

STUDIES IN ORNITHOLOGY AT LAKE KOSHKONONG  
AND VICINITY BY THURE KUMLIEN FROM  
1843 TO JULY, 1850

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This paper is based chiefly on the Swedish Journal kept by Thure Kumlien from February 14, 1844, to January 5, 1850, and other papers in his handwriting.

I have in my possession a paper dated May 15, 1843, which is written in Swedish by him before he left Sweden and contains a list of his Upsala University laboratory equipment and some mounted birds among which are mentioned swan, partridge, eider duck, eagle, lark, etc. It also lists books and the furniture of his room. The pieces named are one chair, a back cupboard, a case, etc. The price is listed after each article, so they are apparently being offered for sale to help raise money to come to America.

The next signed paper by Thure Kumlien is a note dated May 29, 1843, to a nobleman friend, Carl Gustaf Lowenkjelm, which shows Thure borrowed a sum of money for his passage to America. At the bottom of the note is a notation by Lowenkjelm on February 11, 1859, stating that the money had all been paid by Thure Kumlien by his sending collections of birds and other objects of natural history.

A passport before me is number 1397 and is made out for maiden Christine Wallberg, born in Upland, Sweden, with residence in Stockholm; another numbered 1398 is made out to maiden Sophia Wallberg with same birthplace and residence as her sister Christine. The last one, numbered 1399, is made out for student Thure Kumlien, born in Westergothland, Sweden, from Upsala. They are all dated May 31, 1843, and the passengers are all bound for New York. From a photostatic copy of the original passenger list of the log of the sailing vessel, the "Brig Swea,"<sup>1</sup> on which the above three sailed, I find that the ship landed in New York Harbor on August 16, 1843.

<sup>1</sup> Original list found in the archives at Washington, D. C.

In comparing the passenger list which I received after the publication of the biography<sup>2</sup> of Thure Kumlien, I find that James Worm, an instrument maker from Denmark, and Charles E. Westring, Lars and Andrus Wahlin from Sweden and Alice Benneworth, aged 71, mother of James Benneworth from England, were also passengers on the "Brig Swea" and settled near Lake Koshkonong. (The above names were not mentioned in my biography of Thure Kumlien.) In later years, James Worm hunted birds for Kumlien. James Benneworth came to bring his mother to the home of Samuel Kirby on the northwest shore of Lake Koshkonong where he had settled in 1841.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Benneworth acted as interpreter for the Swedes on board ship and in New York City. I mention this because I think it had a bearing on the place of settlement of these Swedes at Lake Koshkonong.

These passengers traveled by way of the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes to Milwaukee and while at Buffalo, New York, Kumlien probably met a Mr. Dole with whom he corresponded soon after arriving in Wisconsin. He was either interested in ornithology or was connected with shipping, for I find in Kumlien's journal under date of August 4, 1844: "Got a letter from Mr. Dole from Buffalo." Other records show that birds were shipped to him.

On August 28, 1843, Kumlien signed his intention of becoming a citizen of the United States in Milwaukee, Territory of Wisconsin. At the same place on September 5, 1843, Thure Kumlien and Christine Wallberg were married.

During a part of September and October the men of the party walked to Lake Koshkonong, staked their claims, and probably all except Thure Kumlien built temporary shacks until they could get their warmer log cabins built. I have a letter in which Kumlien states that he was on the lake every day for the first six months. His deep interest in ornithology and his being unused to manual labor of any kind is what probably prompted him to take possession of an old deserted hunter's cabin which had an open fireplace with a large outside stone chimney. This cabin was situated about fifteen rods southeast of the Elias Downing log house, which had been built in 1842, near what is now the Carcajou Club House. This Downing farm is now a

<sup>2</sup> In "Thure Kumlien, Koshkonong Naturalist," *Wis. Mag. History*, 27..(1943) 17-39, 194-220; 27 (1944) 321-43, the dates of the settlement of Samuel Kirby and Elias Downing are changed around.

part of the late H. L. Skavlem farm. The present frame farm house was built around Downing's log house.

Thure and his bride, Christine, and her older sister, Sophia Wallberg, lived in this old cabin until the weather became too severe, when they moved in with Mr. Downing's people. They remained with the Downings until toward spring, when they went back to the cabin. They stayed here until the following January 20, 1845, when they moved to a new log cabin on their own claim, which was near Lake Koshkonong and about a mile northwest of Mr. Downing's.

This past summer, on May 20, 1944, I saw for the first time the site of this old hunter's cabin, which is only a few steps from the Noland cottage. It is a beautiful location with a grove of large ancient bur oaks near by. One of them is so near that it must have shaded the old cottage in those early days. Two springs near the lake shore are within sight, one of them having furnished water for these early settlers. The old cabin stood on a rather high piece of land which slopes gently to the lake shore. Mr. Charles Hammerquist, who is nearly ninety-five years old, tells me he lived in the Downing log house for a few years when he was a boy and played with the children who were then living in this old hunter's cabin.

From here one has a fine view of the lake. To the right is Willow Point, a long, narrow, wooded peninsula that extends out into the water from the mouth of Koshkonong Creek, which enters the lake here. The land has been built up through long years of deposition of the debris brought down by the current of the stream, and by floating canebroke.

It is now a wilderness of white and black ash, willows and soft maples. Along the edges of the trees the red osier and panicle dogwood, the button bush, the six-foot rushes and then the lower patches of blue flag and the big glossy arrow-shaped leaves of the arrow-head crowd the shore to the very water's edge, making the place a veritable jungle.

