

The third year of the Alabama Ornithological Society is now under way. It is a great pleasure and honor to serve as third president of this worthwhile society.

Alabama has been, for many years, what could be called an "in-between state" so far as scientific data is concerned. Many of the great Ornithologists of the past traveled through Alabama simply because of the necessity of getting from one place to another. This usually consisted of traveling from the Atlantic Coast or Florida, where they spent considerable time, to Louisiana, which was also considered a fertile field so far as gathering bird data was concerned. Fortunately, these men did record a few sight records while passing through this state.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century, Dr. William Cushman Avery of Greensboro, Alabama, contributed more to Alabama ornithology than any other man. His excellent collection of bird skins was the first extensive collection of birds taken in Alabama. The only other work of importance on a statewide basis was the book, *Birds of Alabama*, by Arthur H. Howell in the early part of the present century. Howell recorded in his book data collected by avid amateur ornithologists who collected material in their own or adjoining counties. Were it not for these men, scientific bird data would be almost completely lacking in this state.

The objectives of the Alabama Ornithological Society appear to be made to order for furthering the study of birds in this state. The first three objectives as listed in the Constitution of the society are: 1. To promote scientific and educational activities in the field of ornithology; 2. To bring together those residents of Alabama who are interested in birds; 3. To coordinate and make available the findings from bird observations.

With these objectives in mind and the interest and cooperation of the members, Alabama need not ever have to take a back seat to any state in the field of ornithology.

By WALTER ROSENE, JR.

Some bird students prefer to travel away from home to make observations. Usually opportunities are present near at hand and such was the case when we studied the Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) in our backyard. When I say "we" I mean the entire Rosene family, my wife, Kathryn, and our two boys, Jimmy, age 12, and Walter Carl, age 6.

After building our house in the winter of 1951, we noticed wrens in our backyard so we provided cavities in our wood rack which we thought might be suitable for a nest. The wrens were not interested, but preferred to make their own selection. We made the mistake of leaving open the door which provides access under the house, and a pair chose a very dark situation on the foundation sill. We were concerned with this precarious position as the young could have fallen from the nest along the foundation below the door and not reached the outside. However, this nest was successful.

In the spring of 1953 we kept the door in the foundation closed and the pair of wrens was still with us. We had placed an old martin house on top of a pile of scrap lumber which we were keeping for use on odd jobs around the house. My wife wanted this "unsightly" lumber burned but I had been against her "proposal." The wrens liked the lumber pile and were on my side as they decided to use one of the compartments in the martin house for their first brood. This meant the lumber pile must remain virtually intact until they had finished activities. The first brood was a success. We watched four birds leave the nest one morning, while eating breakfast, between 7 and 8 a. m. We did not make any records on this brood.

Approximately 10 days later activities for the second brood started. Both male and female seemed to be interested in a flower box which was on the rail of our back porch. They were active around this site from June 3 to 6. On the morning of June 7, the wrens were at work building a nest in the box. Kathryn noticed the activity from the kitchen window at 6:30 a. m. At that time the nest was approximately half finished. We postponed breakfast and the four of us watched the wrens complete the job by 8:00 a. m. The nest was on top of the soil among the stems of growing plants, 18 inches from the house, 2 feet from the kitchen window over the sink, and where one passed within 8 inches of the nest when entering the kitchen door.

Both birds worked at construction. We could not determine sexes but assumed the female remained at the nest while the male brought building material. The structure was finished by