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WORK FOR THE PRESERVATION OF
WILD BIRDLIFE

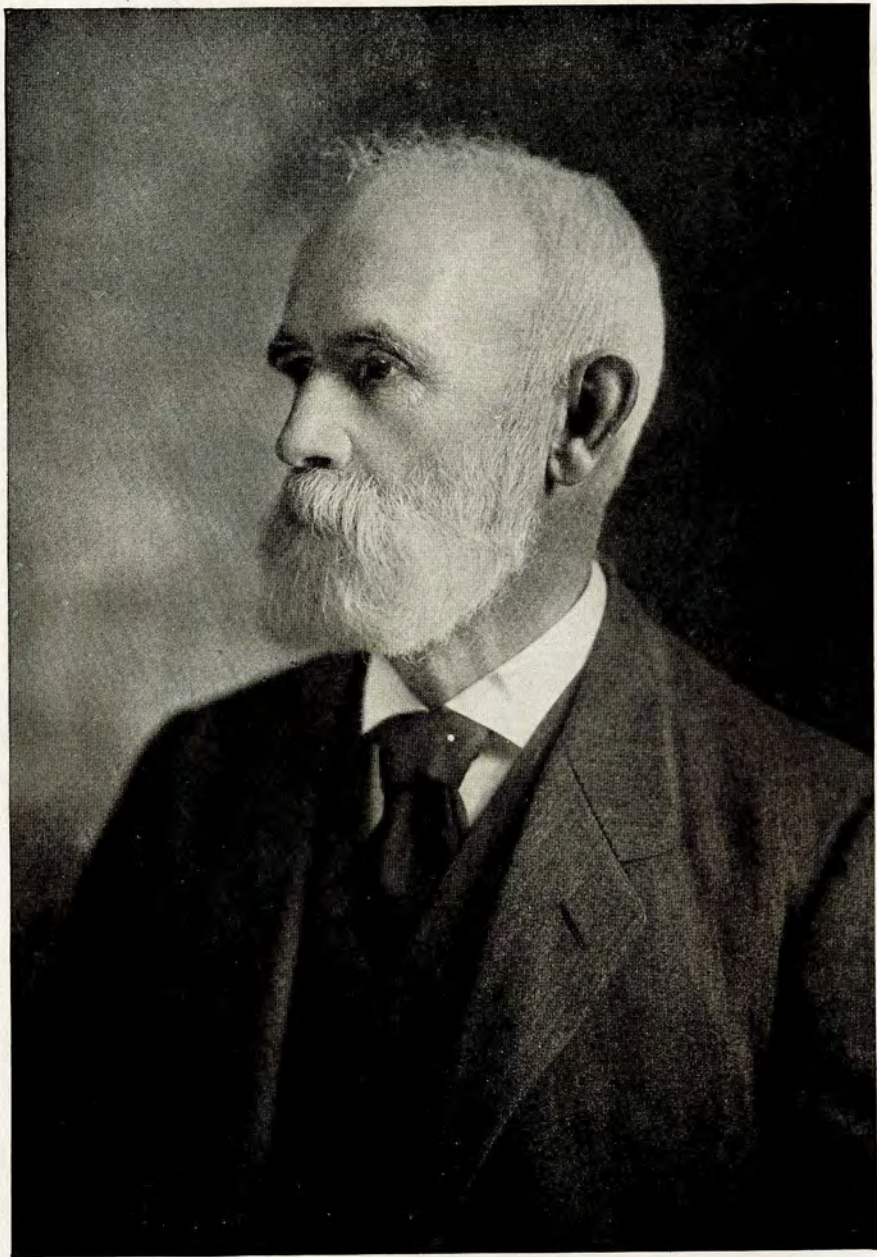
By WINTHROP PACKARD

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William Brewster
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THE STORY OF THE AUDUBON SOCIETY

*Twenty-five years of Active and Effective Work for the Preservation of Wild
Birdlife*

BY WINTHROP PACKARD

The term "Audubon Society" was coined in 1886 by George Bird Grinnell, then editor of "Forest and Stream," and under this name an organization for the protection of birds was formed with its headquarters in New York City. Over 48,000 people are said to have signed cards, expressing their interest in the work, but the Society soon ceased to exist.