Between the peninsula and where we stood was a small marshy bay which was literally covered with large herring gulls. Occasionally one would leave the others and gracefully fly out over the lake, then return to feed on the dead fish which the waves had washed into the tiny bay.

Purple martins flew in and out of their house and sallied out over the marshy shore for their insect fare. When Thure Kumlien first came here, these swallows were nesting in holes in trees and did until 1869. The pewees sang their plaintive song from the old oaks, while the yellow-bellied and least flycatchers watched in the same trees.

The hairy, downy and red-headed woodpeckers were busy on the trunks of the trees. The black terns skimmed over the water and the barn and bank swallows also hunted there for their food.

Blue jays, house wrens, goldfinches, yellow warblers, flickers, Baltimore orioles, bluebirds, white-breasted nuthatches, song sparrows and a whole army of red-winged blackbirds claimed my attention as I walked among the oaks and followed the old path to the spring down by the lake shore.

Many changes have taken place here in the bird world during the past 100 years since Thure Kumlien's first appearance at Lake Koshkonong and the lake itself is not the same. It lies mostly in Jefferson County with a small part of its western edge in Dane County and the southern extremity in Rock County; it is nine miles long and four miles wide. This lake has many broad shallow bays, most of which are bordered by marshy or swamp areas, so it has a very irregular shore line. Before the advent of the white man it was for centuries the home of the aborigines. In the Winnebago language, it means "the lake we live on." Mute evidence of this is told by the nearly 500 Indian mounds, most of which still dot the shores and adjacent land.

Lake Koshkonong is a widening of Rock River and is fed by numerous springs. In the territorial and early days of this state, the lake as a whole was not as deep as it is now. Wild rice and wild celery grew abundantly in the bays and shallow parts of the lake. This change in the depth of Lake Koshkonong was brought about by the construction of a dam at Indian Ford which is about four miles below the outlet of the lake. "The Indian Ford dam is located in sections 16 and 21, township 24 north, range 12 East, Rock County. It appears to have been authorized by the Territorial Legislature of Wisconsin, approved April 7, 1843, and by Chapter 339, Laws of 1851. Since said time a dam has been continuously maintained at the present site by the grantees and their assigns under said legislative acts."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, from docket No. 2-WP-461.

When this dam was changed from a height of four feet to six or seven feet, the depth of the lake was greater. This killed the wild rice, except that which grew in the shallow bays.

When Dr. Increase A. Lapham visited Lake Koshkonong in 1850, he wrote: "The water is from 4 to 12 feet deep. At the time of our visit in July, wild rice was growing abundantly over almost its entire surface, giving it more the appearance of a meadow than a lake."<sup>4</sup>

In a letter written August 15, 1886, by Frithiof Kumlien to his father, Thure Kumlien, he says, "Thursday I took the Slagg boys out sailing. You would laugh to have seen the lake, grasshoppers and birds can walk clear across on the weeds."<sup>5</sup>

Governor Hoard told me that once in the fall of the early 1870's, Thure Kumlien invited him to go to the lake with him before daylight to watch the migration of the famous canvas-back ducks. He said, "We lay flat in the boats on the shore and did not have long to wait before a roaring of wings was heard in the distance. As they flew over us, the noise became greater. On and on they came, great hosts of them. When morning broke, the water was covered with these beautiful ducks as far as the eye could see."

They had come here to feed on the wild celery buds (*Valisneria spiralis*) and on the nutlets from the pond weeds, one of them belonging to the family *naiadaceae*.<sup>6</sup>

The redheads came here too in the fall and spring to feed on the same plant food as the canvasbacks. After a month or more of this plant food, the flesh of these two kinds of ducks was considered a great delicacy.<sup>7</sup>

In the forties Thure Kumlien didn't seem to be sure about the canvasbacks and the redheads for, on a list of birds seen at Lake Koshkonong, signed by him and dated 1850,<sup>8</sup> he mentions only the redhead. The early hunters at this lake were confused for quite some time because they called them the big and little

<sup>4</sup> *Wisconsin Antiquities*, p. 35.

<sup>5</sup> Letter in possession of the writer.

<sup>6</sup> See *Birds of Wisconsin* by Kumlien and Hollister, pp. 21-22.

<sup>7</sup> There were several springs in the marshes directly south of the home of Thure Kumlien where this wild celery grew in the water around them. The early settlers used to come to these springs to gather the celery for use on their tables. Information given to writer by Chas. Hammarquist in 1945.

<sup>8</sup> List of birds in possession of writer which will be given to the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

redheads. Eastern hunters had told our hunters that "there were no true canvasbacks in the West."<sup>9</sup>

In 1881 carp were introduced into Lake Koshkonong, unfortunately successfully, for they cleaned out the wild celery and pond weed and drove out the most of the native fish. Consequently the myriads of water fowl which once haunted its waters are now becoming a memory.

Thure Kumlien began his work as a naturalist at Lake Koshkonong before the hand of man had had a chance to destroy its rich treasures of plant and bird life. Old Koshkonong was then in the full tide of its glory as a lake for waterfowl.

The first dated record I have of Thure Kumlien's bird work is in his old Swedish Journal<sup>10</sup> under date of February 23, 1844. This and other bird records will follow in the order given.

"Feb. 23, 1844, Cut 10 foot rails. Stuffed a blue jay. Carrick came here with new ale.

"Feb. 26, Helped Carrick all afternoon. Janson saw six ducks.

"Feb. 29, Saw two wild geese. Built at a hen house.

"March 7, Shot 4 blackbirds. Cut down 2 large trees. Burned some grass.

"March 8, Rainy and misty weather. Shot four blackbirds, and prepared two squirrel skins.

