



NEWS LETTER

"If I supply you a thought you may remember it and you may not. But if I can make you think a thought for yourself, I have indeed added to your stature."

FEBRUARY
1940

This NEWSLETTER is published monthly by the Greenkeepers Club of New England, and sent free to its members and their Green's Chairmen. Subscription price ten cents a copy, or a dollar a year.

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The ideas and opinions expressed in the subject matter of this NEWSLETTER are not necessarily those of the Editor or the members of the club as a whole.

JOTTINGS FROM THE G. S. A. TURF CONFERENCE

by John Counsell

Mr. John Gray, 57 year-old Superintendent at the Essex County Town and Country Club, located at Windsor, Ontario, was elected president of the organization, succeeding Frank Ermer of the Ridgewood Country Club of Cleveland. Mr. Gray has been superintendent at the Essex Club for the last twenty-five years and recently was signally honored by his club, who signed him to a twenty-five year contract, believed to be the longest of its kind.

The greenkeeper today is faced with prosperity demands with a depression budget. There must be intelligent use of available funds. Greenkeepers comparing costs may minimize danger of greens-chairman doing the same because the greenkeeper is familiar with the many factors that must be considered in making an intelligent comparison of costs. Greenkeepers should develop the executive side of greenkeeping. The revenue of a golf club depends a great deal upon the playing condition of the golf course. The Greenkeeper should keep records and costs of all operations, and develop and

maintain an effective work force. The highest effectiveness and moral of the workmen cannot be commanded or forced, it can be obtained by developing proper working conditions. The physical condition of the work must be reasonable and suitable to create real effort. Explain to the workman why he is doing a certain type of work, this information will make him feel important and create an interest in his work. Efficiency is the ratio between the in-put and the out-put. The workman has ideas and experiences that can help you, keep the door open for these and respect his judgment. The success of the greenkeeper depends largely upon his crew.

The public speaker should put himself in the place of his audience. Public speaking is enlarged conversation. Writing is different from speaking because you don't know who will read it and under what circumstances.

Fertilize your mind as well as your soil. People judge you by your actions in your spare time as well as at your work.

The proper way to combat disease is to plant resistant varieties or strains. Chemical treatment is just a temporary relief. The life history of most fungi is not known at present. *Rhizoctania solani* must have two spores, one of each sex, to develop.

Lime and phosphate applied to Kentucky Bluegrass fairways in Pennsylvania have given good results. The exclusive use of inorganic nitrogen produces plants similar to overgrown children without a constant supply of food.

The greenkeeper should educate young men to take over the golf courses and other recreational positions in the future to prevent other groups from getting the superintendent's position. The greenkeeper is generally underpaid. The purpose of the short courses for greenkeepers is to help the greenkeeper and not to create them.

We have heard that there is a story around that the TORO TROJAN mower has been discontinued, with the introduction of the new SUPER mower. Manager Clapper of the New England Toro Co. positively states that this rumor is false and that the TROJAN will remain in the TORO line.

THE VALUE OF BIRDS ON YOUR GOLF COURSE

by Homer C. Darling

If you as a greenkeeper suddenly discovered that you had many good friends in your club who, unbeknown to you had for years been quietly and earnestly working for your best interest and welfare, you would attempt to show your appreciation in some way, wouldn't you? That is the story of the birds. So, to those greenkeepers who have paid little or no attention to their bird friends during the course of their experience, this article and appeal is directed.

Already I can hear someone say, "All right, I'll bite, what do the birds do for me besides making holes in the greens and a lot of noise?" Well sir, year after year, day and night, winter and summer, the birds in your state and all other states of our country, have actually consumed tons of weed seeds and tons of caterpillars, beetles, grubs, ants, moths and grasshoppers. We do not always realize, because insects are so small and insignificant appearing, what an important place they occupy in our lives. There are more different kinds of insects than all the other forms of animal life added together. There are probably more different kinds of insects on a single good size New England farm than there are birds on the entire North American continent. Take away the birds and we wouldn't be able to exist more than ten years. The insects would devour every last bit of vegetation in existence. (This is the scientist opinion, not mine.)

Back in our Colonial days there was no consideration whatever given to the value of birds. On the other hand, among the first acts passed were bounty laws, not only offering rewards for the heads of certain birds that were condemned without fair trial, but imposing fines on the farmer who did not kill his quota each year.

