

(*Glaucionetta clangula americana*) with the obvious intent of capturing her. The pursuit continued for approximately ten minutes, with the duck using every means to avoid being caught, except that of flight. As she broke the surface after a short dive, the gull seized her by the tail and held on with great tenacity, despite the fact that by this time she was rapidly beating her wings and had partially risen from the water. Scaup and Goldeneye near by were undisturbed and continued to feed. An immature Great Black-backed Gull, a yearling, appeared to be mildly interested, and remained on the water a few yards away.

What immediately followed is pure conjecture, because the gull turned and faced in the opposite direction, holding its wings extended above its body; but we could see that it had pulled the duck into the water, had transferred its hold from the tail to the neck, midway between the head and body, and was killing it by shaking it from side to side and plunging it under the water. Then it released its grip, turned the duck over on its back, ripped it open, and for the next half hour gorged itself.

Two hours later we saw an immature gull of the same species kill a duck, but because of the great distance that separated us we were unable to identify the victim nor observe clearly the method the gull was using, but the result was the same.

During the summer of 1938, I visited the coast of Labrador as a guest-member of Dr. Harrison F. Lewis's party from the Dept. of Mines & Resources, Ottawa, Ontario, and there I soon became familiar with the methods used by the 'saddle-back' in capturing young eider ducks, but I have never observed, nor have I read of it taking anything very much larger.—J. D. CLEGHORN, *Montreal, Canada*.

Northern Pileated Woodpecker eating salmon.—On the evening of June 27, 1942, I set a wire box-trap for a cat at my home near Boonton, New Jersey. The bait for the trap was a piece of canned salmon wrapped up in a cheese-cloth. The trap was set at the edge of a wood road about one hundred yards from my garage. The salmon can was opened, the oil poured out, and small pieces of the fish were scattered about in the road in front of the trap. The next morning the trap was un sprung. Later in the day I was sitting in a semi-concealed spot when a Northern Pileated Woodpecker (*Geophloeus pileatus abieticola*) was observed flying up the wood road. He passed over the trap, then wheeled and lit on the trunk of a tree about six feet away. Almost immediately he started hitching down the tree to its base, flew to the roadway and after a moment's hesitation began picking up and swallowing the bits of salmon. He followed their lead to the entrance of the trap but a slamming door frightened him off.

On a nearby tree I have a suet basket which is kept filled throughout most of the year. Although I have never actually observed the Pileated Woodpecker feeding from this basket he undoubtedly does for I have seen him fly from this tree on numerous occasions. The suet may have attracted him to this general locality. The fruit of the pepperidge tree, *Nyssa sylvatica*, appears to be a favorite food of this woodpecker for during the season when the fruit is ripe a tree in our garden is visited regularly by these birds.—T. DONALD CARTER, *American Museum of Natural History, New York, N. Y.*

Remarkable nesting date of the Everglade Kite.—In recent years the writer has spent considerable time in field work on the remnant population of the Everglade Kite (*Rostrhamus sociabilis plumbeus*) which now appears to be staging its last fight as a bird of this country about Lake Okeechobee, Florida. Small breeding

colonies there have been under vigilant care of Audubon Warden Marvin Chandler for the past several seasons and, as far as field work can reveal, there are no others in the state now. While the nesting season varies considerably in extent and date of commencement, it usually takes place from late February on through May. Howell states that, at times, nests have been found as early as January, and Bent in his 'Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey,' lists 68 breeding records occurring from February 15 to July 20. No breeding record after late July has hitherto appeared in the literature which is available to the writer. One would not expect any.

However, very recently the writer was the recipient of some amazing information from that state of amazements, Florida. Through Mr. Clinton C. Sherman, Jr., of West Palm Beach, a gentleman who has the good of Florida's bird-life much at heart, an ardent field observer, taxidermist, and sportsman, a new chapter has been added to the life history of the Everglade Kite. On November 2, 1941, while duck hunting in the marsh south of Clewiston on the south shore of Lake Okeechobee, he found three nests of this species! One nest held one egg and one newly-hatched chick; the other two nests held two eggs each. The writer in answering this letter, requested Mr. Sherman to watch this little colony and report on further progress. A letter, dated Nov. 12, has just been received which states that on Nov. 9 another trip was made to the locality and an additional nest discovered. This held three eggs. The former three nests then contained two young each, all having hatched since Nov. 2. In one instance the youngsters appeared to be about a day old.

The surroundings are unlike the grassy 'reefs' of Lake Okeechobee where the nesting colonies known to the writer occur. According to Mr. Sherman his nests, now four in number, are "in the middle of a large marsh of cat-tails, deer-tongue, pepper-grass and water lilies with a few scattering willow trees." He took several photographs of the nests and young which have not yet been received by the writer. This is an absolutely unprecedented occurrence, and utterly at variance with the usual nesting season. Recently, the National Audubon Society issued a pamphlet on the status of the Everglade Kite, primarily for distribution among Florida duck hunters, and Mr. Sherman has been very diligent in distributing these. The kite is a decided favorite of his and he has frequently urged his fellow sportsmen not to shoot the birds. He intends to keep a careful watch on this remarkable colony and will report how the youngsters fare. He has added a valuable piece of information on the ornithology of the Lake region, and the writer is indebted to him for making the information available.—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., *The Crescent, Charleston, S. C.*

American Egrets nesting at high altitude.—The American Egret (*Casmerodius albus egretta*) is usually considered as breeding in semi-tropical, low-lying swamps, islands, keys, bayous and the like, of the southern states. True, in recent years it appears to have extended its range to the northward at least as far as Paulsboro, New Jersey, and has been known in the west for some years. However, as far as the writer is aware, the great majority of its nesting areas are characterized by either water-level elevation (sea level) or very slightly above that. Situated as he is at the present writing (Rockport, Texas), the writer is divorced from any contact with a reference library and has no recollection of egrets breeding at high altitudes. Therefore, the following should be of more than ordinary interest, and may constitute a 'high' in the nesting habits of this increasing species.