

Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge
Narrative Report
Period September 1- December 31, 1942

1.- General

A. Weather Conditions. The following is a table with data gathered from the Oregon Inlet Coast Guard Station which is located on the northern extremity of the refuge.

	Precipitation	Max. Temp.	Min. Temp.
September	1.68"	89.5 deg.	58. deg.
October	9.83"	80.00 "	43. "
November	2.29"	72.00 "	43. "
December	3.79"	67.00 "	22. "
Total	17.59		

Corresponding Period 1941

September	1.10"	90. "	59. "
October	1.51"	85. "	54. "
November	1.14"	75. "	26. "
December	4.84"	72. "	35. "
Total	8.59"		

Although normal temperatures prevailed through most of this period, sub-normal temperatures were experienced a few days during December causing much ice. Rainfall during September and November was light. Unusually heavy rains occurred during October with 9.83" being recorded for the month. Precipitation during December mostly rain was about normal. About one inch of snow fell on December 16.

B. Water Conditions. Water levels in the fresh water impoundments stayed below normal through September, but with the heavy rains during October the water levels were all up to normal by the middle of the month. There was sufficient rainfall thereafter to maintain normal levels during the remainder of the period.

C. Fires. Fire hazards have probably increased due to the vegetation (mainly *Spartina patens*) becoming more dense on certain areas and particularly near the public road. One fire of unknown origin occurred along the public road between the fresh water impoundments on September 18 and burned over about 40 acres, (mainly *Spartina patens*) with no apparent damage resulting.

11. Wildlife

A. Migratory Birds

1. Populations and Behavior.

- a. Water birds; never as abundant as several of the other groups; have been here in about their usual numbers.
- b. Wading birds; have not been very plentiful. Several species were fairly common at the beginning of the

period but most of them were gone by the end of September.

c. Waterfowl; the fall flight of most species was poor. So far there has been no unusual concentrations and several species have probably shown a slight decrease as compared with last year. One new species was recorded on December 4, when three white fronted geese were seen. This is the first record of this species on the refuge.

d. Eagles and Hawks; compared with previous years most species of this group have been here in about their usual numbers.

e. Marsh Birds; excepting coot, which have been here in greater numbers than last year, several species have been less abundant than they have through the marshes during the summer.

f. Shore Birds; no great number of shore birds have used the refuge during this period. The population would probably compare favorably, however, with the corresponding period of last year.

g. Gulls and Terns; population compares favorably with other years.

2. Feed and Cover.

Due to the drought which extended through the summer the fresh water ponds had little feed on them in the way of submerged plants. What there was, mainly sage pond weed, grew after the August rains had put a few inches of water in the impoundments. With the water fowl beginning to arrive in September and October it had little chance to get much growth before it was eaten. On the sound there was also a deficiency in aquatic plants. On some of the shoals there was a very good growth of widgeon grass which would compare favorably with former years. Eel grass seems to have disappeared completely from the areas on which an excellent growth was noted last year.

Through the marshes there was a fair amount of *Spartina alterniflora* and *Scirpus americanus*. The area which was burned over last fall has also provided feed in the way of grazing for Canada geese.

3. Disease.

At the end of the period no diseased birds had been seen.

B. Upland Game Birds.

The mourning dove is the only species in this group found on the refuge and they remained scarce with no change noted in the number seen.

C. Fur Animals.

Muskrats which were increasing and quite common on the No. 1 impoundment appears to be scarce. Very few have been seen since last summer when the pond was dry. Others are seen occasionally. They remain scarce.

III. Refuge Development and Maintenance

All work projects on the refuge were closed with the termination of the C C C camp. However there has been a considerable amount of work in the maintenance of the refuge and refuge equipment, which has been taken care of entirely by refuge personnel. This work has consisted in hauling turf for repairing roads leading from the public road around the No. 1 impoundment to the overnight cabin; hauling and putting in sand fence panels in low places of the sand fence; hauling and placing turf at the overnight cabin to check erosion from the winds; planting *Spartina patens* in the barren spots on the dykes and upkeep and maintenance of the refuge trucks and motor boat.

IV. Public Relations

Refuge Visitors.

Mr. Roy Moore, Assistant Regional Director, and Dr. Watson spent a day visiting station.

Messrs. Wm. L. Birch and Carter, U. S. Game Management Agents made a visit here.

Mr. James Sydnor, a bird student, Richmond, Virginia, spent three days on the refuge studying the wildlife.

