“Head Thrown Back, Eyes Alert”:

Sharing Nature in the *Columbus Dispatch* Column of Edward Sinclair Thomas

Seventy-seven-year-old Edward Sinclair Thomas surely wished he was somewhere else when he found himself squeezed into an overcrowded room in Logan, Ohio, in March 1969. Given the choice, Thomas rarely chose to be indoors if he could be out in Ohio's woods, searching for new birds to add to his list of sightings for the year and exploring nature spots for his readers. He likely would have preferred to be at Neotoma, an undisturbed piece of wilderness he owned only ten miles from Logan, sitting on the porch of his cabin or tramping through the trees. After all, he had made a career of doing just that, working as a natural historian for the Ohio State Museum and writing weekly about Ohio's animals, plants, and places for the *Columbus Dispatch*.

On this day, however, Thomas was stuck in the overcrowded room, squeezed in with 400 agitated people on a warm spring morning. Some were forced to stand, as there were more people present than chairs, and cars were crammed into every possible spot in the area around the building because the lot had quickly filled.[1] Many of those in attendance were likely there at Thomas's request—only days before he had encouraged readers of his column to show up and speak against a dam that threatened rare plant species and scenic attractions near Neotoma. Under the leadership of Thomas, known to many in attendance for his column, as well as preservationists from Ohio State University, the Sierra Club, and the Audubon Society, opponents of the dam managed to delay construction and, ultimately, kill the project altogether.[2]

The event highlighted the influence of Thomas, whose nature column reached hundreds of thousands of readers throughout central Ohio from 1922 until 1981, a span of nearly six decades. This research explores Thomas's writings in the *Dispatch*, presenting an overview of his career and writings as an example of American nature column writing. To do so, it utilizes an array of newspaper articles and archival sources, in addition to Thomas's column, to explicate

not only the details of Thomas's life but the previously understated significance his work at the *Dispatch* had on naturalism in the state of Ohio.

There are three primary reasons such a study is needed. First and foremost, such a study is necessary is to understand how nature columns such as Thomas's fit within the larger frame of environmental writing in American journalism history. As the following pages will show, Thomas was far from the only nature columnist in Ohio, and the work of twentieth century newspaper nature writers followed centuries of environmental authors who came before them. Thomas's work with the *Dispatch* began in the early 1920s, a time when journalism on environmental topics had yet to develop as a niche of news reporting, pressing most coverage of environment, excepting crises like the 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill, into columns and literature sections. This paper situates Thomas and his contemporaries contextually, connecting the fledgling genre of American nature writing of the nineteenth century with the modern environment beat.

Second, despite the fact that, throughout American history, most newspaper readers have been in cities and towns outside the distribution range of those major metropolitan dailies that have received the most attention by journalism historians, insufficient research has been conducted to understand the columnists, reporters, editors, and publishers working at such newspapers, particularly in the twentieth century. At one level, this makes sense, as it is important to understand as fully as possible the histories of those working at newspapers such as the *New York Times* and *New York Herald-Tribune,* the *Chicago Tribune,* and the *Washington Post*, as well as such influential newspapers in American journalism as institutions. However, those working at lower-profile newspapers away from the nation's power centers deserve attention as well. Columnists such as Thomas were surely valued members of their newspaper

staffs; the *Dispatch* used Thomas and his column in promotional materials and even published a collection of his columns as a book.[3] Such newspapers reached audiences beyond the reach of the major metropolitan papers, providing valuable information to readers hungry for content. Those journalism historians who have given notice to smaller newspapers frequently have done so to shed light on a specific episode, to answer a question limited by time or topic. This research uses Thomas as an example to explore how one columnist entertained readers not for a few years or decades, but for almost sixty years.

Finally, this research seeks to understand what it was about Thomas's column that made it sufficiently successful that editors continued to run it for almost six decades. Why would the *Dispatch*, the largest newspaper in a city with a population that ranged from around 237,000 to 565,000 when Thomas was active, devote valuable inches to a weekly column seemingly of interest only to a niche audience? As this research indicates, Thomas not only used his column to write about nature in a way that appealed to his readers but created a sharing space in which backyard birders, hobby naturalists, other nature writers, and even scientists could share and learn about the natural world. Thomas used this network to achieve goals that might seem beyond the scope of most newspaper columns or, indeed, much newspaper content generally. Thomas's column was used to collect scientific data, which Thomas could then share with his readers, and to mobilize naturalists throughout the region to address environmental concerns at both an individual and political level.

Given that little attention has been paid to Thomas since his death in 1982, almost nothing has been written about him, leaving the primary sources explored here to tell his story largely untapped. That said, there is a handful of secondary sources that inform this study. The first and largest of these is a collection of Thomas's columns titled *In Ohio Woods and Fields*.[4]

That book, which includes reprintings of one hundred of his columns, was published by the Dispatch Printing Company in 1981, shortly before Thomas's 1982 death. It is an excellent primer to his writing style and substance, and it was used as a starting point for the exploration of his columns. In this study, however, the columns were considered in their original form in the pages of the *Dispatch* so they could be situated in the context of surrounding content. Particularly helpful from *In Ohio Woods and Fields* are the publisher's statement and a brief biography of the author, which aided in the triangulation of the major details of Thomas's life. Additionally, Thomas's obituaries in the *Dispatch* and a short online biography proved useful in pinning down Thomas's chronology, as did a blog post written about him by an Ohio Historical Society librarian.[5]

The core materials consulted for this study, however, came from two sources. First, Thomas's columns in the *Columbus Dispatch* were reviewed on microfilm. Once research began, it became clear that it was not necessary to read each individual column, of which Thomas wrote more 3,000 during his almost 60 years with the *Dispatch*.[6] Instead, columns were read in microfilm form at the researcher's university library and as clippings in Thomas's Ohio Historical Society manuscript collection until their tone and content became clear. In all, approximately 300 columns selected from the entirely of Thomas's career were read, with additional columns sought out from some periods to better understand particular issues that arose in the manuscript collection. That collection was the second main source for this project. Thomas's papers at the Ohio Historical Society include a wide range of materials, including journals, column manuscripts, correspondence with readers and scientists, a videotaped interview with Thomas, and other archival documents. The entirety of the manuscript collection, which includes fourteen boxes of documents, was reviewed for this project. These materials were

supplemented with newspaper and magazine coverage related to topics discussed in Thomas's columns.

