

LUDLOW GRISCOM — GREAT FIELD ORNITHOLOGIST

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Ludlow Griscom, considered the country's leading field ornithologist, died at his home in Massachusetts on May 28. Although he served as research ornithologist, research curator and editor at the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology from 1927 until his retirement in 1955, it might be said that our great "Empire State" lent him to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the benefit of both. He was born in New York, graduated from Columbia University in 1912 and received a Master of Arts degree from Cornell University in 1915. He taught biology in Cornell for a year, was associated with the American Museum of Natural History, N. Y. C., for three years and became assistant curator of ornithology from 1921 to 1927, when he went to Harvard.

While in New York he was a very active field student and his careful discrimination in those days established him as a stickler for accuracy in field identification. For many years he studied the distribution of birds and was a leading force in the annual Christmas bird counts for the National Audubon Society. Around the years 1910 and 1911 he censused the Long Beach area on Long Island and came up with a maximum count one December of 11 Ipswich Sparrows. Incidentally, this area today is covered with beach facilities, dwellings, hotels and resorts. He was a past president of the Linnaean Society of New York after joining it in 1907 and later he became a Fellow of this organization.

Mr. Griscom was a former chairman of the board of the National Audubon Society, held a membership in the New York Academy of Sciences, as well as a number of Societies outside of New York State. His greatest contribution to ornithology in New York State was "Birds of the New York City Region," 1923, American Museum of Natural History, in which he gives distributional data and other remarks on 377 species and subspecies. For many years this was considered the last word in field distribution until Cruickshank's "Birds Around New York City", 1942.

After leaving New York he was in a position to the north of us to discern the ornithological trend along the northeastern seacoast and add information essential to studies in both the New England and middle Atlantic States. Moreover, he was near enough to make frequent visits to the annual dinners of the National Audubon and Linnaean Societies. These were always pleasureable occasions and long to be remembered. His lingering illness for the last couple of years reduced his activities and we saw less of this great ornithologist who was the accepted authority for field identification and bird distribution.

Note: Because of the limitation of *The Kingbird* to New York ornithology, the above deals principally with Mr. Griscom's activities in this State. He wrote many important articles while in Massachusetts which may be revealed by searching the literature.

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