In 1896 the Massachusetts Audubon Society for the Protection of Birds was organized. Its membership and the scope of its work have continued and increased. It is now the oldest and, with the exception of the National Association of Audubon Societies, the strongest and most active bird-protection society in the country. It was not the first in the world, however, for the Selborne Society, with Sir John Lubbock as President, and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Her Grace the Duchess of Portland President, were already active in England and still continue. The Massachusetts Society has been rightly called the "mother" of all Audubon Societies, for directly through its example and influence similar societies were formed one after another until nearly every state in the Union has such a society. In 1902 the late William Dutcher was chosen leader of the National Committee of Audubon Societies, whose aim was to bind together and make more effective the work of the various State organizations. Out of this grew in 1905 the National Association of Audubon Societies with Mr. Dutcher President and Mr. T. Gilbert Pearson Secretary.

While in close touch with the National Association of Audubon Societies at all times, leaning much on it for advice and assistance, and frequently contributing funds and service to its good work, the Massachusetts Society is an independent organization in all respects. Its main work lies within its own State and its membership and financial support come largely from within its borders, but sons and daughters of Massachusetts go all over the world and Massachusetts interests and affiliations go with them. Loyal members of the Massachusetts Audubon Society are to be found in most States of the Union and in many foreign countries. In the same way, through its leaflets, charts, calendars, travelling lectures, libraries and exhibits and through its service to the public in response to countless personal appeals for advice and encouragement in bird-protection matters the direct influence of the Society goes out to every part of North America and often to more distant lands. Russia, Alaska, Honolulu and Jerusalem, even, have in recent years come to the Society for advice, encouragement or bird-protection supplies.

The first record-book of the Society records the first informal meeting of the Board of Directors as having taken place at the residence of Mrs. Augustus Hemenway, 273 Clarendon Street, Boston on Monday, February 10, 1896. There were present Mrs. Cabot, Mrs. Bolles, Miss Hall, Mrs. Hemenway, Miss Richards, Secretary, Mr. Bangs, Mr. Lowell and Mr. Minot. Nine days later a second, more formal meeting was held with Mrs. Cabot at 3 Marlborough Street, Boston. At these meetings leaflets, by-

laws, committees, local secretaries, etc., were discussed and arranged for and the work of the Society was fairly launched. That its influence was to be permanent and far-reaching might have been predicted from the long list of distinguished people who were its officers as follows:

President

WILLIAM BREWSTER.

Vice-Presidents:

MRS. LOUIS AGASSIZ, Pres. of Radcliffe College.	HON. CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS. SYLVESTER BAXTER.
MRS. JOHN L. GARDNER.	WILLIAM STURGIS BIGELOW, M.D.
MRS. CHARLES HEAD.	WILLIAM S. BRYANT, M.D.
MRS. AUGUSTUS HEMENWAY.	J. E. CHAMBERLIN.
MRS. HENRY S. HUNNEWELL.	PHILIP A. CHASE.
MRS. JULIA J. IRVINE, Pres. of Wellesley College.	SAMUEL HENSHAW.
MISS SARAH ORNE JEWETT.	HENRY L. HIGGINSON.
MRS. CLARA T. LEONARD.	HON. GEORGE F. HOAR.
MRS. ENDICOTT PEABODY.	RT. REV. WILLIAM LAWRENCE, D.D.
MRS. JOHN C. PHILLIPS.	HON. JOHN LOWELL.
MRS. DUDLEY L. PICKMAN.	PROF. EDWARD S. MORSE.
MRS. JOHN E. THAYER.	CHARLES S. SARGENT.
MISS WHARTON.	HORACE E. SCUDDER.
MRS. HENRY WHITMAN.	BRADFORD TORREY.

Secretary and Treasurer:

MISS HARRIET E. RICHARDS.

Directors:

MRS. FRANK BOLLES.	OUTRAM BANGS.
MRS. ARTHUR T. CABOT.	ERNEST AMORY CODMAN, M.D.
MISS MINNA B. HALL.	JAMES ARNOLD LOWELL.
GEORGE H. MACKAY.	
J. B. MILLET.	
CHARLES S. MINOT, Ph. D.	

One hundred and ten Local Secretaries were soon appointed, scattered at strategic points throughout the State. One of the first questions to come before the Board of Directors was "how to influence other States to start Societies" and from the beginning every effort was made to this end with most gratifying results. Before the first year was out Pennsylvania organized and in 1897 New York, New Hampshire, Illinois, Maine, the District of Columbia, Wisconsin, New Jersey and Colorado followed, with societies already forecast in Rhode Island, Ohio, Iowa and Indiana.