"My features are fairly regular . . ."[7]

Edward Sinclair Thomas was born April 22, 1891, to Edward Barton Thomas and Tempe Sinclair in Woodsfield, Ohio, a small town of about 1,000 residents roughly 120 miles east of Columbus.[8] His family soon moved to Columbus, where he grew up and where he wrote a series of journals from 1908 to 1912.[9] In his introductory entry, Thomas presents himself much as any boasting teenage boy might be expected to: "I am not a little over seventeen years old, tall and with a dark complexion . . . a friend told me that he heard a group of girls of East High agree that I was the best looking junior out there . . . in baseball I am a fairly good batter and am rather good at getting pickups on first-base."[10] In addition to his interests in sports and romance, Thomas expressed in his salutatory a burgeoning interest in the natural world, noting a fondness for natural history and particularly ornithology.

Entries for the summer after his junior year, his senior year, and the summer before he began college reflect a deep interest in nature, even as typical high school interests vied for his attention. Most months at least mention birding, apparently a long-held passion, and Thomas writes at length about the habits of birds, as when he watched a lone hawk flying over a field and "almost fell in sympathy with the 'monarch of the air' when its dignified flight changed to a wild dash for safety as it was followed by a pair of chattering kingbirds."[11] During some stretches of time he wrote of almost daily outings to find birds, sometimes with friends or family, as when he received a pair of new binoculars for Christmas and spent the afternoon birding with his father, but often alone.[12] By far the most descriptive writings on nature in these early entries, however, came during a family trip to the northern reaches of Michigan in the summer of 1908. There, a

seventeen-year-old Thomas hinted at what could be expected of his columns later in life, expressing not only a developing ability to paint scenes with words but also the extent of his growing knowledge of nature:

> When we woke up at 5:30 this morning, after having ridden all night thru Michigan, a different sight met our eyes. The level country changes to hilly, the good soil to almost pure sand, and the broad plains to wooded hillsides. . . . The vegetation is quite different from our home trees and plants. Some of the strangers are larkspur, birches, aspen, moose maple, ferns and the evergreens. There are also a *large* number of sugar maples. I also noticed a large number of birds near to me, altho the robin, catbird, english sparrow, chippy, song sparrow and kingbird are quite common here.[13]

His journal wasn't the only place Thomas was honing his writing. Journal entries show he was deeply involved with his high school's monthly, student-produced magazine, *The X-Rays*. As editor, his duties were substantial, requiring him to collect materials from other students; pen editorials himself; deliver the drafted materials to the printer; review, copyedit, and approve the proofs; and deliver the finished product, typically about twenty-four pages in length, to students.[14] Taken in sum, Thomas' duties covered many of the duties of small, weekly newspaper. They undoubtedly informed him of the review process his columns would go through at the *Dispatch*, while *X-Rays*' editorial pages gave him space to practice writing.

Despite his obvious interest in nature, Thomas studied law rather than biology at Ohio State University. While his courses took up much of his time, he took part in numerous extracurricular activities. His senior-year entry in the *Makio*, the Ohio State University yearbook, lists him as active in numerous glee clubs, student government organizations, and honor societies.[15] Most important to this study, however, was his editorship of the *Sun-Dial,* a monthly

university humor magazine that extended his student journalism work into his college years. He earned his bachelor's degree from Ohio State in 1913 and received a legal degree there in 1916.[16]

Figure 1. Photo of Thomas from the 1913 Ohio State University yearbook.[17]

Upon graduation, Thomas launched a fifteen-year career in law that overlapped his time with the *Dispatch* by seven years.[18] He preserved few papers from this period, almost none of which pertain to his legal career. Instead, surviving documents illustrate an interest in the natural world that had grown significantly more scientific since he had written in his high school journals. These include detailed bird observation logs kept since 1909. In one observation log, consisting of records from 1909 through the late 1920s, Thomas wrote observation notes for thousands of bird sightings, noting the date, weather conditions, species, sex, and physical traits of the birds. Included in the book are incredible numbers of bird species observed each year. As a graduate student at Ohio State University, Thomas found time to observe 163 different species in a single year.[19] Six years later he would log 199 species. While birding and natural science remained hobbies through the 1910s, Thomas clearly took them seriously.

In 1922, six years after earning his graduate degree from Ohio State University and into his law career, Thomas was approached by Haz Okey, a Columbus outdoorsman, with an interesting offer.[20] Okey had recently been at the *Columbus Dispatch*'s offices speaking with Arthur Johnson, the editor the paper. The *Dispatch* circulation department was hosting a birdhouse-building contest, and Johnson wanted to know if Okey knew anyone who could write a handful of columns on birds to drum up interest in the contest. "Haz [Okey] said, 'I know exactly who you want,'" Thomas said in an interview videotaped in 1980. "'My neighbor Ed Thomas, who lives two doors to the west of me, he's just the person.'"

The *Dispatch* called Thomas, whose only credentials as a naturalist or ornithologist were his enthusiasm and extensive observation notes, and asked if he might be interested in writing the columns. Thomas answered that yes, he was. The initial agreement called for six articles about birds, with the first appearing March 5, 1922.[21] There was no assumption the articles would go on beyond the first series.

When Thomas accepted the *Dispatch*'s offer, he was stepping into a well-established context of environmental writing in the American press. In fact, scores of writers had come before, providing a framework within which most of those who wrote on environmental topics operated. Mark Neuzil suggests those writers penned articles which can be divided into four veins of stories in the early decades of the twentieth century: those pertaining to practical matters of agriculture; outdoor adventure; nature itself; and news-oriented environmental issues such as disasters, crises, land use, and pollution.[22] Of these, Thomas' columns were situated in the traditions of the middle two, outdoor adventure and nature writing.

The first of these, outdoor adventure writing, was extremely common in daily newspapers throughout much of the twentieth century. Writing what Neuzil calls "hook-and-bullet" stories,

reporters "would wax eloquent in the Saturday newspaper about a goose hunt with Uncle Joe, complete with a photograph of a smiling hunter," followed the next day by "the sighting of an endangered bobcat in a nearby state park."[23] Such articles had developed from a long tradition of fishing and hunting stories in English and American books written by men like Izaak Walton (*The Compleat Angler*) and Thaddeus Norris (*American Angler's Book*) by whom Thomas was likely influenced.[24] Outdoor adventure writing reached maturity in the press in magazines such as *Forest and Stream*, where hunters, fishers, lovers of the outdoors, and activists came together.

