

SUMMER RESIDENT BIRDS OF TURKEY RUN STATE
PARK.

FREDERICK H. TEST, West Lafayette.

Turkey Run, the largest of Indiana's state parks, is located in Parke County about ten miles from Rockville, and three miles from Marshall. The park consists of approximately 925 acres stretching along either side of Sugar Creek for a distance of two miles. Almost all of this area is heavily forested except near the hotel, Lusk Homestead, and parts of the new tract of 157 acres where the woods are very open. Part of this is virgin timber and part second growth. Sugar Creek, a stream about 45 yards wide, and three or four small tributaries run through the park, but there are no swamps. Because of the extensive woods not as large a variety of birds was found as if it had been interspersed with open fields. The park is much cut up, especially at the lower end, by deep gulches and canyons through which run small streams. The walls of these canyons are of sandstone and in some places are nearly 100 feet high. Excellent cover is afforded in many parts of the park by the thick underbrush made up principally of dogwoods, witch-hazel, sassafras, spice-bush, papaw, leatherwood and berry bushes. Along the top of the river bank and the rims of the canyons are stands of hemlock and American yew, while the rest of the high ground is covered with oaks, maples, hickories, beeches, walnuts, tulips, and many other less common species. On the lowlands along the river sycamores, lindens, box elders, elms, and walnuts are the common trees.

Although protection is given birds and other forms of wild life by forbidding shooting and trapping in the park and by effectively disposing of stray cats and dogs, the great number of visitors frighten the birds somewhat so that not many species are seen when large groups are on the trails. The dense woods furnish an abundance of food for insect-eating birds including five species of woodpeckers. Over and along the river there is a plentiful supply of food for swallows, swifts and flycatchers, and the fish in the river support two pairs of kingfishers. There is not much attraction for marsh and shore birds nor for pasture-loving birds, although many were seen near the park. Spotted sandpipers were seen only a few times and kildeer were not as common as might be expected. The absence of two birds, the bronzed grackle and the brown thrasher, was very noticeable. Only one of the former was seen in the park, flying near the hotel, and the latter was not once recorded in the park, but both were seen occasionally within a few miles of Turkey Run. Probably the two most common birds were the wood thrush, heard abundantly during the day, and the whip-poor-will, whose song was very much in evidence at night. Although not

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found in the heavily wooded sections, the chipping sparrow was the common bird near the hotel, several nests being found. These sparrows were very tame and would hop between our legs and under our chairs with no signs of fear while we were sitting in front of the tent. The rarest bird at Turkey Run was the bald eagle, which was observed only once by Mr. Esten and Otto Behrens, Jr., while on Trail No. 3. Mr. Elam, the superintendent of the park, reported that he had seen an eagle in the park several times during the three or four preceding years. Another rather rare bird was the Louisiana water-thrush, seen frequently in the deep woods along a stream up Newby Gulch. We were quite surprised to find a number of cerulean warblers nesting in the park. On one trip six or eight were seen and they also were seen at other times. Summer tanagers were seen occasionally, so it is safe to assume there were one or two pairs nesting in Turkey Run. We were told that several years ago a covey of pheasants had been liberated, but although we watched for them, none were seen.

These observations, extending over the period from June 20 to September 9, 1927, were made by Sidney R. Esten, Otto Behrens, Jr., and the writer while acting as nature guides at Turkey Run for the Department of Conservation.

The following list includes 68 species positively identified and a supplementary list of 7 species the identity of which was not confirmed or whose range seemed to include the park.

190. *Botaurus lentiginosus*. American bittern. Rather rare. Seen only once or twice on Trail 3 by Otto Behrens, Jr.

194. *Ardea herodias*. Great blue heron. Rare. Seen a very few times flying over the park.

201. *Butorides virescens*. Green heron. Frequently seen, especially near the river.

228. *Philohela minor*. American woodcock. Uncommon. Observed only once or twice on Trails 1 and 8 where the ground was moist.

263. *Actitis macularia*. Spotted sandpiper. Not common. Seen a few times on bars along the river.

273. *Oxyechus vociferus*. Kildeer. Frequently found in a field back of the garage and also seen flying over the park.

289. *Colinus virginianus*. Bob-white. Frequent throughout the park.

316. *Zenaidura macroura carolinensis*. Mourning dove. Common, especially near the hotel.

325. *Cathartes aura septentrionalis*. Turkey vulture. Common throughout the park. As many as nine were seen circling together over the woods at one time.

