most observers in eastern Iowa consider this species to be fairly common in spring migration. We had no records of the bird until May 1, 1953, when 2 were observed as they fed in bare shagbark hickories at Credit Island Park in Davenport. These birds crept about slowly, examining cracks in the wood and under bark. One sang often, the song resembling a Chipping Sparrow's but much slower. Their underparts were brighter yellow than most illustrations would indicate; in one the striping of the flanks was very dark but in the other almost absent. We are unable to account for our failure to observe these birds before. Their song is quite distinctive and certain to attract attention.

MOURNING WARBLER. Many observers in eastern Iowa commented on the large number of Mourning Warblers observed in the spring of 1953. On May 22, I recorded 5 males and a female at Credit Island. In the deep timber on the lower half of the Island were about 20 brush-heaps of various sizes. On May 23, I found 14 Mourning Warblers in these tangles and I assume more were present in other parts of the island which I was unable to visit.

WARBLERS. Although the more common warblers appeared in large numbers in 1953 we found few of the rarer species. Golden-winged, 3; Blue-winged, 1; Parula, 2; Cerulean, 2; Cape May, 2; Black-throated Blue, 1 on September 13, our second record for the area.

PINE SISKIN. One, our first record for the area was observed on April 7 while it was feeding on elm buds with a flock of Goldfinches. During the winter of 1952-53 and in the subsequent spring, this species was unusually common throughout the State and was reported in large numbers by most observers.

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW and **FOX SPARROW.** Four White-throats and 2 Fox Sparrows were reported as winter residents in the Davenport area from December, 1952 to March, 1953. These unusual winter resi-

dents could be found every day in the vicinity of feeding stations.—THOMAS MORRISSEY, REV. EDWARD C. GREER, RT. REV. THOMAS J. FEENEY, Davenport, Iowa.

Iowa Birders in Arizona.—Nearly every year for the past 30 years, I have taken a Christmas bird census, beginning in Keokuk County and continuing through most of these years with Fred Pierce, who has an even longer census record. Due to weather, distance, and conflicting work schedules, this custom was broken last year, and the Christmas vacation scheduled for the Jones family made a local Christmas census impossible again this year. The vacation consisted of a trip to Phoenix, Arizona, with side trips near Phoenix and one into Old Mexico.

A crowded travel schedule did not allow sufficient time for birding, but a few new birds were added to our life lists.

Our first thrill came with seeing ten Sandhill Cranes between Delphos and Elida, Texas. The weather was very cold and windy, so I stalked them rather hurriedly in the field where they were feeding about 200 yards away from the road. They wheeled across in front of us and settled down farther away.

The Roadrunners entertained us well as we saw our first one near Tucson as it ran across the road in front of us along the paved highway. Two others were seen in the residential district in Phoenix; one in the orange groves and one calmly feeding like a Leghorn chicken in an enclosed yard. A fourth was seen south of Tucson.

The Desert Sparrow was a new one to us and gave many opportunities for observation all the way from the Carlsbad Caverns area through Phoenix to Mexico and up through Flagstaff. They were so neatly marked and interesting I was tempted to trap a few and bring them back to Iowa.

The Juncos along the Oak Creek Canyon near Flagstaff suspiciously resembled a few of Iowa's darker specimens of "Oregon-like" Juncos. These were probably the "real McCoy."

Wherever we stopped for birding along any of the desert roads we saw Cactus Wrens and became quite attached to them.

We found the Phainopepla very obliging near Mesa, where either his curiosity or his vanity brought him out for all to see and admire. Abert's Towhee, also seen here, was less obliging.

It was apparently more luck than skill that got us the Pyrrhuloxia not far north of Nogales, where we had stopped to watch a few sparrows which proved to be Gambel's; also two coveys of the Gambel's Quail were seen.

Near the ultra-modern round home designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in Phoenix we saw the House Finch in considerable numbers.

At the Parker residence we were awakened nearly every morning by Mockingbirds and Cardinals as they fed on the bright red *Phyocanthus* berries.

One of the highlights of our trip was a visit with Harry and Ruth Crockett (contributors to the Arizona section of Pettingill's "Guide to Bird Finding") who, we discovered too late, lived only six blocks from our host, the H. H. Parkers. Now we can enjoy much more fully the January issue of "Arizona Highways" with the marvelous photographs of the Cactus Wren by the Crocketts. At the backyard feeding station of the Crocketts we saw our first Inca Doves, and also the Arizona Cardinal, Gila Woodpecker and Red-shafted Flicker.—MYRLE L. JONES, Estherville, Iowa.

RECENT BIRD BOOKS

LAND BIRDS OF AMERICA, by Robert Cushman Murphy and Dean Amadon (McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1953; cloth, folio size, pp. 1-240, with 221 color and 43 black-and-white photographs; price, \$12.50).

Here is a new kind of bird book. The outstanding feature is the wealth of photographs in color, 221 of them by some of the best-known photographers of the country.

