

## GENERAL NOTES

**Aerial transfer of *Circus cyaneus*.**—"Food passing by nesting Marsh Hawks", *Bird-Banding* 41(1) 1970: 41 is an account of the typical aerial transfer of this species, both as described in the literature and from my own observations of more than 100 nesting pairs. Food passing is thus the usual situation. It is interesting to note, however, that since 1963 males on my study area have tended to drop the food from lesser heights and I have seen more talon-to-talon transfers. I attribute this change to high pesticide residues (Hamerstrom 1965. A harrier population study. *In* Peregrine Falcon Populations, Their Biology and Decline. University of Wisconsin Press).—Frances Hamerstrom, Rt. 1, Plainfield, Wisconsin 54966.

**Introduction of Foreign Eggs into Nests of Starlings and House Sparrows.**—At the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, Maryland, during 1964, I made attempts to press into service three Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) and a House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) for rearing young birds of more desirable species. Eggs of a Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottus*) and two Robins (*Turdus migratorius*) were introduced into active Starling nests, and eggs of a Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*) were introduced into a House Sparrow nest.

In a nest with seven recently laid Starling eggs, 4 eggs were, on 4 May, replaced with Mockingbird eggs which had been incubated about five days. Yet on 14 May the four Mockingbird eggs were in the nest with the three Starling eggs, but the Mockingbird eggs were settled into the nesting material as though they had remained long in the same positions; whereas the Starling eggs were not similarly settled into the nesting material. On 21 May, two Starlings several days old were in the nest, and the remaining Starling egg and the four Mockingbird eggs were gone from the nest. No eggs could be found on the ground outside the nest.

Three Robin eggs were used on 27 April to replace a clutch of five Starling eggs, and the Robin eggs were all on the ground in front of the nesting box at the next visit on 29 April. There was already another clutch of four Starling eggs in the nesting box on 8 May. At another Starling nest three slightly incubated Robin eggs were used on 5 May to replace a clutch of four Starling eggs. On 14 May there were two Robin eggs in this nest, and the third Robin egg was gone from the nest. The two nestling Robins were attended by the Starlings only until they were about one week old, and then the Robins died.

On 25 April, five House Sparrow eggs, incubated 5-6 days, were replaced with five Phoebe eggs at an unknown stage of incubation. The House Sparrow incubated the Phoebe eggs only about two days before deserting the nest.

Each of the four attempts to get Starlings or House Sparrows to hatch the eggs and rear the young of another species was unsuccessful: one Starling incubated but seemingly failed to turn the Mockingbird eggs; a second Starling threw the eggs from its nest onto the ground below soon after introduction; a third Starling hatched and reared two Robins until they were about one week old; a House Sparrow abandoned its nest about two days after Phoebe eggs were introduced into the nest.—Paul A. Stewart, Entomology Research Division, Agricultural Research Service, USDA, Oxford, North Carolina 27565.

**Band Wear on Ruddy Turnstones.**—The recent note by Jehl (*Bird-Banding* 40: 47) has prompted me to write about our use of aluminum bands on the Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*). In 1964 we began banding turnstones in Alaska with standard United States Fish and Wildlife Service aluminum bands. In 1965 and 1966 when many of these birds were recaptured, the bands were wearing badly but at that time we had no substitute. In 1967 we sought the advice of Mr. G. C. Lambourne, of Lambournes (B'ham) Ltd., Birmingham 19, England and suggested to him that Monel metal bands might be of value. He replied that "Monel metal is a great improvement in some situations. We have had a few cases of crevice attack due to electrolytic action and occurring mainly in estuarine waters. Another disadvantage with some species is a darkening of the band; some going almost black." Mr. Lambourne suggested that we use Incoloy, a nickel alloy, which the British Trust for Ornithology had adopted for some species, particularly waders. Mr. Lambourne stated that due to their hardness,