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### A Probable Record of Intraspecific Egg Dumping for Sandhill Cranes

CARROLL D. LITTLEFIELD

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Box 113, Burns, Oregon 97720 USA

On 19 April 1978 a three-egg clutch of a Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis tabida*) was discovered by Lois Edford, an Oregon State University graduate student. Three-egg clutches have been rarely reported for the subspecies (e.g. two of 737 nests examined on Malheur National Wildlife Refuge). The location was approximately 8 km north of Frenchglen, Harney County, Oregon, on Malheur National Wildlife Refuge.

An examination of the nest on 21 April suggested that all three eggs had probably not been laid by the same female. Unfortunately, the eggs had been destroyed by a coyote (*Canis latrans*) before my second visit to the nest. Two of the depredated eggs were located, but the third was missing and had apparently been removed by the coyote. One egg was completely different from the other. Coloration and size of eggs laid by individual female cranes are usually distinctive (pers. obs.). The pair (Pair 102) that received the dumped egg has been observed for 5 yr, and the nest was within their territory. This female's eggs are light brown, small, and covered with small reddish spots. One of the remaining eggs was identical to those she had laid in the past. It measured 95.0 × 57.1 mm. The other egg was longer and measured 102.3 × 61.2 mm. Its coloration was dull olive, with the larger end almost completely covered with large reddish spots. This was the typical egg coloration and size of those laid by the neighboring female (Pair 20).

Pair 102 has the unusual behavior of both birds leaving their nest to feed simultaneously. In 1978, they nested 45 m farther west and within view of Pair 20. Previously, Pair 102's nest had been concealed from Pair 20 by a dense stand of hardstem bulrush (*Scirpus acutus*). Apparently, Pair 102 left their nest unattended for a time, allowing the neighboring female to deposit the extra egg.

By 7 May, Pair 20 had constructed their own nest and laid two eggs (both similar to the dumped egg) about 75 m south of Pair 102's original nest. Pair 102 renested unsuccessfully about 75 m northeast of their first attempt. The eggs were light brown, covered with small reddish spots. Pair 20 successfully hatched one egg; the other was infertile.

Females of certain species of waterfowl are well known for depositing eggs into the nests of others of their own species. However, this is the only record I know of for similar behavior in Sandhill Cranes.

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