

PRELIMINARY LIST OF THE BIRDS OF ESSEX
COUNTY, NEW JERSEY.

BY LOUIS S. KOHLER.

Essex, New Jersey's most populous county, is located in the north-east central portion of the Garden State. Topographically the entire county gradually rises from the Passaic River, its eastern boundry, westward to the first and second ranges of the Orange Mountains, and beyond these low lying hills it slightly declines to the Passaic River again which also forms the western and half of the northern boundaries. At the extreme northern end of the county there is located an immense tract of marsh land which is known as the Great Piece Meadows. To this latter section the local observer must look to find the representatives of the gulls and ducks and such other water birds which are present during their seasons, as there are but three small ponds and two or three small brooks in the whole county and these are not often visited by the water birds.

The greater part of the territory here not occupied by the residential and farming districts, is covered by virgin frowths of deciduous timber with one or two small copeses of the coniferous appearing in the Orange Hills.

The faunal areas represented are principally Alleghanian and Carolinian. Occasionally Hudsonian and Canadian species visit us but their stays are usually limited. The following list is compiled from observations made by the writer from January 1902 to the present time and only includes those species to which no doubt may be attached as to their legibility of their being considered in the compilation:

(1) *Rissa tridactyla*.—Kittiwake. Rare migrant. A flock of twelve were seen migrating over northern Bloomfield on February 22, 1903. The birds alighted for a few moments on Davey's Pond and I obtained an excellent view of same and positively determined their identity. This is the only record I have of this bird in this county.

(2) *Larus argentatus*.—Herring Gull. Common visitant throughout the year. Individuals appear each year in Branch Brook Park, one of Essex's large recreation centers, and on the Great Piece Meadows during the winter months. Is a common visitant along the Passaic River from Nutley to Newark Bay throughout the year.

(3) *Anas obscura*.—Black Duck. Rare winter migrant. Occasionally found on the Great Piece Meadows near Pine Brook. A pair was seen resting on a small pond in East Orange on December 16, 1906.

(4) *Branta canadensis*.—Canada Goose. A regular spring and fall migrant, appearing in early March and returning in November and early December.

(5) *Butorides virescens*.—Green Heron. Common summer visitant. Was first recorded on August 20, 1909, in Branch Brook Park. It later appeared in the same locality on September 9 of that year. It was found in this park on September 10 and 11 of this year and also at Davey's Pond on August 29.

(6) *Gallinago delicata*.—Wilson's Snipe. A common migrant and summer visitant.

(7) *Actitis macularia*.—Spotted Sandpiper. A rare summer resident, chiefly a common transient visitant. Found nest in a cornfield near Clinton on June 12, 1906, with three young just out of the shell and one unbroken egg. Most abundant in late June and early July.

(8) *Oxyechus vociferus*.—Killdeer. A rather rare transient visitant. First appeared on a farm on the outskirts of Bloomfield on July 3, 1902. It next appeared at the reservoir in the South Mountain Reservation, another of Essex's large parks, on July 18, 1909, and on March 6, 1910 a pair were found near the waterworks in East Orange.

(9) *Colinus virginianus*.—Bob-white. Formerly a common permanent resident, but now only a rare visitant in the farming districts where food is available.

(10) *Zenaidura macroura*.—Mourning Dove. Was formerly a common summer resident now only a transient visitant. When I first began making observations in 1902 this bird was fairly abundant during migrations and July and August, but within the last five years I have record of finding only ten individuals in the entire county, and these were taken at such times as would indicate the bird as only a transient visitant. No nests have been found since 1903.

(11) *Circus hudsonicus*.—Marsh Hawk. Permanent resident. Most common along the Newark Bay and on the Great Piece Meadows. Never found breeding.

(12) *Accipiter velox*.—Sharp-shinned Hawk. A common permanent resident. Have never located a nest of this species, although I am advised by a good authority that they did nest near Eagle Rock in the Orange Mountains in 1905 and 1906.

(13) *Buteo borealis*.—Red-tailed Hawk. A rare summer visitant. Have only found two specimens. One in East Orange on July 10, 1908. This bird was busily engaged in feeding on a freshly killed domestic rabbit and did not heed my approach until with fifteen paces. I approached as quietly as possible and obtained a fair view of the markings of the bird and established its identity. The other bird was shot by a boy in Verona on November 15, 1908. The shot had destroyed the feathers to such an extent that it was useless from the standpoint of the taxidermist.

(14) *Archibuteo lagopus sancti-johannis*.—Rough-legged Hawk. An uncommon summer visitant.

(15) *Falco sparverius*.—Sparrow Hawk. A common permanent resident. Pair with young found in large maple in East Orange on June 15, 1910. Have found that locally this little hawk prefers the telegraph wires for points of vantage when in search of food.

