

getting close enough to shoot it. It was a female, fat and in good plumage.
—IVAN R. TOMKINS, *U. S. Dredge "Morgan," Savanna, Ga.*

Black Vulture Nesting in Northern Virginia.—On May 11, 1929, Mr. Herbert S. Barber, of the United States National Museum, and my uncle, Mr. Harold B. Stabler, took me up the Potomac River from Washington, D. C., about half way to Great Falls. One of the purposes of the trip was to show me the nests of some Turkey Vultures of which Mr. Barber had known for years. They were situated on the south, or Virginia, side of the river, for here the banks are steep and rocky, and scattered broken boulders form many crevices and caves which are enticing nesting sites for the birds.

After climbing up a small cliff within which the first of these ancient aeries was located, we peered cautiously into the miniature cavern, and there, standing vigilantly over two tiny newly-hatched young, was the mother Vulture. On seeing us, she lowered her head and hissed softly, but gave no sign of trying to escape. Since I had fortunately brought my bird bands with me, we decided that it would be feasible to try to catch her; accordingly Mr. Barber and Mr. Stabler stationed themselves at two of the entrances to the cave, and by poking sticks at her, drove her over to the third, where I was waiting in readiness. At first she could not bring herself to risk a dash past me; in desperation she emptied the contents of her stomach, but even the unpleasantness of this did not drive us away; finally she made a break for liberty, only to be seized just as she was about free. Resignedly she waited for whatever fate might be in store for her, quiet but watchful.

Mr. Barber now brought out the two young, which hissed in a manner very similar to that of their mother as soon as they were disturbed, but he remarked at once that they were not white, like all the other downy young Turkey Vultures he had ever seen, but a light buffy brown color. No sooner had he announced this discovery, when I noticed to my amazement that the mother did not have a red head, but a pure black one! With a thrill we all suddenly realized that this was no longer a Turkey Vulture's nest, but had been adopted by the other species, the Black Vulture. Further observation brought to light the facts that the adult had a square, short tail, white veins to the primary wing feathers, and a less stocky and blunt head than a Turkey Vulture. The bill was decidedly weaker-looking, but in spite of this fact, the old bird managed to take quite a chunk out of one of Mr. Stabler's fingers, as he was holding her to be photographed and banded. After replacing the little ones in the nest, we quietly pushed her back into one of the entrances, and she promptly settled down upon her babies, apparently ignoring our presence and unperturbed by her recent experience. Thus we left her.

So far as I can ascertain the Black Vulture has never been found breeding so far north but recent records of its occurrence about Washington and elsewhere would seem to indicate that it was extending its range and the finding of this nest is additional evidence.

It is amusing to note that the Virginia-Maryland boundary line is high water mark on the south bank of the Potomac so that the nest missed being in Maryland by only about twenty-five feet. Mr. E. J. Court it is true, has recorded the breeding of this Vulture in Maryland (Auk, 1924, p. 275) but this was in St. Mary County in the extreme southern point of the state and far south of Washington.—C. BROOKE WORTH, *St. Davids, Pa.*

The Black Vulture Breeding in the Mountains of Virginia.—The Black Vulture (*Coragyps urubu*) is now a common permanent resident in Rockbridge County in the central part of the Valley of Virginia, and breeds here. On May 23, 1929, I had the opportunity of seeing a nest with young on the top of House Mountain, at an altitude of about 3000 feet. House Mountain is an isolated off-shoot of the Alleghany range. Mr. Chas. O. Handley, who has recently been with the Georgia Quail Investigation, tells me of finding nests on this same mountain as early as 1919, but I know of no published breeding record for such an altitude.

This nest was discovered by Dr. W. D. Hoyt and Mr. Hill of Washington and Lee University after I had searched for it unsuccessfully. Dr. Hoyt's son, Southgate Hoyt, accompanied me on the trip on May 23d. The nest cavity was under a pile of huge boulders. The cave had an opening above large enough for a man to crawl into, and tunnels from two sides at the ground level. There was no nest, unless the few sticks in a loose pile had been scratched together for that purpose. One of the parent birds flew out of the upper opening as we approached. There were two young birds, one somewhat larger than the other. They appeared to be three or four weeks old and to weigh about three pounds. They had no feathers, and were covered with a thick down of cream buff color, almost reddish above. As we went into the hole they began to vomit large pieces of meat, almost choking in the effort, and continued to do so at intervals as long as we were there. They constantly made a loud blowing noise through slightly opened mouths. It was not a hiss but more like the noise of a bellows. At every effort to get them out into the open they scrambled back into the darkness, jamming themselves under the overhanging rocks and burying their heads in the cracks. When we finally pulled them out to the end of the tunnel in a vain effort to get a good picture in the dim light, they fought each other fiercely and pecked at our hands. I feared that the larger one would peck out the eyes of the smaller. All this time the parent birds were flying about and alighting on the rocks near us at frequent intervals, showing little fear but careful not to get within reach. They made the same blowing noise when on the rocks. Another pair of Black Vultures and a pair of Turkey Vultures were in sight most of the time, and once three Ravens appeared.—JAMES J. MURRAY, *Lexington, Virginia.*

The Turkey Vulture in Westchester County, N. Y.—On June 1, 1929, I saw a Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura septentrionalis*) at Chappaqua, in Westchester County, N. Y. The occurrence of the Turkey