Of those outdoor adventure writers active during Thomas' formative years, one of the best-known was Theodore Roosevelt. For many turn-of-the-century Americans in the eastern United States, his books like *Hunting Trips of a Ranchman, Ranch Life and the Hunting Trail*, and *The Wilderness Hunter* may have been the most substantial descriptions of the natural world west of the Mississippi they would read. As American conceptions of environment have evolved since the early twentieth century, however, the merits of Roosevelt's literary and conservationist contributions have been called into question.[25] Despite their enormous impact on the readers of his time, Roosevelt's writings expose an anthropocentrism reflective of an outmoded form of environmentalism.[26] This view toward nature, which focused primarily on making the maximum use of natural resources for human purposes, climaxed in the early twentieth century in what environmental historian Samuel Hays calls the "gospel of efficiency." In Hays' view, Roosevelt and other Progressive-era conservationists such as US Chief of Forestry Gifford Pinchot championed environmental causes not out of philosophical or humanistic desires but to maximize the output of American resources and, consequently, reliance on experts with highly specialized knowledge able to increase efficiency as such.[27] This managerial sentiment was widespread and increasing during Thomas' teens and twenties, reflected in contemporary

environmental writing, scientific thought, and governmental policy well after the publication of his first column in the *Dispatch*. It would prove extremely influential in his professional activities as a naturalist as well as his writings.[28]

The second thread that informed Thomas' style came from the nature writing tradition. Developed from the books and articles of such writers as Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, and Aldo Leopold, Neuzil argues this strain of American literature "influenced generations of nature writers and others, including environmental journalists," even though few of its pioneers worked as full-time journalists.[29] Instead, they wrote books and magazine articles read by millions, writing field guides and travelogues, philosophical ramblings and natural histories from outside the industry. They expressed not only a passion for the natural world but a deep knowledge of its workings, sharing experience and expertise desired by a hungry readership often unable to experience such things first hand.[30] The titles of the nature writing canon are known even among those who have not read the books themselves: Thoreau's *Walden*, for example, struck a chord in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with its independent agrarian ethic that seemed to many city-dwellers to be vanishing, offering a synthesis between a scientific and yet deeply personal nature.[31]

Walden is almost universally credited as the starting point from which a uniquely American way of writing about nature developed that continues to deeply influence environmental writing today.[32] In time, however, others enthralled readers with their own accounts of nature. Sierra Club founder John Muir, for example, wrote articles that appeared in *Harper's* and *Scribner's Monthly* that may have influenced Thomas, while John Burrough's *Wake-Robin* would have appealed directly to Thomas' interests in ornithology.[33] In time, he would likely come to read writers who blended the managerial bent of outdoor adventure writers

with the loftier nature style, writers like Aldo Leopold, who authored *A Sand County Almanac*, which has been credited with defining the modern environmental movement in similar ways as Thoreau did the nascent movement of the nineteenth century.[34]

In 1922, however, when Thomas typed the manuscript for his first *Dispatch* column, Leopold had yet to write his *Almanac* or come to see nature ecologically, the core offering of his book. Instead, Leopold toed the line between Progressive conservationism, on one side, and the nature writing tradition, on the other. So too did Thomas. As will be shown, Thomas' writing style blended these two veins of environmental writing, combining his managerial fixation on scientific data with his ability to describe nature eloquently. This style would, in time, make his column influential later in the century.

"To Each His Hobby"[35]

Thomas' first column appeared on March 5, 1922, in the Sunday edition of the *Columbus Dispatch*. As noted above, the initial series of six articles had been commissioned to drum up interest for a birdhouse-building contest sponsored by the *Dispatch*, so, unsurprisingly, the first column focused almost entirely on birds. Yet, as he did in many of the columns that followed, Thomas allowed his thoughts to meander away from his topic, taking his time getting to the point. The reader was not left wanting, however; just as Thomas would repeatedly tell his readers that most of the fun in exploring nature is wandering, finding things one never expected, so did his columns present treasures along the way to the topic at hand. His first words in the *Dispatch*, ostensibly about Ohio birds, make this point clear:

> A flight of wild geese, the breath of spring in the air, the piping of the spring peeper, robin's roundelay or the gentle warble of bluebird—and you've caught it. Some call it spring fever, some claim it is just plain laziness and a few insist that it is a vestige of the

> original sin. But is there any one to whom these heralds of spring to do not bring a quickening of pulse, a sparkle to the eye and a flush to the cheek? . . . Let us, then, obey the impulse. Let us escape old donjon-keeper Care, and betake ourselves to the open, to field and stream and woodland where Youth awaits us.[36]

Something in Thomas's style clearly caught the attention of *Dispatch* readers, as his column was soon extended beyond the initial commission of six. Thomas frequently returned to the topic of birds that had initially brought him to the paper and filled so much of his life. He was no backyard birdwatcher but traveled throughout the region birding, and even had a bird-banding operation which propelled him toward academic study of ornithology.[37] Naturally, he never strayed from the topic for more than a couple of weeks, returning frequently to share trip reports from nearby birding hotspots.[38] When able, he would raise questions about bird behavior to his readers, promptly answering the questions as if they, rather than he, had asked.[39]

Yet he did not limit himself to birds. Thomas used his column to spotlight dozens of Ohio species of all kinds, from large raptors to tiny insects. At times Thomas was clearly trying to convey to his readers in easily understood language why they should care about animals they might normally overlook or even avoid, as when he describes how tree crickets, "most melodious" bugs, produce 12 million chirps over their one-month lifetimes.[40] In other columns he outright rallied to the defense of animals considered pests or dangers. "Spiders are things to shudder at and step on and to shun, aren't they?" Thomas asked in one such column before characteristically answering his own question. "We are not to blame for our attitude toward spiders—it has been handed down to us through countless generations of ancestors. But we are to be blamed, are we not, if we pass these senseless, silly prejudices on to our children."[41] Another column presents a quiet, unobtrusive Thomas sitting in a meeting, listening as a man berates

hawks as thieves and murderers, explaining to the reader the argument he might have given in reply if doing so would not "be futile and would result only in ill-feeling."[42] In the course of doing so, Thomas draws on such established names in conservation and nature writing as Aldo Leopold and Paul Errington to make his case.[43]

