

A Survey of White Pelican Nesting Colonies in 1971

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A survey of major nesting colonies of white pelicans (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) was made in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Canada, and the United States during the summer of 1971 in an effort to gain information useful for establishing population trends for this species. Previous studies conducted by Lies and Behle (1966) and Vermeer (1970) provided locations and descriptions of the nesting colonies as well as nesting population estimates useful for comparative purposes.

The 1971 survey was accomplished by means of aerial photographs taken at what was considered the peak of nesting activity. However, as pointed out by Vermeer (1970:1029), early nests and possible replacement nests on the colonies covered are probably not represented in the counts obtained from the photographs. No attempt was made to inventory those pelicans not directly associated with the nesting colonies.

Black and white photographs, 9½" × 9½", taken with fixed mount aerial cameras at a scale of approximately 1:12,000 produced excellent images of individual pelicans and exposed nests on the nesting colonies in most instances. Companion 35 mm. color slides taken with a hand held camera on the Canadian portion of the survey also produced excellent results and provided better contrast for colonies located on white rock islands or where vegetation was present.

Results of the 1971 survey are presented in Tables 1 and 2. The figures represent the number of pelicans and exposed nests counted for each colony covered, and unless otherwise noted, are interpreted as the number of nests present at the time of the survey. The cooperation of Region I Game Management Pilot-Agent Al Weinrich and Region II Flyway Biologist G. Hortin Jensen, who covered the United States colonies, is gratefully acknowledged.

For nesting colonies in Canada where comparison is possible (Table 1), the 1971 survey indicates a larger breeding population than Vermeer (1970) reported for 1967-69, particularly in Manitoba. The significance of this increase, however, is difficult to assess because of the

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Table 1

Location and number of nests on white pelican nesting colonies surveyed in Canada in 1971.

Colony Location	No. Nests from Photos - 1971	1967-69 Est. (from Vermeer)
Saskatchewan: (Surveyed on June 3 & 4)		
Old Wives Lake	1,100	746
Redberry Lake	80	139
Suggi Lake	625	680
Lavallee Lake	1,365	1,020
Dore Lake	30	600
Kagan Lake	1,030	902
Manitoba: (Surveyed on June 7 & 8)		
Moose Lake	360	540
Lake Winnipegosis	570	410
Kawinaw Lake	1,535	1,560
Pelican Lake	2,240	1,670
Dog Lake	1,650	800
Lake Manitoba	1,033	780
Total number of nests	11,618	9,847

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Table 2
Location and number of nests on white pelican nesting colonies surveyed in the United States in 1971.

Colony Location	No. Nests from Photos - 1971
North Dakota: (Surveyed June 8)	
Garrison Reservoir	No nesting noted
Chase Lake NWR	2,150
South Dakota: (Surveyed June 2)	
La Creek NWR	1,050
Sand Lake NWR	No nesting noted
California: (Surveyed May 11)	
Clear Lake NWR	1,130
Lower Klamath NWR	120
Oregon: (Surveyed May 11)	
Upper Klamath NWR	530
Warner Valley (Crump Lake)	350
Nevada: (Surveyed May 11)	
Pyramid Lake (Anaho Island)	2,975
Montana: (Surveyed May 18)	
Bowdoin NWR	1,215
Medicine Lake NWR	1,750
Utah: (Surveyed July 8)	
Great Salt Lake (Gunnison Island)	Estimated 2,200 young
Wyoming: (Surveyed July 8)	
Yellowstone Lake (Molly Island)	High water prevented nesting

unknown bias introduced by different survey methods. Although recent figures are not available to permit a comparison of nest numbers on United States colonies, J. O. Keith [Denver Wildlife Research Center (1971), pers. comm.] stated that the 1971 nest figures for Bowdoin National Wildlife Refuge, Lower Klamath, National Wildlife Refuge, Great Salt Lake, Pyramid Lake, and Chase Lake National Wildlife Refuge were considerably lower than he has seen them in recent years.

Periodic photographic coverage over the major colonies in future years can be expected to provide an index to nesting population trends.

LITERATURE CITED

- LIES, M. F., and W. H. BEHLE. 1966. Status of the white pelican in the United States and Canada through 1964. *Condor*, 68: 279-292.
- VERMEER, K. 1970. Distribution and size of colonies of white pelicans (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) in Canada. *Can. J. Zool.*, 48(5): 1029-1032.

Supplement 1 to the Bird Book Supplement

Addenda

UNITED STATES

New Mexico

Hubbard, John P. *Check-list of the Birds of New Mexico*. 1970. New. Mex. Ornith Soc.

CANADA

Alberta

Salt, W. R., and A. L. Wilk. *The Birds of Alberta*. 2nd ed, 1966. The Queen's Printer, Edmonton.

British Columbia

Munro, J. A. and I. McT. Cowan. *A review of the bird fauna of British Columbia*. B. C. Prov. Mus. Spec. Publ. #2.

Prince Edward Island

Godfrey, W. E. *Birds of Prince Edward Island*. 1950. Nat. Mus. Canada, Bull. 132. Ottawa.

Northwest Territories

Rand, A. L. *List of Yukon Birds and those of the Canol Road*. 1946. Nat. Mus. Canada Bull. 105. Ottawa.

MIDDLE AMERICA

British Honduras

Russell, Stephen M. *A distributional study of the birds of British Honduras*. 1964. Ornith Mon. #1. Am. Ornith. Union.

Recent book

The complete field guide to Nests in the United States. Richard Headstrom, 1971. David McKay Co., New York. Supersedes Headstrom's previous guides, now out of print, and includes nests other than those of birds. \$10.

Corrigenda

The correct title of the 4th ed. of O. S. Pettin-gill's Jr.'s manual is *Ornithology in Laboratory and Field*, as on p. 915.

The author of *The Flight of Birds* is J. H. Storer, not R. W. Storer, p. 919.

The date of publication of Monroe's *Birds of Honduras* is 1968, p. 922.

Kenneth C. Parkes has pointed out to us that two books on his list were inadvertently omitted. They are the *Guides to Bird Finding, East and West of the Rockies*, by O. S. Pettingill, Jr.