"March 12, Rain. Did nothing but a little wood chopping. Shot more blackbirds."

Next day he mounted some birds.

"March 14, at Downing's in the morning. Got some specimens at lake."

Next day Thure shot some more blackbirds and three squirrels.

"March 16, Skinned two blackbirds and three squirrels.

"March 17, Hard storm in night. Finished two blackbirds and looked over others.

"March 26, Caught 19 fish; shot three ducks. Two of the fish weighed five pounds. None under 1½ pounds.

"March 30, Nothing. Hunted. Worm here. Shot a crane [probably a sandhill<sup>11</sup>] and a tern."

<sup>9</sup> Statement of Ira Bingham, famous early duck hunter of Lake Koshkonong, but who hunted several years later than 1843.

<sup>10</sup> This Swedish Journal was translated by A. O. Barton of Madison, Wisconsin, and is in the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

<sup>11</sup> From a practice copy of a letter written by Thure Kumlien, I quote, "I have lived on the same place for nearly eight years and every spring there has been a pair of cranes on the marsh below my house; they have had their nest

The next day he hunted and worked at skins. Worm was there.

"April 9, Prepared bird skins.

"April 10, Shot two prairie chickens. Chopped some wood."

[The common prairie chicken at this time was the prairie sharp-tailed grouse (*Pedioecetes phasianellus campestris*) and was very abundant in the forties. Later, it was gradually replaced by the prairie hen (*Tympanuchus cupido americanus*) as the country became more settled.]

"April 9, Prepared bird skins.

"April 10, Shot two prairie chickens. Chopped some wood.

"April 21, Caught two redhorses and shot six pigeons."

[Wild pigeons or passenger pigeons.]

On April 23 and 24, he shot some birds but did not mention what kind. On May 2, Thure shot some birds and records that on May 4, he helped Mellberg a while in forenoon and shot nine fine birds. On May 11, he located a pair of cranes, undoubtedly sandhill.

"May 12, Shot some birds with handmade shot.

"May 19, To Fort Atkinson with a letter to Buffalo."<sup>12</sup>

The next day he found a couple of cranes near the end of the marsh.

"May 25, Rain all day. Shipped birds.

"June 2, Hunted in woods but got only two pigeons.

"June 8, Rainy weather. Stuffed one bird."

The next few days he mentions shooting some birds.

"June 18, At Fort to see about letter from Buffalo.

"June 24, Shot nine birds, midsummer day.

"Aug. 4, Got letter from Buffalo, Mr. Dole.

"Jan. 9, Puttered with the mounting of a prairie chicken.

"Feb. 16, At Reuterskiold's a while. Shot a woodcock and a gray squirrel. Rained and snowed in the night.

"Feb. 19, Heard some small birds today.

"Feb. 20, Heard the gray goose a couple of days ago. Neighbor thinks it will soon be green down in the swale. Repaired my boots.

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there and one spring they had it placed so I could see her sitting on her eggs from my window. I did not disturb her, as I loved to have the stately bird sitting on the marsh unmolested, but one of my neighbors had a different taste—set his dogs on them and fired at them without any other effect than that they have been rather shy since and keep on another side of the marsh. I will endeavor to get you a good skin of one next spring. If I cannot shoot any myself, having no rifle, I will hire one shot."

<sup>12</sup> His correspondent at Buffalo was a Mr. Dole.

"Feb. 21, Helped Carrick from 10 to 4 cutting logs for his bridge. Piled up some brush where I am thinking of breaking. Saw a flock of small gray birds in the black oaks next to the breaking. They seemed to be on flight, but I could not tell their variety. Norwegian Johnny came to borrow tools.

"Feb. 22, In forenoon cut stuff for about fifty rails and at eleven hauled stuff for about twelve rails and a load of wood. In the evening called at Carrick's to see about his sickness. Heard trana [crane] and blackbird singing today. Water rising. To Carrick's with some potatoes.

"Feb. 23, Nothing in particular. Fine weather. Fixed a prairie chicken.

"Mar. 2, Stuffed some small birds and was out looking for birds and squirrels. Mellberg here.

"March 27, Yesterday I shot a muskrat on the lake and one prairie chicken.

"March 28, Shot a prairie chicken with rifle and hauled two loads of stone. Shot a lark. [Horned lark or prairie horned lark.]

"March 30, Labeled and packed thirty birds for Dole of Buffalo and six for Norway's museum.

"April 1, Stuffed a pair of birds.

"April 6, I walked to Fort Atkinson<sup>13</sup> and bought 1¼ lbs. of shot for a muskrat skin and took eleven pounds of shot on credit. One dollar for the shot."

In the next few days Thure speaks of shooting prairie chickens.

"April 13, Sunday. Mounted birds."

The next week Thure shot ten ducks and several prairie chickens and mounted birds. The 28th and 29th he hunted and fixed birds, shot and skinned a blue jay and shot a sparrow hawk. Rain and hail fell as large as eggs.

"April 30, Stuffed birds and fixed two boxes of them. I now have birds fixed for \$12, if I can sell them.

"May 4, Shot a nighthawk.

"May 5, Stuffed birds and shot a notskeriker, night crier.<sup>14</sup>

"May 6 & 7, At Whitewater for Ole Lind who is to pay me four shillings or 25 lbs. of meal for my oxen and work for me two days. I bought fifty lbs. of fresh meal flour for 75¢ and one bu. shorts for fifty cents. Sold birds for \$2.50 cash.

"May 25, Stuffed a pair of sylvia. [Old scientific name for warbler.]