Most of Thomas's columns, however, focused not on convincing the unsure but preaching to the converted, and he dedicated a great deal of space to sharing nature spots across Ohio with eager readers. Here, *In Ohio Woods and Fields*, the collection of selected Thomas columns, is helpful, as it includes dozens of travel pieces describing destinations within driving distance of *Dispatch* subscribers. Columbus's central location put much of the state within an easy day's drive. He beckoned readers to the shores and islands of Lake Erie, where they could watch terns and gulls fly among the rocks,[44] and south to the Hocking Hills, home to pawpaw fruits and black vultures.[45] Opportunities in the counties between were numerous.[46] Such columns often followed a common structure, exemplified by a July 1946 column detailing his trip to a nearby "paradise for birds."[47] Thomas teases the reader with a glimpse of the scenery before explaining how to get there from Columbus. He then dives into a detailed account of his trek—what he saw, was surprised by, thinks the reader cannot afford to miss—concluding with a glowing remark about the place. His often drew the area's history into his descriptions of Ohio's hills and plains, as he did when describing the glaciers that covered much of Ohio and influenced the diversity and distribution of animals and wildlife throughout the state.[48]

In nearly all cases, however, Thomas's scientific observations, recorded on thousands of notebook pages, bird count sheets, maps, and scraps of paper, contributed heavily to his columns. These records grew considerably as Thomas aged. Although he began keeping daily records of his bird observations as a teenager, his documentation grew increasingly sophisticated as he

developed into adulthood. Given his professional life, this is no great surprise. After practicing law for fifteen years, Thomas decided to follow his passion and become a full-time naturalist. In 1931, he began work as curator of natural history for the Ohio State Museum, later the Ohio Historical Society.[49] His new position, which he held until he retired from it in 1962, allowed him great latitude to research Ohio's plants and animals, to publish scientific papers, and to publicize the state's natural offerings. In addition to writing his column, Thomas wrote dozens of academic articles and pieces for state and national nature journals, including works in the *Ohio Journal of Science*, the *Auk,* and *Ohio Archeology and History Quarterly*.[50] His efforts earned citations, leadership positions, and honorary titles from state science associations as well as an honorary doctorate of science from Capital University in Columbus.[51]

Thomas used his trove of observations and other data to infuse his columns with scientific vigor, especially when his notes might prove useful or novel to his readers. In 1969, for example, Thomas traveled to California to visit family for Christmas. While there, he took time to explore species perhaps unfamiliar to those in Ohio, keeping logs of the birds he saw. He managed to identify roughly seventy different bird species during his trip, and he recounted his discoveries to his hometown audience, detailing several birds but avoiding devolving his column into a kind of scientific log in itself. Instead, Thomas described the California landscape in which he found his birds, relating them to species with which his readers were more familiar:

> When it is raining, as it is at the moment, California gulls sail back and forth, beautiful white birds about intermediate between our herring gull and ring-billed gull in size and markings.
>
> The steep slope below the house is densely clothed with shrubbery, interspersed with small trees, a vegetation type known hereabouts as chaparral, from the Spanish,

> chaparro, and evergreen scrub oak. Chaparral is a distinctive vegetation type with its own special kinds of plants and animals.
>
> The scrub jay, for instance, is characteristic of the chaparral. . . . Striking birds, crestless, with pastel blue head, wings and tail and a white throat, bordered by a necklace of dark streaks.[52]

At other times, Thomas allowed himself drier prose to suit the scientific nature of certain columns, as in the case of his regional reports of Ohio annual Christmas bird counts. These were rare instances when Thomas restrained his usual loftiness and instead let numbers speak for themselves.[53]

As his popularity as a naturalist grew so too did the duties weighing on him. First, he had a family with which to divide his time. In 1938, seven years after taking up natural history full time, he married Marian Louise Washburn, and the two had a daughter, Elizabeth.[54] Meanwhile, conservation and birding groups across the state invited him to speak, and he accepted many of the invitations that came his way.[55] For a time, he served as an adjunct professor in the Ohio State University's Museum of Zoology, providing him access to the school's research facilities.[56] To top things off, his duties with the *Dispatch* grew considerably in 1958, when the paper debuted a weekly nature comic strip. Titled "Professor Naturebug," the comic featured copy written by Thomas that described, in language suited to children, the same range of nature topics considered in his column.[57]

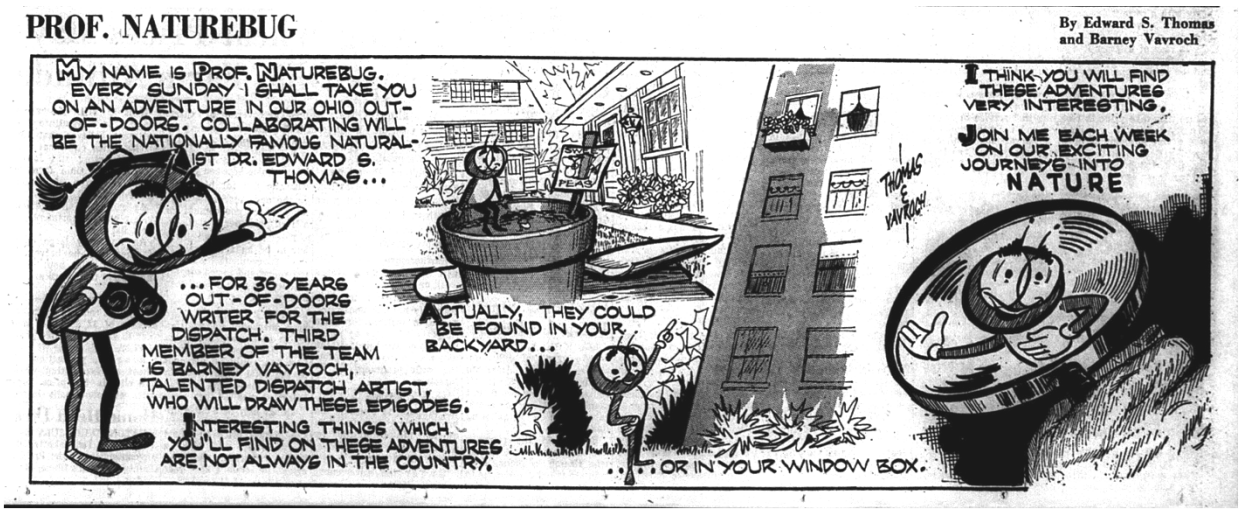

Figure 2. The first "Professor Naturebug" comic strip, July 6, 1958.[58]

Combined, Thomas's duties placed a considerable burden on him, he told friends. In a letter to a colleague written late in his life, Thomas said that even in semi-retirement he was "operating up to capacity," complicating another visit to family in California. He specifically blames his column as getting in the way of helping the friend with a scientific project. "Among other things," he wrote in a letter, "I will have to get a month ahead on my Dispatch articles and cartoon strips. . . . Marian is all for me chucking all the Dispatch bit and digging into the Orthoptera, but I can't in good conscience do that."[59]

Clearly Thomas's column was a duty he took seriously, and with good reason. By the time he had written that letter, Thomas had created an influential sharing space in the *Dispatch*'s pages that he used to great effect. As the next section will show, his column impacted the Ohio naturalist community in concrete ways, bringing together the state's nature lovers and exerting significant political influence in environmental matters.

