

## NOTES, NEWS, AND QUERIES

**Notes on Raptor Research Foundation.** We are gradually getting chairmen for the various committees. The following have been or recently agreed to serve as chairmen:

Editorial Committee: B. E. Harrell, University of South Dakota

Captivity Breeding Committee: Don Hunter, Centerville, S. D. (pro tem).

Raptor Population Committee: Tom Cade and Clayton White, Cornell University (Co-Chairmen)

Raptor Banding Committee: Fran Hamerstrom, Plainfield, Wisc.

Raptor Pathology Committee: William Halliwell, University of Missouri

Pesticide Committee: Steve Herman, University of California, Davis

Raptor Taxonomy Committee: Clayton White, Cornell University

Bibliography Committee: B. E. Harrell, University of South Dakota

Membership Committee: George Jonkel, Huron, South Dakota

Since December Lee Eberly has been serving as Executive Secretary. He has made considerable progress in the office backlog. We appreciate his services which are worth much more than the token pay that we provide.

We are working on the report of the Cornell meeting and the index to the last three volumes of the *News* which have unfortunately been delayed. They will be in the mail to all members before the next issue is out.

**Back Issues of the News.** The first three years of the *News* appeared quarterly. We have a supply of all issues which are available at \$0.50 each or \$2.00 a volume.

**New Reports on Pesticides in Eagles.** Work done at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center on 45 Bald Eagles and 31 Golden Eagles found sick or dead in 18 states and Canada in 1964 and 1965 has been reported recently (W. L. Reichel *et al.*, Pesticide Residues in Eagles, *Pesticide Monitoring Journal* 3(3):142-144, Dec. 1969). Levels were considerably lower in the Golden Eagles. Some unknowns have been identified as PCB.

J. D. Lockie, D. A. Ratcliffe, and R. Balharry report on work in

Scotland (Breeding Success and Organo-Chlorine Residues in Golden Eagles in West Scotland, *J. Appl. Ecol.* 6(3):381-389, Dec. 1969). They compared the period 1963-65 before the banning of dieldrin as a sheep dip in January 1966 with the period 1966-68. The percentage of eyries successfully rearing young rose from 31 to 69% while the dieldrin in eggs dropped from 0.86 to 0.34 ppm. No other factors seemed to account for this relationship and the authors felt that there was confirmation of their hypothesis, "that contamination by dieldrin ingested with mutton carrion was the cause of a substantial decline in the breeding success of eagles in West Scotland."

**More DDT Effects.** Experiments at the Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit suggest that two of the effects of sublethal doses of DDT are to make it more difficult for young predators to learn how to obtain their food, and to make it more difficult for prey species to avoid being killed by predators. (*Outdoor News Bulletin*, June). (*Kingfisher* 5(1):4-5, Sept.-Oct., 1969)

**Ospreys in Scotland.** Five pairs of ospreys either nested or attempted to nest in Scotland in 1968. The Loch Garten pair, visited by 37,500 people, reared two young. The second Speyside pair failed to rear any young for the sixth year running, breaking one egg and failing to hatch the other, which was fertile. At the third Scottish site, first used in 1967, three young were reared, one of which was recovered in Spain in December. A fourth pair built a nest nearby but did not lay, and elsewhere in Scotland a fifth eyrie was also found but without eggs. (*Scottish Birds*, Summer).

In 1969 four pairs of ospreys are known to have bred, and at least 20 other ospreys were reported in various parts of Scotland. Three pairs produced two young each, but the eggs of the fourth pair failed to hatch. The snowy owls bred for the third year running on Fetlar, Shetland. Including young from former years, at least 15 snowy owls are now present in Shetland, and it is hoped that some more may breed in 1970. (*Kingfisher* 5(1):5-6, 1969).

**Sea Eagles at Fair Isle.** The three young white-tailed or sea eagles from Norway, which were released last year on Fair Isle, Shetland, where they have long been extinct, came successfully through the winter, and are now regularly seen. They have learned to fend for

themselves, and food is no longer left out for them. (*Birds*, July). (*Kingfisher* 5(1):6, 1969).

