

NOTES ON BIRDS OF LAKE MAXINKUCKEE REGION.

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Messrs. B. W. Evermann and H. W. Clark made a very comprehensive report on the birds of Lake Maxinkuckee Region covering the period from 1899 to 1913.¹ During the last ten years certain changes in bird life about the lake have been observable. A number of the birds have become rarer while others have become common which previously have been reported scarce. Twenty-two new species are added to the list of those found by Evermann and Clark, which brings the total number of species of birds seen near Lake Maxinkuckee to 197. In many instances I have been able to add nesting data not included in the report. The number of cottages about the lake as shown by the detail map dated 1900 attached to the report of Evermann and Clark is 99. There are now (1927) 180 cottages.

Norris Inlet and Green's Marsh remain almost as they were during the period covered by Evermann and Clark. Farrar's Woods on the southwest shore is as woody but has been taken over by camping parties during most of the summer months for some years, so that bird life is not as representative there as formerly. Cottages border the lake on most of its shoreline now, causing some additional disturbance to the normal activities of shore birds.

These notes are supplemental to the above named report and cover the period from 1922 to 1927, inclusive.

Sterna antillarum. Least tern.² In 1910 Mrs. Elizabeth C. Marmon of Indianapolis, reports she saw this tern on her pier.

Mergus serrator. Red-breasted merganser. A dozen in a flock passed along the east side of the lake on Apr. 4, and on July 23, 1927, two were seen and the next day one was watched in the lake opposite the gravel pit.

Icobrychus exilis. Least bittern. Not observed at any location except Norris Inlet. Two young were found just out of the nest on July 18, 1926, when four adults were also seen.

Rallus elegans. King rail.² On July 3, 1927, in the shallow stream running through Norris Inlet, just north of the road south of the lake, there came out of the cress beds a king rail and two half-grown black-feathered young.

Rubicola minor. Woodcock. The woodcock continues to be very rare in my experience about this lake. My only notes are of three immature birds with parents seen May 30, 1925, in Farrar's Woods.

¹Pub. No. 7, Dep. Conserv. St. Ind., 1920.

²Indicates species not included in Evermann and Clark report.

"Proc. Ind. Acad. Sci., vol. 37, 1927 (1928)."

Tringa solitaria solitaria. Solitary sandpiper.² Mrs. E. C. Marmon says she occasionally sees this bird along her beach.

Oxyechus vociferus. Killdeer. My earliest and latest nesting dates are as follows: May 30, (1925), nest and eggs; July 20, (1925), nest and eggs. There are no nests on the few gravel bars. Nests were found in fields.

Colinus virginianus virginianus. Quail. This bird is apparently holding its own. A nest was found with a dozen eggs on July 20, 1925, and another on May 30, the same year, containing two eggs.

Tympanuchus americanus americanus. Prairie chicken. Rare. I saw two cross the road near Kewanna in the summer of 1924, and Capt. Chas. Hulsburg reported four seen west of the lake in June, 1927.

Zenaidura macroura carolinensis. Mourning dove. My earliest and latest nesting dates are April 19, (1924), four nests with two eggs each; July 30, (1923), nest of fledglings (one of this clutch was reported by Biological Survey as killed at Jonesboro, Louisiana, in Jan., (1927); Aug. 9, (1924), building nest.

Nyctea nyctea. Snowy owl. There was a great southern migration of these birds in winter of 1926, which included northern Indiana. The only report of one near Lake Maxinkuckee was of the killing of one at Fulton, Dec. 6, some miles south of the lake. Several were taken at Indianapolis in January, 1927.

Coccyzus erythrophthalmus. Black-billed cuckoo.² Not positively identified till July 23 and 24, 1927, when it was stalked in the woods north of Vonnegut's orchard.

Archilochus colubris. Ruby-throated hummingbird. A pair was found nesting with fledglings about ready to leave the nest in the woods northeast of Marmon's, Aug. 23, 1926. The nest was saddled in a maple toward the tip of the branch about 15 feet up.

