

**XVIII. EVIDENCE OF INCREASE IN CERTAIN RARE
SPECIES OF BIRDS IN OKLAHOMA**

**R. O. Whintenton, Department of Zoology,
Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College**

The year 1924 has brought to light more new or rare species of birds than any of the past 13 years of my observation and collecting in Oklahoma.

During the months of November and December many reports came to us that Wood ducks (*Aix sponsa*) were seen in

the eastern half of the State. But since many hooded mergansers had been brought to us for identification, it was our opinion that the latter had been mistaken for the former by inexperienced observers.

On December 30, 1924, Mr. Geo. A. Moore collected and mounted a male wood duck. On seeing this specimen Mr. Main Miller, of Stillwater, was certain that the duck killed December 14, seven miles west and 2 miles south of Stillwater, was a male of that species.

Professor Sanborn reports that on November 3, he saw a flock of ducks in the Kiamichi Mountains. Because of the darkness of the late afternoon he assumed they were Mallards until a hunter shot two and pulled off their heads. This aroused his suspicion and upon examining the heads, found that they were wood ducks.

Many students reported seeing, and in some cases killing, a number of this species in eastern Oklahoma or Arkansas during the holidays, but were not certain of the species until after seeing the mounted specimen.

All these reports indicate that the wood duck will become common within a few years if the law against their slaughter can be enforced.

On the South Canadian river near Taloga, Oklahoma. December 26, 1924, Mr. Frank Allen saw two birds which he mistook for wild geese. He shot one which was described by an eye witness as weighing 25 lbs. and similar in color and size to the Whistling Swan (*Olor columbianus*) in our museum. Unfortunately the sex was not determined and the specimen was not mounted. It was reported that two other Swans were killed in the same neighborhood during the holidays.

The American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*) is considered exceedingly rare in the eastern half of the state. Mr. Geo. Moore collected a pair of these at Stillwater, May 15, 1924.

From the records accessible to us the Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*) had not been taken in this state until October 4th. Mr. J. P. Talbot shot a pair on the Cimarron river south of Stillwater on that date.

We have what we believe to be a specimen of the Harlan Hawk (*Buteo borealis harlani*). However, we have had so many color phases of the red-tailed, the western red-tailed and red-shouldered hawk, that we are awaiting a reply from Mr. Bunker

of the Kansas University Museum before laying claims for the first record of this species within the State.