

FIELD NOTES

Monk Parakeet in Broome County: On the morning of Feb. 11, 1972, after a telephone call from Mr. Freeman Brooks of Conklin, New York, Harriet Marsi and I observed two Monk (or Quaker) Parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*) in Mr. Brooks' yard. They appeared to be a pair, although the plumages were apparently identical—green head, back and tail, with dark, almost navy blue primaries that formed a blue V when the birds were perching. The breast, cheeks and forehead were light gray; the underparts behind the legs were a chartreuse yellow-green. The bill was pink. The overall length was about 15 inches, about half of the length being the slender tail which fanned out like a Mourning Dove's tail in flight. Also visible in flight was the gray color under the wings.

We observed the birds for a half hour or more from a parked car in the driveway. The birds paid very little attention to us and spent most of the time flying back and forth between an elm tree and a spruce tree, each time carrying an elm twig a foot or a foot and a half in length into the spruce tree, from which a noisy squawking emanated for several minutes. We were quite puzzled by this behavior at this time of year, as the birds appeared to be nest building. We learned later, though, that this was a roosting activity.

A telephone conversation with Mr. John Bull, Dept. of Ornithology, American Museum of Natural History, confirmed the identification of the birds as Monk Parakeets. Several have been seen wild on Long Island* and one has been reported from Michigan. They are natives of S. America and were probably imported from there by pet shops. However, since they are noisy and poor talkers, they may have been turned loose by their owners after the first novelty wore off.

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Ed. Note: See *The Monk Parrot*, by Wayne Trimm. *N.Y. State Conservationist* 26(6): 4-5.

Lark Bunting on Long Island, New York: A male Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*) appeared at the feeding station of Henry Vail, Riverhead, L.I. on April 11, 1972. This is a bird of the western prairies, mainly Kansas and Colorado.

The KINGBIRD for January, 1968, lists the following records of this species in New York State; September 4, 1888 Montauk Point; September 11, 1896 Millers Place; November 27, 1937 Wainscott; August 31, 1939 Easthampton; June 6, 1959 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; February 27, 1960 Cortland; September 6, 1964 Jacob Riis Park, Queens County; September 10, 1966 Short Beach, Nassau County; November 30, 1966 to May 13, 1967 Belmont; May 19, 1967 Ithaca. In addition, there are the following later records: September, 1967 Jacob Riis Park, Queens County; October 6-14, 1968 Jacob Riis Park, Queens County; May 12-13, 1970 Stanfordville; September 16, 1970 Orient; Sept—October 17-31, 1971 Bronx County.

Beginning April 17 I attempted to trap the Riverhead bird and continued on Apr. 19, 20, 26 and 27. On these five days the bird was feeding on the ground where Mr. Vail had been scattering his bird feed. I succeeded in trapping and banding 55 birds consisting of Mourning Doves, Grackles, Blue Jays, Redwinged Blackbirds, Rusty Blackbirds, Cowbirds, Cardinal, White-throated Sparrows, Song Sparrows, Tree Sparrows and Field Sparrows. The Bunting fed by itself, also kept to itself instead of flocking with other birds. It was singing every day, about one-half the time I was there, in early morning as well as afternoons. The bird was easily frightened by all the other larger birds. By the afternoon of Apr. 27, after five days of attempting to trap it with nine trip-doorstep traps, it became apparent that the bird

* See Region 10 Report, *Kingbird* 22(1): 57 for summary of status in the metropolitan area.

was too trap-shy. Therefore I erected three mist nets and in one and a half hours the bird finally landed in one of the nets at 5:00 P.M. It weighed 46.4 grams, wing 86mm, tail 65mm and bill 12mm. It remained in the area at least until May 5 giving an opportunity for many L.I. birders to add it to their life list.

It might be appropriate to cite my first experience in banding Lark Buntings which occurred at Separ, New Mexico. On Dec. 3, 1965 we stopped at a gift shop in this small village-population 44. I noticed about 100 Lark Buntings just back of some out buildings that formerly housed horses or cattle. A young Mexican boy, Manuel Mendoza, about ten years old, was home from school that day. I was surprised to hear the boy say he had been shooting these birds every day to feed them to his cat. His parents gave me permission to put up two mist nets alongside of a fence as there were no bushes or trees. In one and a half hours I captured two Lark Buntings and 19 Brewer's Sparrows. This presented a good opportunity for me to give the boy a simple lesson in conservation. He had never met any one who knew birds or had any interest in them so I explained some details about bird banding and that it was unlawful to shoot these birds. He seemed very impressed and as we said goodbye he promised not to shoot any more of them.

LeRoy Wilcox, Oceanic Duck Farm, Speonk, L.I., N.Y.

Chuck-will's-widow at Central Park, New York Co., N.Y.: On the morning of May 13, 1972 was walking through the famous Ramble in New York City's Central Park when I was approached by an excited birder who wanted to know if I had ever seen a Chuck-will's-widow. I replied that I had, but only once and rushed with him to a spot where a group of twenty to twenty-five people were studying a large brown goatsucker perched in the open about twenty feet from the ground.

I later learned that the bird had originally been spotted when it flew through a clearing and had then been followed from tree to tree. At the time I first saw it the bird was still disturbed, allowing us excellent views of it from all angles before it flew once more and then settled down permitting leisurely observation.

In overall bulk the bird dwarfed any Whip-poor-will we had ever seen. Its general color was a warm, rich brown, totally different from the gray brown of *Caprimulgus vociferus* and the throat was a clear brown with no hint of blackish. The tail, seen clearly from above and below, both spread and closed, was a rich buffy color narrowly banded with horizontal bars of dusky. While the outer edges of the outer tail feathers were a little lighter, the general effect was a buff tail with narrow dark bands—there being no noticeable contrast between the outer tail feathers and the rest of the tail and no noticeable contrasting band at the tip of the tail. (See Charles T. Clark — *BIRDING* Vol. 3, No. 6, Nov.-Dec. 1971)

If, however, any of the gathering band of observers had any doubt as to species identity, it was removed at midday by a means of comparison more effective than any field guide. Incredible as it may seem, photographer Sid Bahrt, going behind the tree to get a better angle, started up a Whip-poor-will which proceeded to settle two trees and twenty feet away from its larger relative. There the two birds remained until nightfall, the Whip-poor-will in the classic horizontal position along the branch, but the Chuck varying positions and perching for long periods of time in an almost vertical position. Both birds were viewed by scores of observers and recognizable color photographs were obtained by Arthur Swoger and Sid Bahrt.

The Whip-poor-will was the second individual sighted this spring in Central Park where the species is considered "Rare — Not seen every year" according to Geoffrey Carleton's *THE BIRDS OF CENTRAL AND PROSPECT PARKS*. The first individual was seen on April 22nd. The sighting of *Caprimulgus carolinensis* was, of course, the first record for the park.

I regret that I am unable to give credit for sighting and identification to any individual or individuals, but simply to "many observers."

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