The text is divided into 30 short chapters of interesting facts and personal experiences about each major group of species. There is an interesting introduction which presents an over-all history of bird study in the United States, and a final chapter on bird photography.

It is an attractive and worthwhile book, no question about it. However, one cannot help but protest the authors' disparaging estimate of bird art since Audubon. As a matter of fact, contemporary bird artists have done remarkably fine work and should be highly complimented on what they have accomplished. One cannot judge the quality of art from books where an artist is compelled to crowd several species of birds on one plate in order to keep costs down and to accede to ornithologists' demands. Audubon, it must be remembered, was not so handicapped.

Further, one cannot help but voice a mild protest at least relative to remarks made about "the muddy medium which in our own day has come to be called 'tempera'." Actually opaque water color, whether tempera or gouache, is one of the most versatile and satisfactory of media for the painting of bird portraits.

The authors adversely criticize bird artists for painting birds in profile, yet of the 221 birds portrayed in color in this book 154 are in profile. It is interesting to note that 117 of these same pictures are photographs of birds at their nest sites. Perhaps this reveals a limitation of bird photography. At least it tends toward monotony. A few of the color plates seem to be photographs of mounted specimens.

Despite the criticism, however, bird photography can stand on its own feet. It can be especially useful, for instance, in teaching the facts of color. In the photograph of the Red-shafted Flicker, for example, the blues, especially in the bark of the tree, are very evident. I doubt if any artist has ever been able to convey to anyone or convince people that there is more blue in nature than consciously meets the eye. Yet here we see blue where the camera sees all and records it.

In the introduction Martin Grant is mentioned as "an ornithologist with a taste for linguistics." It is fitting and proper that so able an ornithologist should receive some well-deserved recognition.

"Land Birds of America" presents a very good cross-section of the land birds of the entire United States. It portrays western birds as well as eastern in an attractive and comprehensive manner.—EARNEST W. STEFFEN.

* * * * *

A number of our members have acquired parrakeets and have these cage birds as interesting indoor companions. We have had inquiries for books on the care of these birds, and are glad to recommend these two new publications.

One book is "Care and Breeding of Budgies (Shell Parrakeets)", by Cyril H. Rogers (Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1953; 93 pp., 40 illustrations, paper binding; price, 65c). The other is "All About Parrakeets", by Earl Schneider (Practical Science Publishing Co., Orange, Conn., 1953; 107 pp., 1 col. pl., many text figs., paper binding; price, \$1.50).

These books contain full information on parrakeets—their history, how to cage and house them, proper feeding, training, how to breed for color, how to exhibit, as well as chapters on how to keep the birds healthy.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Among our new members are: David E. Archie, editor of "The Iowan", of Shenandoah; A. Lang Baily, curator of birds of the Davenport Public Museum; Joe Stanton, member of State Conservation Commission, Des Moines; Gilbert Knudson, editor of the Emmetsburg "Reporter" and "Democrat", semi-weekly newspapers of northwest Iowa. Mr. Knudson writes a column called "Outdoors" in his newspapers. This is a very popular feature and has aroused much interest in fishing, hunting, dogs (he is an authority on dogs), bird life, and various other outdoor topics that he has touched upon.

Harry E. Rector, of Vinton, received one of the Nash Conservation Awards, and in January made a trip to Washington, D.C., where the presentation was made at a Hotel Statler banquet. He was honored for his contributions to public understanding of Conservation through lectures, demonstrations, and personal contact with farm and youth groups. The award was in the form of a beautiful plaque prepared by the Nash-Kelvinator Corporation. Mr. Rector was one of 20 award winners, selected from a group of 729 nominees from the entire United States. He is well known to our membership, having occasionally been a speaker at bird club meetings, and serving as a state conservation officer for many years in eastern Iowa. He now heads his own insurance business at Vinton. Mrs. Rector accompanied her husband to Washington and they made the trip by airlines.

The Sioux City Bird Club are sponsors of a Zell C. Lee Memorial, and in recent months have been accepting contributions to the Memorial fund. The committee is composed of these persons: Miss Esther M. Groth, chairman; Carleton C. Van Dyke, treasurer; Mrs. W. W. Barrett, Mrs. Louise Freeze, Mrs. Darrell M. Hanna, Miss Alice Loeffler, Wayne Menter, Miss Grace Smith. As a fitting memorial, this committee decided upon a set of Audubon prints to be presented to the elementary grade schools of Sioux City. The late Miss Zell C. Lee, a well-known amateur naturalist and business woman, was president of the Sioux City Bird Club for a full decade (a biographical sketch was printed in *Iowa Bird Life*, 1953, p. 52).

One of our readers complained that only one observer has been sending in bird notes from a section of the state where there is a rather large local bird club and a good deal of interest. We are in complete agreement with the thought that many people should take their bird study a little more seriously and place their observations on permanent record—observations that are otherwise lost to our science. We can print only those notes which are sent in, and we know that many more people could contribute to our columns than do so at the present time.