Realizing that an organization moves forward only on funds, care was taken at the very beginning to provide these through membership fees and donations and the Treasurer's report, published in October, 1897, toward the close of the second year, shows receipts of \$3,322.12 and expenditures of \$1,904.19, leaving a balance of \$1,317.93. At the very first meeting a legislative agent was appointed to represent the Society in regard to proposed legislation concerning the game laws.

One of the purposes of the Society, as stated in the first paragraph of its first circular, was to discourage the buying and wearing of the feathers of any wild birds. For this, throughout its existence it has worked unceasingly and with a large measure of success, but as the foregoing shows it immediately stepped forward into the greater conflict for general bird welfare, where it has ever since remained.

William Brewster, of Cambridge, was elected President of the Massachusetts Audubon Society at its beginning and continued in that office until a pressure of other duties caused his resignation in December, 1913. He was succeeded by Edward Howe Forbush, State Ornithologist, who still (1921) is the head of the Society. To its two Presidents the Massachusetts Audubon Society owes much of its prestige and success. The foundation of these were laid by Mr. Brewster, whose personality and training so admirably fitted him to lead in work of this sort. "His influence was always toward the best efforts and the highest ideals, both in scientific work and personal conduct and association with him was always stimulating and improving." All his life a field naturalist and collector, at the time of the founding of the Society Mr. Brewster was already known throughout the country as one of the foremost ornithologists of his time. His scientific attainments, his deep knowledge of bird-life and broad and sympathetic understanding of it peculiarly fitted him to be the foremost representative of a Society for the protection of birds. He added to these qualities a temperament that was invariably calm and judicial, blended with a forceful yet always genial leadership that was an inspiration to those who came in contact with him. Set upon the broad foundations of tolerance and wisdom laid during his administration, the Society has always been free from any suggestion or charge of fanaticism. Through his influence it went serenely forward to its great work, tact and patience always directing its energy and enthusiasm.

This sane guidance and balanced as well as fostered enthusiasm has been admirably continued in the able leadership of Mr. Forbush.

The Society's first Secretary-Treasurer was Miss Harriet E. Richards of Brookline, and as it owed much to the wisdom and deep ornithological knowledge of Mr. Brewster, so it did to the tact, zeal and tireless devotion of Miss Richards. Upon her fell the brunt of the detail work of the organization. As Secretary-Treasurer, lecturer, demonstrator and field organizer she worked day and night for the building up of the Society. At the end of the first year, largely through her activities, the Society listed 385 school members and 926 Associate Members, who by vote of the Directors came to be known as Founders, a title of privilege which they still retain.

With these two in direct charge and with an active and keenly interested Board of Directors, the work of the Society went forward surely and successfully. Through the courtesy of the Boston Society of Natural History, deskroom for the Secretary was provided in the library of the building free of charge, a friendly hospitality which was continued for near-

ly twenty years. Later on the Council Chamber in the basement of the building was turned over to the Society for its ever-expanding office. This commodious room is still occupied in conjunction with the Massachusetts office of the National Association of Audubon Societies, the two societies joining in paying a modest rental.

An early plan of the newly launched Society was the publication of an educational Audubon Calendar and an Audubon poster which could be used by all who wished to post their land against hunting. These two activities have been continued to the present day, several thousand calendars being sold yearly throughout the country and the Audubon Poster for the protection of birds being known in every hamlet throughout the State. Another early activity was the devising of a circular advocating Bird Day in the public schools. This was published in the Journal of Education and reprints were widely circulated amongst superintendents, teachers and others. In response to this first circular eighteen gratifying letters were received saying that Bird Day had been or was to be observed in the schools. Through the persistent influence thus originated Bird Day has since become an established institution in the State, fostered and provided for by the Commonwealth itself.

During the second year of the Society's existence it was voted to devise and print the first bird chart, the idea being taken from a copy of a German bird chart, exhibited by Ralph Hoffmann, who was an influential member of the Board of Directors and was at one time Chairman of the Board. Mr. Hoffmann was for many years an active worker in the cause, widely known as a lecturer on birds and the author of a valuable Bird Guide.

In 1909, twelve years after the founding of the Society, Mr. Hoffmann, then Chairman of the Board, issued a circular stating the character and aims of the Society. A paragraph from this sums up very well the work of the Society up to that time. "In the past twelve years the Massachusetts Audubon Society has by no means confined its educational work to combating the fashion of wearing birds' plumage on hats. It has published nearly fifty leaflets and distributed them either directly or through its Local Secretaries; it has published two wall-charts, representing together fifty-two of our common birds; it has issued seven Audubon Calendars; it has instituted three travelling lectures and four travelling libraries, which are sent into communities where there is a lack of this particular kind of educational influence; it has organized in Boston nine courses of popular lectures."