For two centuries and a half this systematic destruction of birds, blundered ignorantly along in every colony, state, and territory resulting in a staggering loss to agriculture. It was not until 1885 that Congress appropriated a small sum of money for the research of the economic value of birds. Not until this searchlight of science was pointed in the right direction was the real value of birds discovered. As a result of this

investigation, not even the crow appeared as black as he had been painted. Only a few culprits among the hawks and owls, and one little sinner not a bird of prey stood convicted and condemned to die. When it came to a verdict on the English sparrow after a most impartial and thorough trial, the judges turned thumbs down. Today, the states have not only withdrawn the bounties on birds but have established laws for their protection.

Whoever takes any notice of the birds about us cannot fail to be impressed with the very orderly manner in which Dame Nature has allotted her house-keeping to the birds. Every species of birds is given a definite area to keep clean. One class of birds is given the job of sweeping the air to keep down the mosquitoes, gnats, and midges. Some are around our homes, others over the fields and streams, and even a group for night duty close to the ground and higher in the air. Then there is a class to keep the foliage of the low trees and bushes clean, another group for the trunks of trees, and still others for the upper parts of trees. When this division of work is all combined it gives us all a free protection service of untold value, and the more we learn about the details of the work the more we appreciate the necessity of giving it a boost.

Have you ever watched a Chickadee in mid-winter as it diligently searches every twig for tiny objects too small for us to see? Much of the food of Chickadees in winter consists of dormant insects or of insect eggs. These friendly little birds daily destroy great numbers of insects which if left alone would do much damage when warm weather came. Then there are the Nuthatches, the Brown Creepers, and Downy Woodpeckers working on the trunks of the trees searching under bark and covering every minute part of the trunks and limbs of the trees. Or you may have noticed a flock of Tree Sparrows working on the ground, along the walls, in the rough, anywhere there are weeds. What a wonderful help they are to the greenkeeper, for they live almost entirely on weed seeds.

With the coming of warm weather these winter birds go north and are replaced by the many classes of birds from the southland. A big job is ahead of these workers because the warm weather will bring out millions of all types of destructive insects. Stop and watch these birds at work. You will see the

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Vireos and Warblers seeking out the cankerworms, leaf hoppers, flies, and smaller caterpillars on bushes and low branches of trees. Shortly you may see the Catbird, Brown Thrush, or Cuckoo covering the same ground for the larger caterpillars, and other insects too big for the smaller birds to handle. If you are an observer of birds you may some time get the thrill of witnessing an Oriole or Catbird breaking into a tent caterpillar's nest and before it is through, destroy the entire contents.

This sort of thing is of tremendous value to us, and when we consider that the young of all these birds have enormous appetites we get some idea of what our bird friends are doing for us. Many young birds eat more than their own weight of food every 24 hours. Multiply this by the many hundreds of grub and caterpillar eating birds around us and we have a rough estimate of the great consumption of injurious insects which our bird helpers are responsible for. So, don't condemn the birds that make holes in your greens, but thank them for calling to your attention the fact that the greens are infested with destructive grubs.

Now what about the value of weed destroying birds to the greenkeeper? Fortunately, the Sparrow and Finch families are among the most widely distributed, prolific, and hardy birds, who are your co-workers in the consumption of weed seeds. Some members of their large clan are with us every day of the year. Nearly all, it is true, vary their diet with insects, but surely for this reason they are all the more welcome.

"Certain garden weeds produce an incredible number of seeds," says Dr. Sylvester Judd of the Biological Survey. "A single plant of one of these species may mature as many as a hundred thousand seeds in a season, and if unchecked would produce in the spring of the third year ten billion plants." The great majority of weeds being annuals, the parent-plant dying after frost or one seasons growth and the species living only in the embryo during the remainder of the year, it follows that seed-eating birds are of enormous practical value.

In the fall many flocks of song sparrows, chipping sparrows, white throated sparrows, and goldfinches may be seen cleaning off seed of crab grass, dandelion, plantain, and other turf enemies. A few of these tender sparrows which

winter in the South are replaced in the late fall by their relatives such as the juncos, snowflakes, tree sparrows, siskins, etc.

Now even the most sluggish birds, (some of the finch family have the reputation for being that) are fast livers compared to men. Their hearts beat twice as fast as ours. Therefore, the quantity of food required to sustain such high vitality, especially in winter, is enormous. A tree sparrow will eat one hundred seeds of pigeon grass at a single meal, and a snowflake observed in a Massachusetts garden one February morning, picked up more than a thousand seeds of pigweed for breakfast.