Form NR-1

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Refuge Pea Island Months of September to December 31, 1944

161

(1) Species	(2) First Observed		(3) Became Common	(4) Peak Concentration		(5) Last Observed		(6) Young Produced			(7) Total
	Number	Date	Date	Number	Date	Number	Date	No. Broods Obsvd.	Avg. Size	Estimated Total	Number Using Refuge
Loon Common	1	10/26	12/18								
Grebe Horned	1	10/29	12/18								
Grebe Pied-billed			9/20	150	10/20						
Gannet				3000	12/4						
Cormorant Double-crested			9/20								
Heron Great Blue				6	11/19						
Egret American				50	9/26						
Egret Snowy				20	9/26	1	10/5				
Heron Louisiana						1	10/13				
Heron Little Blue						1	11/18				
Heron Green						1	9/26				
Heron Black-crowned Night				40	Remained here through the period.						
Bittern American	1	9/12	Scarce								
Swan Whistling	4	10/20		14	12/28						14
Geese Canada	20	10/2	10/20	10000	12/10						10000
Brant American	200	11/2		1000	11/6	3	12/10				1000
Geese White-fronted	3	12/4				3	12/4				3
Geese Snow	1	11/2		10000	12/18						10000
Geese Blue	2	11/5		10	12/10						
Mallard	1	10/29	Scarce								1
Duck Black			11/5	1000	12/4						1000
Gadwall				125	11/6						125

REMARKS: (Pertinent information not specifically requested)

INSTRUCTIONS

Form NR-1 - MIGRATORY BIRDS (Include species in families
Gaviidae through Strigidae; also doves and
woodcocks)*

In case a resident form occurs, such as mottled duck
on the Gulf Coast, use only the columns that apply.

- (1) SPECIES: Use correct common names as found in the
A.O.U. Check List, 1931 Edition, and list
in A.O.U. order. General terms are to be
avoided, such as "scaup", "teal", etc.;
use "green-winged teal" or "lesser scaup".
- (2) FIRST OBSERVED: The first refuge record for the species
during spring migration, fall migration,
wintering, or summering, and the number
observed. In the case of resident species
this column may be disregarded.
- (3) BECAME COMMON: The date the species became common on the
refuge.
- (4) PEAK CONCENTRATION: The greatest number of the species present
on any one date or limited interval of time.
- (5) LAST OBSERVED: The last refuge record for the species
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or non-migrants.
- (6) YOUNG PRODUCED: Estimated number of young produced based
upon observations and actual counts on
representative breeding areas. Brood
counts should be made on two or more areas
aggregating 10% of the breeding habitat.
Estimates having no basis in fact are to
be omitted.
- (7) TOTAL: Estimated total number of the species using
the refuge during the period. This figure may
or may not be more than that used for peak
concentrations, depending upon the manner in
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Refuge Pes Island Months of September to December 31, 1942

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	Number	Date	Date	Number	Date	Number	Date	No. Broods Obsvd.	Avg. Size	Esti- mated Total	Number Using Refuge
Baldpate	6	9/12	9/13	1000	11/5						1000
Pintail			9/13	2500	11/5						2500
Teal Green-winged	1	9/12	10/29	800	12/18						400
Teal Blue-winged			9/12	300	9/21						300
Shoveller	1	9/12	12/2	200	12/10						200
Duck Ring-necked				5	12/10	Very rare.					5
Duck Lesser Scaup	1	11/5		1000	12/31						1000
Golden-eye American	1	11/6		150	12/18						150
Buffle-head	3	10/29	12/10	800	12/18						300
Old-squaw	1	11/18									25
Scaup White-winged	1	11/5	12/10	100	12/18						100
Scaup Surf	6	10/21	12/10	500	12/18						500
Duck Ruddy	7	10/20		100	11/6						100
Merganser Hooded	3	11/12		10	12/18						10
Merganser Red-breasted	9	10/2		200000	11/24						200000
Hawk Sharp-shinned	1	11/5				1	11/5				
Eagle Bald				5	11/5						
Hawk Marsh			10/9								
Osprey				10	9/20						
Hawk Duck	1	9/19	10/9								
Hawk Pigeon	1	10/14				1	10/9				
Gallinule Florida				14	10/9						

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Flover Piping						1	9/25				
Flover Semipalmated			10/11	Common		4	10/13				
Floves Black-bellied			9/14								
Snipe Wilson's	1	9/21	Not plentiful but seen occasionally, probably increasing								
Turnstone Suddy						1	10/13				
Willet						1	10/13				
Yellow-legs Greater							10/15				
Yellow-legs Lesser			9/26	Common	through period.						
Rust			Noted occasionally through the period.								
Sandpiper Pectoral	6	9/21				6	9/21				
Sandpiper White-rumped	1	10/13				1	10/13				
Sandpiper Least			Seen occasionally through period, not numerous.								
Sandpiper Red-backed	8	10/25									
Dowitcher			Not plentiful but seen occasionally through the period.								
Sandpiper Stilt						9	9/21				
Sandpiper Semipalmated			10/11	Common							
Godwit Marbled	1	9/14		32	10/13						
Sanderling			Fairly common during entire period.								
Avocet	1	9/21				2	10/13				
Gull Great Black-backed	1	9/14	11/1								
Gull Herring			9/14								
Gull Ring-billed	2	9/14	11/24								

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Gull Laughing Tern Common Tern Royal Tern Caspian Skimmer Black	1		Common through most of the period. Common through most of the period. Common through most of the period. 9/14	4000	10/20	1	12/29				

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