

writer this simply signifies recurrence of the earlier stages of the nesting cycle coincident with a renewal of sexual activity after a short period of inactivity. Since the early nesting species are accustomed to gather more or less light twigs broken directly from trees, it is natural that in the repetition of the building phase the same thing should reoccur, even though the terminal twig should bear bud, leaf or blossom, according to the advance of vegetation.

[ To be Continued in Next Issue ]

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#### FOUR DAYS' OBSERVATIONS AT A GUNNING CAMP ON MARTHAS VINEYARD

A. H. WOOD, JR.

APRIL 18, 1924

Down to camp on Friday. A fine sunny day but very windy. There are usually myriads of Gulls and Terns at the Woods Hole wharf, but there were very few in evidence this trip. Pretty early in the season.

We saw great banks of Scoters, apparently all *Oedemia deglandi*, feeding in the sound on the way over to the Vineyard. On the beaches between Oak Bluffs and Edgartown the Gulls were fairly numerous. Three species of the Gulls were in evidence—Herring, Great Black-backed, and Laughing. They were all standing huddled up on the shore looking as though they hadn't a friend in the world. Flying overhead were a few Terns, mostly Common Terns, but we also noticed a few Roseate Terns and several Least Terns.

The ponds en route all contained small flocks of Lesser Scaup and a few American Golden-eyes.

We arrived at camp about 2:30 p. m., but as it began to storm we contented ourselves with cleaning up and airing out the camp for occupancy.

APRIL 19

Rain and wind greeted us at 6 a. m. and lots of it. The inclement weather didn't prevent Fred and myself from starting out at 7 to see what birds were out in the storm as well as ourselves.

We found a pair of our mated Geese nesting on the shore of the lagoon on the point.

We went over to the west blind and rowed the boat over to the South Beach. The waves were running very high, and the trip over to the beach was anything but dry. The avi-fauna on the beach was very scanty. In another month the *Limicolac* will be much more in evidence than they are now. We noticed one Piping Plover running along the shore of the inner beach as we landed, and later we saw a Sanderling on the outer beach. There were two dead White-winged Scoters and a Gannet lying on the beach, evidently killed by the discharged fuel oil of passing ships as their feathers, breast and wing, were heavily matted with the viscous stuff.

The rain let up about 2 p. m. so Fred and I painted the sail boat and the front porch. While painting the boat we saw several pairs of ducks fly over but they were too far off for positive identification. They were probably local Black Ducks which are very common in this vicinity.

There are very few land birds around camp yet. About all we saw were Marsh and Red-tailed Hawks, Crows, Song Sparrows, Towhees, Robins, and Tree Swallows.

#### APRIL 20

Easter Sunday and a mighty poor one! Driving rain and more high winds out of the south-east. Charley, Fred, and the Skipper went over on the mail boat for the afternoon train. Joe and I stayed in camp.

#### APRIL 21

Allan called for me about 8 a. m. in the Ford and we started up-island to Squibnocket Pond to visit a Night Heron colony. While driving past Oyster Pond we saw several large flocks of Canada Geese swimming around in the pond, feeding along the shore, and otherwise enjoying themselves. Later in the morning, we saw several other wedges high in the air, headed north. These wedges were so high that the individual birds looked to be the size of a sparrow, yet the wind brought the sound of their honking down to us with astounding clarity.

In one of the small outlying Lagoons bordering on Squibnocket, we saw about twenty "Blue Peters" (American Coot) sitting idly in the sun, completely satisfied with the world in general. They were very tame and allowed us to approach to within twenty yards of them, close enough to see their peculiar

banded white bill. In times past they have bred in this vicinity, and it looks as though they might breed there again this spring.

We arrived at the Heronry about 10 a. m. This particular colony is situated off the main Gay Head-Edgartown road, about one-third of the way between the road and the north-western end of Squibnocket.

A small marshy pond, oval in shape, about one hundred yards long and half as wide, bordered by a wide fringe of tall bushes and dead trees, comprises the Night Heron colony.

The birds were sitting on every bush and tree in sight — about three hundred of them, and every bird a Black-crowned Night Heron. At our approach the Herons nearest us rose in clouds and settled on the other side of the pond. They were all very wild and would not allow any sort of an approach for observation. It was necessary for us to make use of a pair of high-power glasses to see any detail at all. The birds were all in their splending breeding plumage and made a beautiful picture perched on the dead tree tops with the sun shining directly on them. We watched them for about an hour and enjoyed every minute of that hour.

We drove back through the Heath-Hen Reservation, passing a covey of about twenty or thirty Quail on the way, but it was too late in the day to see any Heath-Hen.

Joe and I took the afternoon boat and arrived back in town that night. We are planning to go down to camp again the last of May and visit the breeding grounds of the Herring and Laughing Gulls, Piping Plover, Terns, and Parula Warblers. Boston, Massachusetts.

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#### SCREECH OWL

(*Otus asio asio*)

E. D. NAUMAN

(Observations on some of its food habits).

When my brother and I were boys our home was on a farm near where the town of Keota, Iowa, now stands. The farm buildings were located near the margin of an extended forest.

We boys became interested in the domestic pigeon business. We built and put up nest boxes to the number of about a dozen and usually had about that many pairs of adult pigeons about the place. When undisturbed they produced many a pair of