

**Baldpate (*Mareca americana*) Nesting in Minnesota.**—Dr. T. S. Roberts in the discussion of the Baldpate in his *Birds of Minnesota* states (page 233), "We have no record of the finding of a nest in Minnesota, but its occasional occurrence in pairs in the late spring and early summer suggests that probably it does breed rarely in the State."

Each spring numerous breeding pairs of Baldpates are seen on the Mud Lake National Wildlife Refuge near Holt, Minnesota. Brood counts for the past several years indicate considerable nesting in the extensive marshes; however, no nests have been found there to date.

A few pairs of Baldpates are seen on the Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuge, East Lake, Minnesota, each nesting season, and two broods were observed in 1947 by former Manager Karl Kobes. On June 30, 1939, P. Knopp and R. L. Coppess, formerly of the Fish and Wildlife Service, saw a brood of ten. While making a nesting survey of a small island in Rice Lake on June 2, 1949, John Wege and I flushed a female Baldpate from a clutch of 10 eggs. Photos of the nest and eggs were taken during a return trip on June 5. On June 20, the female was still incubating, and slow-motion movies (in color) were taken of her flushing from the nest.

The island, which is less than two acres in area, is covered with a heavy growth of raspberries, nettles, grasses, and other herbaceous growth, and includes one small low area of cattails and sedges. Wild grapes are plentiful, and the vines climb into the small aspen trees which are scattered thinly over the area. Several large basswood trees on the east and south sides of the island furnish a nesting site for a colony of herons and Double-crested Cormorants.

The nest was situated under an old log, the end of which was about 20 inches off the ground. Owing to the heavy herbaceous growth and the presence of the log, it was very well concealed. The nest had been constructed about five steps from the water's edge along the west shore of the island. It was lined with a good supply of down, which protruded up and partially over the eggs on the edge of the clutch. The female apparently made no effort to cover the eggs before flushing.

A visit to the nest on July 13 revealed that 8 of the 10 eggs had hatched. One of the remaining eggs was addled, and the other contained a fully developed embryo, which had failed to hatch. These two eggs measured  $1.44 \times 2.09$  and  $1.45 \times 2.10$  inches. On this same day a brood of five downy Baldpates was observed about one-half mile north of the island. One of these was caught and examined closely as the female feigned injury near our boat.

On July 24, 1949, two broods of Baldpates were seen on Rice Lake. One female was accompanied by five downy young, apparently only a few days of age. One of these young was captured and the female observed very close at hand as she gave the typical protesting performance. The other brood, also five young, seen on the same date were nearly half grown and could skitter and dive with agility. The female was positively identified as she feigned injury near our boat. Both these broods were seen in rather open stands of bulrush within 300 yards of the shoreline.

One other brood of Baldpates was seen during the summer of 1949 on the Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuge. This brood of seven young, about half grown, was seen on Mandy Lake (Little Rice Lake) on July 2.—FRANK R. MARTIN, *Upper Souris National Wildlife Refuge, Foxholm, North Dakota.*

**Unusual Behavior of a Golden Eagle in Southeastern New Mexico.**—On January 29, 1954, when making an aerial census of antelope in eastern Chaves County, New Mexico, I observed an incident which may be of interest to students of bird behavior. While a count was being made from an elevation of 200 feet of a herd of 58 antelope, a Golden Eagle was noted flying parallel with, and about 300

yards from, our Piper Super Cub. In order to facilitate a count of mature bucks, the pilot dove the plane to a point about 100 yards from the side of the running herd and leveled off 25 feet above the ground. The eagle simultaneously duplicated this maneuver except that he leveled off 25 feet from the antelope, almost disappearing into the large dust cloud above them. The eagle was seen to disappear and reappear several times, apparently having no difficulty moving in and out of the herd, now running at full speed and almost in single file. On one occasion the eagle dropped back to hover above a large mature buck bringing up the rear. During the five minutes of observation the eagle was not seen to strike an antelope. When last noted, the bird was still in pursuit of the running herd.—ALLEN E. ANDERSON, *New Mexico Game and Fish Department, Santa Fe, New Mexico (Contribution from P-R Project W-75-R-1)*.

**Marsh Hawk Pursues Domestic Cat.**—On June 4, 1955, I was observing Short-eared Owls (*Asio flammeus*) and Marsh Hawks (*Circus cyaneus*) on a marsh in southwestern Waukesha County, Wisconsin. At about an hour after sunrise an adult male of the latter species was seen pursuing a common house cat through a field adjacent to the marsh.

The hawk flew several feet behind and about 10 feet above the cat which was running about as fast as possible towards the protective cover of a fencerow. The field through which the cat was running had a rather uniform cover depth of about 10 to 12 inches. During the chase the hawk dived three times to within one foot of the cat. It appeared to have no intention of actually striking it, however. When the cat entered the deeper cover along the fence the hawk hovered momentarily and then perched on a fence post about 10 feet from where the cat disappeared. It remained on the post for about 10 minutes before resuming its coursing over the fields. The cat was a medium-sized individual and was predominantly white but with some brown areas on the foreparts.

Although this was probably defensive behavior this same male Marsh Hawk consistently tolerated another male in its territory. This second male was mated to a female which was incubating about a third of a mile away, but no mate to the first bird was seen even after seven hours of observation during two successive mornings.—DANIEL D. BERGER, 510 E. MacArthur Road, Milwaukee 17, Wisconsin.

**Tree Sparrows (*Spizella arborea*) Feeding on the Common Reed.**—On December 26, 1954, while making some observations in Pelham Bay Park, Bronx County, New York, I visited an area known as the Baychester marshes. These marshes support a luxuriant dense growth of Common Reed (*Phragmites communis* var. *Berlandieri*).

This plant is sometimes characterized as an indifferent halophyte which grows best in slightly basic or alkaline soils which are occasionally flooded with polluted tidal water (Eaton, Rhodora, 54: 135-137, 1952). In this case, the waters flooding the area came from adjacent Eastchester Creek.

In this type of habitat, I was attracted to a small flock of sparrows, consisting mainly of wintering Tree Sparrows. The birds were seen feeding in and among the large terminal panicles of the Common Reed. I then proceeded to examine these plants, but neither insects nor larval masses could be found. I can only conclude that the Tree Sparrows were either feeding on the seeds or other parts of the dried inflorescences.

This was the first observation I have ever made of any bird species feeding on this relatively poor source of food.—MAURICE L. RUSSAK, 1675 Metropolitan Avenue, New York 62, N. Y.