In view of the enormous amount of work certain birds are capable of doing for us, how many take pains to secure their services continuously? The truth is that very few realize the true situation, therefore the obvious thing to be done is neglected.

One of the most successful peach growers in Georgia entered into a business-like understanding with a number of birds whose special appetites for special insect pests made them valuable co-workers. Up and down the long rows of trees he erected poles from twenty to thirty feet high and from them hung goards to attract the martins who have a special appetite for the curculio beetle, perhaps the most destructive pest this man had. The martins arrived and lived there just when the curculio, the shot hole borer, and the root borer were emerging. The bluebirds came and readily accepted the nest boxes erected for them and destroyed immense quantities of insects taken from the trees, ground and air. Then he attracted the chickadees, and nuthatches by placing raw peanuts on the ground and in the trees. Once this food was found this family of birds joined the army of helpers. This intensified attack on the injurious insects which supplemented the spraying program paid dividends. It increased the peach grower's cash income from the sale of a larger quantity of better fruit.

Another concrete instance of the use of bird houses is described by the following quotation from Mr. C. C. Clute: "I know one farmer who lost one summer three rows of corn 40 rods long. The corn grew next to a fence row heavily sodded with bluegrass, which produced swarms of grasshoppers. For

the sake of experiment, although skeptical, last spring he put up 21 bird houses, placed two rods apart along the fence. The houses were some that he and his boys made during the winter from packing boxes. Thirteen of the houses were occupied during the following summer, 6 by wrens, 4 by bluebirds, and 3 by colonies of martins. The grasshoppers that summer made a rich living for the nearby birds. That farmer had the satisfaction of gathering 23 bushels of corn from the three rows that grew next to the fence, right where there had been no corn the year before.

At this point, the readers of this article who in the past have given little thought to the value of birds may begin to realize there are some advantages in encouraging more birds to live near us. Surely, the greenkeeper cannot under estimate the value of birds on the golf course, for they are working hand and glove with him to destroy the very things that give so much trouble. More than that it is a source of a great deal of satisfaction in our daily lives to become familiar with these interesting friends. To be able to identify them by their songs, their flight, or their coloring and to have the gratification of seeing them occupy the houses we put up for them truly adds something to the joy of living.

It would seem as though the practical golfer should see in birds an economical and efficient aid to the Greenkeeper and Green Committee in maintaining a good turf free from distressing ant-mounds, worm casts, or bare ground. If the membership of your club realized that ants, earthworms, white grubs, Japanese beetles, cutworms, grasshoppers, crabgrass, chickweed, and pennywort are not so much to be feared where birds are abundant, wouldn't they gladly join with you in a movement to encourage more birds to live on the golf course? **Why not promote the idea of a bird sanctuary on every course?**

The man who already has an interest in the out-of-doors will see immediately the virtue of making a bird sanctuary of the Golf Course for he realizes what a resource the bird life of the club is to those who are not playing. The cheerful songs, the bright bits of color and the amusing antics of the birds are decided assets to any club wherever located.

The majority of Golf Clubs in this country are ideally situated for giving

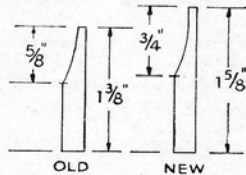
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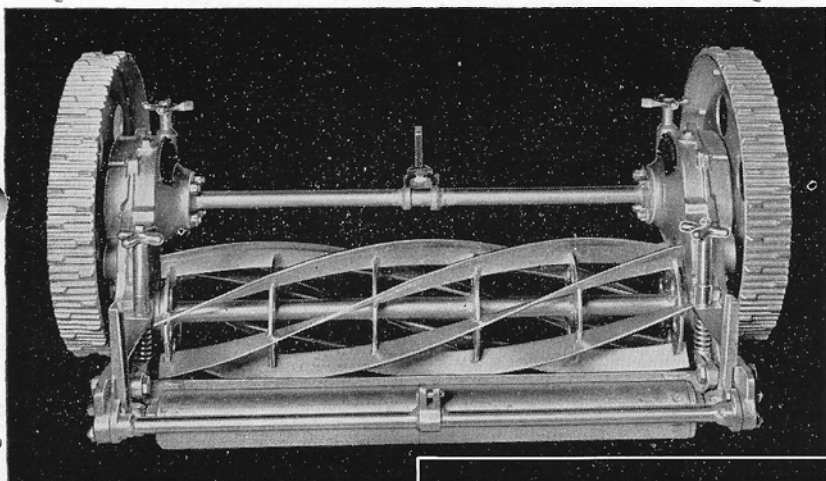
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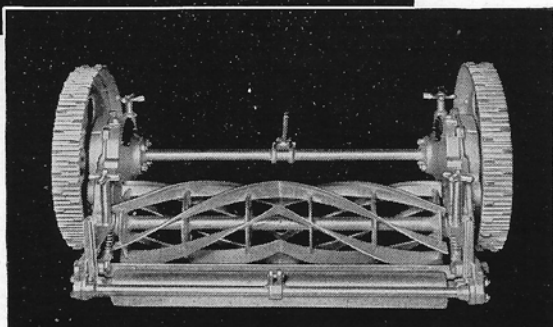