<sup>13</sup> A distance of twelve miles.

<sup>14</sup> Might be nighthawk or night heron.



- “June 2, Hunted in woods but only got two pigeons.  
“June 13, Planted corn at Mellberg’s, shot a specimen.  
“June 18, At Fort to see about a letter from Buffalo.”

Birds are not mentioned again for six months. Everyone in the family and many in the settlement are ill with fever and ague, and have a very hard time to get along and attend to their crops and threshing.

1846

“Jan. 1, Severe weather. I accomplish nothing. Looked up a place for cleaning wheat in the wind. Farbro put things in order for it. I moved my birds and deer skins to Farbro’s.  
“Feb. 10, Chopped wood. Shot a prairie chicken and prepared for a trip to Pine Lake.<sup>15</sup>

“March 22, Out hunting and fishing but got nothing except a prairie chicken and a pigeon.

“March 23, One prairie chicken.

“March 25, Nothing more than to skin a penelope.<sup>16</sup> Shot a blackbird and a pair of bommer [meaning not known]. In evening skinned a pair of ducks, 1 penelope and a high [illegible] Fuligula.

“March 29, In afternoon I went hunting at Downing’s point. Shot two Fuligula ferina [redhead] and another Fuligala [probably canvasback].

“March 31, I stuffed a pair of ducks. Laid up fence and cut new rails. Shot a pair of geese and a pigeon.

“April 3, Continued Mellberg’s houseraising in forenoon. I’m not well. Stuffed some birds. Received of Dr. Head pay for prairie chickens, mudhens and [illegible] at 50¢ each.

“April 5, Never saw more bommer.

“April 11, Nice weather after storm. Cold. B. J. gets a prairie chicken.

“April 12, Easter. Fixed some birds.

“April 13, Stuffed a prairie chicken.

“April 17, Did nothing but stuff a prairie chicken.

“April 23, Upon the prairie to see about wheat at Slaters. Shot three prairie chickens. Split twenty rails in the evening.

“April 27, I split 25 rails. Hindered by Carrick’s visit. Shot a trana. [Swedish name for crane.]

“April 28, Rained all day. At Carrick’s. Skinned the trana.

“May 3, Out to see if I could find any snakes or fish. Shot a teal duck, one quail and one prairie chicken.

“Nov. 11, Cleaned a cat [wild cat]. Fixed a hawk skin.

“Dec. 8, In forenoon pattered with some new birds.

<sup>15</sup> To visit Rev. Unonius, a Swedish Episcopal minister.

<sup>16</sup> Penelope is the specific name of the European wigeon, but he undoubtedly had the American wigeon in mind.

1847

"Jan. 5, Butchered a large gobbler and a hog. [Undoubtedly a wild turkey.]

"Jan. 30, In the afternoon fixed two bird skins.

"March 13, Fixed a pair of birds.

"April 9, Laid up a fence and fixed a pair of Strix [owls].

"April 20, Ran around to borrow salt, did not succeed. In afternoon fixed a vitvea. [Not decipherable.]

"May 2, Fixed Dr. Head's birds for which he paid me four new dollars.

"May 3, Shot three snapyroil." [Meaning not known.]

The first week in May Kumlien worked quite steadily at his birds.

"May 9, Fixed some birds and one woodchuck. To Green's with two trana for \$1.00.

"May 18, Fixed a glass box with birds and took it to Catfish [now Fulton].

"May 21, Rained. Stuffed Tra. etc.

"May 22, At Catfish after 4½ bu. grist for myself and for five others. Sold birds for \$1.75.

"May 23, Fixed a little on Dr. Head's birds. With Hammerquist at Blackhawk Island but did not shoot anything.

"May 27, Planted 7 small pails of potatoes. Fixed four bird skins for an Englishman.

"June 18, In forenoon sold bird skins for \$4.00 and worked at fixing four others for \$1.00.

"July 4, America's high festival day. In afternoon to store with five pounds butter. Shot one duck. Fia home.

"Aug. 9, Shot three fine white ardeidae. [Probably American egret.]

"Aug. 22, Shot seven ducks Saturday and fixed three today.

"Oct. 2, Made a mounting.

"Oct. 3, Shot four shitepokes and a blue crane.

"Nov. 6, Cleaned manure out of the stable. Rain and cold with thick weather and strong storm. Wrote and sent Friday (yesterday) a letter to J. G. Bell, New York, about birds.

"Dec. 11, Butchered a pig in forenoon, went after an eagle in the afternoon.

1848

"Feb. 18, Translated for Dr. Dass [Dr. Dundass] on his accounts. Took gray goose.

"Feb. 26, At Fort Atkinson, letter from Bell. Got word from Willard, selling a box of birds to Pelton for \$2.00.

"Feb. 27, Shot two [illegible] and one lark.

"March 21, At Dietrichson's for Wilson's Ornithology.

"March 29, Have sore throat. Split 16 rails. Got of Mrs. Reuterskiold \$1.50 for 6 bu. potatoes and \$1.50 on fees [Thure Kumlien appraised the Reuterskiold estate when Mr. Reuterskiold died] which equals \$3.00 which I sent with Preston Downing to Unonius and birdboxes from Milwaukee to pay for Wilson's Ornithology."

In a letter to Thure Kumlien from Rev. Gustaf Unonius, Pine Lake, Wisconsin, dated March 14, 1848, and which was sent to him through Pastor Dietrichson (pastor at one of the Koshkonong Lutheran churches) at the Christiania Post Office, Dane County, is a reference to Wilson's Ornithology as follows: "You have received, I believe, the book from Pastor Dietrichson. It cost \$3.00, which little sum I have paid out. When you send it to me, send the letter with the money to Delafield Post Office as until further notice this will be my address. The other book which you asked me to buy costs \$30. So I thought it best not to buy it. Write soon to me. God be with us all. Your indebted friend, G. Unonius."