(16) *Syrnium varium*.—Barred Owl. An irregular visitant. On November 17, 18 and 19, 1908, one was about my home constantly and then disappeared. None were again seen until June 2, 1910, when a pair were present for about a half day.

(17) *Megascops asio*.—Screech Owl. A rather common permanent resident. A pair found nesting in decayed oak in Bloomfield during April, 1905.

(18) *Coccyzus americanus*.—Yellow-billed Cuckoo. A common summer resident. Found nest with three eggs in West Orange on June 2, 1907. This is the only nesting record I have.

(19) *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*.—Black-billed Cuckoo. An uncommon summer resident. Abundant in 1906 and 1909. Other years about ten were recorded each season. No breeding record for the county.

(20) *Ceryle alcyon*.—Belted Kingfisher. A common summer resident. Found nesting in Glen Ridge and Verona in 1903.

(21) *Dryobates villosus*.—Hairy Woodpecker. A rather uncommon permanent resident.

(22) *Dryobates pubescens medianus*.—Downy Woodpecker. A common permanent resident. Found nesting in several isolated spots in South Mountain Reservation in 1906 and 1907. These are the only breeding records for the county.

(23) *Melanerpes erythrocephalus*.—Red-headed Woodpecker. A rather uncommon resident. Most abundant in May and June. No record of nesting.

(24) *Colaptes auratus luteus*.—Northern Flicker. Common permanent resident. Nests in all available places throughout the section.

(25) *Anastrostomus vociferus*.—Whippoorwill. An occasional summer resident, usually a common transient visitant. Located two sets of eggs in 1906 and one in 1909 on the ground in a small clearing in a patch of timberland in West Orange.

(26) *Chordeiles virginianus*.—Nighthawk. A common summer resident. Have no record of its nesting, but the birds are seen almost daily during June and July, both in Newark and over the immediate vicinity feeding on mosquitoes, which infest this neighborhood in great numbers.

(27) *Chætura pelagica*.—Chimney Swift. A common summer resident. Pairs nest in a number of the unused chimneys throughout the county. Have nested in my own chimney each year as far back as I can recall.

(28) *Trochilus colubris*.—Ruby-throated Hummingbird. A common summer resident. Not as abundant this year as formerly.

(29) *Tyrannus tyrannus*.—Kingbird. A common summer resident. Have no record of its breeding within the county.

(30) *Myiarchus crinitus*.—Crested Flycatcher. A common summer resident in the wooded sections.

(31) *Sayornis phæbe*.—Phæbe. A common summer resident. Arrives about March 20 and remains with us until November 1. Nests under bridges and in sheds in the more rural parts of the county.

(32) *Horizopus rivens*.—Wood Pewee. A common summer resident. Has nested for four consecutive years in Bloomfield on the horizontal branches of the Honey Locust.

(33) *Empidonax flaviventris*.—Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. A rare summer visitant. Only found on September 8, 1910, in Bloomfield in a copse of Honey Locust.

(34) *Empidonax minimus*.—Least Flycatcher. A common summer resident. Breeds throughout the county.

(35) *Cyanocitta cristata*.—Blue Jay. A common permanent resident. Most abundant in spring and autumn. Have no record of its nesting in the county.

(36) *Corvus brachyrhynchos*.—American Crow. A common permanent resident. Nests throughout the county in the more rural sections.

(37) *Sturnus vulgaris*.—Starling. Formerly quite rare, but now an abundant permanent resident. Nests in deserted woodpecker holes, hollow trees, bird boxes and on the station poles of the telephone companies. Have record of seven conflicts between these birds and *Colaptes a. luteus* and *Sialia sialis* wherein the last two named species have been ousted by these exotics. They have one very apparent redeeming feature, which covers up a lot of their misdemeanors, such as demoralizing our own birds, roosting over the sidewalks in the shade trees and on the protected eaves of buildings and making unsightly marks from their excrement, and various other objectionable practices, and this is their relentless war upon the *Passer domesticus*. Since these birds have become abundant the sparrows have been continually harassed and are seeking new sections where they may live undisturbed.

(38) *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*.—Bobolink. A common transient visitant.

(39) *Molothrus ater*.—Cowbird. Common summer resident. Have found their eggs in sets of *Vireo olivaceus*, *Dendroica aestiva* and *Setophaga ruticilla*.

(40) *Agelaius phoeniceus*.—Red-winged Blackbird. A common summer resident. Usually in the marshy sections. Have found it breeding on the Great Piece and Newark Meadows and in Branch Brook Park.

(41) *Sturnella magna*.—Meadowlark. A common summer resident. Also a rare winter visitant. Breeds in the sparsely settled parts.

(42) *Icterus spurius*.—Orchard Oriole. Formerly a common summer resident, now only a visitant. Found a nest and three young in Bloomfield on May 30, 1904.