**London's Wildlife.** A pair of kestrels has successfully reared a brood of four in a window box on the 16th floor of a block of flats near the Old Kent Road. (*Kingfisher* 5(1):6, 1969).

**Saving Birds of Prey.** A new method of saving rare and decreasing birds of prey, which usually lay two eggs but rear only one young, has been pioneered with lesser spotted eagles *Aquila pomarina* in eastern Slovakia. The newly hatched second young birds were removed from two cyries, and reared in black kites' nests, from which the young kites were removed to a third kites' nest. One young eagle was returned to its original cyrie just before it could fly, and left the nest along with its elder, but the other developed too fast and flew before it could be returned "home." It is suggested that this method could be used with other large birds of prey, such as the golden eagle and the lammergeyer. (*Berliner Naturschutzblatter*, December). (*Kingfisher* 5(1):7, 1969).

**Eagle Owls in Germany.** Determined efforts are being made by the Deutscher Naturschutzring to re-establish the eagle owl as a breeding bird in parts of northern and western Germany where it is rapidly decreasing or has become extinct. Releases of wild caught birds were found to be ineffective, because the old birds were killed by road or rail traffic while defending carrion prey and the young ones wandered away. Renewed attempts are now being made with young aviary-bred stock, with the assistance of the Ornamental Pheasant Trust. (*Kingfisher* 5(1):7, 1969)

**Delaware Protects Raptors.** Delaware's new bird protection law protects all non-game birds, including all birds of prey, excepting only crows, starlings and house sparrows. (*Audubon Conservation Guide*, July). (*Kingfisher* 5(1):10, 1969).

**Secretary Hickel Halts Issuance of "Blanket" Permits to Kill**

**Golden Eagles.** Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel announced today that he has ordered a halt to a long-standing practice of issuing "blanket" permits authorizing the killing of golden eagles in one or more counties in a state.

In past years such permits have been issued when requested by a state, based on potential danger to the livestock industry in entire areas.

Intensive recent studies, Secretary Hickel said, indicate that golden eagles' attacks on lambs and goat kids "are not widespread and that they do not threaten either the local economies or the livestock industry generally.

"To undertake unrestricted golden eagle control under these circumstances would inordinately diminish the golden eagle population which the Secretary is charged with the duty of protecting.

"I conclude, therefore, that the responsibility for protecting golden eagles outweighs the need for controlling eagles in order to alleviate local depredations, except in the most critical circumstances."

Under a law enacted in 1940, the Interior Secretary is directed to protect the golden eagle. The law also requires that he investigate individual claims that eagles preying on livestock are causing economic hardship, and issue a permit for individual killing if investigation substantiates the claim.

Secretary Hickel noted that individual farmers and ranchers still may obtain a permit to kill golden eagles. Such permits, he directed, will be issued only after careful investigation, and with the personal approval of the Secretary.

Secretary Hickel also directed the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife "to increase your efforts to find ways and means of repelling or discouraging attacks by golden eagles and to encourage the Wool Growers and other groups to adopt these and other methods that will minimize the potential for eagle depredations."

Found mainly in the Southwest and Mountain States, golden eagles have been declining in numbers for many years. They are somewhat smaller than the bald eagle, America's national bird, and sometimes are confused with the young of the bald eagle. (News release from Department of the Interior, March 6, 1970)

**Nelson Broadens Pesticide Attack.** Faced with the painful reality that nothing short of a legislative demand will force the Department of Agriculture and the pesticide industry into dumping the persistent pesticides in favor of safer chemical and nonchemical controls, Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson introduced a package of eight bills

to prohibit the interstate sale and shipment of eight insecticides in the chlorinated hydrocarbon insecticide family—aldrin, chlordane, DDD/TDE, dieldrin, endrin, heptachlor, lindane and toxaphene. These proposals are similar to a bill he sponsored last year to ban DDT.

“The long-term toxicity of chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides presents a deadly threat to fish, wildlife and the overall quality of the environment,” Nelson said. “Evidence of environmental damage caused by hard pesticides has been found in nearly every part of the globe. Yet no significant action has been taken to stop pesticide pollution.”