In the fall of 1903 the Society regretfully accepted the resignation of Miss Richards, its first and up to that time its only secretary, tendered on account of ill health, and Miss Jessie E. Kimball, who for some months had served as secretary *pro tem.*, was elected to the position. Miss Kimball served faithfully in this capacity for a term of ten years, being succeeded in 1913 by the present Secretary-Treasurer, Winthrop Packard.

The work of the Audubon Society since that time, while it has followed consistently the lines marked out for it by the Founders, has been so varied in detail, has touched the public of our State—indeed of the country at large—on so many sides of the bird-protection problem that it would need a book to adequately describe it. The office at 66 Newbury Street is at once a Museum of bird-protection material, an exhibition library, an ever ready source of information and activity in the dissemination of knowledge in all matters pertaining to bird study and bird protection. It has become head-

quarters for supplies as well, and every day brings inquiries, appeals for help, orders for material or visiting investigators, often from far-distant States as well as our own.

In all matters pertaining to better legislation the Society has fought vigorously since its founding. It has been largely instrumental in getting upon the statute books of the State the better bird laws that have been enacted during the past quarter of a century. It has contributed in money and service in every campaign for better national laws as well. It was particularly active in work at Washington for the Federal Migration Bird Law and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, both of which have done so much for the protection of our useful wild birds. It has contributed liberally to the various funds needed for bird work throughout the country from time to time. One of its notable contributions was \$1,000 toward the Roosevelt Memorial Bird Fountain, planned for by the National Association of Audubon Societies, this total being made up of very many small sums generously donated by a large portion of its membership.

The Audubon Society Bird Lectures, begun in a small way by Ralph Hoffmann and his fellow directors, have become a Boston Institution, bringing lecturing scientists from all over the country and filling the largest hall in the city with audiences numbering fifteen hundred or more for each lecture.

Several thousand Audubon Calendars, published each year, carry bird pictures in color and bird information into as many homes, and the Audubon leaflets and pictures go forth on missionary errands, often to far-distant places, in every mail.

In the same way the Audubon Bird Charts, now three in number, showing seventy-two birds in color, have become a schoolroom necessity throughout the land and are displayed in progressive public libraries everywhere.

In April, 1916, the Society accepted the generous offer of Dr. George W. Field of the use of his Sharon estate for a bird sanctuary. This estate comprises two hundred and twenty-five acres of diversified field and forest land with brooks and small ponds admirably adapted for the purpose. Since that time through the good will of adjoining landholders the area thus protected has been increased to seven hundred and fifty acres. In June, 1918, Mr. Harry G. Higbee, an ornithologist of repute, was engaged as resident warden at the Sanctuary, making his headquarters at the very ancient farmhouse. The Society's aim in this work is to show how birds may best be attracted on any farm or estate, to so attract and protect them over a large area and especially to make the place so interesting to the general public that it will make pilgrimage to it to learn the methods employed. In the farmhouse certain rooms have been set apart for the display of Audubon literature and material and have been made very attractive by Mr. Higbee's excellent natural-history collections showing birds, flowers, minerals, insects, etc. During 1920 over twenty-six hundred visitors registered at the Sanctuary office, representing twenty-three States and some distant countries—Canada, Cuba, England, for instance. A delegation of Japanese studying American institutions came one day. The Sanctuary work is supported entirely by voluntary subscription and from the General Fund of the Society.

In February, 1917, the monthly "Bulletin of the Massachusetts Audubon Society" was first published, its purpose being to chronicle the affairs of the Society from month to month, to report items of interest con-

cerning birds, to keep its readers informed as to State and Federal legislation and briefly to note matters of interest about birds throughout the world. Its subscription price is \$1.00 per annum, included in all Sustaining and Life Membership fees. The Bulletin has proved itself valuable in increasing the sense of fellowship among the members of the Society, as a means of widely disseminating information in regard to the work and as a treasure-house of contributions of interesting items of personal experience with birds.

