

## Abstract of the Proceedings of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club for 1906.

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*January 4, 1906.* Annual Meeting. Thirty-eight members present. The election of officers for the ensuing year resulted as follows: President, Dr. Spencer Trotter; Vice-President, William A. Shryock; Secretary, Herbert L. Coggins; Treasurer, Stewardson Brown.

Mr. Rehn outlined the distribution of the various species and races of Thrashers, illustrating his remarks by a map. An exhibition of lantern slides followed, and the Club then adjourned to the annual collation.

*January 18, 1906.* Seventeen members present.

Dr. Trotter read a paper on "The Life of Charles Lucien Bonaparte."

A Catbird (*Galeoscoptes carolinensis*) obtained at Stone Harbor, Dec. 31, 1905, by Dr. W. E. Hughes, was exhibited.

The abundance of Brant (*Branta bernicla*) along the coast was remarked upon, but it was generally conceded that the present open winter had been attended by a scarcity of small birds.

*February 1, 1906.* Twenty-four members present.

Dr. Charles Jack and Mr. Arthur F. Hagar were elected Associate members.

Mr. Stone, under the title of "A Review of the Year in Ornithology," gave an outline of the past year's work in the bird world, and also dwelt upon the more important lines for future investigation, both general and local. Mr. Coggins read an article from a periodical entitled "Why Sea Birds are White," which was followed by a discussion.

*February 15, 1906.* Sixteen members present.

Mr. C. J. Hunt read a paper entitled "The Pensauken Creek and its Bird Life," based upon observations made during a

number of visits to this attractive spot on the New Jersey side of the Delaware, and illustrated the value of concentrated labors in a limited area.

Under the title "A Few Parodies," John D. Carter gave interesting representations of the songs and call-notes of a number of birds, and justly emphasized the value of the sense of hearing in the identification of birds afield.

Mr. Harlow described the call of the Short-eared Owl (*Asio accipitrinus*), which he had heard recently on the Tinicum meadows after dark. The note has not been correctly described in any work on American Ornithology with which he was familiar, though Dresser, in his "Birds of Europe," gives a good representation of it.

*March 1, 1906.* Twenty-five members present.

Mr. Paul C. Brewer was elected an Associate member.

Wm. B. Evans read a paper entitled "The Birdman Afield," in which he spoke of the illusions experienced by those who make field observations, and the great care that should be exercised in establishing records where there was the least possibility of doubt.

Mr. Pennock reported that thirty or forty Robins (*Merula migratoria*) had wintered at Kennett Square, Pa.

Mr. Morris recorded a Killdeer (*Oxyechus vociferus*) that had wintered at Atlantic City, N. J.

*March 15, 1906.* Twenty-four members present.

Mr. Norman W. Swayne was elected an Associate Member.

Mr. Samuel N. Rhoads addressed the Club on "Florida's Subtropical Avifauna," outlining a recent trip to the southern part of the state, and dwelling upon the various birds peculiar to the lower extremity of the peninsula.

Mr. Stewardson Brown described a trip to Bermuda undertaken during the previous summer, in company with Dr. and Mrs. Britton, of the New York Botanic Garden, and commented upon the birds that he had observed.

*April 5, 1906.* Thirty-two members present.

Mr. Duncan McFarlane was elected an Associate Member.

Mr. Stone read a paper entitled "Some Light on Night Migration," describing graphically a flight of migrants observed on the evening of March 27, by the aid of the illumination from a burning lumber-yard in West Philadelphia (see Auk, 1906, p. 249).

Dr. W. E. Hughes exhibited a number of lantern slides illustrating the country traversed by him during two hunting-trips to Chihuahua, Mexico, which he had previously described before the Club.

*April 19, 1906.* Twenty members present.

Dr. Spencer Trotter read a paper entitled "The Relationship of the Passeres," which with the aid of charts gave a comprehensive presentation of the current classification of the Passerine group. An extended discussion followed.

*May 3, 1906.* Twenty-two members present.

Dr. Henry Tucker was elected an Associate Member and Mr. R. P. Sharples a Corresponding Member.

A paper on "Some Delaware Herons," prepared by Mr. Pennock, was read by Mr. Stone. A rookery of Great Blue Herons (*Ardea herodias*) located near Wilmington was described, which contained about twenty-five occupied nests.

Mr. Hunt read a paper entitled "The Shifting of a Crow Roost" (see Auk, 1906, p. 429).

Mr. Morris described a trip to Eaglesmere, Pa., from which he had just returned. He was impressed by the great difference in the advancement of vegetation in the mountains and about Philadelphia as compared with the nearly uniform progress of nest-building at the two localities.

*May 17, 1906.* Twenty-one members present.

Mr. Stone reviewed the work and theories of Hugo De Vries and their bearing upon the evolution of animal species. He considered that "Mutation" if it played any part in evolution was not a factor so far as vertebrate animals were concerned. A general discussion followed.

Mr. Fowler described a recent trip to the lower Susquehanna in the vicinity of York Furnace, Pa.

*October 4, 1906.* Twenty-five members present.

Mr. Harlow read a paper on the breeding of the Bobolink in the vicinity of Croydon, Bucks Co., Pa. He had observed about eight pairs of the birds within a radius of about a mile, and saw some of them practically every day from June 24 to July 26. Diligent search failed to discover the exact breeding-places, but on June 29 he found several young birds which were obviously only a few days out of the nest.

