

of such easy recognition as to exclude the slightest uncertainty regarding its determination." (from the introduction)

2. "*Parus carolinensis*, R. 42, C. 47. Carolina Chickadee. Rare, Straggler, Lancaster, N. Y. — E. P. Van Duzee." (one of species listed.)

Here is a record with a tag. The tag states, in effect, "This record has been carefully examined by W. H. Bergtold, and carries his stamp of unqualified approval". Up until our present program was inaugurated, our own tag might similarly be taken to indicate, "This record has been carefully examined by (insert names of statisticians), and carries their stamp of unqualified approval." Just what will that mean when our record, like Bergtold's, is seventy years old? In many cases it will be capable of substantiation by the correspondence upon which its acceptance was based, but in those instances where the examination was oral, the researcher of the future will be forced to guess that equal care was taken, — and no good scientist will be satisfied to guess.

Axtell's conclusion is, let's furnish written verifications for all unusual records, and let's set standards for such write-ups which shall satisfy our desire for certainty. Then our ideal tag will contain such incontrovertible evidence, for researcher after researcher to examine in detail, that it will be as convincing as a tag attached to the leg of a specimen!

Here is a new concept, and I think it may be the beginning of a new era in field observing. As such it should command the attention of all groups of amateur bird students. As a matter of fact, a good many eyes have already turned in admiration toward the Buffalo Ornithological Society and its program.

Our program is not easy. It requires a modest contribution of time and effort to write up a careful and complete verifying description of all phases of an observation. It is true that we have lightened the burden by spelling out, in our Date Guide, those dates which will be considered by the statisticians as not requiring a write-up. But several times per year an active observer will find himself faced with the requirement that he furnish written substantiation for a record. He may feel at first that the task is a burden, and recall that formerly it was not required; but further thought brings to him the realization that he was fortunate enough to make a very important observation, and that his written account of it, if conscientiously made, will insure its validity and its recognition for all time. It then becomes a real satisfaction to write it, submit it, and note its acceptance.

A serious program of this nature may well be too great a challenge for some bird clubs. But careful study will, I think, convince anyone that in this direction lies success for amateur ornithology. After all, is it not worth while to place observation of living birds on a higher plane, — a scientific plane, — on a plane where the efforts of bird observers are circumscribed by universal standards of excellence?

CALL FOR PAPERS

The eleventh annual meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs will be held at Rochester on May 2-4, 1958. Federation members are invited to participate in the Saturday program of short papers.

Papers should be concerned with New York State ornithology or should consider problems closely related to those of New York State. Although most papers in past years have dealt with field activities and ecological studies, it is appropriate to include talks on club activities which could be copied in other regions. Of particular interest are papers illustrated with slides, motion pictures or tape recordings.

Members willing to present a paper at this meeting should contact as soon as possible the chairman of the paper committee. This communication should include the subject of the proposed talk, its approximate length, and whether or not there will be pictures. Arrangements can be made for blackboards and projection equipment.

In the past a few clubs and a few individual members have borne the "burden" of presenting these programs. It is sincerely hoped that other members especially from new clubs in the Federation will describe their activities.

*Gerold R. Rising, Chairman, Papers Committee,
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A REPORT TO READERS

This issue marks my completion of two volumes. Although I will edit the next issue also, volume eight really belongs to the new editor, Dr. Minnie Scotland of the Schenectady Bird Club. It seems appropriate at this time then to report to Federation members on my tenure in office.

One thing is certain: editing this magazine is a demanding task. I can really appreciate the fine work of Allan Klonick and Steve Eaton after having tried to cope with the many problems of publication. Much of the work is tedious, painstaking, and most of all lonely. There is a great deal of worry for despite hundreds of pages of correspondence each issue brings with it a crying need for more material. No one of us who has served as editor has ever had enough material for two issues at any one time.

On the other hand, serving as editor has been one of my most rewarding experiences. It has been pleasant to receive exchange copies of ornithological publications and to correspond with ornithologists interested in our publication and Federation from all over the world. But most of all it has been a pleasure associating with those who have contributed to the magazine. Many readers have no idea how much time and effort some of our contributors have put into their work; none of you realize how willing to cooperate they have been. It was wonderful to be able to print McAtee's lengthy paper on folk names of birds, a paper representing many years of research. It was wonderful too to be able to print a note by Randolph Little, a keen observer just now going into high school.

Special note should be taken here of two most important groups, the regional editors (who provide material for half or more of each issue) and the members of the editorial board (whose supply of material has kept the magazine going). An examination of the staff will show that several are serving in both capacities. From these, all of whom have made major contributions to the magazine, I should like to single out three. Sally Hoyt has not only done fine work in accumulating notes for the magazine, but she