

XV. A THIRD CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS

Margaret M. Nice.

Norman, Oklahoma.

The Christmas Bird Census in 1921 was the most successful of the three we have taken here in Norman; in 1919 we saw 35 species and over 1,000 individuals; in 1920: 33 species and 800 individuals, while in 1921 we recorded 39 species and over 2,000 individuals. The larger number of species seen this winter was partly due to the use of an automobile which gave us a wider range, but even over the same route traversed in the previous years we saw 36 species, so that the extra trips in the car gave us only three more species.

The census was taken Dec. 26, from 8:20 a. m. to 12:20 p. m., and 2:00 p. m. to 4:30 p. m. The weather was clear, the ground bare, the wind south and the temperature 28° at the start and 46° at the return. We covered eight miles on foot and sixteen in the automobile.

The following birds were seen:

Bobwhite, 10 (one covey); Western Mourning Dove, 2; Marsh Hawk, 5; Cooper Hawk, 1; Red-Tailed Hawk, 2; American Roughleg, 6; Hawks, (sp?), 3; Barn Owl, 1; Short-eared Owl, 1; Screech Owl, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 3; Downy Woodpecker, 13; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 3; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 7; Flicker, 33; Red-Shafted Flicker, 2; Blue Jay, 6; Crow, 600; Western Meadowlark, 74; Brewer Blackbird, 300; Blackbirds (sp?), 100; Purple Finch, 6; Goldfinch, 34; English Sparrow, 20; Western Savannah Sparrow, 4; Harris Sparrow, 280; White crowned Sparrow, 6; Western Field Sparrow, 77; Junco, 160; Song Sparrow, 57; Lincoln Sparrow, 1; Fox Sparrow, 12; Artic Towhee, 30; Cardinal, 105; White-rumped Shrike, 4; Mockingbird, 3; Carolina Wren, 9; Texas Wren, 9; Tufted Titmouse, 20; Plumbeous Chickadee, 90; Bluebird, 18. Total, 39 species, over 2,000 individuals.

Flocks of Crows and Blackbirds made up more than half the number of birds seen. Neither Horned Larks, Tree Sparrows, nor Robins were seen on this census; it seems as if these species were more apt to be found in cold winters than in mild ones. Tree Sparrows are usually abundant but this winter we have only seen two, one on Dec. 12 and the other Jan. 24.

A few words as to our experiences in feeding birds these last two winters may be of interest. Last year we put out food only and the birds came very little except when there was snow on the ground. But this year it occurred to us to offer water also and consequently we have birds all the time. (The foods we give them are suet, bread crumbs, cheese, nuts, sunflower seeds and bird seed.) Last winter our visitors were Western Field Sparrows, Juncos, one Lincoln Sparrow, a pair of Cardinals, a pair of Texas Wrens and several Plumbeous Chickadees. (One of the Juncos was curiously mottled with white spots on her head, back and throat.) English Sparrows have come in small numbers both years. This year our constant visitors, many of whom apparently get all their meals from the table, are a flock of a dozen Field Sparrows, one Junco, a male Cardinal, a Mockingbird, a Texas Wren, two Chickadees and a pair of Bluebirds. Occasionally a hybrid Flicker comes to drink; once we were visited by a White-crowned Sparrow and Feb. 11, a female Cardinal appeared. In general all these birds eat in peace, as many as three and four species being on the table at once; but the Mockingbird considers himself "Cock of the Roost" and may drive off any of the other birds, showing a particular animosity against the Cardinal.