331. *Circus hudsonius*. Marsh hawk. Not common. Seen on Trail 1 and occasionally elsewhere.

333. *Accipiter cooperi*. Cooper hawk. Not common. Seen a few times on Trail 4.

337. *Buteo borealis*. Red-tailed hawk. Frequent. Seen on Trail 4 and near Boulder Canyon.

352. *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*. Bald eagle. Rare. Seen only once during the summer by S. R. Esten and Otto Behrens, Jr., while on

Trail 3. Mr. Elam, the superintendent of Turkey Run, reported that he had seen an eagle in the park several times during the four or five preceding years.

373. *Otus asio*. Screech owl. Common. Heard on most of the trails and around the hotel.

375. *Bubo virginianus*. Great horned owl. Frequent. Found on both sides of the river.

387. *Coccyzus americanus*. Yellow-billed cuckoo. Common on all the trails.

388. *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*. Black-billed cuckoo. Uncommon. Seen on Trails 1, 3 and 7.

390. *Ceryle alcyon*. Belted kingfisher. Common along Sugar Creek. Probably there were at least two pairs that nested in or near Turkey Run, although no nests were found.

393. *Dryobates villosus*. Hairy woodpecker. Frequent. Seen on Trails 4 and 8.

394. *Dryobates pubescens medianus*. Downy woodpecker. Fairly common and seen on most of the trails.

406. *Melanerpes erythrocephalus*. Red-headed woodpecker. Common. Seen on some of the trails but more common near the hotel and in the open.

409. *Centurus carolinus*. Red-bellied woodpecker. Frequent. Several pairs with young were noticed near the hotel and also in deeper woods.

412. *Calaptes auratus*. Flicker. Common. Seen throughout the park.

417. *Antrostomus vociferus*. Whip-poor-will. Heard abundantly all through Turkey Run, although only two or three were seen.

423. *Chaetura pelagica*. Chimney swift. Common. Seen flying over the hotel and also the woods.

428. *Archilochus colubris*. Ruby-throated hummingbird. Frequent. Seen several times, but no nests were found.

444. *Tyrannus tyrannus*. Kingbird. Not common in the park. Seen frequently along the roads near the park.

452. *Myiarchus crinitus*. Crested flycatcher. Fairly common. Seen on all trails.

456. *Sayornis phoebe*. Phoebe. Common along the river and in the canyons. Several nests were found built on the rock of the canyon walls.

461. *Myiochanes virens*. Wood pewee. Common all through the park. A few nests were found.

465. *Empidonax virescens*. Acadian flycatcher. Common, especially along the river. Four or five nests were found on Trail 1.

477. *Cyanocitta cristata*. Blue jay. Common. Seen on most of the trails.

488. *Corvus brachyrhynchos*. American crow. Common. Seen in most parts of the park.

495. *Molothrus ater*. Cowbird. Seen frequently near the hotel. One young cowbird followed a pair of chipping sparrows around near the hotel for several days, being fed by them.

501. *Sturnella magna*. Meadowlark. Common in fields back of the garage but in no other place in the park except the new 157-acre tract. Common outside the park.

507. *Icterus galbula*. Baltimore oriole. Frequently seen and heard during first and latter part of summer, but they were silent during the latter part of July and the first two weeks in August.

511b. *Quiscalus quiscula aeneus*. Bronzed grackle. Rare in park. Seen only once, flying over the hotel, but observed several times within a few miles of Turkey Run.

529. *Astragalinus tristis*. American goldfinch. Frequent. Seen frequently flying over hotel and along Sugar Creek.

Passer domesticus. English sparrow. Common around hotel. Several nests were built under the hotel porch roof.

560. *Spizella passerina*. Chipping sparrow. Abundant near the hotel. These birds were very tame, picking up crumbs within a few inches of us. Several nests were found. Seen only near hotel and in the camp grounds.

563. *Spizella pusilla*. Field sparrow. Frequently seen and heard in the fields of the park. One nest was found on Trail 2.

581. *Melospiza melodia*. Song sparrow. Frequent. Seen mostly along the river.

587. *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*. Towhee. Common. Observed on Trails 2, 3, 4 and 8.

593. *Cardinalis cardinalis*. Cardinal. Frequently seen on all trails. One nest was found on Trail 1 about six feet from the ground in a small elm which stood just at the side of the trail over which hundreds of people passed while the young cardinals were in the nest.

