

height of the nests, the percentages built on branches and in crotches and also on other nests were very similar to those of the more extended investigation, despite the fact that, due partly no doubt to the severe pruning in 1923 of the older trees on the campus, most of the Doves have moved into a new grove of young trees. The one great difference between our former results and those of this fall lies in the unprecedented number of successful nests this September.—MARGARET M. NICE, *Norman, Okla.*

Nesting Habits of the Barn Owl.—It is a recognized fact that the Barn Owl utilizes the same nesting cavity for years. Excellent proof of this fact was furnished the writers this past summer (1925) upon finding the same pair (see 'The Auk' April, 1925) again occupying the identical cavity they used the preceding year. The adult female (No. 204477) was captured on the nest in order to make the identification positive. The adult male, while not captured, we are certain was the same mate of a year ago, judging from his general appearance and actions which corresponded with our previous observations.

While we were unable to make an intensive study of the birds this year, we made visits from time to time to witness the development of the seven young ones,—the same number as the previous year. One night, while we were watching the parent birds bring food to the young, the male entered the tower with a field mouse and perched four feet from us for a period of *twenty minutes*, obviously blinded by our electric flashlight! After many unsuccessful attempts, we then finally secured, with the assistance of Mr. Geo. H. Beatty, Jr., a flashlight picture of him carrying a fat field mouse in his beak.

It has been claimed that certain species of Owls perch with two toes forward and two behind. The photographs we have obtained prove this to be the case with both adult and immature Barn Owls.

The youngest Owl of last year's brood perished in the nest. Of this year's brood, the youngest (No. 233485) was shot, August 20, 1925, at Somers Point, N. J., approximately fifty miles southeast of the place where it was banded, while No. 233482 was shot on November 16, 1925, at Wilmington, N. C., about 400 miles south of the banding point. Both of these returns are from points on the Atlantic Coast, showing evidences of a southerly migration by immature birds of this species.

That the parent birds of this brood are permanent residents, was verified by observations made at the nesting site on October 31, 1925, when the pair was flushed from the tower. We had come prepared to repair the flooring of the nest cavity which had broken through on one side, but found the Owls had attended to this themselves, for the damaged portion was clogged with feathers, pellets, etc. To our amazement, the nest cavity contained five downy fledglings. Pin-feathers had appeared in the wings of the two largest. We judged their ages to be from ten to fifteen days. On a subsequent visit, November 14, they were still downy, excepting wing primaries and tail which were feathered in proportion to

their respective sizes. On this date the young were banded and "movies" were taken of them by Mr. Alex. H. Leighton.

Some authorities state the Barn Owl has two broods a year, but a search of available literature discloses only one other winter nesting record. Possibly this practice is more common than generally supposed, due to lack of systematic search for nests at this season. It seems odd that this same pair should nest *this* winter, for the tower was visited the two preceding winters and no evidence of a nest was found, which leads us to the theory that possibly misfortune had befallen the adult female and the male had secured a new mate.—JULIAN K. POTTER AND JOHN A. GILLESPIE, *Collingswood, N. J. and Glenolden, Pa.*

Bats Eaten by Short-eared Owl.—On March 22, 1925, while I was collecting specimens for the Natural History Museum of San Diego on Sweetwater Marsh, which is situated on the east side of San Diego Bay, I picked up a well preserved Owl pellet from beneath a stake that projected a couple of feet above the surrounding marsh. Upon examining it, I was surprised to find the skull of a small bat embedded in its side. This prompted a further search among the vegetation beneath the stake and I soon found a second pellet, of the same color and appearance as the first. The contents of the two pellets, when they were examined later at the Museum, proved that they were unquestionably disgorged by the same bird. That the species was the Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*) there can be no doubt, for it winters commonly on the salt marshes about San Diego Bay and several were seen, and one collected, on the day in question.

In my personal experience of the food of the Short-eared Owl, my only previous record was the stomach contents of a specimen killed in late March, 1911, which contained an entire California Black Rail (*Creciscus coturniculus*), swallowed in two pieces. Of the two pellets which are the subject of the present note, the contents, after being spread out for tabulation, were as follows:

Pellet No. 1.

(a) Skull, lower jaws, scapula, parts of metacarpal (wing) bones, and undigested skin, with hair attached, of a Western Red Bat (*Nycteris borealis teliotis*).

(b) Skull, right lower jaw, right scapula, parts of metacarpal (wing) bones, undigested skin, with hair attached, of Bat (*Pipistrellus hesperus* subsp.).

(c) Mass of small, unidentifiable bat bones.

(d) Portions of skull and skeleton of Southern California Meadow Mouse (*Microtus californicus sanctidiegi*).

(e) Upper mandible of Belding's Marsh Sparrow (*Passerculus beldingi*).

(f) Upper mandible of Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis* subsp.).

(g) Lower mandible of unidentified bird.

(h) Two bird stomachs.