

September 13, 1955

## THE SISKIN

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TO MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA CHAPTER:

On the eve of our chapter's first birthday as an officially constituted organization, we find our group in a flourishing condition, considerably bigger and healthier than we had dared to hope at first. Of course, every bird study group, as soon as it is successful, needs its own journal, duly and properly named, and so we have bestowed the above appellation on the heretofore unnamed circular letters sent out to inform the members and friends of forthcoming activities. We selected the name "Siskin" because, like that bird, our publication appears irregularly from autumn to spring in the Northern Virginia Area. As yet there are no plans afoot to make it into a serious rival of the Auk or the Wilson Bulletin.

The first activity of the new season will be a field trip through the Pine Ridge vicinity on Saturday, September 24, 1955, at 7:30 A.M. To get to Pine Ridge, travel west on Route 50 about 5 miles beyond Seven Corners; turn left at the Pine Ridge sign; then turn left again on Overbrook, and again on Highland, and park off the street near the homes of the Rules and Peacocks, at the end of the macadam.

A business meeting in the near future is advisable, and it may be necessary to hold a short business session after the walk. One important question to be settled is that of dues for the forthcoming year. You will recall that last year, when we fixed the dues at 50¢ per person, we did so with the understanding that this was an interim figure, which would be subject to review in the light of a year's experience. We foresaw the possibility that this sum might prove inadequate. It now appears that dues of 50¢ are not sufficient to cover all of our expenses, (of which the largest items are: dues to the V.S.O. and postage, stationery, etc.) It has been suggested that we raise our dues to 75¢ for adults, retaining the 50¢ for junior members. This can be settled at the Pine Ridge meeting.

Our second formal, planned activity will also be a field trip, this one to be held in the Belle Haven section of Alexandria on Saturday, October 15, at 8:00 A.M. The trip will be led by Jack Abbott, of Alexandria, who has led trips for the D.C. Audubon Society ~~as~~ for a number of years.

Meet at the Belle Haven picnic area, just off Mount Vernon Highway, a short distance south of the city limits of Alexandria. You can find this spot without difficulty; a sign along the Mount Vernon Highway will tell you

where to turn left when traveling south from Alexandria. (Caution: Do not confuse with the "North Belle Haven" area, which is also marked; pass by the latter, and you will see the "Belle Haven" sign almost immediately). The Potomac River and the nearby marshes, fields, and woods in this area should give us an opportunity for coverage of a number of different habitats on this trip. Jack Abbott recently completed a breeding-bird census in this area, according to the standard method prescribed by the National Audubon Society and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and he has agreed to give an explanation of the techniques used in conducting a study of this type. After the trip we will repair to the Abbott residence nearby where Jack has promised to show us some of his superb water-color bird portraits, as well as those of his father, the late Jacob Bates Abbott. Best

Those who may be interested in additional trips during the fall migrating season are invited to join us on informal walks through Glen Carlyn Park, Arlington, on September 17 and October 1 while warblers are still migrating. These walks will start at 7:00 A.M. from the junction of South Lexington St. and Arlington Blvd. Drive west on Arlington Blvd. until you cross the bridge over the Washington and Old Dominion railroad tracks at bottom of hill; South Lexington St. will then be the first side street (it turns off to the left at the top of the hill at the Glen Carlyn sign.) Cars will assemble on South Lexington St.

We have a number of ideas tentatively lined up for future programs, and hope to have as many of these as possible during the coming year. Present ideas include talks on the birds of Africa and the Arctic by Dr. Charles Handley, Jr.; a talk on falconry by a local practitioner of the art, Mr. Nye of Oakton; and (we hope) another visit to the home of the Mangum Weeks' to see the remainder of his choice collection of ornithological literature. Needless to say, any additional suggestions for meetings, field trips, or other activities will be most welcome.

Remember the dates: September 24 Pine Ridge\*  
October 15, Belle Haven\*

*Robert J. Watson*  
Robert J. Watson  
Secretary

\*Bring picnic lunch