"Learned nature writer for the Dispatch"[60]

The success or failure of a newspaper column depends, to a large degree, on its ability to engage its readers. Columns that provide readers with relevant and useful information are likely to succeed, while those that serve niche audiences or fail to involve readers struggle. In this respect, Thomas excelled. He found ways not only to provide information which readers found valuable, as in his descriptions of Ohio nature destinations and birding advice, but also to draw readers of all kinds into his column, sharing in print their discoveries and curiosities while empowering them to help him in his capacity as a naturalist and writer.

As an expert naturalist, readers frequently wrote Thomas with questions about birds they had seen in their backyards, the correct way to build birdhouses to attract desired species, and simply to report observations of interesting birds. Thomas would sometimes write direct replies, at others drawing the questions into subsequent columns.[61] For Thomas, the questions did not just flow in one direction; he viewed his column as a two-way street, where readers were welcome to ask questions but were frequently asked to answer them as well. This was epitomized in his research into the evening grosbeak, a species of songbird that periodically invades Ohio.[62] Thomas solicited reports of grosbeak sightings for years, compiling the results in massive tables. These complimented other reader-sourced research, such as Christmas bird counts, conducted through his column that engaged readers directly.

The sharing space created by Thomas's column was not limited to ordinary readers. It drew nature columnists from across the state into a conversation about bird sightings and counts and even the importance of nature columns. Thomas kept in touch with writers of other bird columns throughout the area, corresponding at length with two in particular: Pat Murphy, whose column "Birds I View" appeared in the *Marietta Times*, and Mabel Edgerton, who wrote "Birds in Your Air" for the *Barnesville Enterprise* under the pen name Phoebe. Letters between Thomas

and Murphy centered on birding, and Murphy used information from Thomas and his columns in her own writing, framing an entire column on a day trip she and Thomas took together to view birds.[63] In another letter, Murphy shared with Thomas news of a bald eagle shooting in her area.[64] Most important to this study, however, was an exchange of letters when Murphy's column was temporarily cancelled. She wrote Thomas that her editor had said the opinion page of a newspaper should appeal to a majority of its readers and that birding, therefore, had no place there.[65] He wrote back a few days later, providing information on the readership of his column to demonstrate the importance of such columns in newspapers. Regarding nature column readers, "they may be a minority group," he wrote, "but certainly not a small minority. . . . Some general feature to replace your column may not add a single new subscription; they have plenty of those already. But a column like yours may attract a readership and hence subscriptions they would not otherwise obtain."[66]

Correspondence between Thomas and Edgerton followed similar lines, focusing on birding, trying in particular to pin down whether or not a particular species had been spotted in an area in which it had not previously been seen. Edgerton provided extremely detailed notes on the birds using observations from one of her readers.[67] Thus, Thomas's network of bird observer-reporters not only included scores of his own readers but the readers of other Ohio birding columns as well. Thomas's notes included clippings of the columns of other birders in the region; even if he was not corresponding with every one of them, he was often reading their work.[68]

Meanwhile, Thomas's column proved a useful resource for scientists and decision makers as well. They tapped Thomas because of his status as columnist and naturalist, using information mentioned in his writing in their own scientific works. In one example, Thomas's *Dispatch*

columns had made their way to Richard Alexander, a researcher with the University of Michigan's Museum of Zoology. Alexander wrote Thomas for more information and asking for help on a book on insects, offering to "use your [Thomas's] words, or slight revisions of them, whenever I can."[69] Similar correspondence stretched outside of the Great Lakes region, and Thomas wrote naturalists and scientists in Colorado, Idaho, and Nebraska.[70] Some of those he exchanged letters with, such as a representative of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, asked Thomas to share information on naturalistic topics.[71] Meanwhile, Thomas used the platform of his column to test ideas for his own scientific articles, asking colleagues whether certain topics he explored in columns might be suited for publication in academic journals, as many of his observations were.[72]

Figure 3. Thomas at his cabin at Neotoma in rural Ohio, 1933.[73]

Thomas's columns covered a variety of topics related to nature, but they rarely ventured into the politics of environmentalism. As previously noted, the majority of Thomas's writing shared Ohio nature destinations, trip reports, or conversations about plant and animal species with readers. Occasionally, however, he touched on issues central to environmentalism in his time. Such columns tended to focus on the scientific rather than political dimensions of the topic at hand. For example, in July 1948, almost fourteen years before Rachel Carson first published *Silent Spring* in serial form in the *New Yorker*, Thomas warned readers to use insecticides, and specifically dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane, better known as DDT, carefully. In a column titled "Beware of the Boomerang!," Thomas noted the benefits of the powerful new insecticides available to Americans following World War II but stressed that any benefits came with risks and killed insects indiscriminately.[74] "I wish every one could understand that *every insecticides is dynamite,*" he wrote with unusual vigor. "*It is capable of doing more harm than good if not use intelligently*."[75] Typically, though, he pressed such causes outside his column.[76]

By far his most substantial environmental efforts, however, came in opposition to a proposed dam forty miles southeast of Columbus, and in this case he would rally his *Dispatch* readership behind him. In the 1960s, civic leaders in towns along the Hocking River in southeast Ohio pressed for the construction of a dam on Clear Creek, a tributary of the Hocking, to prevent flooding of downriver towns. Such a dam had been under consideration for many years—newspaper articles indicate the project was authorized in 1938 but never constructed[77]—and by the middle of decade studies recommended construction at a site 3.1 miles upriver from the confluence of Clear Creek and the Hocking.[78] However, the National Rivers and Harbors Congress requested in 1965 that a new study be conducted by the US Army Corps of Engineers, delaying construction.[79] Over the next three years, Hocking Valley leaders continued to press for

the dam, enlisting local members of Congress to prod a lagging Corps of Engineers to finish its report.[80] Their efforts seem to have been successful; in early 1969, the Corps announced a public hearing would be held on the matter in March.

Thomas had undoubtedly been watching the proceedings, as they directly affected him in a number of ways. As a naturalist, he was concerned with the environmental impact of the proposed dam and its reservoir, which would inundate rare species and what he and others said were unique natural features. Thomas was also undoubtedly concerned about his tract of land in Clear Creek Valley, Neotoma, where he had a cabin and took guests on nature hikes and which served as an ecological study site for Ohio State University. The standing construction proposal did not call for Neotoma itself to be flooded. In fact, it called specifically for the creation of a 3,800-acre nature preserve that would place Thomas's land and the surrounding forest under public stewardship.[81] But Thomas steadfastly opposed the damage to the natural habitat the dam would cause.

