

HORACE GROSKIN

PHILLIPS B. STREET

The passing of Horace Groskin on April 19, 1958 took from the Club one of a handful of members who might truly be called a scientist. The thoroughness of his studies and the meticulous care with which he organized and presented his data, be they banding records, plumage or behavior studies, or simply observations, might well be emulated by others of us.

Whatever the project, the study was thorough. When Groskin became interested in the clouds of Chimney Swifts he watched pouring into the chimney of an Ardmore department store to roost, the report he amassed was important enough to serve as the lead paper in the July 1945 *Auk*. Another paper in that journal described the plumage variations observed while banding 1,249 male Goldfinches during a six-year period. One in *Bird-Banding* described a spring invasion of Purple Finches and included a long series of wing measurements. When the Peregrine Falcons were first discovered breeding on the Philadelphia City Hall in 1946, it was duly reported in the *Auk* with all the supporting data which could be gleaned from inquiry and personal observation.

Bird-banding was Groskin's chief avocation. He maintained an elaborate series of traps on the terrace of his lovely Ardmore home. How many Purple Finches he banded there until failing health curtailed his activities in the year or so before his death I do not know, but certainly the figure ran into the thousands.

Groskin was not only a good ornithologist but a proficient entomologist as well, specializing in ants. This led him into the little known behavior pattern of birds known as "anting", and reports of these observations appeared in *Cassinia* and the *Auk*. His insect collection is now in the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences.

He became a member of the D.V.O.C. in 1936 and was elected a Fellow in 1946. He joined the American Ornithologists' Union in 1935 and was honored with Elective Membership in 1950. He was President of the Eastern Bird-Banding Association from 1945 to 1948 and was always active in its affairs. Other scientific memberships included the Cooper Ornithological

Society, Northeastern Bird-Banding Association, American Entomological Society, Wilson Ornithological Society, National Audubon Society and the Academy of Natural Sciences.

Groskin was born in New York City on October 15, 1875. He attended Brown Preparatory School and shortly thereafter entered the real estate business in Philadelphia. He served as a director of the Philadelphia Real Estate Board and was once the recipient of a national award from the National Association of Real Estate Boards for a study which he presented on the City of Philadelphia. He is survived by his wife, the former Rose Mann; a daughter, Gwladys; and a son, Jerome.