This book was the first bird book he ever had on American birds. The \$30 book Kumlien wanted was one by Audubon, who was living at this time.

"April 2, I shot four ducks and *Tetrao umbellus* [ruffed grouse] on a visit at Mellberg's.

"April 11, Yesterday arranged to stuff a pelican for Mr. Harden in Catfish. Chopped a little near the woods.

"May 3, Planted six pails of early potatoes and onions. Had visit in tamaracks of *Pelicanus erythrorhynchus* [American white pelican].

"May 5, I laid up a fence. Shot a *sialia sialis* [bluebird], a Baltimore Oriole and a *Tetrao*. Dass here on medical errand.

"May 9, In the Norwegian Settlement after Fjargallare. [Probably Swedish name for butterflies.]

"May 21, Hunted down by the lake. *Phalaropus lobatus* [Northern phalarope].

"May 22, Rained the greater part of the day. I was lucky enough to shoot four *Phalaropus lobatus*.

"June 1, Sold a prairie hen to H. Hull for 50¢.<sup>17</sup>

"June 4, Rained in night. Pelican visitors.

"June 8, Hoed. Planted potatoes. Finished a bird cabinet.

"June 12, Second day of Pentecost. Out on the lake sailing and hunting. Christine along.

<sup>17</sup>This might be his first *Tympanuchus americanus* which, in after years, nearly replaced the prairie sharp-tailed grouse in southern Wisconsin.

"June 19, Hoed in forenoon. Fixed a bird box.

"June 28, At Clinton and Cambridge. Sold a bird box for a pair of boots, \$2.50.

"July 4, America's holiday. Rained all day. In the evening a big flock of bird visitors arrive.

"July 30, Shot a white gull, one gray blue large ----- one *Totanus* [probably yellow-legs] and two *Charadrii* [plovers].

"Sept. 14, Nothing. Shot three wood ducks.

"Sept. 22, Fia cocked up a little hay, I shot five ducks.

"Oct. 14, Gubben plowed and I fixed my bow and made three arrows for hunting hens.

"Nov. 9, My birthday, 29 years' old. A considerable age.

## 1849

"March 1, Yesterday Hammarquist saw and heard a gray goose.

"March 10, Swen cut two new logs for the house and trimmed a pair of others. I worked on the house. Yesterday I saw crow-blackbirds [bronzed grackle].

"March 11, Spring seems near. Bluebirds.

"March 12, After the grist at Clinton.<sup>18</sup> Saw a flock of *Bl. Migratoria* [bluebirds].

"March 13, *Turdus migratorius* [robin]. Chopped for house.

"March 16, Saw Wood ducks. Hammarquist in. Heard Trana. Beautiful day. Strong frost in night. Have seen Trana.

"March 25, Cold night. Snowed yesterday. Some fish appear to be running. Not many small birds yet. *Fringilla hyemalis* [slate-colored junco] and *Fringilla arborea*, [Wilson, is the tree sparrow], *Emb. lapp.* [lapland longspur] and *Al. Alpestris* [*Alauda Alpestris*, northern horned lark]. Blackbirds have been here in large flocks.

"March 29, Shot a pair of hens.

"April 9, Rained nearly all day. Fixed some birds for Sweden.

"April 11, Heard *Totanus Bartramius*. [Bartram's sand-piper.]

"April 18, Shaved shingles. Stuffing a *pelicanus Americanus* [American white pelican].

"April 19, Sowed and dragged about an acre. In afternoon worked on pelican. Bjorkander and Henry Carrick buy the old sawmill.

"May 7, Carrick brought a red bird to stuff. Rainy. Mr. James Clarke, an Englishman brought four birds to stuff.

"May 13, Sunday. Lots of visitors. Mr. Clarke brought six birds to stuff. Stuffed two of them and shot four.

<sup>18</sup> Now Rockdale.

"May 21, Planted corn. Stuffed a highholder [flicker] for Mr. Clarke.

"May 22, At Rice's with 3 pounds 5 oz. butter for which I got 3# sugar. Got of Clarke's boys 2½ bu. corn for fixing birds, \$4. Grubbed a little.

"May 26, At store with 3# butter with which I bought a jug of tack [vinegar] 25¢. Received of Randall 4 bu. corn for a pair of *Tetrao cupido* [pinnated grouse, prairie chicken] \$1.00.

"May 29, Chinked and mudded at stable. Grubbed a little in afternoon. Shot a scarlet Tanager.

"May 30, Stuffed a scarlet bird for Jenken's boy.

"May 31, Stuffed a *fulig. rubida* [old name for ruddy duck].

"June 2, Cut and split 80 shingles. Moved the fence by the stable. Put eyes in several birds.

"Nov. 4, Music of *Totanus* [one of the species of yellow-legs] in afternoon.

"Nov. 23, Busy, heard *Totanus* all day.

"Nov. 28, Got of Dr. Head 94¢ on payment of pelican. Worked a little on house.

"Dec. 8, Skinned a *Grus Americanus* [whooping crane].

"Dec. 12, Wrote letter to Sweden and fixed a Crane."

The last date in the journal concerns a bird and is under date of

"Jan. 5, Worked on a swan."

As Thure Kumlien did not always give the species of a bird mentioned in the old journal, but would write, "I saw six ducks," "heard music of the *Totanus*," etc., I cannot give the exact number of different birds seen by him at Lake Koshkonong in the 1840's. Many translations are missed because the words were not decipherable.