Unlike what he had done in the past, Thomas turned directly to his readers for support. His column on the dam proposal, which ran in the *Dispatch* four days before the March public hearing was to take place, proposed a compromise offered by preservationists to those supporting the dam. Rather than constructing the dam at the site 3.1 miles from the mouth of Clear Creek, he recommended shifting to a location 5.7 miles from the mouth of the creek.[82] That site, Thomas noted, had the support of individuals within the US Department of the Interior and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and would "leave the most scenic and biologically valuable portions of the gorge untouched."[83] After making the case for the 5.7-mile site, Thomas provided the time and location of the March 20 hearing and encouraged readers to either attend or write their congressional leaders and Ohio Governor James Rhodes.

In a single column, Thomas spurred his readers to action. In the days after it was printed, multiple readers sent him letters reporting their activism and encouraging Thomas to continue the fight. "Please keep this matter before the public," one wrote. "Our legislators may hear and consider our wishes."[84] Others noted the supporters of the 5.7 mile site gained much from Thomas's support. "I am writing to the Governor's office . . . we have been reading your column for such a long time and have a great respect for you and your opinions."[85] In the opinion of his readers, the credibility Thomas garnered through his columns made this cause worth attention.

Thomas left the matter out of his columns, but he continued the fight, and his role with the *Dispatch* was brought up frequently when his name appeared in coverage of the dam debate. He was specifically noted as a leader of the opposition group and a "learned nature writer for the Dispatch" by the *Logan Daily News*, a newspaper in Logan, Ohio, that would have benefitted from the flood protection of the dam and that publicly supported the project."[86] Archival documents suggest he was indeed a leader, leaning on his network of naturalists to oppose the dam, pulling scientists, other professionals, and readers together to make the case against the 3.1-mile site. His public comments presented a straightforward case he felt was a compromise between those supporting the 3.1-mile site and those who opposed any dam whatsoever. "He was not opposed to flood control, improvement of water quality or recreational development," an article said in recounting the March 20 hearing, "but is opposed to the 3.1-mile site."[87] Instead, Thomas offered the 5.7-mile site to offer some flood protection while preserving the valley's rare habitats.

Proponents continued making their case for the 3.1-mile site, but the damage had been done. In September, the League of Ohio Sportsmen joined other state and federal agencies opposing the dam,[88] and although the Corps of Engineers recommended construction at site 3.1

in 1970,[89] Congress did not appropriate the funds required to finance construction. In 1971, a new survey to consider alternative dam sites was announced, delaying even the potential of construction several years down the road. By 1974 proponents agreed the project was dead.[90]

"Ed Thomas left his marks. They were good marks."[91]

After almost six decades of fair fortune and success, the close of the 1970s brought tragedy to Thomas when he wife, Marian, died in 1979 of liver cancer.[92] His own health had declined over the past decade; he had written one friend to say he had been hospitalized with ulcers in 1972 and told another about a leg problem around 1975.[93] In 1981, his health apparently weakened once again. For several weeks beginning February 22 his column was written by Jim Fry, another Columbus naturalist, with a note that Thomas was ill. Thomas returned in May, but Fry continued to write the column periodically over the next few months. Then, in October 25, Fry took over the column permanently.[94] Thomas, at long last, had retired.

In a 1980 videotaped interview, Thomas shows the signs of his age.[95] It is difficult to envision the 89-year-old, slightly stooped over and slow to get around, as a youthful naturalist bounding through Ohio's forests after birds or bending over to more closely examine some insect. Yet even in 1980, wearing his years so visibly, Thomas was at work. He demonstrated how his bird banding cage operated, catching a bird and delicately clamping the tiny metal band around its leg. Thomas told his interviewer he was very concerned about declining bird populations in the state. He said he was worried about the widespread use of herbicides and farming practices that tilled seeds underground in fall, hiding them away from birds. He worried the state's meadows had vanished, destroying the habitat of meadowlarks and other birds. He applauded state and city park organizations for stepping in to help fill the breech. In many ways,

then, his mind was right where it had been during his long tenure with the *Dispatch*, fighting the same fights he had for decades.

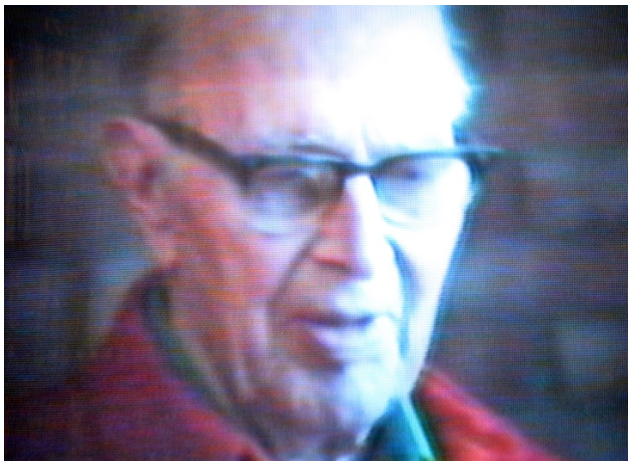

Figure 4. A still image from 1980 videotaped interview of Thomas.[96]

When Thomas died of a heart attack February 16, 1982, at age 90, he did so after significant influence on *Dispatch* readers and people all over Ohio. His column served as a hub for the study of nature throughout the state, connecting backyard birdwatchers with university scientists and using readers to develop his own research while providing a space for them to share their own stories. At the same time, Thomas focused his network of naturalists to achieve tangible political goals. The letters he received late in life suggest such efforts were much appreciated. As late as January 1982, just a month before his death, Thomas was still receiving occasional letters of thanks. "I have enjoyed your articles for all these years," one person wrote. "They are the main reason I get the Dispatch every Sunday."[97] "I learned a great deal from reading your column—what attitude to take and how to handle various subjects," another wrote in 1979. "If I had never met you, Bernard and I would never have taken up bird collecting and serious bird study and I know I would never have taken an interest in botany. So thinking back, I owe a great deal to your influence."[98]

Thomas's legacy can be seen several places. Most obvious is a city park named for him in north Columbus, but his impact is just as strongly felt in the valley saved from inundation by Logan Dam. His column was still alive when this research was completed in May 2016; after writing it for almost twenty-nine years, Fry turned it over to Jim McCormac, another Ohio naturalist, in 2010, and McCormac was writing it on a biweekly basis.[99] Perhaps even more important is the mark he left on readers who found their curiosities piqued by something Thomas wrote in his column and accidentally found themselves interested in nature. While legacies are sometimes difficult to see, it is clear that Edward Sinclair Thomas's work with the *Columbus Dispatch* illustrates the impact a columnist in a mid-American newspapers could have during the twentieth century. Although their stories are seldom researched, men and women like Thomas were influential among their readers, sparking their interests and moving them to make their voices heard politically and intellectually. To fully understand the history of journalism in the United States, more research needs to be done to explore the ways such individuals turned column inches on the inside pages of newspapers into action and curiosity in readers.

