

Dr. Harry C. Oberholser was no hail-fellow-well-met. He meant business and his business was birds. His other various works placed him among the great American ornithologists. The Bird Life of Texas places him among the great ornithologists of the world.

Successful Eagle Nesting on Mississippi Coast

By W. H. Turcotte

As reported in the MOS Newsletter, Vol. 19, No. 4, page 11, in January 1974 a pair of Bald Eagles was observed nest-building in a tall pine tree in Harrison County on the Big Biloxi River. The nesting attempt was observed by Mr. Oliver C. Huch, a State Highway Department Engineer and by others throughout the cycle until the birds abandoned the completed nest about mid-April. No evidence of eggs or young could be observed during this time.

The 1974 nest was situated in a living slash pine tree well out into a marsh area bordering the east bank of the Big Biloxi River. It was reoccupied and on February 21, 1975 Mr. Huch and Mr. Flynn Clark observed one large young eagle in the nest with both adults sitting side by side on a limb. The immature was capable of climbing or leaping to the side of the nest.

On February 26, 1975 at about 1:00 P.M. I had the opportunity to observe the adults, nest and young in the nest. A 15-60 power zoomscope was used from the new Interstate 10 right-of-way. One adult eagle was seen on the side of the nest that appeared to be regurgitating or feeding on something or feeding young in the nest. No evidence of a young bird could be seen in the nest. The second adult, which had been perched on a dead tree in the marsh, flew to the edge of the nest beside the other adult. Soon afterward the bird seen feeding flew. A wing of a bird in the nest was then seen to move upward, then the head and neck of a young eagle was seen. The immature nestling then jumped and flew to the edge of the nest and across the nest beside the remaining adult. The nest-

ling appeared to have completely feathered primaries and soon should be able to leave the nest.

Mr. Bobby Tramel, State Supervisor, Wildlife Services, Fish and Wildlife Service, observed the eagles earlier over a six hour period with about the same results. It can be definitely concluded that the 1975 nesting produced a fledgling eagle ready to leave the nest. This is the first known successful nesting record for Bald Eagles in Mississippi since the early 1950's.