The blue jay was the first bird mentioned in the journal; the most common birds were red-winged blackbirds, prairie chickens and quails. The robin, *Turdus migratorius*, was not mentioned until March, 1849, and the bluebird was first mentioned two days earlier.

I have in my possession a list of birds, dated June 14, 1850, and signed by Thure Kumlien, that he had met with in Wisconsin on the west side of Koshkonong Lake in Jefferson County. This list contains several birds not mentioned in the journal and the journal contains a few birds not found on this list. This list

is written with the old scientific names which have been translated into the present-day common names.

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| 1. <i>Falco leucocephalus</i> -----                    | Bald Eagle   |
| 2. <i>Falco sparverius</i> -----                       | Sparrow Hawk   |
| 3. <i>Accipiter pennsylvanicus</i><br>(Swainson) ----- | Sharp-shinned Hawk   |
| 4. <i>Falco cyaneus</i> -----                          | Marsh Hawk   |
| 5. <i>Falco leverianus</i> -----                       | Eastern Red-tailed Hawk  |
| 6. <i>Strix nyctea</i> -----                           | Snowy Owl  |
| 7. <i>Strix tengmalmi</i> -----                        | Richardson's Owl [might be<br>confused with <i>Strix asio</i><br>—screech owl] |
| 8. <i>Strix nebulosa</i> -----                         | Barred Owl   |
| 9. <i>Strix virginiana</i> -----                       | Great Horned Owl   |
| 10. <i>Caprimulgus vociferus</i> ---                   | Whip-poor-will   |
| 11. <i>Caprimulgus virginianus</i> ---                 | Nighthawk  |
| 12. <i>Cypselus pelagius</i> -----                     | Chimney Swift  |
| 13. <i>Hirundo riparia</i> -----                       | Bank Swallow   |
| 14. <i>Alcedo alcyon</i> -----                         | Kingfisher   |
| 15. <i>Muscicapa tryannus</i> -----                    | Kingbird   |
| 16. <i>Muscicapa crinita</i> -----                     | Crested Flycatcher   |
| 17. <i>Muscicapa fusca</i> -----                       | Phoebe   |
| 18. <i>Lanius borealis</i> -----                       | Great Northern Shrike  |
| 19. <i>L. excubitoroides</i> -----                     | Migrant [or Loggerhead]<br>Shrike  |
| 20. <i>Turdus migratorius</i> -----                    | Robin  |
| 21. <i>Turdus minor</i> (Bonap) --                     | Hermit Thrush  |
| 22. <i>Turdus felivox</i> (Bonap) --                   | Catbird  |
| 23. <i>Turdus rufus</i> -----                          | Brown Thrasher   |
| 24. <i>Sylvia coronata</i> -----                       | Myrtle Warbler   |
| 25. <i>Sylvia aestiva</i> -----                        | Yellow Warbler   |
| 26. <i>Sylvia canadensis</i> -----                     | Black-throated Blue Warbler  |
| 27. <i>Sylvia trichas</i> -----                        | Maryland Yellow-throat   |
| 28. <i>Troglodytes palustris</i> ----                  | Marsh Wren   |
| 29. <i>Troglodytes aedon</i> -----                     | House Wren   |
| 30. <i>Troglodytes americanus</i> --                   | Audubon Wood Wren [con-<br>fused with House Wren in<br>fall plumage]           |
| 31. <i>Regulus satrapa</i> -----                       | Golden-crowned Kinglet   |
| 32. <i>Regulus calendula</i> -----                     | Ruby-crowned Kinglet   |
| 33. <i>Sialia wilsonii</i> (Swainson)                  | Eastern Bluebird   |
| 34. <i>Certhia familiaris</i> -----                    | Brown Creeper  |
| 35. <i>Parus atricapillus</i> -----                    | Black-capped Chickadee   |
| 36. <i>Alauda alpestris</i> -----                      | Northern Horned Lark   |
| 37. <i>Fringilla pennsylvanica</i> --                  | White-throated Sparrow   |
| 38. <i>Fringilla gramina</i> -----                     | Vesper Sparrow   |
| 39. <i>Fringilla canadensis</i> -----                  | Tree Sparrow   |
| 40. <i>Fringilla hyemalis</i> -----                    | Slate-colored Junco  |