(43) *Icterus galbula*.—Baltimore Oriole. A common summer resident. Nests throughout the county in all sections.

(44) *Euphagus carolinus*.—Rusty Blackbird. A common visitant during migrations.

(45) *Quiscalus quiscula*.—Purple Grackle. Our most common blackbird. Has nested in Bloomfield for the past three years in a patch of evergreens.

(46) *Quiscalus quiscula ancus*.—Bronzed Grackle. An occasional visitant during migrations.

(47) *Carpodacus purpureus*.—Purple Finch. An uncommon migrant and winter visitant.

(48) *Loxia curvirostra minor*.—American Crossbill. Found in a group of conifers in Bloomfield only on December 28, 1904.

(49) *Acanthis linaria*.—Redpoll. Rare winter visitant. Only found on March 5, 1905, at Silver Lake.

(50) *Astragalinus tristis*.—American Goldfinch. A common summer resident and winter visitant.

(51) *Passerina nivalis*.—Snowflake. A rare winter visitant. Flocks found only on December 28, 1902, and February 19, 1905, at Bloomfield.

(52) *Coturniculus savannarum passerinus*.—Grasshopper Sparrow. A rare summer visitant. Only found on May 16, 1909, in a clump of meadow grass near the Passaic River just above Newark Bay.

(54) *Zonotrichia leucophrys*.—White-crowned Sparrow. A rare visitant. Only found on May 31, 1909.

(55) *Zonotrichia albicollis*.—White-throated Sparrow. A common winter resident. Also abundant during migrations. Rare in summer.

(56) *Spizella monticola*.—Tree Sparrow. A common winter resident.

(57) *Spizella socialis*.—Chipping Sparrow. A common summer resident. Breeds in numerous places throughout the county.

(58) *Spizella pusilla*.—Field Sparrow. A common summer resident. Breeds in open fields and in hedgerows throughout the county, especially in the rural districts.

(59) *Junco hyemalis*.—Slate-colored Junco. An abundant winter resident.

(60) *Melospiza cinerea melodia*.—Song Sparrow. A common summer resident. Also present in sheltered localities during the winter. Nests throughout the county.

(61) *Melospiza georgiana*.—Swamp Sparrow. Common summer resident. Breeds in the low lands and near streams.

(62) *Passerella iliaca*.—Fox Sparrow. Common during migrations. Rare winter visitant.

(63) *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*.—Towhee. A common summer resident. Nests in blackberry brambles in many parts of the county.

(66) *Piranga erythronclaus*.—Scarlet Tanager. Common summer resident. Found pair with family of three about a week old on July 18, 1909, in South Mountain Reservation. This is the only breeding record I have.

(67) *Petrochelidon lunifrons*.—Cliff Swallow. Occasionally seen during migrations.

(68) *Hirundo erythrogastra*.—Barn Swallow. Abundant summer resident. Nests in open barns and hay-lofts with easy access, in rural sections of the county.

(69) *Iridoprocne bicolor*.—Tree Swallow. A common summer resident. Most abundant in fall it is seen daily in vast numbers flying from the west to the Newark Meadows, where they roost. Nest on Great Peace Meadows in hollow trees.

(70) *Riparia riparia*.—Bank Swallow. A common summer resident. Nests under bridges and in the canal locks in several places in the county.

(71) *Lanius borealis*.—Northern Shrike. Rare winter visitant. Only specimen found on February 7, 1906, at Bloomfield.

(72) *Ampelis cedrorum*.—Cedar Waxwing. Resident where found. A pair nested in a mulberry at Bloomfield during May, 1904. This nest I still have in my collection.

(73) *Vireo olivaceus*.—Red-eyed Vireo. A common summer resident. Their pensile nests may be found in many places throughout the county. Have found this species is greatly imposed upon by the *Molothrus ater*. Have located six nests with eggs of the Cowbird present.

(74) *Vireo flavifrons*.—Yellow-throated Vireo. A common summer resident. Nests in shade trees along highways and much traveled thoroughfares in the residential sections.

(75) *Vireo gilvus*.—Warbling Vireo. A rare summer visitant.

(76) *Mniotilta varia*.—Black and White Warbler. A common migrant and occasional summer visitant.

(77) *Helmitheros vermivorus*.—Worm-eating Warbler. A rare migrant.

(78) *Helmithophila pinus*.—Blue-winged Warbler. An occasional summer resident, usually only a migrant. Arrival May 5 to 16th.

(79) *Helmithophila chrysotera*.—Golden-winged Warbler. A rare migrant. Arrives about May 7.

(80) *Compothlypis americana*.—Parula Warbler. A common migrant. Arrival May 5 to 15th.