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sanctuary to birds without the slightest inconvenience to the game. Often they are lacking in only a few details that keep them from being the most attractive areas in the vicinity for bird life, and these wants are easily supplied.

Sometimes it is a lack of safe nesting places, or a lack of food bearing shrubs or trees, or an over abundance of cats or other enemies of birds. Always there is sunshine loved by the birds, the varied topography, and a certain amount of seclusion, especially in early morning.

It is a mistaken idea that a bird sanctuary must be a large area covered with a tangle of bushes and vines. The places in this country which are richest in bird life are those that combine open areas with clumps of shrubbery or single bushes. The edges of woodlands shelter far more birds than the center of the woods, and pasture lots, dotted with thorn apples, dogwoods and mulberries, support still greater numbers.

Realizing the natural adaptability of the Golf Course to the requirements of a bird sanctuary, and largely in response to requests for further information and assistance from the officers of many Golf Clubs, the National Association of Audubon Societies (for the protection of wild birds and animals) has published a pamphlet especially for Golf Clubs. It is intended to show in as graphic a manner as possible the desirability of encouraging birds about Golf Courses and the simple way which happy results may be attained.

To obtain this publication simply write to the Audubon Society, 66 Newberry Street, Boston, or to the Main Office, 1974 Broadway, New York City. If you are interested in securing other information about birds in general such as bird houses, how to attract them, feeding stations, etc. write to the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. for the following.

Homes For Birds—

Farmers Bulletin, No. 1456

Food For Some Well Known Birds—

Farmers Bulletin, No. 506

How To Attract Birds—

Farmers Bulletin, No. 621

Some Common Birds Useful To

The Farmer—

Farmers Bulletin, No. 630

My own experience and observation of birds at the Juniper Hill Golf Course corresponds with the foregoing statements. Comparing notes with other

Greenkeepers, I find that we have had fewer insect and weed troubles than many others. We have had very little trouble with grubs and other vegetation destroyers with a minimum of effort in their control and we have had practically no weeding to do for years. How much control is definitely due to the birds is difficult to say but we have encouraged their presence by feeding them in the winter and putting up bird houses for their summer nesting.

Golfers tell us that they have noticed more birds on our course than others they have played and it has been gratifying to notice that many players get a lot of enjoyment in seeing pheasants, partridge and quail around the course. They report it with some excitement at the office. Several of our patrons are bird lovers and take considerable pride and satisfaction in reporting the birds as they arrive in the spring. I am satisfied that the abundance of birds on our course adds just one more thing to the satisfaction of playing at Juniper Hill.

In the summer we attract the birds by many different types of bird houses made to interest the different species. The bird houses around the club house are homes for wrens, tree swallows, blue birds and woodpeckers. The increased numbers of these birds seem to attract other species, such as an abundance of robins, warblers, vireos, catbirds, kingbirds, song sparrows, chipping sparrows, etc.

In the winter we place in the feeding stations such food as scratch feed for the bigger birds, and for the smaller birds chick feed, wild bird feed, canary seed, bread crumbs, peanut butter, apples, and suet. The latter is placed on trees with half inch wire guards to prevent squirrels and larger birds from taking large quantities at a time. This winter we were late in putting out the feeding stations and we noticed that the birds were rather scarce, at least around the club house. Within one week after the stations were put out the number of birds in the vicinity easily tripled. Now, there is almost a steady stream of different kinds of birds feeding throughout the day.