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| 41. <i>Fringilla linaria</i> -----   | Redpoll                                      |
| 42. <i>Emberiza lapponica</i> -----  | Lapland Longspur                             |
| 43. <i>Emberiza nivalis</i> -----  | Snow Bunting                                 |
| 44. <i>Cyanospiza cyanea</i> -----   | Indigo Bunting                               |
| 45. <i>Carduelis tristis</i> -----   | Goldfinch                                    |
| 46. <i>Pipilo erythrophthalmus</i> --  | Red-eyed Towhee                              |
| 47. <i>Coccothraustes ludoviciana</i>  | Rose-breasted Grosbeak                       |
| 48. <i>Pyrrhuloxia rubra</i> -----   | Scarlet Tanager                              |
| 49. <i>Icterus baltimore</i> -----   | Baltimore Oriole                             |
| 50. <i>Icterus spurius</i> -----   | Orchard Oriole                               |
| 51. <i>Icterus agripennis</i> -----  | Bobolink                                     |
| 52. <i>Icterus pecoris</i> -----   | Cowbird                                      |
| 53. <i>Icterus xanthocephalus</i> ---  | Yellow-headed Blackbird                      |
| 54. <i>Icterus phoeniceus</i> -----  | Red-winged Blackbird                         |
| 55. <i>Quiscalus major</i> -----   | Boat-tailed Grackle [mis-<br>take; not here] |
| 56. <i>Quiscalus versicolor</i> -----  | Bronzed Grackle                              |
| 57. <i>Quiscalus ferrugineus</i> ----  | Rusty Blackbird                              |
| 58. <i>Sturnella ludoviciana</i> ----  | Meadowlark                                   |
| 59. <i>Corvus corax</i> -----  | Raven  |
| 60. <i>Corvus americanus</i> -----   | Crow   |
| 61. <i>Garrulus cristatus</i> -----  | Blue Jay                                     |
| 62. <i>Sitta carolinensis</i> -----  | White-breasted Nuthatch                      |
| 63. Quote: "There is a humming bird here, which one I<br>don't know."                      |  |
| 64. <i>Picus pileatus</i> -----  | Pileated Woodpecker                          |
| 65. <i>Picus villosus</i> -----  | Hairy Woodpecker                             |
| 66. <i>Picus pubescens</i> -----   | Downy Woodpecker                             |
| 67. <i>Picus varius</i> -----  | Yellow-bellied Sapsucker                     |
| 68. <i>Picus carolinus</i> -----   | Red-bellied Woodpecker                       |
| 69. <i>Picus erythrocephalus</i> ----  | Red-headed Woodpecker                        |
| 70. <i>Picus auratus</i> -----   | Flicker                                      |
| 71. <i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i>   | Black-billed Cuckoo                          |
| 72. <i>Ectopistes migratoria</i> ----  | Passenger Pigeon                             |
| 73. <i>Ectopistes carolinensis</i> ---   | Mourning Dove                                |
| 74. <i>Ortyx virginianus</i> -----   | Quail—Bobwhite                               |
| 75. <i>Tetrao umbellus</i> -----   | Ruffed Grouse                                |
| 76. <i>Tetrao cupido</i> -----   | Pinnated Grouse—Prairie<br>Chicken           |
| 77. <i>Tetrao phasianellus</i> -----   | Sharp-tailed Grouse                          |
| 78. <i>Gallinula chloropus</i> -----   | Florida Gallinule                            |
| 79. <i>Fulica americana</i> -----  | American Coot                                |
| Quote: "Three species of <i>Rallus</i> I think I have had but<br>had no ornithology then." |  |
| 80. <i>Grus americanus</i> -----   | Whooping Crane                               |
| 81. <i>Ardea nycticorax</i> -----  | Black-crowned Night Heron                    |
| 82. <i>Ardea lentiginosa</i> -----   | American Bittern                             |
| 83. <i>Ardea exilis</i> -----  | Least Bittern                                |
| 84. <i>Ardea herodias</i> -----  | Great Blue Heron                             |

85. *Ardea candidissima* ----- Snowy Heron  
 86. *Ardea egretta* ----- American Egret  
 87. *Charadrius vociferus* ---- Killdeer  
 Quote: "and I think one smaller *Charadrius*."  
 88. *Tringa alpina* ----- Red-backed Sandpiper  
 89. *Totanus Bartramius* ---- Upland Plover  
 Quote: "Two or three more species" not identified  
 90. *Limosa* (I think) *hudsonica* Hudsonian Godwit  
 91. *Scolopax wilsonii* ----- Wilson's Snipe  
 92. *Scolopax noveboracensis* -- Eastern Dowitcher  
 93. *Microptera americana* --- American Woodcock  
 94. *Numenius longirostris* --- Long-billed Curlew  
 95. *Phalaropus wilsonii* ---- Wilson's Phalarope  
 96. *Anser canadensis* ----- Canada Goose  
 97. *Anser bernicla* ----- American Brant  
 98. *Cygnus buccinator* ----- Trumpeter Swan  
 99. *Anas boschas* ----- Mallard  
 100. *Anas americana* ----- Baldpate  
 101. *Anas acuta* ----- Pintail  
 102. *Anas sponsa* ----- Wood Duck  
 103. *Anas carolinensis* ----- Green-winged Teal  
 104. *Anas discors* ----- Blue-winged Teal  
 105. *Anus clypeata* ----- Shoveller  
 106. *Fuligula ferina* ----- Red-head  
 107. *Fuligula marila* ----- Scaup  
 108. *Fuligula rufitorques* ----- Ring-necked Duck  
 109. *Fuligula rubida* ----- Ruddy Duck  
 110. *Fuligula albeola* ----- Buffle-head  
 111. *Mergus merganser* ----- American Merganser  
 112. *Mergus cucullatus* ----- Hooded Merganser  
 113. *Pelecanus americanus* ---- American White Pelican  
 114. *Sterna hirundo* ----- Common Tern  
 115. *Sterna nigra* ----- Black Tern  
 Quote: "Two or three species of *Larus*—Gulls"  
 116. *Colymbus glacialis* ----- Loon  
 Quote: "One species of *Grebe* or *Podiceps*"

At the end of the list Thure Kumlien writes, "This list, of course, is very imperfect, but having not until late been able to get a book on the subject and but little time to spend on hunting, it is very likely that I have not mentioned half of the birds we have here."

By the will of Thure Kumlien, his natural history collection, bird books and his bird notes were left to his son, Ludwig, who was also a naturalist.

These bird notes were used by Ludwig Kumlien and Ned Hollister in their "Birds of Wisconsin," which was published in



1903. I will quote the bird notes mentioned as of the 1840's from "Birds of Wisconsin."

Trumpeter Swan, *Olor buccinator*, p. 31. "Thure Kumlien had a juvenile specimen, obtained somewhere between 1842-45 in Jefferson County, with down on the head and primaries still soft, color a dingy ash."

