

THE LIVING BIRD — BOOK REVIEW

To read and analyse the "Living Bird" is to fully appreciate the work that has been done at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology at Sapsucker Woods, Ithaca, N. Y.

The First Annual of the Living Bird (1962), edited by Dr. Olin S. Pettingill, tells of the extent and scope of the ornithological studies available under the liberal facilities of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.

Through the ample supply of visual aids and tape recordings, sights, sounds and songs are ever ready for close study and analysis.

The woods, ponds and fields of the sanctuary provide the background for field work.

With the aids of these facilities of the laboratory, students and graduate students have prepared their work, the results of some of which are ably shown in the excellent articles recorded in this book.

The papers on ethology, sound recordings and their application to laboratory and field work with living birds, and the very explicit explanation of the new approaches in the study of ornithology, within the covers of the "Living Bird" make good reading for all interested.

These papers prove conclusively that the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology has a place for any serious minded bird student. The courses offered cover a wide range and scope for research, where students and graduate students can work and study under the expert guidance and very competent leadership of Dr. Arthur A. Allen, Dr. Olin S. Pettingill, Dr. Peter Paul Kellogg, Dr. William C. Dilger and members of the laboratory staff.

Edward C. Ulrich

CONSERVATION NEWS

MAXWELL C. WHEAT, JR.

The lucklessness of conservationists is that they can never leave their victories high on the shelf to sometimes gaze at with satisfaction, relishing in the good feeling of a job finally done. As soon as your attention has been turned to another problem, probably a land speculator, predator control enthusiast, or someone similarly dedicated, has jiggled the shelf enough to totter the victory.

John Alderman of New York City, who had so successfully spirited the fight to have the Golden Eagle bill passed by Congress, knew there would have to be surveillance to make sure that protection of the bird was enforced. No one could have believed that the whole effort would come crashing down — and so quickly.

The Department of the Interior, in issuing proposed regulations implementing the law, specified that when permission was granted by the Secretary to control these eagles, they could be taken "by firearms, traps or from aircraft." This was shattering. The main intent of the bill had been to halt the airplane hunting in Texas which has threatened the decimation of this species in North America. This action by the Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife unbottled the spectre of some Secretary of the Interior opening the whole state of Texas for control of Golden Eagles — which a Secretary could do in accordance with the law's provisions.

There was a rush by conservationists to pick up the pieces — and in the place where they fell, the Department of the Interior. Carl W. Buchheister, President of the National Audubon Society and Charles H. Callison, Editor of the "Audubon Leader's Conservation Guide," on January 3 personally called on Secretary Stewart L. Udall. The Audubon officers actually could not pick up the pieces — Secretary Udall was the man big enough to do this, if and when he would.

But as a result of the visit and a scorching telegram to Udall from New York State's U. S. Senator Kenneth Keating, the pieces were not immediately swept away into the wastebasket as they would have been January 6 — this having been the original deadline for submitting public protests against the proposed regulations. The deadline was extended.

From the viewpoint of a healthy democracy, this veto by a subordinate sector of the bureaucracy of a bill passed by Congress and signed by the President could serve to place these two institutions in positions of ridicule. If outlawry of airplane hunting was not spelled out in the bill, it was clearly understood by all concerned to be its intent. The Interior Department's minions took advantage of a loophole. If such practice is rampant, this could render meaningless the desires of Congress and the Presidency — and, in effect, establish precedents for nullifying the representative procedure of our system of government.

Disregard of the Congress, for example, was shown by the failure to provide Senator Keating, a co-sponsor of the bill, with a copy of the proposed regulations before, or at least on the day they were made public. Keating knew nothing about them when Alderman phoned him December 17, ten days after the public release of the regulations. The Senator told Alderman to hold the phone, and then came back to say that he had received them only that very day. Keating then rushed off his telegram urging a delay.

In the past couple of years, the Great Horned Owl in our state has been enjoying, at best, a precarious protection. We have to maintain a wary watch on the Legislature lest, when we least expect, this bird's appellation is snipped from the list of protected birds — this having been so nearly the case last year. Again, this year, New York State Conservation Council was recommending the Great Horned Owl's removal. It was to the credit of many of the Council's county sportsmen's organizations that last year they too joined in the protests against the bill that would have so removed the owl.

A practically regular controversy each year involves the Forest Preserve. Continually attempts are made to alter the 'forever wild' constitutional protection of the Forest Preserve — and it appeared that this legislative session was not going to be an exception. Conservationists (and others, too) were watching for a renewal of last year's Bartlett-Anderson bill. This would neatly "dive up" the Preserve in three pieces; one for organized recreation, one for lumbering and commercial use and the other for "preservation."

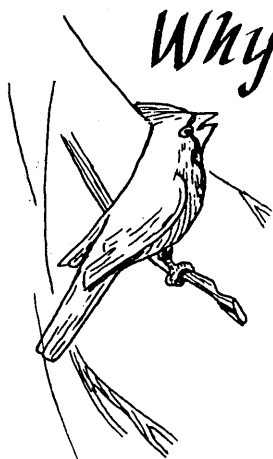
An anticipated bill to establish a regulatory commission to police the use of insecticides in New York State could not come too soon. One Long Island observer has been noting fields where certain crops are sprayed each fall for aphids. Within an hour after such a spraying, this observer has noticed several dead Savannah Sparrows and Cowbirds. Greater attention is being directed toward control of such activities as a result of Rachel Carson's book, "Silent Spring."

A recent victory — in which conservationists are still basking to some degree — has been the dedication of 2500 acres of Long Island wetlands for conservation purposes under State protection. The Town of Hempstead entered into such an agreement with the State — largely as a result of the efforts of the Hempstead Town Lands Resources Council, a conservation group. The agreement with the State will continue ten years at least. However, conservationists are pressing for preservation of the entire 10,000 acres of salt marsh lands of Hempstead on the south shore of Long Island.

Conservation lost one of its great leaders in the death last December of Mrs. Charles Noel Edge, the lady who saved a mountain for the hawks and for the people who enjoy just watching and studying them — Hawk Mountain in Pennsylvania. Mrs. Edge, who was a member of the Federation, was president of the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association.

At 85 years of age, she was still coming at least twice a week to her office in one of New York's older buildings where she carried on her work for Hawk Mountain. As chairman of the Emergency Conservation Committee for some 30 years she played important roles in the saving of the Trumpeter Swan, creation of Olympic National Park in the west, protection of the Bald Eagle, to name only a few of her interests. She was a champion of model hawk protection laws.

I would like to take this opportunity of publicly thanking the members of the Federation Conservation Committee for their efforts and support during my first year as chairman. I begin with Miss Audrey Wrede who resigned after having given much service to the Federation — particularly in membership. Other members of the Conservation Committee are Joseph A. Blake, Jr., (who did such a fine job as chairman just prior to my assuming the office), Miss Agnes A. Amstutz, Mrs. Winston W. Brockner, H. Everest Clements, Eugene Eisenmann, Elizabeth A. Feldhusen, Watson B. Hastings, Arthur E. Kopp, Samuel R. Madison, Harold D. Mitchell, Miss Roberta W. Seaman, Dr. Walter R. Spofford, Mrs. Barrie Strath, Cornelius J. Ward, Edward J. Whelan, and the Rev. John L. Wolff.



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for the birds
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