One very convincing bit of evidence of the value of birds was observed when the snow disappeared from the ground about January 13. During that period of course, there were few birds at the feeding station for they were looking for a change of diet. The seed eating

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birds, however, such as the tree sparrows, juncos and snow flakes were observed all over the course and around the club house busily picking up weed seed. One definite space in our back lawn within close observation attracted especial attention. At intervals during the day and every day while the ground was bare this area attracted groups of tree sparrows. Why they selected this spot I was not at first aware but in checking it I found it was a small patch of crab grass. These birds so industriously worked on that crab grass I don't see how a single seed could have escaped their attention.

This incident was proof enough to me that it is a great mistake if we fail to take full advantage of this free and willing service rendered by the birds. So I recommend to the greenkeepers that they give this subject their serious attention this winter and plan on giving our bird friends a real home-coming when they arrive in the spring, by having their new homes all ready for occupancy.

In the January issue, in article by Pres. Harold Pierce of the U. S. G. A., on page 3, cost of running New York office should have been approximately \$24000 instead of "about \$18000".

The February meeting was held at the Waltham Field Station on the 5th. Following lunch, Lawrence Blatchford of the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation showed two interesting sound films concerning the development of the motoring industry and the use of Ethyl gasoline, also discussed the use of ethyl gasoline, and showed the elimination of "knock" in a motor by running an experimental motor with standard gas and then with ethyl gasoline.

An art editor for the NEWSLETTER has been appointed in the person of our Secretary, Philip Cassidy. As a start toward pictures in the NEWSLETTER, please send Phil any pictures you may have suitable for reprinting in the NEWSLETTER.

Chairman Leo J. Feser of the Qualifications Committees of the G. S. S. points out that some might misinterpret our introduction of the Winning Questionnaire on page 6 of the last issue. This questionnaire won the contest, but is not to be used as a test for membership by the G. S. S. It represents one step in the work of the Qualifications Committee, and their report will be acted upon at the New York meeting.

The following committee have been appointed by President Counsell to serve for 1940:

Entertainment

N. Sperandio, S. Mitchell, H. Darling,
N. Bruno, T. Mattus

Golf

P. Hayden, A. Anderson, J. Oldfield,
E. Phinney, J. Latvis

Welfare

L Stott, H. Mitchell, M. O'Grady

Employment

A Anderson, M Maxwell, T Swanson

Mass. Inter-Relation

H Farrant, P Wanberg, C Parker

R. I. Inter-Relation

G West, R Peckham, M Greene

Turf Research

F Wilson, S. Mitchell, P Wanberg

Winter School

S. Mitchell, H Farrant, H Darling

Outdoor Show

H Darling, A Anderson

Publicity

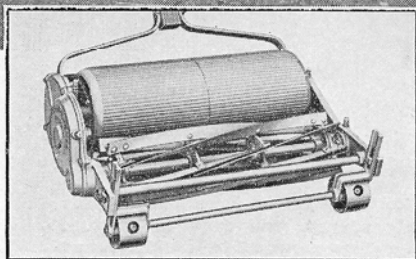
S. Mitchell, H Hayden, R Rommell

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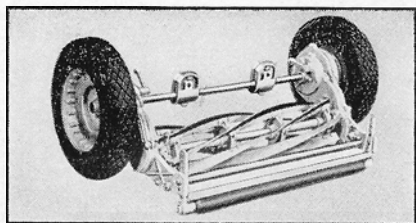
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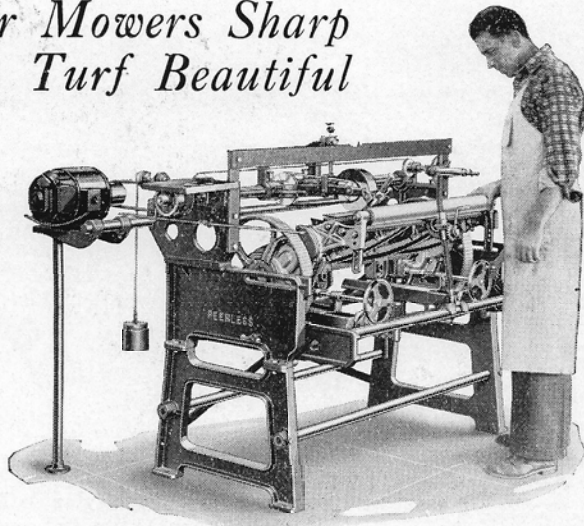
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