

country). Thus, some parks seemed nearly devoid of birdlife, particularly those in the upper portion of the state.

Comments on a number of species seem necessary because of their scarcity. First, many of the common open country species (such as Mourning Dove, Starling, Eastern Meadowlark, and blackbirds) were scarce because of the poverty of their preferred habitats; and the House Sparrow and remarkably the Cedar Waxwing were not seen at all! Second, winter finches had an off-winter, as no Evening Grosbeaks, Pine Siskins, or Red Crossbills were reported. Third and most important, the severe weather caused many of the smaller, insect-feeding species to be found in reduced numbers, especially in the sandhills, piedmont, and mountains. Species particularly affected were Winter Wren, Carolina Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Pine Warbler.

Only a few species seemed to be present in above normal numbers. American Robins and Dark-eyed Juncos appeared to be in this category, and the Hermit Thrush almost certainly was the surprise species. It was seen or heard on all 14 counts and was in double figures on seven, and four counts tallied at least 20 individuals.

Several rarities were reported on the park censuses. A Bald Eagle was sighted at Santee. Huntington Beach observers found a Red-necked Grebe, a European Wigeon, seven Common Mergansers, three Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrows, and three Snow Buntings. Adair Tedards, Vivian Smith, and Caroline Watson saw a Blackburnian Warbler at Hunting Island, apparently the second winter record for the state. They noted the dark cheek patch, large white wing patch, and trace of orange on the throat and upper breast.

The Division of State Parks plans to continue the Mid-Winter Count in future winters, and they also began a Breeding Bird Count in June 1977 at these same 14 parks. Persons wishing to participate on these counts, as well as those desiring a copy of the 1977 Mid-Winter Count (including a list of field observers), should contact either John Reid Clonts (Count Coordinator) or Brian E. Cassie (Count Compiler). Their address is: South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism, Suite 113, Edgar A. Brown Building, 1205 Pendleton Street, Columbia, S.C. 29201.

CBC

Roundtable

... with Louis C. Fink

More on Starving Birds

Charles H. Blake of Hillsborough, N.C., graciously provides more information about birds without food. "A good many years ago," he writes, "J.A. Hagar, then State ornithologist in Massachusetts, undertook a detailed study of the Black Duck which winters commonly on the Massachusetts coast. He found that if — for various reasons — a bird lost a certain amount of weight, perhaps 30% of its original weight, it seemed to pass a point of no return. By that I mean that even if it was given food, it could not recover its weight and survive. Unfortunately, we usually don't have the opportunity to undertake such investigations."

Bob Teulings Stumped?

I find it hard to believe, but *Southern Living* magazine for April reported that Dr. Robert Teulings was stumped and frustrated. He had seen a hawk and "his mind told him he shouldn't have seen what he saw." But he could not stop, because Bob was leading a field trip for the Mountain Ecology Workshop near Cedar Mountain, N.C. The workshop was scheduled for May, with about 60 participants.

Natural Areas of Charleston

The National Audubon Society has produced a brochure entitled "Natural Areas of Charleston, S.C." It describes 18 areas that should interest any member of CBC, gives directions, and includes a map. A free copy may be obtained from National Audubon Society, P.O. Box 786, Charleston, S.C. 29402.

Do Chickens Ever Go Wild?

At a spring meeting of the CBC at Brevard a few years back, I listened with interest as a young ecologist from the University of Georgia described how he'd attempted to introduce an assortment of chickens, white rocks, domineers, etc., to a life in the wild on Sapelo Island. The experiment came a cropper when a Great Horned Owl discovered the hapless birds and proceeded to dispatch them one by one. Perhaps the young scientist would have fared better had he started with a fowl like the Wild Cock of Ligon Road.

I first saw the aforementioned bird the morning of 1 April 1977. I'd just finished my morning chores at the N.C. State University greenhouse center on Ligon Road in west Raleigh when I spied a smallish rooster pecking away at the lawn in front of the facility. The bird was gaunt and gamey-looking, but elegant in black tail, black and red contour plumage, and golden hackles, colors reminiscent of his ancestor, the Red Jungle Fowl, and the domestic breed known as the Brown Leghorn. I attempted to approach the rooster, but he'd have none of it. He didn't exactly run for the nearby woods, but, rather, sidled cautiously away.

I thought little of the bird at first, assuming that he was the property of some of the Black citizens who dwell nearby. However, enquiries around the neighborhood turned up no owner, so I concluded that the rooster must have straggled in from parts unknown, and had come to like what he'd found. As of this writing, 25 May, the Wild Cock of Ligon Road continues to thrive on insects, waste grain, and whatnot, and grows warier by the day. I was hesitant to include him on the spring count, but if he, and me, are still around in December, I think by George I will, Harry LeGrand notwithstanding.—JOSHUA A. LEE, 5104 New Castle Road, Raleigh, N.C. 27606.

Ostriches in Edgecombe County?

They are Rheas, to be completely factual. The two are in a pen quite close to the pen containing Cinnamon, Green-winged and Blue-winged Teals, and not far from the pond harboring 20 pinioned Canada Geese. Peacocks have the run of the place, but other pens contain Mallards, Black Ducks, and a dozen exotics. Quail are being hatched—more varieties of quail than I knew existed. Pheasants aplenty.

The entire collection of several thousand birds is a private hobby, not open to the public—so I am not giving travel directions. My visit was brought about by the wishes of the fifth grade in our parish school in Rocky Mount. The kids had the choice of a number of day-long outings — and nine of them asked for bird-study. After an hour of color slides, we checked out the American Coots at City Lake and the Great Blue Heron and Common Snipe at the Coastal Plain Experiment Station. We were told to look for a dozen Cattle Egrets, but we never found them. The kids wound up with a list of 25 species, not counting the Rheas, etc., of course.