Cory's Least Bittern,\* *Ardetta neoxena*, p. 34. "In June, 1845, Thure Kumlien found some Indian children playing with a small headless heron, using it as a target for bow and arrow practice. This was at an Indian encampment on Black Hawk Island, Lake Koshkonong. The bird was new to him and he secured it and later sent a color sketch to Dr. T. M. Brewer. Brewer pronounced it probably some southern species or a different plumage of the least bittern. A copy, or in fact the original sketch, is still in our possession, and it plainly shows the specimen to have been a typical *Ardetta neoxena*. No others were found and the matter was lost sight of by both Dr. Brewer and Kumlien. Neither was the bird ever found by L. Kumlien during many years of careful marsh collecting in the same locality. Its claim to a place in the present list, therefore, rests principally on the capture of a full plumaged male by Mr. C. E. Akeley on Lake Koshkonong, May 22, 1893, and preserved in the Field Columbian Museum, Chicago. (Cherrie, Auk, XIII, p. 79)"

American Avocet, *Recurvirostra americana*, p. 42. "Specimens of this peculiar wader were taken by Thure Kumlien at different times from 1844 to 1875. Three were shot on Lake Koshkonong September, 1873. Those taken by Thure Kumlien were more often taken in September and October and were principally young birds."

American Woodcock, *Philohela minor*, p. 42. "On the evidence of Thure Kumlien and Dr. Hoy, and others, this species increased from the early forties up to say about 1870. From that time on to the present its numbers have decreased, from too close shooting, settlement of the country, and the draining and drying up of its natural resorts."

Buff-breasted Sandpiper, *Tryngites subruficollis*, p. 51. "Rare migrant. During a residence of fifty years in southern Wiscon-

\* Now considered a color phase of the Least Bittern.—Editor.

sin, Thure Kumlien procured but a single specimen, killed on a prairie in Dane County late in September, 1845."

Hudsonian Curlew, *Numenius hudsonicus*, p. 52. "From 1845 to about 1865 this species was fairly common during migrations in the prairie regions. Dr. Hoy writes of finding a few nesting at Fox Lake, June 15, 1848, and Thure Kumlien found the birds in summer in Dane County and, from their actions, supposed them to be nesting. We have no *positive* evidence, however, that the species ever bred in the state."

Great Gray Owl, *Scotiapterx cinerea*, p. 70. "Rare winter visitant. This great owl seldom reaches southern Wisconsin, especially of late years. Before the heavy timber was cut down specimens were sometimes known to reach even the southern tier of counties. Recorded by Dr. Hoy from Racine in 1848. Two specimens were sent to Thure Kumlien from Bark River woods, Jefferson County, at about the same time."

Snowy Owl, *Nyctea nyctea*, p. 72. "Winter visitant, of irregular occurrence." Thure Kumlien knew of two cases of this owl remaining through the summer, but the birds proved to be cripples. "Perfectly sound specimens were secured, however, in April on several occasions, and one as late as May 5 (1847)."

Carolina Paroquet, *Conurus carolinensis*, p. 73. "Many years ago the paroquet occasionally wandered to southern Wisconsin. Thure Kumlien saw a considerable flock near Lake Koshkonong in 1844 or 1845. One specimen which he secured at this place at an early day was sent to John G. Bell, of New York."

Prairie Warbler, *Dendroica discolor*, p. 116. "A rare straggler to Wisconsin. Dr. Hoy procured but one specimen at Racine, and Thure Kumlien but one at Lake Koshkonong. Unfortunately the dates of capture of both specimens are gone, but both were taken at a very early day, between 1845 and 1860."

Bell's Vireo, *Vireo belli*, p. 133. "In the early forties Thure Kumlien procured specimens of a vireo which he called *belli*, of which he had no description, simply to distinguish it from *gilvus*. This led to some confusion with Lawrence, Baird, and others who had not seen the specimens. The bird referred to was later described by Cassin as *V. philadelphicus*."

On a paper written by Thure Kumlien at an early date, he writes, "The yellow-billed Cuckoo I have not seen here, but the

black-billed Cuckoo is not uncommon and I may get their eggs. I have found its nest three times but only one nest within the last three or four years."

Considering the fact that Thure Kumlien had to learn the English language, that he had no knowledge nor experience of manual labor and that he had to work so hard to eke out a bare existence in this new country with no railroads, no American books on the subject of natural history, no one else anywhere around him interested in the subject, without the proper equipment for his work and with ill health stalking the family, he did very well indeed with his bird study the first seven years from 1843 to 1850.

The early pioneers suffered many hardships during the long Wisconsin winters, so the arrival of spring was very welcome. It was especially so to Thure Kumlien, as the following lines which were found in his own handwriting among his old papers will show:

"At last spring has come—the bluebirds, robins, and meadow larks singing near my house and the prairie hens tooting in the lowlands below it with an occasional screaming of the Sandhill cranes, long strings of geese cackling and the constant whirring of duck wings over my head is delightful to me now. To me spring has something inexpressibly pleasing."

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The writer is indebted to A. W. Schorger of Madison, Wisconsin, for helping in unravelling some of the old scientific bird names.

Dear Mr. Bell-Block  
I have your letter of the 12th and am glad to hear from you.

I am sorry that I cannot give you a more definite answer at this time. The matter is still under consideration and I will be sure to let you know as soon as a final decision has been reached.

I am sure that you will understand the need for a thorough review of the situation before any final action is taken.

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