Mr. Stone reported several hundred birds killed on the tower of the City Hall on the night of August 28. While great numbers had been picked up before he visited the building he saw and identified the following: Redstart 47, Maryland Yellowthroat 38, Black-and White Warbler 27, Reedbird 26, Ovenbird 16, Small-billed Water Thrush 8, Kingbird 2, Yellow-breasted Chat 2, and one each of the following: Nighthawk, Alder Flycatcher, Orchard Oriole, Baltimore Oriole, Purple Finch, Red-eyed Vireo, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Parula Warbler, and Veery. The platform on the tower where the lights are located, some 500 feet from the ground, was white with the excreta of the birds that had rested there, and as one looked over the railing dead birds could be seen lodged on the cornices and ledges that project from the tower at various points below. Many live birds had also found their way into the uppermost story of the City Hall which has open passage-ways leading to the main roof.

The death of Mrs. Edward Robins on July 6, 1906, was announced and the following minute adopted:

The Delaware Valley Ornithological Club has heard with deep regret of the death of Mrs. Edward Robins and desires to record its sense of the loss that the cause of bird-protection has suffered in the death of so earnest a worker, and also to express its appreciation of Mrs. Robins' labors in furthering popular interest in birds and bird study.

*October 18, 1906.* Twenty-two members present.

Mr. Palmer read a paper on a "Robin and Grackle Roost near Concordville, Pa." (See *antea*, p. 26).

The following amendments to the By-Laws were adopted:

Add to Art. IV, Sect. 2.

Not more than eight Associate members shall be elected in any one year, the actual number to be chosen at any meeting being determined by a majority vote of the Active members present. Elections for members shall be held at the first regular meeting of November and March.

Alter Art. IV, Sect. 3, to read:

A unanimous vote of the Active members present and voting shall be necessary for the election of an Active, Corresponding or Honorary Member, and a two-thirds vote for the election of an Associate member or officer.

*November 1, 1906.* Twenty-seven members present.

Messrs. George C. Roberts and Ernest A. Butler were elected Associate members.

Mr. Carter described the finding of a nest of Henslow's Sparrow (*Ammodramus henslowi*), near Marlton, N. J., on May 21, 1906. It was located deep in a tussock of grass, in a small cranberry bog, and contained at this date four eggs.

Mr. DeHaven spoke of a Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), which had been observed by him during the past summer at Beach Haven, N. J.

*November 15, 1906.* Sixteen members present.

Dr. Weygandt summarized his observations upon the birds he had found roosting upon the ground. In winter he had found the following on the ground after dark, obviously settled for the night: Woodcock, Quail, Snowy Owl, Meadowlark, White-throated Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, Junco, Song Sparrow, Fox Sparrow and Robin. In summer he had recorded the Ruffed Grouse, Killdeer, Whip-poor-will, Night Hawk and Vesper Sparrow. He was inclined to consider ground roosting far more prevalent than generally supposed.

Mr. Keim, who had just arrived from Washington, gave an account of the Congress of the American Ornithologists' Union.

Mr. Brown reported a Snowy Owl at Avalon, N. J., November 8.

December 6, 1906. Twenty-nine members present.

Mr. Stone read a paper received from Mr. Richard F. Miller, giving an account of the occurrence of the Lapland Longspur (*Calcarius lapponicus*) in the Delaware Valley. The first record was a specimen obtained in a market in Philadelphia by John Cassin in January, 1849. The next specimen that we know of was secured by C. D. Wood from a flock of Snow Buntings at League Island, Phila., about 1864. In 1895 four were observed: two at Princeton, N. J., February 13, one of which was shot, one shot by Isaac Ruff on the New Jersey shore of the Delaware opposite Tinicum, February 21, and another obtained near Salem, N. J., by Henry Warrington, December 28. The last was associated with Horned Larks, the first two with Snow Buntings. Mr. Miller recorded a seventh specimen seen in a field at Harrowgate, Phila., November 22, 1904. "It was alone, but evidently had come south with a flock of Titlarks that were nearby. Unlike the wild Titlarks, it allowed me to approach within twenty-five feet and less as it stalked silently about, furtively watching me before taking wing. When flushed it flew only a few rods, alighting in the short grass and running restlessly about like a Robin. It was thus flushed several times, as I wished to be fully convinced of its identity before shooting it. At the discharge of the gun it arose with a startled cry, and with rapidly vibrating wings it mounted higher and higher in the air, occasionally uttering a one-syllable alarm-cry, till it was soon a mere speck in the sky, and then disappeared from sight."

Mr. Miller was of the opinion that if flocks of Horned Larks were carefully examined more Longspurs might come to light, as their presence among these birds would be much less readily detected than among the Snow Buntings.

Mr. Harlow exhibited a Migrant Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus migrans*) obtained at Oak Lane, Phila., December 1, 1906, and recorded a Saw-whet Owl (*Cryptoglaux acadicus*) taken in Pike County, October 30. Mr. Spaeth reported two of the latter species shot at Cape May Point, N. J., November 30. Mr. Hunt mentioned a winter record for the Ruby-crowned Kinglet.

*December 20, 1906.* Twenty-two members present.

Messrs. Baily, Carter, Evans and Stone described a trip to Pocono Lake taken during June of the present year (see *antea*, p. 30).

Mr. Stone reported a Red-throated Loon (*Gavia lumme*) picked up on a street in the city early in the morning (Dec. 20) and brought alive to the Museum. It seemed quite uninjured, but when placed on the floor could not raise itself in flight nor could it stand upright or lift its breast from the ground. It twisted its head from side to side, sometimes crooking it in the middle after the manner of a goose, and struck viciously at any one who approached within reach. A Goshawk (*Astur atricapillus*) was exhibited, obtained Nov. 15 at Cape May Point, N. J.; two others were reported from near Tuckerton, N. J., the middle of the same month, and taxidermists reported large numbers all over the country.