“The Agriculture Department’s plan to cancel certain uses of DDT never even got off the ground before the pesticide industry initiated a complex series of appeals that could delay final action for years,” he charged.

Under the Agriculture Department’s regulations, manufacturers who appeal a cancellation order can continue to produce and sell pesticides until the appeal is resolved.

“It looks like the Department played right into the industry’s hands by failing to use its statutory authority to suspend certain uses of DDT before starting the cancellation proceedings,” Nelson added. “If the Department is serious about protecting the quality of our environment from pesticide poisoning, it should move without further delay and immediately suspend all nonessential uses of DDT.”

Nelson said that the pesticide industry’s “continued resistance to reform coupled with the Agriculture Department’s historical hesitancy to act makes it mandatory that legislative deadlines be set for banning persistent pesticides.”

Seven years ago, a Presidential Science Advisory Committee concluded that the goal of all national efforts should be the “elimination of the use of persistent toxic insecticides.”

This recommendation was confirmed by the recent Department of Health, Education and Welfare Commission report which urged restrictions on persistent pesticides hazardous to human health or environmental quality.

Nelson said that neither the Agriculture Department nor industry appears willing to mount an all-out effort to improve alternative means of pest control. “The Agriculture Department has admitted that its programs to develop better nonchemical means of pest control were underfunded by at least \$4 million last year,” he said.

There is no indication in the Department’s budget for the coming year that any substantial increase in funds will be available for expanded research in the fields of biological pest control, hormonal techniques, natural plant resistance and cultural control, Nelson said. (*Conservation News* 35(5):8-9, March 1, 1970).

**Use of Falconry at Airbase in Spain.** A recent article in the *Guardian Weekly* (102(4):7, Jan. 24, 1970) by W. Cemlyn-Jones tells about Operation Bahari initiated at Torrejon, a U. S. airbase near Madrid, Spain, after nine "bird-strike instances" in 10 months. One repair job ran to \$74,000. The falconry program was initiated by Spanish naturalist Dr. Felix Rodriguez de la Fuente and is now carried on by another falconer and a veterinary technician. The ten hawks, later increased to 14, were mostly taken from nests. In over a year and a half there have been no serious collisions, and daily sightings of birds on the 2½ mile runway have decreased from an average of 100 per day to less than two. The birds were flown especially at Little Bustards and Lapwings which formerly caused the most damage. Similar programs exist at two Royal Naval airbases in Scotland and at a commercial airport in Holland.

**Falcons Protect Aircraft.** The Royal Naval Air Station at Lossiemouth, Morayshire, Scotland has solved its bird-strike problem by importing peregrine falcons from the Middle East. Collisions between jet planes and black-headed gulls had been occurring about monthly, with \$100 thousand repair bills on the average. Various attempts to scare away or kill the birds met with little success.

In May, 1965, peregrines were introduced and were an immediate success. There have been no bird-strikes since then and the taxpayers have been saved over a million dollars a year. The birds have been trained to scare, rather than to kill as in traditional falconry, and as yet there seems to be no indication that the gulls are adapting by becoming accustomed to the falcons. (from *The Wildlife Society News* No. 126, p. 9, Feb. 1970).

**More Missing Members.** In our recent mailing we received a number of copies back without any forwarding information. It would help our office if our members would remember to tell us of their new addresses. We especially wish to remind students at this time of year. We have no addresses for the following:

John J. Burns	Thomas N. Smylie
R. E. England	Dale Spain
Patrick W. Grace	John F. Turner
Verland T. Ogden	

**Continental Osprey Status Survey – 1969.** Under the auspices of the RRF Raptor Population Committee a survey of work on Osprey in North America was undertaken by Thomas Dunstan. A 31 page summary was prepared in January 1970 and sent to the 30 cooperators. Considerable information on past and present status in most areas of concentration in the United States and in a number of areas in Canada is contained in the summary. Because of its more general interest we are planning to edit this report and put it in the next issue of *Raptor Research News*.