Tyrannus tyrannus. Kingbird. I found a nest in Vonnegut's orchard, June 8, 1922, with young and at the same time and place in 1924, with eggs. On July 20, 1925, a nest and three young a week old were climbed to in a sycamore at water's edge near Aubeenaubee Creek.

Sayornis phoebe. Phoebe. My earliest and latest nesting dates are April 4, (1927), nest ready for eggs; June 28, (1924), four young in nest (one of these fledglings, No. 143870, was found dead at Zolle, Louisiana, in Jan., (1926); July 20, (1922), nest and three young.

Myiochanes virens. Wood pewee. Pairs have been observed in Farrar's Woods, near Maxinkuckee Landing, and in the woods north of Vonnegut's orchard. A nest in Farrar's Woods was saddled at the juncture of three limbs with young in it about three days old, on July 22, 1927. It was 20 feet up in a cottonwood.

Empidonax virens. Acadian flycatcher.² This bird does not appear to be common. While in company with Mr. Alden H. Hadley we came across the acadian flycatcher in the woods north of Vonnegut's orchard, where there is a high heavy canopy of forest with light underbrush, on July 20, 1925. In the same woods it was found July 29, 1927.

Otocoris alpestris praticola. Prairie horned lark.² This bird has been seen singly on June 20, 1925, east of the lake about a half mile.

Also, in the road where our auto approached to within 15 feet of it as it pecked at food, it was seen Feb. 1, 1927. It was under observation for several minutes. Two were seen again east of the lake on Apr. 4, 1927. Twelve seen south of lake Oct. 30, 1927.

Cyanocitta cristata cristata. Blue jay. Found nests as follows: July 9, (1922), with young birds at Spangler Creek and again there in June, 1925; July 20, (1922), young in nest east of Marmon's near the lake shore in a vine.

Dolichonyx oryzivorus. Bobolink. It is breeding at the Inlet. Observed at the Inlet May 29, 1925, May 28 and July 4, 1926. During this summer (1927), at least five pairs had nests in the grass west of the branch which flows through Norris Inlet.

Molothrus ater ater. Cowbird. I have found it laying its eggs in the nest of a song sparrow (May 28, 1926), and on July 5, the same year, gathered the nest of a yellow warbler containing three eggs of a cowbird only. July 5, 1927, a chipping sparrow was sitting on three of her eggs and one cowbird egg. All these were in the Vonnegut's orchard and an adjoining field northeast of the lake.

Icterus spurius. Orchard oriole. Found nesting in Vonnegut's orchard with young hatching, June 5, 1922, and a pair feeding young several days out of the nest on the edge of Norris Inlet, July 3, 1927.

Icterus galbula. Baltimore oriole. This oriole now nests abundantly on the northeast side of the lake, especially along the lake road from Aubeenaubee Bay to Maxinkuckee Landing. I found nests June 8, (1922), with young; July 3, (1927), with young which left the nest that day.

Astragalinus tristis tristis. Goldfinch. Found nest of this species July 20, 1925, with three eggs, in a small elm north of the Academy Artillery building.

Zonotrichia albicollis. White-throated sparrow. May 30, 1925, one was seen on the ground feeding at the foot of trees. Glasses revealed that it had a large lump the size of a pea on the head above one eye, otherwise it appeared normal. It was stalked for some time at close range. Could fly and hop and eat and seemed in good flesh.

Spizella passerina passerina. Chipping sparrow. This bird has become more than "fairly common." My notes show nesting dates May 30 (1925), nest and eggs; July 22 (1927), nest with two eggs and one cowbird egg.

Spizella pusilla pusilla. Field sparrow. It was found breeding May 28 (1926), nest and three eggs; July 3 (1927), nest and three eggs.

Melospiza melodia melodia. Song sparrow. Song sparrows have been found nesting on the following dates: May 28 (1926), nest containing three fledglings and one cowbird; July 28 (1923), nest and young.

Cardinalis cardinalis cardinalis. Cardinal. Common now in Farrar's Woods and in the woods pasture north of Vonnegut's orchard. Feb. 1, 1927, two flocks of a dozen each (males) were found in pawpaw thickets north of the lake. A nest and three eggs was located May 28, 1926.

