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NOTES ON THE PAINTED BUNTING AT MEMPHIS

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The Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*), generally considered the most beautifully plumaged of our native birds, is a common bird in the lower Mississippi valley, ranging northward up the river until it becomes rare at the latitude of Tennessee. This species was inadvertently omitted from the Distributional List of the Birds of Tennessee, published early this year, although several records for this county had entitled it to a place in the list. As if in protest to the exclusion, five males and at least three females appeared on the scene here during the past nesting season.

Bird records for Memphis begin with 1928, being based on field trips by the writer and other observers made since that date. Since our field work has by no means included visits to all likely habitats of this bird, it could have existed in some places of course other than in those noted in the few and scattered records which follow. My first record was made May 26, 1929, when I discovered a male singing from the cross-bar of a telegraph pole along the Illinois Central Railroad, just south of the Memphis city limits at East Junction. It showed a preference for these cross-bars, as I attempted to learn its pretty but not forceful song, a song which bears a slight resemblance to that of the common Indigo Bunting. A short hunt for a possible nest was unsuccessful. The evening of May 29 I may have heard its song again, and on June 1st, with Eric Henrich, I saw the bird for a second time. This species was not observed again in 1929, but a male was seen here twice the next spring, one of the dates being May 2nd. John Bamberg also recorded a male in Riverside Park on May 2, 1930. A lookout was kept for them and East Junction was visited assiduously, but no other one was seen until this year. Very occasionally some one tells me of seeing a male Painted Bunting, and while it is conspicuously colored and should be easy to identify without confusing it with some other species, I have been inclined to disregard all but two instances. Gerald Capers, veteran Scout leader and nature student, saw one in Overton Park, the last part of April, 1927. Mrs. A. L. Heiskell saw one the past spring, as will be noted further on.

After two years' apparent absence, five male and three female Painted Buntings spent the summer of 1933 with us. Previous visitors were only seen once or twice, but Bunting No. 1 could be found from May to the middle of July any time we wanted to show it off to other bird lovers. No. 1 was discovered April 29 along the Illinois Central tracks and southward between North Second Street and the Wolf River. Its song led to its discovery and by learning to recognize the song we were able to locate the bird on most subsequent visits. This bird seemed to have a very large territory, about 400 by 200 yards, with several favorite perches. The next afternoon I returned with Mrs. Coffey and Bert Powell, so they could see their first in-