[1] "Crowd of 400 Attends Logan Reservoir Hearing," *Logan Daily News*, March 20, 1969.
[2] "Site for Dam on Clear Creek Disputed at Public Hearing," *Logan Daily News*, March 21, 1969.
[3] Photocopy of advertisement in folder 43, box 3, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[4] Edward Sinclair Thomas, *In Ohio Woods and Fields* (Columbus: Dispatch Printing Company, 1981).
[5] "Death of Ed Thomas," *Columbus Dispatch*, February 19, 1982; "Memorial Service Set for Columnist, *Columbus Dispatch*, February 19, 1982; "Edward S. Thomas, ESA Fellow (1946)," Entomological Society of America, last modified April 2015, http://entsoc.org/fellows/thomas; Betsy Butler, "If Only I'd Worked at the Ohio Historical Society When Naturalist Edward Sinclair Thomas Did," Beesfirstappearance (blog), posted May 30, 2013, https://beesfirstappearance.wordpress.com/2013/05/30/est/comment-page-1/#comment-6081.
[6] "Memorial Service Set for Columnist, *Columbus Dispatch*, February 19, 1982.
[7] Introduction to 1908 journal, folder 19, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[8] "Biography, Edward S. Thomas," folder 61, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[9] Thomas, *In Ohio Woods and Fields*, VI.
[10] June 24, 1908, entry in 1908 journal, folder 19, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[11] August 14, 1908, entry in 1908 journal, folder 19, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[12] December 25, 1908, entry in 1908 journal, folder 19, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[13] July 31, 1908, entry in 1908 journal, folder 19, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[14] December 11, 1908, entry in 1908 journal, folder 19, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[15] "The Sun-Dial," *Makio 1913* (Columbus: Sears and Simpson, 1913), 73. Thomas began at the *Sun-Dial* (which was founded in 1911) no later than 1912 and served on its board of trustees in 1914.
[16] "Biography, Edward S. Thomas," folder 61, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[17] *Makio 1913*, 177.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Roll book, folder 50, box 2, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[20] The story of the column's inception comes from two sources: Interview with Edward Sinclair Thomas in *Portrait of Professor Naturebug*, produced by David Brethauer (1980), VHS, AV 193, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection; and John F. Wolfe, "Publisher's Statement," in *In Ohio Woods and Fields*, IV.
[21] Edward S. Thomas, "Our Birds," *Columbus Dispatch*, March 5, 1922.

[22] Mark Neuzil, *The Environment and the Press: From Adventure Writing to Advocacy* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2008).
[23] Ibid., 66.
[24] Given the affinity for fishing and avid readership in Thomas' journals as well as the prevalence of such books at the time, this seems a likely conclusion.
[25] Daniel Payne, *Voices in the Wilderness: American Nature Writing and Environmental Politics* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1996), 107.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Samuel Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1999).
[28] For explication of the wide influence of managerial conservationism in the era, see, as examples: Bruce Schulman, "Governing Nature, Nurturing Government: Resource Management and the Development of the American State, 1900-1912," *Journal of Policy History* 17, no. 4 (2005): 375-403; Brian Balogh, "Scientific Forestry and the Roots of the Modern American State: Gifford Pinchot's Path to Progressive Reform," *Environmental History* 7, no. 2 (2002): 198-225.
[29] Neuzil, *The Environment and the Press*, 96.
[30] Ibid., 97.
[31] Payne, *Voices in the Wilderness*, 37.
[32] Frank Stewart, *A Natural History of Nature Writing* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 1995), xx.
[33] Ralph Black, *John Burroughs (1837-1921)*, in John Elder, ed., *American Nature Writers*, *vol. 1* (New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan, 1996), 126.
[34] Peter Fritzell, *Aldo Leopold (1887-1948),* in John Elder, ed., *American Nature Writers*, *vol. 1* (New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan, 1996), 542.
[35] Edward S. Thomas, "Our Birds," *Columbus Dispatch*, March 5, 1922.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Bird banding involves temporarily capturing wild birds and carefully attaching a small metal band around one of their legs. Each band has a unique number, allowing it to be tracked for scientific purposes. If a bird is banded in Ohio during the summer, for instance, a birder in Louisiana might come across the bird in the winter and report the observation, helping identify the species's migratory behavior.
[38] Edward S. Thomas, "Birds Wintering in Central Ohio, *Columbus Dispatch*, February 20, 1944.
[39] Edward S. Thomas, "Birds Pick Strange Spot on a Cold Night," *Columbus Dispatch*, December 12, 1954.
[40] Edward S. Thomas, "The Insects are Singing," *Columbus Dispatch*, August 14, 1949.
[41] Edward S. Thomas, "Spiders Aren't So Bad!" *Columbus Dispatch*, October 14, 1945.
[42] Edward S. Thomas, "The Case for Hawks," *Columbus Dispatch*, February 16, 1947.
[43] The writings of Leopold have already been discussed; Paul Errington was an outdoorsman, professional trapper, early ecologist and friend of Leopold most famous for his book *Of Men and Marshes*, published in 1957. Matthew Wynn Sivils, "Paul L. Errington: His Life and Work," introduction to Paul L. Errington, *Of Men and Marshes* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2012).
[44] Edward S. Thomas, "Terns of Lake Erie," *Columbus Dispatch*, July 2, 1922; Edward S. Thomas, "Erie Island Offers Puzzle," *Columbus Dispatch*, September 19, 1948.
[45] Edward S. Thomas, "Pawpaw: Tropical Plant in Ohio," *Columbus Dispatch*, April 16, 1944; Edward S. Thomas, "Black Vultures in Hocking Hills*, Columbus Dispatch*, April 16, 1950.

