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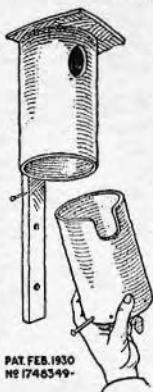


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HABITS OF THE WARBLING VIREO

By HARRY C. MONK.

As no one seems to have written on the habits of the Warbling Vireo in Tennessee the following sketch may be of interest. It is based upon general observations made over a period of years, chiefly in the Centennial Park colony, in Nashville.

The chosen haunts of this vireo are groves of medium sized trees growing about houses or in parks. Like the Robin this species clings to man's lawns and shade trees. Not many such situations are occupied by the birds as they are very locally distributed.

Spring arrival is in April, with the dates spread over the first three weeks of the month, in a period of years. Earliest is April 5, 1931. Usually but one or two birds are seen at first, with the remainder coming in soon after. One year however, five arrived on the same day.

There is much singing, chasing and quarreling among the birds following arrival. Some of this activity must be due to territorial disputes, but much of it may be ascribed to courtship. Little time is lost in settling down and nest building begins early. Some birds begin incubating within four weeks after arrival.

The nest is a typical vireo structure, a small basket suspended from a forked twig. It is quite distinct in appearance from the nests of other local breeding vireos, being expertly constructed of fine materials, the whole being smoothly felted together and remindful of the fabric of nests of the Yellow Warbler. It lacks the coarse fibers and looseness seen in the nest of the Red-eyed Vireo and the shaggy look of the White-eye's home. The bottom is almost flat and rather wide, the nest being shallow and with a contracted brim.

Nests are usually placed well out on a limb so that they swing free and have nothing beneath them. Only one of thirty-five recorded nests was invisible from beneath. One-fourth of this number were hung directly over roads. All were in deciduous trees, there being nine species in the list.

Height above ground of the nest varies much. While none have been measured, they appear to range from eight to forty feet in the air, with the majority below twenty-five feet. Several have been found so low that they could be examined from the running board of a car standing on the road under them.

Fresh sets of eggs have been found from May 5 to May 25 in different years, but the majority are laid in the first half of the month. In general, nesting dates correspond with migration dates and vary somewhat with different pairs.

A set contains three or four eggs. Five nests held four eggs each, and four nests contained three eggs apiece. Only one brood is reared in a season as far as is known. Nests that have met with an accident are quickly replaced in a neighboring tree.

The young remain in the nest about two weeks. In one case where the

date of hatching was known the birds left the nest on the fifteenth day. It has been difficult to learn much about family life after the nest is vacated. The fledglings are known to remain with their parents for two weeks and doubtless receive some care for a longer period. No dependent young have been seen after July in any year.

The majority of these birds remain in their nesting locality throughout their stay here, but a few wander about in late summer. They regularly appear in the trees about the writer's home, nearly a half mile from the nesting colony.

Departure takes place in September and most of the last dates are in the first half of that month. These last birds are often heard singing in fair voice. Latest fall date is September 25, 1934.

NASHVILLE, TENN., Sept., 1934.



TENNESSEE'S PROGRAM FOR WILD LIFE RESTORATION

By DAMON HEADDEN, State Game Warden.

The purpose of the Department of Game and Fish of Tennessee is to save and increase the valuable wild life of the State. We who constitute the personnel of the Department at this time have projected a definite program to the end that a basis may be established upon which may be built a self-perpetuating system. Our greatest need in bringing this primary program to fulfillment is the co-operation of the people of Tennessee.

Our program calls first for the enactment of laws which give adequate protection to the game and fish of Tennessee. Second comes proper enforcement of these laws. Next on the program is the restocking plan. We have gone into this feature of the program with considerable expenditures after careful consideration. In the past, many thousands of quail have been bought in Mexico and Virginia and planted in the Tennessee cover. Now, however, we have three quail hatcheries, all operating successfully, so that this year and next spring we shall be able to plant more than twice as many quail from the hatcheries as we have bought in any year.

Fish hatcheries are located at Morristown and Springfield. From them we have removed hundreds of thousands of bream, bass and trout for placement in the streams and lakes of the State.

