



# Roundtable

... with Louis C. Fink

## Good News on Two Fronts

The venerable *New York Times* reports that the Puffin is coming back to Maine for the first time in 75 years. There were 20 sightings this year, and there is hope that the bird will breed.

*The Washington Post* reports that Bald Eagles are doing well in the Chesapeake Bay area. Active nests this year numbered 79, up from 73 last year. Sixty-nine eaglets hatched, up from 39.

## Georgia Checklist

The Georgia Ornithological Society has published the third edition of its Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds (\$2.00, C. O. S., 755 Ellsworth Drive N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30318.) Authors are J. Fred Denton, W. Wilson Baker, Leslie B. Davenport Jr., Milton N. Hopkins Jr., and Chandler S. Robbins. A total of 379 species and subspecies are listed, with details on the status of each. Facing pages give room for personal notes. The book should be valuable for Carolina students.

## More Bachman's Warbler Publications

Several articles on Bachman's Warbler have appeared recently in *Chat* and other publications. Those who follow this subject may have missed two articles less readily available than those referred to in the previous sentence. One is "Bachman's Warbler Breeding Habitat—A Hypothesis" (Hamel, Hooper, Urbston, and McDonald), a slide-illustrated paper read to the 1977 meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union and distributed in mimeograph form. The other is "Bachman's Warbler in a Clearcut?" (Shuler) in *The Lesser Squawk* (Vol. XXVIII, No. XI, December 1977), the newsletter of the Charleston Natural History Society. Both articles figure in the current debate about habitat requirements for the Bachman's Warbler and the effects of certain forest management practices upon this endangered species' chances for survival.

## Dissertation on Jewelweed

I have a good-sized stand of jewelweed near my back door. Jewelweed is a versatile plant for attracting birds. Hummingbirds seem to prefer nectar of the blossoms to everything else, and that is where I saw the hummers this summer. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks come to enjoy seed, but this fall, for the first time in several years, they seem to have passed me by—at least they were not there when I was looking. But warblers more than made up for the grosbeaks' delinquency. What they get from the jewelweed I have been unable to discover. They don't go to the blossoms, and they don't eat the seed, but get something from the edges of the leaves, something so microscopic I haven't been able to see it, even with the aid of a magnifying glass. They do not eat the leaves themselves, but leave them completely intact. It is a thrill to have the little warblers so close, sometimes right up on the back porch where my jewelweed overhangs it. My latest thrill was having

a Blue-winged Warbler there every day for nearly a week (10-4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9—don't know if the same one or a different one each day).

The first warbler to show up this fall was the American Redstart, 8-27—then on 9-18, 19, 21, 22, 23 (bird bath). The Yellow-breasted Chat came 9-9; Tennessee, Pine, and Cape May, 9-29; Magnolia, Palm, and Yellow, 9-30; Pine and Magnolia, 10-5; Kentucky and Golden-winged, 10-6. First Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 10-12; Black-throated Blue Warbler, 10-4; Nashville, 10-1; Hooded, 10-1; Wilson's, 10-1; and Orange-crowned, 10-1.

You can well imagine what a pleasure my jewelweed has been to me!—ETTA SCHIFFMAN, 2015 Bluemont Drive, Greensboro, N.C. 27408.

### **What "Undeveloped" Means**

On a cold day in early December, I drove 25 miles due north of Rocky Mount on Route 48 until I saw the signs "Medoc Mountain State Park—Undeveloped."

What a lovely word! "Undeveloped" means that there are an office, an unpaved parking area, free maps, and nothing else except the hiking trail. There are no picnic tables, no soft-drink machines, no swings or slides. I hiked about three miles of the trail down to Little Fishing Creek and back—not a single beer can, no hamburger cartons, no candy wrappers, no cigarette packs. In truth, I saw not a single piece of trash on my walk!

### **A Writer of Grace**

If any readers of this column enjoy graceful, elegant writing that wanders into the world of birds occasionally, I recommend the *Essays of E. B. White* (Harper & Row, 1977). The essays range far and wide; the birds appear naturally:

"A goose's eye is a small round enigma."

"And the visiting birds of spring and fall—the small, shy birds that drop in for one drink and stay two weeks."

"Swallows, I have noticed, never use any feather but a white one in their nest-building, and they always leave a lot of it showing, which makes me believe that they are interested not in the feather's insulating power but in its reflecting power, so that when they skim into the dark barn from the bright outdoors they will have a beacon to steer by."

"I found it spooky yet agreeable to be tailed by a bird, and a disreputable one at that. The Canada jay looks as though he had slept in his clothes."

"By day the goldfinches dip in yellow flight ..."

"Somebody told me the other day that a seagull won't eat a smelt ... I find this hard to believe ... I've always supposed a gull would eat anything."

### **Recommended Reading**

A new booklet by the U.S. Department of Agriculture is "Invite Birds to your home—conservation plantings for the Southeast." Written by Biologist Olan W. Dillon Jr., it has a world of landscaping suggestions and a handy table of foods preferred by familiar birds. Order from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Stock Number 0100-00316. Program aid 1093. (75 cents).