

They feed in coastal marshes, tidal mudflats, stagnant backwaters, bayous, swamps, and mangroves. They are more diurnal in their feeding than Black-crowned Night-Herons, but their large eyes are probably adaptations for crepuscular and nocturnal foraging. The tide cycle may affect their feeding schedule. Their prey are mostly crustaceans, with crabs and crayfish preferred items. They also eat mollusks, snails, frogs, snakes, and young birds. They will feed opportunistically on an abundant resource (e.g., grasshoppers). They rarely eat fish. They usually forage by standing or walking slowly, and are often seen head swaying and neck swaying as they stalk their prey. Their status has remained largely unchanged in Massachusetts during the past half-century. During the nineteenth century in North America their range was reduced to largely coastal areas, but they have expanded their range in the twentieth century up to and beyond their former range. They were not hunted for plumes, but are reported to be, or have been, a favored food item in parts of the south. They have adapted well to human habitation, and are often seen in campgrounds or parklands in much of their range.

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ABOUT OUR COVER ARTIST

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The Yellow-crowned Night-Heron drawing first appeared in a catalog of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc. (VENT). Victor Emanuel has kindly given *Bird Observer* permission to use this drawing. VENT conducts birding tours around the world. Their address is P.O. Box 33008, Austin, Texas 78764.

AT A GLANCE *June 1994* _____ *Wayne R. Petersen*

Perched hawks! What a tough and often humiliating experience they can create for even the most avid and experienced hawk watchers. Unlike the dot in the sky that is usually going away and mercifully seldom allows a second look, a perched hawk leaves little room for retreat when a controversial identification is involved.

June's mystery hawk is entirely typical of the problem—a lone individual with only tree branches for comparison; an immature, as suggested by the streaked underparts (a condition found in only a few adult North American hawks); and no obvious flight behavioral characteristics to lend a clue. Given these realities, it is necessary to carefully analyze the bird—its shape, structure,