As a matter of curiosity, we went back over the 1953 volume of "Iowa Bird Life" to see how many persons had contributed notes of any length.

We printed 80 pages during the year. Of this number 4 pages were title pages, the membership roll covered 4 pages, and the Constitution, By-laws, and Articles of Incorporation 3½ pages.

Figuring space rather roughly, we found that the following people contributed one-half page or more of text or photographs (numbers indicate page lengths of combined articles): Woodward Brown, 1; Mrs. Wm. Collins, ½; Crooks & Hendrickson, 4; Mrs. Geo. Crossley, 7; Fish, Scott & Hendrickson, ½; Russell Hays, 1½; James Hodges, 2½; Fred Kent, 6; Pearl Knoop, ½; Dr. Kozicky, 1; F. J. Pierce, 12; Drs. Frank & Mary Roberts, ½; James Sieh, 7½; Earnest Steffen, 3½; Bruce Stiles, 1; Henry Weston, Jr., 4; Wm. Youngworth, 11.

The above tabulation adds up to 75½ pages, leaving 4½ pages of short notes to which a half dozen of our members contributed.

BIRD BOXES

A BLUEBIRD BOX

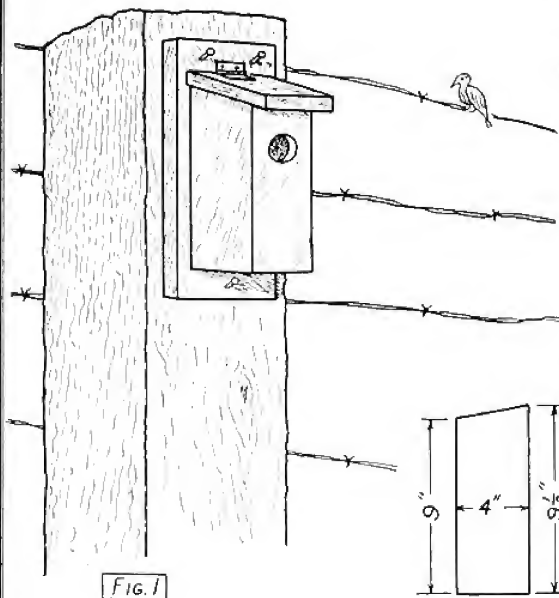
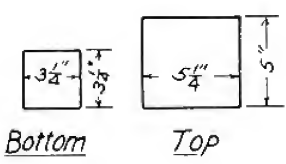


FIG. 1



Bottom

Top

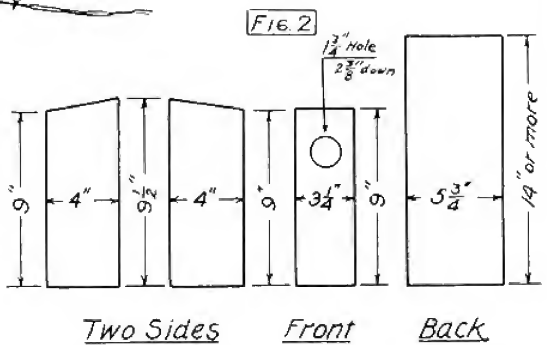


FIG. 2

Two Sides

Front

Back

A WREN HOUSE

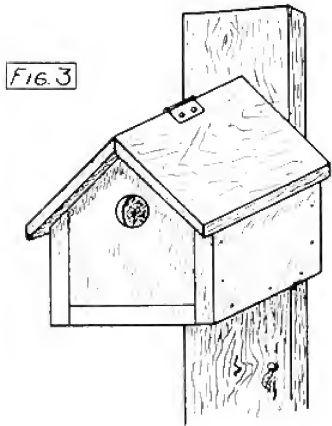
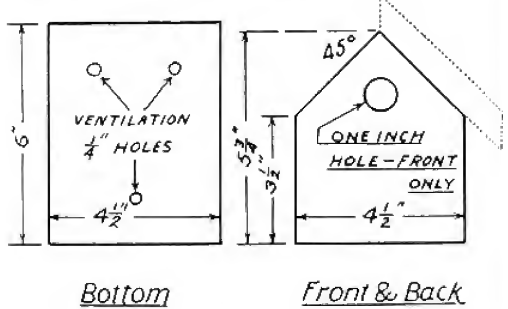


FIG. 3



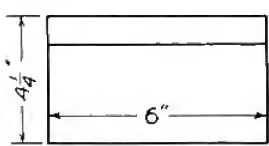
Bottom

Front & Back

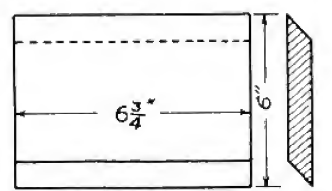
FIG. 4



1 1/2" Hinge



Two Sides



Roof - 2 Pieces

END VIEW