

FIFTH ANNUAL BANQUET — MAY 24, 1952

Guest speaker at the dinner at the Edison Club was Morris Mandel Cohn, City Manager of Schenectady. He spoke, however, not as manager but as New York State Commissioner and Chairman, Northeast Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission, with "Water Conservation Policies in New York State" as his subject.

Mr. Cohn emphasized that water conservation — both protection of water sources and correction of pollution problems — is a subject of which state and national legislative bodies are well aware, and that each succeeding year will see real advancement in conservation. Conservationists must remain alert, he emphasized.

"Animals Are Exciting" was the subject of a new color film presented by Howard Cleaves. His story of the story behind the scenes was particularly interesting.

Mr. Cleaves was also the Hopper who presented membership cards to two new members of HOPS, Messrs. Kellogg and Brockner. Membership in HOPS, or Human Ornithological Perch Society to spell it out, is limited to those who have served as a perch for a mature, wild bird subject to no restraint.

Held over from the afternoon session was "Pause in Review" by Winston W. Brockner of *Buffalo Ornithological Society*. It included a variety of photographs showing field trips of all previous meetings.

Report on Federation papers and banquet adapted from
Schenectady Bird Club, Inc. report on FEATHERS.—Ed.

THE RED-EYED VIREO AS A MOCKER

ALLEN H. BENTON

N. Y. S. College for Teachers, Albany, New York

The Red-eyed Vireo *vireo olivaceus* is known for the persistency of its song, rather than for quality. Some individuals, however, are accomplished singers and mockers. Bent (*Life Histories of North American Wagtails, Shrikes, Vireos and their Allies*, U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 197:343. 1950.) noted references to imitations by this species of the Crested Flycatcher, Bluebird, and Olive-sided Flycatcher.

My first attention was called to this phenomenon in 1942, when I heard two birds, in widely separated localities in Central New York, imitating the song of the Wood Pewee. In the summer of 1952 my brother, Francis Benton, of Ira, Cayuga County, New York, called to my attention a Red-eyed Vireo in his yard. This individual imitated at least four other birds. Included in his repertoire were the double "tswee-tswee" note of the Goldfinch, startlingly different from any normal Vireo note, the two-noted call of the Bluebird, the down-slurred whistle of the Starling, and a double or triple note resembling the call note of the Robin. The Goldfinch note was most commonly used, occurring about once in five phrases. The other imitative notes were used irregularly. In this connection it might be of importance to note that the Goldfinches were abundant in the yard at that time, and it was necessary to trace the Vireo carefully to differentiate him from the Goldfinches. All the other birds imitated were present nearby.

Further observations were planned, but the bird disappeared in mid-June, and was not heard thereafter.