

her to stand nearly on her head with tail straight up! Four eggs were laid: March 18-21-24-26. She began sitting with the third. The eggs are still solid at this writing, April 23, but I am all but certain they cannot be fertile. With an older male I'm sure we would have young falcons. The area is about 25 feet long, 12 feet wide and 7 feet high. There are no windows and a 25 watt bulb supplies light at all times. (Report prepared by Ron Austing.)

An Evaluation of Raptors Nesting in South Dakota

A raptor breeding population count has been undertaken primarily for the use of the Game, Fish and Parks Department to provide information for purposes of management.

Though a complete census will not be possible, fairly accurate estimates can be made if the sample data are selected with care. As this program develops it is hoped that with the aid of knowledgeable persons a highly representative sample can be obtained. Considerable care is being taken in choosing cooperators as even well-intentioned disturbances can adversely affect nesting success. Also, since all interests in raptors are not oriented toward preservation, data are considered highly confidential as to nest or eyrie locations.

In addition to merely a count of breeding birds, data on nesting success are being gathered. Over a period of several years these data may be meaningful in several ways, particularly so in indicating trends and in correlation with other phenomena to indicate possible causes of such trends.

Only in areas where personal observations were made within the past few years can comparisons be made to indicate a possible trend. It is our impression from these isolated cases that Prairie Falcons (though not common anywhere), and Redtailed Hawks are showing a slight gain, while Marsh Hawks are down. It also appears that Golden Eagles, Marsh Hawks, and Swainson's Hawks had relatively poor percentage of nesting success, Kestrels perhaps showed a good percentage while Prairie Falcons, Redtailed Hawks and Ferruginous Hawks had an excellent year, as did Great Horned Owls.

To date we have no report of successful Marsh Hawk nesting for this year. It is our impression that the total number of these birds is way down.

Of the four known Golden Eagle eyries in South Dakota, two are known to have been unsuccessful in 1966, another contained an egg in mid-June and is assumed to have been unsuccessful, and the fourth was unchecked but an unverified report indicated that two young were flown from this eyrie.

Swainson's Hawk did well in some areas but in others many nests and young were lost by being blown from the tree by high winds.

Kestrel nest censusing takes a great deal of time. Since time was limited, it was decided merely to note apparently nesting pairs. No success data are therefore available. Our impression, derived from juveniles observed in July, is that success percentage was at least good.

We have only a few Prairie Falcon eyries in the state and it is felt that a high percentage of these were checked. Nesting success was high, over four young fledged from each eyrie. No failures were noted.

Redtails averaged over two per nest. Of all Redtails observed, including those which were classed only as probably breeding, 78% were known to be successful.

Don Adolphson of Huron, South Dakota, reported that twelve pairs of Great Horned Owls in ten different counties fledged 21 young for an average of 1.75 young fledged per nest. Mr. Adolphson also contributed some valuable data on Swainson's Hawks, Redtailed Hawks and Ferruginous Hawks. Some interesting and valuable data on Ferruginous Hawks were gathered by John Flavin of Lemon, South Dakota. The rest of the data were collected by Donald Hunter and Anthony B. Luscombe of Sioux City, Iowa.

Colateral with the census, a two-day raptor recognition and appreciation course was given for the Sioux Ranger Corps Training School at Pine Ridge. The purpose of the course was to provide the rangers with identification skills to help in managing and teaching appreciation of birds of prey on the rather extensive Pine Ridge reservation. Wildlife management is one of the principal missions of the newly formed Ranger Corps. The course was conducted by Donald Hunter with the assistance of Tony Luscombe. (Report prepared by Donald Hunter.)

Call for Snowy Owl Observations

Several Snowy Owls have been seen in the Lake States region this winter. A survey of the southward movement of the Snowy Owl is being made this winter to determine the distribution of these birds as well as the extent and duration of their invasion. The following information is requested: Name and address of observer, date, time, and location of observation (state, nearest town, county, and if possible: township, range, and section), habitat, activity, and weather. If bird is perching, how high and on what is it perching? Please send observations to: Thomas H. Nicholls, University of Minnesota, Museum of Natural History, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455. Cooperators will be sent a report of the results, if requested.