[46] See, for example, Edward S. Thomas, "Wildlife Lush on Castalia Prairie," *Columbus Dispatch*, July 2, 1950; Edward S. Thomas, "Walden Wildlife Refuge Inspected," *Columbus Dispatch*, March 7, 1971; Edward S. Thomas, "Cedar Bog Tour Unique Habitat," *Columbus Dispatch*, July 4, 1976.
[47] Edward S. Thomas, "Fort Hill: Paradise for Birds," *Columbus Dispatch*, July 21, 1946.
[48] Edward S. Thomas, "Native Plants Likely Survived Glacial Age," *Columbus Dispatch*, December 26, 1954.
[49] "Biography, Edward S. Thomas," folder 61, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection; Bibliography, Edward S. Thomas, folder 61, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[50] Bibliography, Edward S. Thomas, folder 61, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[51] "Biography, Edward S. Thomas," folder 61, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[52] Edward S. Thomas, "Birds Plentiful in Frisco Winter," *Columbus Dispatch*, January 12, 1969.
[53] For example, Edward S. Thomas, "Count Made at Kingston," *Columbus Dispatch*, December 29, 1974.
[54] "Biography, Edward S. Thomas," folder 61, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[55] For correspondence related to Thomas's speaking engagements, see folders 32 and 44, box 3, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[56] Letter from David H. Stansbery to Edward S. Thomas, December 24, 1970, folder 54, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[57] Thomas said, "I was not too happy about that title, I thought it sounded just a little bit foolish, but I didn't say so, and it's 'Professor Naturebug' to the present day." Interview with Edward Sinclair Thomas in *Portrait of Professor Naturebug.*
[58] Edward S. Thomas and Barney Vavroch, "Prof. Naturebug," *Columbus Dispatch*, July 6, 1958.
[59] Letter, Edward S. Thomas to Richard D. Alexander, April 25, 1972, folder 22, box 3, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[60] Editorial, "Sportsmen's League Is Up Clear Creek in Need of Paddle," *Logan Daily News*, September 22, 1969.
[61] Letter from Helen Dumbauld to Edward S. Thomas, March 15, 1972, folder 50, box 3, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[62] James McCormac and Gregory Kennedy, *Birds of Ohio* (Edmonton: Lone Pine Publishing, 2004), 328.
[63] Pat Murphy, "But Where Did They Go?," *Marietta Times*, January 21, 1966.
[64] Letter from Pat Murphy to Edward S. Thomas, January 25, 1967, folder 31, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[65] Letter from Pat Murphy to Edward S. Thomas, January 30, 1974, folder 31, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[66] Letter from Edward S. Thomas to Pat Murphy, February 5, 1974, folder 31, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[67] Letter from Mabel Edgerton to Edward S. Thomas, August 10, 1977, folder 54, box 3, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[68] For example, Charles Goslin, "Record Bird Count," *Lancaster Eagle-Gazette*, January 3, 1976, folder 39, box 3, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.

[69] Letter from Richard Alexander to Edward S. Thomas, September 30, 1972, folder 22, box 3, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[70] Folder 31, box 3, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[71] Letter from Craig to Edward S. Thomas, March 5, 1969, folder 5, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[72] Letter from Edward S. Thomas to Margaret, January 4, 1948, folder 9, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[73] Thomas, *In Ohio Woods and Fields*, III.
[74] Edward S. Thomas, "Beware of the Boomerang!," *Columbus Dispatch*, July 18, 1948.
[75] Ibid., emphasis in original.
[76] Examples of other environmental causes Thomas pressed include the preservation of Cedar Bog, a rare habitat in Ohio that he secured public purchase of in the 1940s, and lobbying efforts to prevent dove hunting in the state. Edward S. Thomas, "Acquisition of Cedar Bog by the State of Ohio," folder 65, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection; letter from Robert Shaw to Edward S. Thomas, September 7, 1967, folder 31, box 3, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[77] "Delegation to Seek Reinstatement of Local Reservoir on Project List," *Logan Daily News*, May 7, 1970.
[78] "Morr Submits 6 Ohio Flood Control Projects," *New Philadelphia* (Ohio) *Daily Times*, June 10, 1965.
[79] "Agency Pushes New Logan Reservoir Survey," *Logan Daily News*, June 12, 1965.
[80] "Congressman Miller Urges Action on Logan Reservoir," *Logan Daily News*, July 2, 1968.
[81] "Crowd of 400 Attends Logan Reservoir Hearing," *Logan Daily News*, March 20, 1969.
[82] Edward S. Thomas, "Clear Creek Dam Hearing March 20," *Columbus Dispatch*, March 16, 1969.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Letter from Virginia and Doyt Bell to Edward S. Thomas, March 17, 1969, folder 27, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[85] Letter from Lorena Whitelaw to Edward S. Thomas, March 25, 1969, folder 27, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[86] Editorial, "Sportsmen's League Is Up Clear Creek in Need of Paddle," *Logan Daily News*, September 22, 1969.
[87] "Site for Dam on Clear Creek Disputed at Public Hearing," *Logan Daily News*, March 1, 1969.
[88] "League of Ohio Sportsmen Opposes Dam on Clear Creek," *Logan Daily News*, September 15, 1969.
[89] "Recommend 3.1-Mile Dam Site for Logan Reservoir Project," *Logan Daily News*, April 1, 1970.
[90] Jim Myers, "Area Officials Renew Efforts to Get Action," *Logan Daily News*, October 25, 1974.
[91] "Death of Ed Thomas," *Columbus Dispatch*, February 19, 1982.
[92] Letter from Edward S. Thomas to Roger Conant, November 11, 1980, folder 45, box 3, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[93] Letter from Richard Alexander to Edward S. Thomas, September 30, 1972, folder 22, box 3, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection; letter from Roger Conant to Edward S. Thomas, February 25, 1975, folder 45, box 3, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.

[94] No formal announcement was made in the column, but Fry's articles were no longer presented as "specials." See October 25, 1981 issue of the *Columbus Dispatch*.
[95] Interview with Edward Sinclair Thomas in *Portrait of Professor Naturebug.*
[96] Ibid.
[97] Letter from Joe Nuzum to Edward S. Thomas, January 10, 1982, folder 11, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[98] Letter from Lace to Edward S. Thomas, October 14, 1979, folder 10, box 4, MSS 751, Edward S. Thomas Papers, the Ohio History Connection.
[99] Jim Weiker, "Longevity a Feather in Writer's Cap," *Columbus Dispatch*, January 29, 2010, http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/home_and_garden/2009/12/20/FRYGONE.ART_ART_12-20-09_H1_2QG0PH7.html.