- (81) *Dendroica aestiva*.—Yellow Warbler. A common summer resident. Nests throughout the county. Arrives from May 1 to 5th. Departs about September 1.
- (82) *Dendroica carulescens*.—Black-throated Blue Warbler. A common vernal migrant. Rare in autumn. Arrives May 7 to 16th.
- (83) *Dendroica coronata*.—Myrtle Warbler. The commonest of all warblers during migrations. Arrives April 21 to May 10. Departs about November 15.
- (84) *Dendroica maculosa*.—Magnolia Warbler. A common vernal migrant. Arrives May 7 to 15th.
- (85) *Dendroica pensylvanica*.—Chestnut-sided Warbler. An occasional summer resident. Most abundant in May and early June. Arrives May 2 to 15th.
- (86) *Dendroica castanea*.—Bay-breasted Warbler. A rare migrant. Arrives May 4 to 21st.
- (87) *Dendroica striata*.—Black-poll Warbler. A rather rare migrant. More abundant some years than others. Arrives May 6 to 24th.
- (88) *Dendroica virens*.—Black-throated Green Warbler. A common migrant. Arrives May 4 to 15th.
- (89) *Dendroica vigosii*.—Pine Warbler. A rather common vernal migrant. Rare in autumn. Arrives May 5 to 13th.
- (90) *Dendroica palmarum hypochrysea*.—Yellow Palm Warbler. The earliest warbler to appear in the vernal migrations. Rare in autumn. Arrives April 12 to 22d.
- (91) *Sciurus aurocapillus*.—Oven-bird. The commonest of breeding warblers. Nest found at Upper Mountclair on June 2, 1906. Arrives May 1 to 15th.
- (92) *Seirus noveboracensis*.—Water-Thrush. A rare visitant. Found only on July 10, 1902, in South Orange.
- (93) *Geothlypis trichas*.—Maryland Yellow-throat. A common summer resident. Nests in many places throughout the county.
- (94) *Icteria virens*.—Yellow-breasted Chat. A common summer resident. Have no nesting record.
- (95) *Wilsonia mitrata*.—Hooded Warbler. A rather common migrant. Arrives May 7 to 19th.
- (96) *Wilsonia canadensis*.—Canadian Warbler. A common vernal migrant. Arrives May 10 to 26th.
- (98) *Setophaga ruticilla*.—Redstart. A rather common summer resident. Found nest at Bloomfield on May 20, 1908.
- (99) *Anthus pensilvanicus*.—Pipit. A common summer resident in the more sparsely settled sections. No record of nesting.
- (100) *Galeoscoptes carolinensis*.—Catbird. A common summer resident. Nests throughout the county.

(101) *Toxostoma rufum*.—Brown Thrasher. A rather common summer resident. Nests in the more rural sections of the county.

(102) *Thryothorus ludovicianus*.—Carolina Wren. A rare visitant. Only record made at Bloomfield on September 18, 1905.

(103) *Troglodytes aëdon*.—House Wren. A common summer resident. Nests throughout the county.

(104) *Telmatorhynchus palustris*.—Long-billed Marsh Wren. A common summer resident. Breeds in the Great Piece and Newark Meadows in large numbers.

(105) *Certhia familiaris americana*.—Brown Creeper. A rather common winter visitant.

(106) *Sitta carolinensis*.—White-breasted Nuthatch. A common winter resident. Rare visitant in summer.

(107) *Baeolophus bicolor*. Tufted Titmouse. A winter visitant. Found it only on February 27, 1910. Mr. C. A. Merrill of East Orange, advises me that he has seen specimens throughout the county on numerous occasions.

(108) *Parus atricapillus*.—Black-capped Chickadee. A common winter resident. Also quite common in summer. Found nesting on South Mountain Reservation on April 20, 1903. Only record I have.

(109) *Regulus satrapa*.—Golden-crowned Kinglet. A common winter visitant.

(110) *Regulus calendula*.—Ruby-crowned Kinglet. A common migrant.

(111) *Hylocichla mustelina*.—Wood Thrush. A common summer resident. Nests in many places throughout the county.

(112) *Hylocichla fuscescens*.—Wilson's Thrush. A rather common summer resident. More abundant some years than others.

(113) *Hylocichla alicia*.—Gray-cheeked Thrush. A rather common migrant.

(114) *Hylocichla swainsonii*.—Olive-backed Thrush. A common migrant.

(115) *Hylocichla guttata pallasii*.—Hermit Thrush. A common migrant.

(116) *Merula migratoria*.—Robin. An abundant summer resident. Occasional winter visitant.

(117) *Sialia sialis*.—Bluebird. An abundant resident throughout the year.

(118) *Sphyrapicus varius*.—Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. A rather common permanent resident. Found nest with young in South Mountain on May 2, 1903.

Bloomfield, N. J.