

of early ornithologists (Kennicott, Nelson, Ridgway), and specimens have been taken in neighboring states (southern Wisconsin and Indiana).—FRANK A. PITELKA, *University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill.*

Lesser Scaup Duck Defending Nest.—That the Lesser Scaup Duck (*Mareca affinis*) is fearless in defense of its young has often been observed, but the incident related below, of an individual defending her nest, is unique in my experience.

On a small, wooded island in Ministik Lake, Alberta, on July 20, 1931, a Lesser Scaup was disturbed from her nest in a patch of sedges near the water's edge. The nest contained eight eggs. The bird did not fly but walked in a crouching attitude toward the water. After proceeding about ten feet, she turned about, walked back in the same manner and settled upon the eggs. Meanwhile, with a companion, I was standing within three feet or so of the nest. My companion then put out his hand which prompted the duck to again leave the nest, and, moving forward with wings outspread, grasp a finger with her bill.

We returned to the nest again an hour later and the same performance was repeated with variations a number of times. A sudden movement would impel her to leave the nest only to return immediately. Not once did she fly. Sometimes she picked at the sedges around the nest, or, standing upright, re-arranged the down. Usually upon settling, she turned her tail toward us and once after doing this, turned completely about and faced us. Finally at a time when the bird was relaxed on the eggs we drew together the sedges above the nest and left her in peace.—J. A. MUNRO, *Okanagan Landing, B. C.*

Nesting Behavior of Kingbirds.—The writer's porch faces westward upon a row of elms, where on the evening of June 16, 1938, a pair of Arkansas Kingbirds (*Tyrannus verticalis*) were busy building a nest in a fork some twenty-five feet from the ground. It seemed but half completed and both birds were industriously bringing materials to be woven into it by the female. Several pieces of string were added, one of them so long that it became entangled in the surrounding twigs.

During an interval when both owners were away, an Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*) alighted at the nest and began tearing it to pieces with claws and bill. Hastily collecting the looser bits, she flew directly to a group of trees back of the house. Returning shortly, the female owner was greatly excited. She flitted off and on the nest, re-built and re-shaped it and then spent a time perched above it complaining shrilly. No sooner had she departed upon another collecting trip, however, than her white-breasted cousin returned, tore hurriedly at the nest, struggled with the entangling string and left with a bill full of materials by the same air-way as before. These raids were repeated until dusk, the owners sometimes surprising the thief and driving her off with furious attacks and great noise.

During the following day all was quiet, the Arkansas Kingbirds occupying the tree alone. Evening, however, saw the return of the trespasser and several severe battles ensued. Other species, especially Robins, mingled in the fray, apparently assisting the owners. A female Baltimore Oriole suddenly appeared to assist in repelling the invader, but when all had again quieted, she was seen tugging away at the long string, pulling and fluttering to carry it aloft, and in the absence of



FIG. 40. Photograph of a Lesser Scaup Duck defending its nest.
By J. A. Munro.



FIG. 41. Photograph of a Lesser Scaup Duck defending its nest.
By J. A. Munro.

the owner, taking her turn at stealing the materials of the nest. Thus the foundations of a hanging nest were soon visible about ten feet higher up in the tree, the length of white string connecting the two nests. Strangely enough her depredations seemed to pass unnoticed, and after two or three days both nests were completed and the home life of the kingbirds and the orioles proceeded peacefully.—A. D. WHEDON, *Fargo, N. D.*

A Hand-reared Arkansas Kingbird.—Returning from work one evening about the middle of July, I found twelve-year-old Charles busily engaged in catching grasshoppers and feeding them to a pair of baby Arkansas Kingbirds. He and his pal had found the birds that afternoon, apparently dislodged from their nest by the high wind of the night before. I feared that the birds would die, but could suggest no better plan. One of them did indeed die within a day or two, but through no fault of the boys. A striped ground squirrel seized and killed it while the boys were hunting grasshoppers only a few yards away. A few days later Charles avenged the bird by killing the squirrel.

The remaining bird thrived on its diet of grasshoppers until about a week later when we took it with us on a trip to the lake. The weather was rainy and insects were hard to find. We supplemented what few we could catch with bits of bread and meat. Some of the meat was highly seasoned and apparently was not suitable because the next day, "Pete", as the boy had called the bird, was quite droopy. The sun came out in the afternoon when we were able to find plenty of grasshoppers and Pete quickly "perked up".

At about this time he began to learn that he had wings and soon could make short flights from one's hand to a convenient garage roof or to the ground. Charles commented that Pete was more fun than a model airplane: "you did not have to wind him up". The next step was for the bird to fly from his perch to one's hat, shoulder or outstretched finger when a tempting grasshopper was offered.

We soon learned Pete's language. A certain lusty sound accompanied by a suggestively open mouth meant that he was hungry. Another short and fainter sound, "*pip-pip-pip*", when offered the fourth or fifth grasshopper in rapid succession, meant that he was not interested in food for the time being. Still another chirp indicated indifference or mild curiosity.

The accompanying picture was taken about the first of August. At this time Pete still depended entirely on our ministrations for his food. In another two weeks he had become self-supporting, but still welcomed an occasional grasshopper from our hands. On August 2 he was officially decorated with a Biological Survey leg-band, No. 38-127463.

Each night Pete was taken to the basement where he perched on one of the electric light wires running through the floor joists. Here he would remain contentedly until about six o'clock in the morning when he would begin to call for breakfast. He would accept food from others but was more familiar with members of our family. Without detailed records of the food, especially of weights of the grasshoppers, it would be hard to estimate the amount eaten per day, though the number probably ran as high as seventy-five.

On the evening of August 12 we were not at home until after Pete's bedtime and he was not to be found. Neighbors reported that he had appeared at the usual time and made considerable disturbance, clamoring to be put to bed. The next morning as I started for the office, I heard a familiar chirp and from a tall