Zamelodia ludoviciana. Rose-breasted grosbeak. Rare. On June 10, 1923, the nest was found near the east side road south of Maxinkuckee Landing. It was up 10 feet in a sapling and contained four eggs.

Piranga erythromelas. Scarlet tanager. They were nesting July 21, 1925, near east side road.

Progne subis subis. Purple martin. A pair or two are reported by Evermann and Clark principally at the south end of the lake. During 1924 and subsequent years several large colonies have been established near the road where it borders the lake south of Long Point where many colony nesting boxes have been erected and maintained for their use. At least a dozen pairs breed here yearly. Another colony almost as large is housed in boxes at a farm house near the juncture of the south and west roads nearest the lake, south of Farrar's Woods.

Petrochelidon lunifrons lunifrons. Cliff sparrow. This species, out the summer of 1899 and from September 9 to 24 in 1913," has become rare. I have not found any breeding colonies about the lake. The birds have not been seen since 1922 nearer than Mexico, Ind., about 25 miles south, where on June 23, 1923, there were seven gourd-shaped nests under the eaves of a large barn. The colony was not back in 1924, and efforts to locate it or any other nearby have been unavailing.

Riparia riparia. Bank swallow. The largest colony reported by Evermann and Clark as at the gravel pit is still located there (90 holes in 1927). Another colony of 40 nests is located half a mile east on the Maxinkuckee road. They have been found nesting May 30 (1921), nests with young and with eggs; July 30 (1927), all young out of nests and on wires above colony.

Stelgidopteryx serripennis. Rough-winged swallow. While not so numerous as the bank swallow it is common. I have found it nesting May 28 (1926), nest and eggs, and on July 4 (1926), four young in nest. Five fledglings were dug out by myself and Mr. Frank M. Woodruff. True to the species' solitary habit, it was a lone nest in a long sand bank three feet high, dug five inches below the grassy surface to a depth of two feet. In most cases I find these birds using empty tile drains where same are two feet or more above the water surface. Many in drain openings are mostly composed of much more grass than is used by the bank swallow. The usual depth at which the nest is placed is two feet.

Lanius flavifrons. Yellow-throated vireo. Seen and heard in the woods north of Vonnegut's orchard July 20, 1925, and near same place July 23, 1927. Found several in Farrar's Woods on July 30, 1927. I think it breeds there.

Vireo griseus griseus. White-eyed vireo.² Upon the authority of Mrs. E. C. Marmon, this species is included. She says "the red-eye nested in the yard in the early years but is now supplanted by the white-eye, an agreeable exchange."

Protonotaria citrea. Prothonotary warbler.² June 28, 1925, a single male was seen alongside the fence in Green's Marsh. It played about in the lower branches of a willow tree while under observation. Mrs.

E. C. Marmon reports that in 1911 a pair nested near the Chas E. Coffin place.

Dendroica aestiva aestiva. Yellow warbler. Nest and three eggs found five feet up in a catalpa east of the lake, June 10, 1923. Nest and two eggs May 28, 1926, in Vonnegut's orchard. On May 29, 1926, a nest being built was observed east of Vonnegut's orchard in a briar patch. When visited again June 5, it contained three cowbird eggs only and was found to be abandoned on later trips. No attempt was made in this instance to cover the cowbird eggs.

Dendroica cerulea. Cerulean warbler.² This species nested in late May, 1910, in the Vonnegut's woods high in a forest tree, reports Mrs. E. C. Marmon.

Dendroica castanea. Bay-breasted warbler. This species reported by Mrs. E. C. Marmon.

Dendroica fusca. Blackburnian warbler. Observed by Mrs. Marmon during the migration wave of 1909.

Dendroica discolor. Prairie warbler.² Mrs. Marmon reports several of these birds came through her estate at the lake during the unusual warbler migration of 1909.

Seiurus motacilla. Louisiana water-thrush.² Mrs. Marmon reports that up to about 1922, several were seen each year but she has not recorded it since.

