

Fifty Years Ago in *The Chat*—September 1957

On the President's Page of the September 1957 issue of *The Chat*, Charlotte Hilton Green urged closer ties with all organizations and groups working toward a common goal of conservation. She also reported that the Newsletter had carried arguments both for and against the important question of raising yearly dues to \$2.00. "Some of our oldest, most loyal and hardworking members" were on each side.

In "Safety factor in a hanging nest", B. R. Chamberlain presented an engineering analysis of an Acadian Flycatcher nest. He found that the nest, although apparently flimsy, was capable of supporting about 3.5 times the estimated weight of an adult and three grown young.

B. R. Chamberlain also summarized the 1957 spring counts. Only eight counts were reported from the two states, down from 11 in the previous year. Weather had been unfavorable during the count period, and participation was down. No unusual species were noted.

In a letter to the "Backyard Birding" editor, B. R. Chamberlain described a Pine Warbler that regularly fed from his hand. After noting the firm grasp of the bird as it perched on his finger, he constructed a "grip meter" with which he could measure the strength of the grip when the bird perched on it. When leaning forward to take food, it had a grip strength of 7–8 grams, and when balanced or relaxed, 3–4 grams. Chamberlain also was able to weigh the bird by offering it food on a balance. Its average weight was 14.2 g, and average food consumed at a perching was 0.5 g.

In General Field Notes there were several reports of sightings of Cattle Egrets—in the spring near the Cape Hatteras lighthouse, south of Charleston, near Washington, NC, and at North Pond at Pea Island NWR, and in fall in the Mattamuskeet area. Alexander Sprunt, Jr. reported that Glossy Ibises were breeding more extensively than previously known in South Carolina. A colony of 75–80 pairs was discovered at Winyah Bay. Previously only two small nesting sites had been known. Details of a sighting of a Garganey near the Cape Hatteras lighthouse were published. It was thought to be the first record for the Western Hemisphere. A January observation of a White-tailed Kite near Wilmington was reported.