598. *Passerina cyanea*. Indigo bunting. Frequent. Seen on Trails 2 and 3 and just outside the park.

608. *Piranga erythromelas*. Scarlet tanager. Frequent. Seen on Trails 2 and 3.

610. *Piranga rubra*. Summer tanager. Rare. Seen several times at the same place on Trail 2, a rather open space. Probably one pair nested in the park.

611. *Progne subis*. Purple martin. A colony of four or five pairs of martins shared with some English sparrows a dilapidated martin house erected in the field back of the garage.

613. *Hirundo erythrogastra*. Barn swallow. Seen several times flying near the garage and along the river near the covered bridge.

616. *Riparia riparia*. Bank swallow. Common along Sugar Creek. Nested in holes in the sandstone walls of the canyons.

617. *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*. Rough-winged swallow. Frequent along Sugar Creek. Nested with bank swallows in holes in the canyon walls.

619. *Bombycilla cedrorum*. Cedar waxwing. Frequent around the hotel, where they feasted on bush honeysuckle berries. No nests were found but two evidently deserted young cedar waxwings found on the ground were raised by Mrs. Esten and finally released.

624. *Vireosylva olivacea*. Red-eyed vireo. Frequent on all the trails. One nest was found on Trail 4.

627. *Vireosylva gilva*. Warbling vireo. Common on all trails. No nests were found.
658. *Dendroica caerulea*. Cerulean warbler. Frequent. Although we found no nests, probably several pairs nested in Turkey Run.
674. *Seiurus aurocapillus*. Oven-bird. Frequently heard on Trails 2 and 3.
675. *Seiurus motacilla*. Louisiana water-thrush. Frequently seen and heard on Trails 2 and 4.
681. *Geothlypis trichas*. Maryland yellow-throat. Not common, although one nest was found in a clump of weeds growing in a small plot of damp ground on Trail 4. Seen also on Trail 2 along the river.
683. *Icteria virens*. Yellow-breasted chat. Rare. Seen only once on Trail 2 by the writer.
687. *Setophaga ruticilla*. American redstart. Frequently seen on several of the trails, especially 2 and 3. No nests were found.
704. *Dumetella carolinensis*. Catbird. Seen frequently on Trails 1 and 2 and around the hotel, but no nests were found.
718. *Thryothorus ludovicianus*. Carolina wren. Common. Seen on most of the trails, but especially common along Sugar Creek and up Newby Gulch.
721. *Troglodytes aedon*. House wren. Rare. Only one pair, which probably nested near the Hockett home, was seen.
727. *Sitta carolinensis*. White-breasted nuthatch. Common throughout the park and especially near the hotel and camp grounds.
731. *Baeolophus bicolor*. Tufted titmouse. Common, especially in the camp grounds and around the hotel, but also seen on most of the trails. One of the men on the park patrol usually shared his lunch with a tufted titmouse which flew down to the table where he had his food spread.
735. *Penthestes atricapillus*. Black-capped chickadee. Frequent. Seen on Trails 1 and 2 and around the hotel.
755. *Hylocichla mustelina*. Wood thrush. Abundant all through the park. Probably the most common bird at Turkey Run. Several nests were found.
761. *Planesticus migratorius*. American robin. Common around the hotel and camp grounds. Several nests were found.
766. *Sialia sialis*. Bluebird. Frequent around hotel and back of garage.

SUPPLEMENTARY LIST OF BIRDS NOT POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED OR
OBSERVED ONLY OUTSIDE THE PARK.

360. *Falco sparverius*. Sparrow hawk. Seen several times within a mile or two of the park but never in it.
368. *Strix varia*. Barred owl. We thought we heard the hooting of this owl but it possibly was that of the great horned.
467. *Empidonax minimus*. Least flycatcher. A flycatcher was identified as this species but may have been an acadian.
540. *Poocetes gramineus*. Vesper sparrow. Seen in fields just outside the park and probably occurred in Turkey Run.

622. *Lanius ludovicianus*. Loggerhead shrike. Seen frequently within two or three miles of Turkey Run but never in the park.

639. *Helmitheros vermivorus*. Worm-eating warbler. Otto Behrens, Jr., and the writer identified a bird on Trail 3 as this species but the identification was not positive and no others were seen during the remainder of the summer.

703. *Mimus polyglottos*. Mockingbird. One was observed about ten miles from Turkey Run near the "Shades."