

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY  
Washington, D. C.

March 2, 1925.

TO THE BIRD MIGRATION OBSERVERS OF THE BIOLOGICAL SURVEY:

The voluntary assistance which for so many years has been given by the numerous bird migration observers of the Biological Survey is greatly appreciated by the Bureau. The continuance of their active cooperation is earnestly desired, both in the matter of observations and in putting into effect a change in the method of preparing the reports.

At the present time the Bureau finds itself without sufficient clerical assistance to prepare for the permanent card files the great number of bird migration records that it receives on the schedules each year.

To obviate this difficulty as much as possible it seems desirable to change the form of report and to request the observers themselves to enter their records directly on cards that can be placed in the files without the necessity of copying. This system, furthermore, will make the records available for use much sooner than has formerly been possible.

It is hoped, therefore, that all the observers will cooperate in making this change, even though it should involve a little extra work on their part. The inclosed cards have been prepared to take the place of the schedules, and are to be filled out in much the same way.

Since these cards are to be placed in the permanent files of the Biological Survey, it is desirable that they be legibly written and kept as clean as possible. They should be written in ink, not with pencil.

On the top line should be written the name of the bird. (The square in the upper left hand corner should be left blank.)

On the second line should be entered the locality where the observations were made. The post office address of the observer is sufficient for a territory within a radius of 8 to 10 miles.

On the third line should be given the name of the observer.

In the square at the end of the second and third lines should appear the year during which the records were made.

Note.- In case there are records of 20 or more species by one observer, for the same locality, and during the same year, such cards may be tied together, with the observer's name, locality, and year written on the top card only, and the remainder of the cards will be filled in by rubber stamp at this office. For records of observations made at some distance from the observer's home or principal station the full information called for on the card should be given.



Records of observations are to be placed in the spaces provided below the third line, as follows:

First space, the date when the bird was first seen.

Second space, the approximate number observed on the date first seen.

Third space, the date when the species was next seen, whether on the next day or not until some time later.

Fourth space, the date when the species became common. Some birds come in a body and are common from the first, while others straggle along and do not become common for some time, while still others never become common.

Fifth space, the last date on which the species was seen. As this means the date of departure it can be filled only when all the birds leave. There will be no last record in spring, therefore, for species that breed in the vicinity; or in fall for those that remain through the winter.

Sixth space, a notation as to whether the species is "abdt." (abundant), "com." (common), "tol. com." (tolerably common), or "rare."

Last space, "Yes" or "no," to show whether or not the species breeds in the vicinity.

Additional information, such as breeding dates, exceptional abundance or scarcity, etc., may be noted in the space at the bottom or on the back of the card.

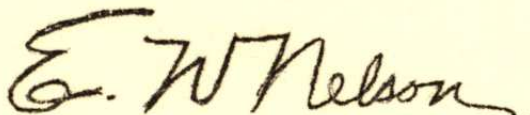
Separate cards should be used for the spring and fall migration reports. All records should be exact and noted at the time when the observations are made, not from memory at some subsequent time. General statements, such as "early in March" or "late in May" are of little value.

The larger card inclosed should be filled out with the observer's name and the address to which his mail should be sent.

Cards may be returned to this office in the inclosed return envelope without payment of postage. Not over about 100 cards should be placed in one envelope. Additional cards will be furnished on request.

We trust that we may have the continued cooperation of all our observers in our study of the distribution and migration of North American birds.

Very truly yours,



Chief of Bureau.