

Another Cory's Shearwater Specimen from Florida

On 15 July 1974 Johnnie Johnson and Bob Barber collected a Cory's Shearwater 20 miles offshore of Brevard County, Florida. The female (ovary 10 x 2 mm) weighed 417.0 g; there was little visible fat. The wings and body were in molt. I sent the skin to the National Museum for racial determination. George B. Watson identified the shearwater as the Mediterrean race *Calonectris (=Puffinus) diomedea diomedea*. In his letter to me (dated 4 November 1975), Watson stated that the specimen is undoubtedly a prebreeding bird since it is well into molt in early summer. To my knowledge, the only other records of this race for Florida are 3 specimens collected by the late Al Pflueger on 7 October 1961, 4 miles east of Tavernier (Stevenson and Baker, *Florida Naturalist*, 43: 69-70, 1970). Prior to these records the race was only known as a casual visitor in the Long Island, New York, area (A.O.U., *Check-List of North American Birds*, 5th Edition, 1957). The specimen is number FTU 1941 in the bird collection at Florida Technological University.

I thank Johnnie Johnson and Bob Barber for giving the specimen to me, to Bruce Anderson for preparing the study skin, and to John Weske and George B. Watson of the National Museum for examining the specimen.—*Walter Kingsley Taylor, Department of Biological Sciences, Florida Technological University, Orlando, Fla. 32816.*

Summer Records of the Marsh Hawk in Florida

On 12 July 1974 we observed a Marsh Hawk (*Circus cyaneus*) in Okeechobee County along U.S. 441, 1.6 km north of the junction with State Route 68 to the east. The bird was flying on a direct easterly course with steady, fairly rapid wing beats at a height of 90-120 m. The habitat in the area consisted of extensive open improved pasture with scattered hammocks and marshes. The bird was in brown plumage and appeared to be an adult female rather than a juvenile, although it was not possible to determine its age with certainty because of the distance (0.4 - 1.6 km) at which it was observed and poor light conditions (overcast, light rain). Peter Cone has informed us of a sighting of a brown-plumaged Marsh Hawk at Archbold Biological Station, 12 km south of Lake Placid, Highlands County, on 4 July 1969. He watched the bird at close range as it flew over railroad tracks bordered by densely vegetated ditches in an area of scrubby flatwoods.

With the exception of the above records, the extreme dates of occurrence of Marsh Hawks recorded by one of us (J.N.L.) over a

nine-year period (1967-1975) in the region of Highlands, Glades, DeSoto, and Okeechobee counties are 10 September 1968 and 23 April 1975. Marsh Hawks generally do not appear in numbers in this part of the state until October, and most have departed by the end of March. They are more abundant in winter in the open improved pasture and prairie regions of the DeSoto, Okeechobee, and Osceola Plains than on the generally more wooded and drier Lake Wales Ridge.

Henry M. Stevenson (*in litt.*) has provided us with a probable record of Marsh Hawks in the north-central Florida Peninsula in July. On 9 July 1969, just west of Lake Eton in the Ocala National Forest, Marion County, he saw 2 large hawks flying close together in an easterly direction at an altitude of 60-90 m. Although the only view he had was of the ventral aspect and it was thus not possible to determine whether or not the birds had white rumps, their size, form, and flight characteristics left little doubt of the identification. The habitat in the vicinity was predominantly pine forest.

The only previously published record of the Marsh Hawk in Florida in July appears to be the unusual report by Rand (1939) of a pair of large hawks, said to have been later identified as Marsh Hawks by Donald J. Nicholson, that visited a bird bath near his house in Orlando for a week in early July. How the identification was made is not stated. With the exception of this somewhat questionable case, previously recorded extreme dates for the species in Florida are 16 June 1971 at Zephyrhills, Hillsborough County (Edscorn 1972) and 8 August 1969 at Mashers Island, Wakulla County (Ogden 1969). Thirty records of Marsh Hawks in Florida during the months of May, June, and August are cited in *Audubon Field Notes/American Birds* from 1949 through 1974, *Florida Naturalist* from 1928 through 1973, Howell (1932), and Weston (1965). Of these, 14 are in May, 4 in June, and 12 in August. On the basis of this distribution, it seems somewhat more likely that Marsh Hawks in Florida in July are either summer residents or very early fall migrants rather than individuals that are unusually late in migrating north. Although the only state breeding records of the Marsh Hawk are from northern Florida (Howell 1932), the midsummer occurrence of individuals in the extensive prairie and improved pasture areas in the south-central part of the state suggests the possibility that the species may eventually be found nesting in this region.

LITERATURE CITED

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