Placing of new stock of quail in suitable cover has already shown impressive result. Not in generations has Tennessee had so many quail in her fields and thickets as this year. The result of our stream and lake restocking will begin to show within a year or two. Our assumption is that in no state are the waters better adapted to fish propagation than in Tennessee. We propose to make Tennessee one of the nation's finest fishing states. We are placing deer in the forests where once there were great herds of them. We are restoring the wild turkey to river bottom and mountain cover. We are experimenting with the guinea fowl as a game bird, and our progress thus far has been encouraging. The guinea has shown an aptitude to atavism which is little short of astonishing. It is fast and wary. We are restocking red fox for the fox hunter in territory where the fox's presence is not offensive to the farmer. We are even taking care of the shortage of raccoons in 'coon hunting country. The Department co-operates fully with federal authorities in protecting migratory waterfowl.

Briefly, our program is founded upon a determination to strive for sufficient legislation, to enforce the game and fish laws and to educate the people of Tennessee to conservation ideals. This last, we undertake to do through

one or two adult Little-blue Herons, a small group of Pied-billed Grebes—perhaps a family which probably bred on the lake or very near it, were among some 45 species which we recorded during our little boat ride. The prize of all, tho, was the actions of a female Least Tern which completely fooled us. She acted so much like a young bird, continually crying and being fed by the male, reluctantly leaving her perch when we drew near only to flutter to another nearby, that had we not later been informed that the Least Tern does not lay until well into June, we would have marked them down as parent and young instead of spoiled wife and hen-pecked husband!—Eugene P. Odum, Chapel Hill, N. C.

AN AUGUST LIST FROM REELFOOT LAKE: It may be of interest to report on my recent trip to Walnut Log, Reelfoot Lake, Tenn., August 24th thru 30th. The accompanying list is shown in relative numbers and not by the actual count. (A) indicates Abundant; (C) Common; (F.C.) Fairly Common and (S) Several. The species noted on or about the lake were American Egret (A), Little Blue Heron (immature) (A), Green Heron (A), Great Blue Heron (Ward's) (A), Double-crested Cormorant (C), Pied-billed Grebe (C), Least Bittern (C), Wood Duck (C), Coot (C), Florida Gallinule (C), Sora Rail 1, Rough-winged Swallow (A), Purple Martin (F C), Black-crowned Night Heron (one flock) (12), Kingfisher (C), Red-wing Blackbird (C), Bronzed Grackle (C), Least Tern (S), Lesser Yellow-legs (2), Wood Pewee (C), Cardinal (C), Maryland Yellow-throat (C), Carolina Chickadee (C), Summer Tanager (C), Pileated Woodpecker (C), Red-bellied Woodpecker (A), Barred Owl (S), Great Horned Owl 1, Yellow-billed Cuckoo (C), Prothonotary Warbler (S), and Sycamore Warbler (1).—Paul D. Harwood, College Park, Maryland.

WOOD IBIS IN HENRY COUNTY: About August 15th, a flock of twenty of these birds were seen near Paris and one of them, which was shot by a farmer, was brought to town. A party who measured it stated that the wing-spread was six feet and the length of bill was nine inches. Its plumage was mostly white with some black. On August 16th, another one of the birds, from a flock of about twenty and presumably the same flock, was taken about fifteen miles from where they were first seen. This specimen was given to me but was in such condition that it could not be preserved. This is the first record of the Wood Ibis that I know of in this vicinity. Incidentally, this occurrence illustrates the need for teaching conservation to the general public to prevent their shooting large and harmless birds merely to satisfy their curiosity.—Buster Thompson, Paris.

STARLINGS WESTWARD: In the last part of June I was in McKenzie and with Rev. George L. Johnson, I verified the nesting of the Starlings in the wall of Shiloh Church and in the hollow limbs of an oak tree at the home of Mrs. Robbie Thomas. We also found them nesting on the campus of Bethel College. Mr. Huley Pugh assured me that he saw the Starling in the nesting season of 1933, going in and out of a hole in a telephone pole near my old home in McKenzie. When we went to examine the pole the telephone company had replaced it during the winter. I think there is no doubt however that the Starlings nested there in 1933. The first week of August of this year I was roaming over the farm of my boyhood home, one and one half miles northwest of Guntown, Mississippi, and I saw a pair of Starlings. Mr. Whittaker, who lives at the old home, was very much interested in them and called my attention to them. He showed me where they had nested in a side of the house where the weather-boarding had fallen off. This is about forty miles below the Tennessee line. A few days later at Corinth, Miss., I saw a number of Starlings which seemed to radiate from the Reubel Building and Mr. Warriner told me that they had nested there in numbers this year.—Jas. A. Robins, Nashville.