Icteria virens virens. Yellow-breasted chat.² Included on the authority of Mrs. Marmon.

Wilsonia pusilla pusilla. Wilson's black-cap.² Included on the authority of Mrs. Marmon who reports having listed it in 1909 and 1911.

Wilsonia canadensis. Canada warbler.² The Canadian warbler was observed one time on May 28, 1926. This species was also recorded by Mrs. Marmon.

Mimus polyglottos polyglottos. Mockingbird.² The mockingbird has been observed on two occasions. June 23, 1923, two were seen to fly from telephone wires ahead of us to a clump of trees at the north edge of a field a short distance away. This was about three miles east of the lake on the Mentone road. May 29, 1925, one was seen in Vonnegut's orchard.

Dumetella carolinensis. Catbird. Nesting records: June 9 (1924), four fledglings in nest; July 20 (1925), nest and one fledgling.

Toxostoma rufum. Brown thrasher. June 9, 1924, nest and four young was found.

Thryothorus ludovicianus ludovicianus. Carolina wren.² On July 3, 1927, I followed a Carolina wren from the Vajen cottage on the east side road to the barn back of Rector's house at Maxinkuckee Landing. I heard it sing repeatedly but could not see it. On the afternoon of July 23, I stalked it as it sang in a large vine-covered tree over the barn at Rector's. Called Mr. Rector, who said the species had been about his premises in summer for six or seven years.

Thryomanes bewicki bewicki. Bewick's wren.² On May 29, 1925, I found this wren at Leiter's Ford five miles south of Maxinkuckee on

the Tippecanoe River. On July 22, 1927, I distinctly heard it sing its song in the woods north of Vonnegut's orchard.

Troglodytes aedon aedon. House wren. From a "not very common" summer resident up to 1913, it has gained in numbers and is now very numerous. In summer one is not out of hearing of the song of this bird at any part of the lake shore. This may be due in part to the placing of rural mail boxes in front of houses which serve as nest boxes. I have as earliest and latest nesting dates: May 29 (1925), nest and eggs; Aug. 3 (1927), nest and two eggs.

Cistothorus stellaris. Short-billed marsh wren.² The short-billed marsh wren is present at the Outlet and Inlet, but in different sub-habitat therein from the long-billed. I found the empty nest of it at the Outlet in the grass at a place where there was no water below it and where no cattails grew for 50 feet in any direction. In the south half of the Inlet on July 30, 1927, I approached within 25 feet of two males as they sang. Many of these birds have a different habit from long-billed in that they fly some distance to another stalk, when approached, where they again sing instead of at once dropping out of sight in the cattails or grass upon being disturbed. Apparently the two species of marsh wrens do not nest near each other even where suitable areas are close. It is easily a quarter-mile between the places where the two species were observed at the Inlet.

Telmatodytes palustris iliacus. Prairie marsh wren. Found to be most numerous in the north half of Norris Inlet and at the marsh west of Green's Marsh. Many nests were found each place in 1926 and 1927. All the nests of this species were found over water and at such place that cattails were growing for some distance every direction from the nest. On July 4, 1926, a nest with two chocolate-brown eggs in it was found at the Inlet. Three other empty nests were observed. The same day, in another part, were five empty nests. In 1927, I found on July 3, four pairs at the Inlet and one nest and one pair of birds at the Outlet. A nest with five fledglings almost two weeks old was found at the Inlet July 23, 1927. This nest was built in the tall grass over water among cattails.

Penthestes atricapillus atricapillus. Black-capped chickadee. The black-capped chickadee built a nest in a tree near the east side road and raised a brood of three which left the nest June 24, 1924.

Hylocichla mustelina. Wood thrush. It was often heard during the summer and was found nesting near east side road in an elder bush with one young and two eggs, June 14, 1925.

Hylocichla fuscescens fuscescens. Veery.² This species was found nesting by Mrs. Marmon in a bush about 500 feet north of the Marmon cottage, in 1908.

Planesticus migratorius migratorius. Robin. Earliest and latest dates are April 19 (1924), nest and two eggs; Aug. 1 (1923), nest and young.