

As the type locality of this well-marked race is in Brewster County, Texas, the occurrence of a specimen so far north in New Mexico may well occasion surprise. The bird collected was not in breeding condition, however, and its presence so far from the previously known range of *fuertesi* may have been due to some chance wandering. No additional Red-tails were taken in this area, but others seen did not impress the writer as being so lightly marked below as *fuertesi*, a character which the authors of the race state to be clearly discernible in the field. Several very dark birds seen appeared to be *B. j. calurus*, which is probably the breeding form of the region. At least they could hardly have been *fuertesi* since that Texas race is apparently not dichromatic. Not knowing of any previous records of Fuertes's Red-tailed Hawk in New Mexico, the writer deemed it advisable to publish this note, regardless of what significance the record may have as far as the breeding range is concerned.—ROBERT M. MENGEL, *Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.*

Eagles of western Illinois.—There has been no recent publication of data dealing with the winter migration of eagles to western Illinois. Scattering notations on eagles taken from my Nature calendar, may be of some interest.

Three-quarters of a century ago huge slaughter houses were located on the Mississippi River near Keokuk. Prime meats were packed and lard was rendered while the carcasses, fats, and meat scraps were thrown into the river. Open water at the base of the Des Moines rapids contributed to the ease of securing fish which together with the presence of this offal from the slaughter house, attracted large numbers of eagles. These occasionally carried on their depredations even on inland farms, wandering as far south as Clarksville, Missouri. The following clipping from a Warsaw, Illinois, paper published about 1912 gives interesting local color to the status of the eagles years ago and then:

"The presence of a pair of eagles above the river recalls the days of half a century ago when the locality where these birds are now seen was simply alive with eagles which were attracted by the offal discharged into the river from the pork houses at Keokuk.

"The 'Plough Boy' was operating between Keokuk and Warsaw at that period and the big birds would come so close to the craft in retrieving the floating food that they became the object of curiosity to the passengers who marvelled at the strength exhibited in lifting from the water, loads of fat and decomposed meats, apparently larger than [the birds] themselves."

Time has passed. The slaughter houses are gone. The great Keokuk Dam crosses the river. Open water acts as a constant attraction to gulls, ducks, and waterbirds throughout the winter. Most noticeable of the visitors are the eagles, which continue to make their yearly trips to the ancient site of winter plenty.

This flock of Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) usually numbering from five to ten, hunts south of the dam and roosts in the big sycamore trees which line the river bank between Hamilton and Warsaw. They have an abundance of food in the form of carp and hickory shad which are killed during the ice period of the winter. The big birds are usually preyed upon by embryo hunters, correspondence-school taxidermists, and likewise by an older man who kills them in order to sell the feathers to a western firm which finds a ready market for the plumage among Indian tribes. The slaughter has totaled from two to four birds yearly for a number of years. Yet the eagles persist. From Keokuk, the eagles wander south along the river for seventy-five to a hundred miles.

On October 26, 1929, a Quincy duck-hunter named Ed Hagerbaumer was surprised when a mature Bald Eagle dropped in to his decoys killing one bird. He shot the eagle which was one of the largest I have seen: wing spread 7 feet 3 inches, weight 11 pounds, with fine white head and tail.

November 18, 1929, John Badamo killed a mature Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos canadensis*) which had attacked his chickens. Wing spread 7 feet, weight 9 pounds. The golden head-feathers were particularly fine. The tarsi were covered with short white feathers. It was neither so large nor so heavy as the Bald Eagle killed three weeks earlier.

November 18, 1930, a Golden Eagle was killed by a farmer across from Hannibal, Missouri, twenty miles south of Quincy. Chickens again seemed to be the lure.

In November 1932, an immature Bald Eagle sailed over a duck blind at the mouth of Mill Creek and was killed by Roy Hussong.

February 1933, two immature Bald Eagles spent most of the winter on Long Island, five miles north of Quincy. I recorded them twice during that month.

On February 22, 1933, I was watching a large congregation of ducks which alighted on the ice near Warsaw, Illinois. There were Mallards, Pintails, Goldeneyes, and American Mergansers. Imagine my surprise upon seeing three mature Bald Eagles standing upon the ice pulling dead fish to shreds. The ducks were walking about within a few feet of these great birds of prey. They seemed to have no fear whatsoever of the eagles as long as they were standing or walking about on the ice, but the moment the eagles raised their wings for flight there was a general exodus of ducks from that neighborhood.

