

several being stripped of outer bark. The great majority of the Evening Grosbeaks recorded were birds flying over the area. Most of my observations were made during the first hour of daylight and it was soon apparent that the grosbeaks had a night roost to the south, and each morning headed for feeding stations in the village of Gouverneur.

The Horned Owl was resident in the area during five winters. Usually only one bird was seen, but on January 17, 1965, with the temperature sixteen degrees below zero, five crows were mobbing a pair of Horned Owls. Incidentally this was the only winter that crows were observed in the area.

92 Clinton Street, Gouverneur, N.Y. 13642

BREEDING BIRD SURVEY NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

Once again it is time to plan for the Fish and Wildlife Survey's Breeding Bird Survey for June. The number of routes as yet not committed has been reduced to 17. These routes lie primarily in the Adirondack Forest Preserve, or on its fringes.

They are.

Dannemora	Waddington	Clinton
Stark	Inlet	McKeever
Sevey	Newcomb	MacDougall
Wanakena	Blue Ridge, south	Cayuga
Edwards	Old Forge	Laurens
Ogdensburg	Blue Ridge, north	

Observers and assistants are needed for these routes. Coverage takes only one-half day at the observer's convenience any day during June. To qualify, an observer should be capable of identifying by sight and sound 95 percent of the species expected in the area. If anyone wants more details, or wishes to volunteer, please contact me. In addition, if anyone knows someone who does not receive this publication, who might be interested, please have him or her contact me.

One need not live immediately in the count area. Some of the Adirondack counts that are already covered are taken by people who have summer cottages in the Forest Preserve. Since Adirondack birding is quite different from that elsewhere in the state, and, can be refreshingly rewarding, why not consider a weekend stay in the mountains with the coverage of one of these more remote routes as the highlight of the weekend? It should prove to be an interesting change of pace and scenery.

Robert P. Yunick, 1527 Myron Street, Schenectady, N.Y. 12309

CONSERVATION NEWS

MAXWELL C. WHEAT, JR.

The dynamic concept of "certain unalienable rights" for all men has streamed through our history as at various times people have become personally and emotionally aware of their rights. Women got the feeling of their rights—and fought for them, as have workmen and other groups.

Now conservationists have been getting the feeling of their rights—set

forth in the Conservation Bill of Rights in the defeated state constitution. This Bill of Rights was introduced as a constitutional amendment in last year's legislature and a large effort for it is expected this year. Also there is growing support for such an amendment to our Federal constitution. New York Congressman Richard Ottinger's House Joint Resolution 1321 (last year's number) declared:

"The right of the people to clean air, pure water, freedom from excessive and unnecessary noise, and the natural, scenic, historic and esthetic qualities of their environment shall not be abridged."

You can ask your Congressman to add his name as a joint sponsor, a way of getting him on record without waiting for a vote.

On both Federal and State levels there are moves to curb the power of commissions and authorities who guard their privilege of making a decision without consulting specialists in other fields or holding public hearings.

Scientists don't know the full extent of possible ecological damage from thermal pollution due to nuclear power plants, not to mention that from radioactivity. The Atomic Energy Commission says it has no authority to require preventive measures against hot water pollution, and yet it continues to license more nuclear power plants. Support is needed in the new Congress for a bill by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy instructing the Commission to make a national survey of suitable sites for atomic generators and to draft an over-all plan for their location. The teeth in the bill is a moratorium on further construction until studies of hazards and necessary safeguards can be made.

Last fall the U.S. Department of Transportation announced a system of at least two public hearings with review procedures for highway plans financed by Federal funds. The system has not yet been implemented although conservationists are supporting it. Strong opposition has been exerted by the American Road Builders Association and the American Association of State Highway Officials. The Dec. 13 deadline for written comment has passed, but you could ask your Congressman to support the department and even to introduce a bill requiring public hearings early enough to permit revisions.

In the State Legislature efforts are expected for repeal of a bill that gives electric utilities the power of condemnation over private property for nuclear development. In the hectic closing days of the session last year, the lawmakers passed this bill, subsequently signed by Gov. Rockefeller and reportedly pushed through at his insistence. In effect, this has extended the right of eminent domain beyond the government where it has historically resided.

Use of this right even by government is coming under question because of the single-mindedness with which a government agency declares a project is in the public interest. There are 28 authorities in the

State with a kind of eminent domain of their own. "After they are created the state has no control over them. Neither do the taxpayers," declares Long Island Press reporter John M. Greene. Comptroller Arthur Levitt has urged more control because they are a "threat to the election process." Nobody elects their members and once appointed they can go their way.

In the State Legislature Sen. Bernard Smith (R-Northport), chairman of the Senate Committee on Conservation and Recreation, and Assemblyman John G. McCarthy (R-Huntington) have pre-filed bills to force the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the State Department of Transportation to hold public hearings and consult with local governments before drawing up plans.

Enhancement of the rights of the people to good environment may also come about through up-dating of procedures in the Legislature and Congress. Bills to improve accessibility to information on how lawmakers vote and what they say have been introduced in the State Legislature in recent years. After this year's election, Assemblyman Perry B. Duryea, Jr. (R-Montauk), expected to be Assembly speaker, asserted: "Our basic mission will be to restructure the Assembly." He talks about reorganizing committees, reducing the power of the half-dozen strongest and abolishing unimportant ones. Four committees in 1966 received more than 70 per cent of all the bills and five of the 38 received none.

Congress gives more visibility to the activities of its members by printing the Congressional Record and hearings proceedings. However, even here there is serious talk about changing the structure, especially with regard to seniority. Rep. Benjamin S. Rosenthal (D-Nassau) has announced he will propose to the Democratic caucus January 2 that committee chairmen be approved by a vote of the caucus members (the Democrats being the majority party).

Conservationists should watch these developments in the Legislature and Congress because such changes could have considerable effect on environment legislation.

333 Bedell Street, Freeport, N.Y. 11520

FIELD NOTES

Snowy Owl Face-cleaning: Recently, field notes have appeared in *The Kingbird* on a Snowy Owl (*Nyctea scandiaca*) bathing (May 1967) and on Snowy Owl behavior at the Syracuse Airport (July 1966). In the light of these, the following note on what was apparently face-cleaning by a Snowy Owl at the Syracuse Airport may be of interest.

On March 2, 1968, shortly before dusk, Stephen Morgan and I visited the Airport, hoping to watch at close range one of the Snowy Owls which had been wintering there. Shortly before we arrived, a snow-squall started, dampening our hopes of clear Snowy Owl observations. However, we soon spotted the big black-barred fe-