One of the first aims of the Audubon Society was to interest and educate young people in a love for birds and their protection. In the beginning it instituted Junior Membership for a nominal fee and it has labored to this great end of educating the young all through its career. It numbers among its Sustaining and Life Members today many whose first interest was aroused through Junior Membership. When in 1912 the National Association's plan of Junior Classes in bird study with leaflet, text and colored picture, was proposed, the Society immediately took it up. Its initial success throughout the State being due largely to the effective work of Miss Jessie E. Kimball, then its Secretary. This work throughout the State has steadily expanded, as many as 28,000 children having been thus trained in a single year.

Realizing the educational value, especially to the young, of worthwhile motion pictures, the Society has had filmed, at very large expense, a two-reel picture of Longfellow's beautiful poem "The Birds of Killingworth." The quaint, picturesque New England village setting with its Academy and church, parson, preceptor and scholars, with the farms, farmers, village and farmlife give great interest to the story, all through which the birds are seen in profusion, flocking, singing, nesting and feeding their young. The bird pictures are by the noted motion-picture photographers of wild birdlife, William and Irene Finley. This picture is distributed by the Community Motion Picture Company, of 46 West 24th Street, New York City, throughout the United States, and abroad by the Inter-Ocean Film Corporation, 218 West 42d Street, New York City. Its use by theatres or private gatherings may be obtained on application to the Society. It is proving a valuable educational force in the cause of bird protection.

Thus we have briefly stated some of the principal activities of the Society during the past twenty-five years. Naturally all reference to a mass of detail often important and effective for the cause has been omitted. The great desire of its Founders and Directors has been to arouse the public conscience to the need of the work and to secure and direct its assistance. In the quarter-century great progress has been made. To realize this one has only to recall the incessant slaughter carried on without restraint twenty-five years ago, skins of our songsters shipped to the milliners in great bales, articles of common and unrestricted traffic, wildfowl of all kinds killed for the market by the ton, then note the complete cessation of such traffic today. In this result, brought about by Audubon and conservation societies throughout the country, our Massachusetts Society has had always an active participation, often an effective leadership. The Society has proved its worth. There is still great need of its leadership and its activities. It has learned the value of the mutual assistance and friendly good will of its membership. It tries to give to all who work with it not only a feeling of fellowship in the work but the thought that membership is a distinct personal advantage. *Let us help you* is its slogan.

The Massachusetts Audubon Society is headquarters for everything that pertains to the great movement for the sane and adequate protection of all desirable wild bird-life. We aim to help the bird students and bird protectionists as well as the birds. You can obtain at the office, 66 Newbury Street, Boston, many things of great value absolutely free.

Advice and Instruction. We give expert advice freely in all matters pertaining to the study of birds or their protection.

Cloth Posters. These are in the best legal form for protecting your property from trespass or illegal hunting.

Pamphlets. We have in variety much useful literature on bird protection and bird study issued by the Audubon Society and others.

Lectures. We have several travelling bird lectures, text and slides of which we lend free of charge to teachers and others who wish to lecture on birds.

Libraries. Four travelling libraries of bird books are loaned to public libraries or other educational centres in towns which need them.

Exhibitions. Bird literature, various types of bird-houses and other bird-protection material lent at any time for educational exhibits.

Bird Clubs. If you wish to start a bird club in your town, write to us. We will help you.

Bird Sanctuaries. If you wish to start a bird sanctuary in your town, write to us. We will help you.

Supplies for bird work should be obtained from us. You get the lowest prices and the best service, and you help the Society to a modest margin of profit which is used to further bird work.

Bird Books. We have the newest and best in bird books on our shelves for inspection. You are invited to examine or use these for reference here at the office. We sell them at the list price. You may order them or any other nature book, and we will see that they are mailed to you at the regular price, postage added.

Calendars. Bird calendars of the current year, very attractive bird pictures in color with exquisite backgrounds, six plates with calendar dates—six $11\frac{1}{4}$ x 7 inches, price \$1.00.

Charts. The Audubon Bird Charts—three in number—show seventy-two different birds in color. They are lithographed, mounted on cloth, size 27 x 42 inches. We sell thousands of them yearly to schools, libraries and private individuals. They are known the country over. Even far-off Alaska bought them. They cost \$2.50 each and they last a lifetime.

Bird Pictures. We have over a hundred different bird pictures from paintings by Horsfall, Fuertes and others suitable for framing. With descriptive leaflet and outline drawing these are the best for teaching children—5 cents to 25 cents each.

Lantern-slides. We sell beautifully colored slides of birds. You may choose from 200 at \$1.00 each.

Bird-houses. We show and sell the best in bird-houses, feeders and food for the winter birds. Mail orders will receive prompt attention.