May 21, 1933, while hiding in a blind at Duck Island Hunting Club at Banner, Illinois, taking pictures of the feeding of young Great Blue Herons, a mature Bald Eagle sailed into the swamp intent upon securing a fat young bird for breakfast. A solitary old heron flew out to meet it, with head laid back and its saber-like bill ready for action. At the moment of contact, the eagle dove and the heron circled, keeping between the enemy and the young birds. The eagle settled in a dead pecan-tree, bordering the swamp, where it watched for an opportunity to snatch its breakfast. However, the Tree Swallows, Prothonotary Warblers, and Red-winged Blackbirds mobbed the unwelcome intruder, forcing it to evacuate without a meal. Although this was a mature bird, I could get no information about an aerie anywhere in the neighborhood. My companion and assistant in photography on that occasion was W. L. Angus, teacher of biology in Quincy High School.

Spring of 1933, a farmer at Taylor, Missouri, noticed a big bird taking his chickens. He killed the culprit—an immature Bald Eagle which is mounted in Stratman's Gun Company window.

November 20, 1933, perhaps the most unusual experience of all occurred when two young farmers brought me a sack, containing a live but badly wounded Bald Eagle. They reported having been coon hunting with dogs, gun, and powerful focusing flashlights in the wooded swamps near Lima Lake. They were standing waiting for the dogs to bay, when hearing a noise above, they flashed their dazzling lights into a tall sycamore tree. Immediately a great bird became confused and fluttered down from the branches. It alighted on the ground, then approached them half flying and half running with wings outspread. It seemed bewildered by the bright light. The men picked up sticks and beat the bird until it was stunned; then they incarcerated it in a sack. Another eagle fluttered down through the branches and landed in some bushes. It was immediately shot. Two

other large birds, probably eagles, were disturbed by the light and noise, but were successful in escaping into the upper darkness. (I have made inquiry, and from the good reputation enjoyed by these young men I have no reason to doubt their story. Certainly they had one live bird to add to the unfortunate list of sacrifices.)

March 8, 1934, I watched a pair of Bald Eagles hunting over the river at Clarksville, Missouri.

January 27, 1935, I saw two immature and one adult Bald Eagles seated on the branches of an uprooted cottonwood lying on a sand bar above Long Island. They were watching the antics of some American Mergansers swimming and fishing in the current below a break in the dike.

March 1, 1936, I saw three immature and one adult Bald Eagles fly over the woods at Willow Island seven miles north of Quincy. Although shot at several times by farmers, these birds survived the winter season, and were reported half a dozen different times. October 26, 1936, a Bald Eagle credited with killing a young pig, was shot at Camp Point. Two other Bald Eagles were killed in that neighborhood later in the winter.

November 12, 1936, C. L. Weems shot a Golden Eagle flying low over the sand bar near Willow Island. The same day an immature Bald Eagle was shot over a Bear Creek farm by Chas. E. Lane, assistant superintendent of schools.

November 15, 1936, L. H. Haener shot an immature Bald Eagle at Dillon's Island. The specimen was mounted.

January 18, 1937, LeRoy Knoepple, superintendent of schools, reported five Bald Eagles hunting daily over the waters south of the great dam at Hamilton.

January 1938, I received a letter from Warsaw telling of eagles eating fish on the large horizontal limbs of the sycamore trees, while crows on the ground below, were quarrelling over scraps dropped from above.

February 1938, residents living on the bluffs at Keokuk, watched with binoculars as the eagles robbed the gulls and crows which had retrieved dead or weakened fish from the waters below the dam. Once the fish were carried to the ice or bars, the eagles took possession of the booty.

There seemed to be a slight increase in numbers during 1938 and taxidermists reported two immature Bald Eagles brought in for mounting.

In 1939, there was an increase in the number of eagles gathered below Hamilton. Sixteen or eighteen birds were often seen hunting along the river, about one-third of them mature birds. As winter progressed, these birds worked farther south, and individual specimens were reported by hunters many times throughout the winter.

In 1940, only twelve birds were reported at Hamilton. However, other reports were about as usual as far south as Quincy. For the first year in a decade there were no eagles reported shot nor were any dead birds brought to the neighboring taxidermists.

Thus in the last twelve years we have had numerous live records, as well as ten or a dozen dead records of Bald Eagles; and at least three dead records of Golden Eagles. The latter specimens were all positively identified by me. It will be interesting to record the increase in numbers which will probably result from the government ban on shooting Bald Eagles. Sufficient food exists to support a much larger gathering of winter birds and a later note will be sent to 'The Auk' to record an increase or other variation in numbers.—T. E. MUSSELMAN, *Quincy, Illinois*.