

the duck to dive again. During possibly 10 to 15 repetitions the hawk struck the surface of the water with legs and body several times, but quickly recovered altitude in each instance. It then seemingly grasped the duck and rested on the water for four or five seconds, then flew up again. Soon the duck reappeared at the surface and was immediately seized by the hawk, which rested on the water for perhaps two minutes before attempting to fly and drag its prey shoreward into the wind. The duck gave no further sign of life and the hawk made five attempts to get it to land, flying about between attempts. The edge of the slough was choked with pondweeds and but little headway was made. While trying to move the duck, the hawk flew without touching the surface.

At this time I frightened the hawk away as I approached. I retrieved the duck about 25 feet from shore in 'kneedeep' water. It was an immature bird, fully feathered and, I am sure, capable of normal flight. It weighed 1003 grams. Autopsy disclosed a minor head wound extending into the flesh, with a small section of skin removed. Other wounds may have been present, but were not noticeable. The right auricle was ruptured and there was considerable blood in the thoracic cavity.

This episode was viewed at a distance of 100 yards or closer with 7 x 35 Bausch and Lomb binoculars and all participants were in full view from my car window. There was a strong northwest wind, which may have aided the hawk in its hovering attitudes.—MERRILL C. HAMMOND, *U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Lower Souris Refuge, Upham, North Dakota.*

Cowbird tragedy at Prothonotary Warbler's nest.—On May 22 1941, I visited a small colony of Prothonotary Warblers in swampy woods on the south shore of the Grand Reservoir (Lake St. Marys) in Mercer County, Ohio. A dead female Cowbird was seen, lodged in the entrance to a cavity of a small willow stub. Although the body was badly decomposed, considerable force was necessary to dislodge it. The barbs of the primary feathers seemed to act as hooks. The nest held a single typical egg of the Prothonotary Warbler. I anticipated that the abdomen of the Cowbird would contain a perfect egg and upon opening it, I found this to be the case. I recall finding Cowbird eggs in two or three Prothonotary nests in this colony in previous years. The late Charles Dury of Cincinnati probably knew this colony many years previously.—HOMER F. PRICE, *Payne, Ohio.*

Red-winged Blackbird caught in a crotch.—When on a field trip on May 13, 1937, along Duck Creek, Davenport, Scott County, Iowa, I came upon a dead Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus phoeniceus*) that had garroted itself in a crotch of a small sapling. Evidently it had tried to alight on a small limb of the sapling, had slipped, and caught its neck in the crotch where it struggled to get free but only worked its neck down tighter into the crotch. The body was still warm when I found it and the plumage was in excellent condition except for the neck that was in the crotch. This area is unfrequented by people and I was near by all day and saw no one, so the evidence seems to indicate that it was one of those tragedies in the avian world.

Similar accidents have been recorded by Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr. (Auk, 63: 591, 1946) of a King Rail caught in a barbed-wire fence and by William P. Baldwin (Auk, 63: 96, 1946) of a cormorant that had been similarly caught in a split pole.—JAMES HODGES, *3132 Fair Avenue, Davenport, Iowa.*

Cooper's Hawk 'drowning' its prey.—The note by Frederick C. Schmid in *The Auk*, [64 (2): 307, April, 1947] entitled, 'Unusual behavior of a Cooper's Hawk,'

leads me to report an observation made on the behavior of the same species in captivity.

In the Washington zoo we have a few examples of the Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*). In captivity the species appears nervous, and as a rule does not take kindly to a cage. However, one example has settled down to cage life and is thriving. The diet consists of horse meat, English Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) and at times mice. The bird in question is a female, and upon seizing its "prey," hops on one foot (the other being occupied with its food) toward the watering pool in the cage. Here the bird jumps in and submerges itself up to its body, thus keeping the food under water. After a few seconds it jumps out of the pool and devours its food, protecting it by spreading its wings outward in typical *Accipiter* fashion.

I have observed this manner of feeding many times, but it did not occur to me that the hawk was "drowning" its prey prior to feasting upon it.—MALCOLM DAVIS, *National Zoological Park, Washington, D. C.*

Nocturnal fresh-water wandering of the Black Skimmer.—Since I have seen nothing published concerning the night wandering of the Black Skimmer to bodies of fresh water, a report on this little-known practice may be of interest. During my many years of residence in Florida, I had never observed this species anywhere but on the sea coast or in the waterways immediately bordering it until the early 1930's. Between February 4, 1934, and March 2, 1939, these birds were observed, mostly at night, on numerous occasions in the immediate vicinity of Orlando, approximately 40 miles from the nearest salt water to the eastward; several were seen, also, during the daytime. In April, 1933, I recorded a single individual seen feeding in a fresh-water canal on a bright, sunny day, 12 or 15 miles west of Vero Beach. A flock of some 35 to 40 was seen closely bunched on a sandy bar on the western shore of Lake Okeechobee, Glades County, by Wray H. Nicholson and myself, in May, 1946.

The majority of the Orlando records were made at night. Apparently the Skimmers seldom arrived before 7:30 P. M. and usually later—around 9:00 or 9:30—and were not seen in the morning, so it may be assumed that they left the coast about dusk and flew inland, remaining all night and returning before daylight. The journey was made primarily for feeding since the birds constantly flew low over the lakes, often skimming the water. During the many times I saw these birds, I heard the peculiar and distinctive barking notes only once—the very dark night of January 23, 1939. The calls were heard continuously for five minutes. On February 4, 1934, Hugo Schroder saw ten Skimmers on Lake Eola, in Orlando, and also heard the calls. He reports that a few nights before, he had seen them on the same lake.

My other detailed records, all for Orlando, are as follows:

April 26, 1934.—A lone Skimmer seen at night, about 10:00 P. M.

May 31, 1934.—I saw a lone individual skimming the water on Lake Cherokee, about 8:30 P. M. Watched for 15 minutes as it circled the lake many times.

June 2, 1934.—I saw two feeding by skimming the surface of Lake Lucerne, about 10:00 P. M. Birds came within ten feet of me.

June 4, 1934.—I saw at close range, two Black Skimmers on Lake Eola, during a political rally, in the full glare of electric lights and with hundreds of people near by. Birds came close to the crowd and were silent.

February 5, 1936.—Four seen about 5:30 P. M.; day cold, 58° and drizzling rain.

December 24, 1937.—A lone Skimmer on Lake Lucerne, at 9:45 P. M.

January 17, 1939.—Seven seen on Lake Eola, about 9:30 P. M.

January 18, 1939.—Ten or more seen on Lake Eola between 7:20 and 7:40 P. M.