

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.

March 2, 1939.—Major E. A. Goldman and Donald J. Nicholson saw four about 9:30 on Lake Eola, and again 15 minutes later. We remained 40 minutes longer and saw them again, but no calls were heard.

April 15, 1947.—At nine o'clock sharp in the evening I saw and heard six Black Skimmers on Lake Eola in the center of the city. I stood on the bank of the lake close to an electric light, and six birds passed within ten feet of me. They were skimming the water with their bills and were within a few feet of each other in staggered formation. Soon they began to come from both directions and in passing, each bird uttered a low but sharp *ut-ut* note. While the birds were travelling in a group going in one direction they were silent, but each time they crossed, *i. e.* birds meeting from opposite directions, each saluted with the double *ut-ut* note. Skies were overcast and it had just finished showering.

There were a number of other sight records of night-visitation to these Orlando lakes that I failed to record, and I think it was a year or two before 1934 that I saw the birds for the first time in Orlando.

Flying a round-trip of 80 miles, with continuous all-night flight over the lakes adding many more miles to their nocturnal wanderings, indicates remarkable vitality. What special foods they might have been seeking in the interior and why it was necessary to make the strenuous trek is most intriguing and puzzling.—DONALD J. NICHOLSON, *Orlando, Florida*.

A loose-feathered Nighthawk.—Included among the members of The American Ornithologists' Union there must be at least several banders who have trapped adult Eastern Nighthawks (*Chordeiles minor minor* [Forster]). To those banders and to any other members may I please address this appeal for information?

On June 20, 1945, I trapped a female, the only member of this species I have ever handled. During the banding procedure a conspicuous number of her body feathers loosened and fell at my feet. Since it appeared to be a normal case of molting I failed to give the situation more than passing consideration, nor was it even mentioned in a brief study of this bird's behavior published in *Bird-Banding*, 17 (2): 55-60, 1946.

She returned to nest on the same roof again during the summer of 1946. Upon this occasion she was not trapped, but the band was observed closely enough for certain identification. A 'General Note' in *Bird-Banding*, 17 (4): 168, 1946, reported her return.

This bird nested on the same roof again this season (1947). On June 19, I trapped her and this appeal for information is an attempt to explain an incident which occurred while she was in momentary captivity. When the draw-string was pulled the bird seemed not even to notice the door of the flat trap as it swung shut. She remained motionless, quietly incubating the two eggs over which the trap had been set. In fact, it was not until I had approached within five feet of the trap that she rose from the eggs and attempted to escape. I moved the trap at once away from the eggs to insure against breaking them. While the trap was being moved the Nighthawk hovered, fluttering, in the air. She flew against the chicken-wire sides and top not more than a half-dozen times. She was very tame and at no time was her struggling at all violent.

When the trap was set down the bird came to rest on the floor and crouched there quietly while I reached in and picked her up. While she had been fluttering about, some long feathers became loosened and fell to the floor of the trap. While I held her I discovered several of her primaries and some of her tail feathers were so loose that they fell out of place even while I examined them.