

Osprey also, it is suggested that information on both species be collected. All observations of these birds which may indicate nesting will be of value, particularly since nests cannot be located or even suspected in wilderness areas such as the Adirondacks except by the accumulation of many observations. I hope to receive reports on spring and summer eagles in the hope that these observations will lead to nests as yet undiscovered or unreported. At the present time my files contain records on only five current eagle nests along Lake Ontario, fewer from the interior of the state.

In my study of the Golden Eagle from Ungava to Georgia I am also collecting information on the Peregrine Falcon, partly because the aeries of these two cliff-nesting species can be confused, as they were by William Brewster 85 years ago and lesser observers since. It is interesting to note that two recently used New York State nests of the Bald Eagle, one dating back for more than 80 years, are also in cliffs.

In the present inquiry the focus of attention will be on the status of the Bald Eagle, but information of the Osprey, the Golden Eagle and the Peregrine Falcon will also be welcome. Specific information on the last two species especially will be held confidential because these birds are particularly subject to molestation.—Walter R. Spofford, Duguid Road, Fayetteville, N. Y.

Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers near Ithaca. — The Golden-winged Warbler has been a fairly common resident of the lower elevations in western New York for at least fifty years (E. H. Eaton, 1914, "Birds of New York," II, 387), but it has been locally distributed. Until recently the Blue-winged Warbler has been exceedingly rare in central and western New York. In the early 1940's, however, it was found that the Blue-wing had become a fairly common bird in many parts of Chautauqua and Erie counties. The spread of this species in western New York has been briefly reviewed by Parkes (1949, *Wilson Bulletin* 61: 48-49).

In the Ithaca area neither Blue-winged nor Golden-winged Warblers had been found in the breeding season until 1953. In mid-May 1953 an apparently mated pair was located in Michigan Hollow approximately eight miles south of Ithaca. The male of this pair was collected. In the spring of 1954, we found approximately seven male Blue-wings and three male Golden-wings which appeared to be defending territories in the same area. Although no one revisited the area to locate nests it is quite probable that both species nest in Michigan Hollow.

The habitat preferences of the Golden-winged Warbler seem to vary in different regions. Territories are found in the Lake Ontario plains at the edges of wooded swamps, areas that do not seem attractive to these birds in the hills of southwestern New York. There the habitat requirements of the Golden-wing seem to include: (1) a slight hillside covered with a few rather large second-growth deciduous trees, sugar maple the species I have most often noted; (2) some scrubby growth (sumac, blackberries, etc.) around the base of the hill, and especially although not invariably old apple trees; (3) a moist area at or near the base of this growth, usually with rather long grass; (4) a nearby creek; (5) altitudes below 800 feet. The places in Michigan Hollow where Golden-wings turned up possessed these same characteristics and looked like ideal areas for them.

Once having invaded south-western New York, the Blue-wing has shown no tendency to be so narrowly restricted in habitat requirements. They are likely to be found in almost any type of second growth scrub, from habitat like that of the Golden-wing to areas much dryer, much more exposed and much higher in altitude. Thus it is possible in and near Chautauqua county to find an unusual situation: Golden-winged Warblers in the low valleys and some Blue-winged Warblers well up above near the crests of the hills.

The Blue-wings in Michigan Hollow in 1954 were all noted in low, moist areas, but were found in much more varied habitat than the Golden-wings. Nevertheless at least two were in habitat which would probably be suitable to Golden-wings. Such situations as this might well give the opportunity for inter-specific mating, and the establishment of a colony of these two species may bring more hybrid forms to the Ithaca area.

Subsequent search of this area in 1955 did not turn up birds of these species, although Blue-winged Warblers were found in two other locations near Ithaca.

Neither of these appeared to be nesting localities. It is still conjectural whether these two species have, or will have in the future, successfully established permanent breeding colonies in south-central New York State.—Edward L. Seeber, 213 Columbia Street, Ithaca, New York

Food Preferences of Wintering Robins in Central New York State, 1955-1956. —

The winter of 1955-6, in spite of being a rather severe one with respect to amount of snow, ice and below-freezing temperatures (while lacking the extreme cold of some years), might be known at least in the Finger Lakes area as the Winter of the Robins.

The usual scattered reports of one or two Robins kept coming in to me and to the Ornithology office at Cornell throughout December and the first two weeks of January. Three Robins were spending most of their time with a neighbor of mine in Etna, feeding on multiflora rose fruits, and coming at times into my yard for the same food.

On January 15, however, I saw a flock of 18 Robins in Cayuga Heights near Ithaca and was told that up to 25 had been there all winter. The next day, the 16th, the calls and letters began to come in, telling of flocks all around Ithaca and eventually all around central New York State. We kept a record of most of these reports and on January 18, I put a small item in the ITHACA JOURNAL calling attention to the flocks and asking that people note what food was attracting them. Dr. Benjamin Burtt kindly ran a similar note in his weekly column "Keeping Up with the Birds" in the Syracuse POST-STANDARD, asking for the same information. The response was gratifying.

In general the Robins utilized natural food. I had only one report of their eating bread crumbs; one report, third hand, of their eating suet. I put out raspberries and mulberries from my freezer, but they were ignored. Multiflora rose and frozen apples left on the trees seemed to be the favorite foods but fruits of the following were also reported as being eaten: Mountain Ash, several species of Dogwood, Buckthorn, Washington Thorn, Autumn Olive, Cotoneaster, Myrtle, Wild Grape, Barberry, Privet, Cedar, Juniper and Sumac.

One observer saw a Robin locate a caterpillar and another saw one feed on insect eggs. A report came from Clifton Springs of a flock feeding on stone-flies (Plecoptera) in early February. Crows also fed on them.

No one seems willing to make any positive statements about the reasons for the large flocks being present throughout the winter, nor have I found anyone who has determined what population of robins these might have been. Were they northern birds that went no farther south than this? Were they mid-western ones that were driven east by some weather disturbance not evident to us? Were they the usual eastern population that found a great scarcity of food farther south because of late freezes in the spring of 1955 and, unusually early, worked their way back north where food was relatively abundant? Perhaps weather had little to do with it and the relatively abundant food supply played the important role. In any case it was pleasant to have them!

I am indebted to all who sent me their observations on the foods taken by these birds. Sally F. Hoyt, Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.
