

GENERAL NOTES

Avian Psychological Disturbance Resulting from Abnormal Coloration.—As a note supplementary to the discussion of this subject by Frances Hamerstrom in the issue of this journal for March, 1942 (*Wilson Bulletin*, 54: 33), it may be remarked that the psychological disturbance occasioned in certain flocks of birds by abnormal coloration of one of their number is recorded as having been noticed at least 2,550 years ago. In the Book of Jeremiah, chapter XII, verse 9, to which the date 608 B.C. is commonly attributed, the prophet states:

"Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird, the birds round about are against her."

The specific identity of the birds on which this remark is based is not indicated; it is not even known whether they were passerine birds. It is improbable that they were domestic fowls, for this prophecy preceded the carrying away of the Jews into Babylonian captivity (586 B.C.), while domestic fowls are not believed to have been introduced into Palestine until after the return from captivity, more than seventy years after the prophecy was made.—HARRISON F. LEWIS, 34 *Grosvenor Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario.*

American Bittern Wintering in Michigan.—In the midst of a marsh near the town of Erie in the southeastern corner of Michigan there is a large spring of mineral water which keeps a pool unfrozen throughout the coldest winter. Here in mid-winter have been seen a number of birds that are uncommon in this season elsewhere in the region.

On March 1, 1942, John Stophlet and I found there an American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) huddled, frozen, in a small depression. The body was emaciated. Apparently the bird had died since a snowfall of six days before. Louis W. Campbell has sight records of this species in the same location January 18, 1930, and February 18, 1933.—HAROLD F. MAYFIELD, 3311 *Parkwood Avenue, Toledo, Ohio.*

Some New Water Bird Records for Kentucky.—Satisfactory records of water birds, notably Charadriiformes, in Kentucky are exceedingly few because of the limited amount of material that has been collected. Consequently we wish to record a heron, two shorebirds and a tern collected during 1941.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea violacea*).—A beautiful male of this species was taken by Mengel on June 29, 1941 at the extreme northern end of Reelfoot Lake in Fulton County, Kentucky. This bird appears to be the first preserved specimen for the state. L. O. Pindar (*Wilson Bulletin*, 37, 1925: 81-82) mentions a Yellow-crowned Night Heron "seen" dead in Fulton County, September 1, 1887. These herons were regularly present in small numbers at the north end of Reelfoot Lake during late June, 1941. The bird collected was fully adult but the gonads appeared somewhat reduced.

American Knot (*Calidris canutus rufus*).—In company with Mary Louise Fagley, Elizabeth Grawemeyer, and J. Frank Cassel, all of Cornell University, Mengel visited the Falls of the Ohio River near Louisville, Kentucky on August 28, 1941. Cassel promptly noticed a strange shorebird among the "peeps." It was collected and proved to be a male Knot in full fall plumage. So far as we know it represents the first occurrence of the species in Kentucky.

Baird's Sandpiper, *Pisobia bairdi*.—Monroe secured a specimen of this sandpiper on September 1, 1941 at the lower end of the Falls of the Ohio. There are several previous sight records for the Louisville area, (Monroe and Mengel, *Kentucky*

Warbler, 15 1939: 43) and some for Warren County (Gordon Wilson, *Kentucky Warbler*, 16, 1940: 19) but this specimen seems to be the first for the state.

Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia imperator*).—Caspian Terns have been seen in the Louisville area in early fall for a number of years. (Monroe, *Auk*, 55: 678, 1938). The first specimen, however, was not secured until September 6, 1941 when Monroe killed one of several birds which had been about the Falls of the Ohio for some days. So far as we know, this is the first actual specimen for Kentucky.

All specimens mentioned are in the authors' collection at Anchorage, Kentucky.—BURT L. MONROE, *Louisville, Kentucky*, and ROBERT M. MENDEL, *Cornell University, Ithaca, New York*.

Ducks following Bald Eagles.—Upon two occasions I in company with others witnessed ducks following or chasing Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*). On April 25, 1926, Charles F. Walker and I noted an eagle flying over the Huron Marsh, Huron County, Ohio. As the eagle flew over a flock of about 500 Pintails (*Anas acuta*) that were sitting on a pool in the marsh, the ducks arose and began to follow. The leaders of the flock quickly gained a position some 20 to 50 feet behind the eagle, with the remaining ducks following their leaders in a long, sinuous flock. This flock followed the same route as did the eagle, and we observed no attempt by ducks in the latter part of the flock to "cut corners". As the eagle continued to circle and rise, the long, following flock did likewise, assuming some form of a hollow oval, circle, or "figure 8." Ducks approaching the eagle at lower elevations paid no apparent attention to it, but continued following their immediate leaders. Once the flock was formed, each duck closely maintained its relative position, and we noted no attempt of individuals to forge ahead, or of the leaders to attack the eagle. After a few minutes the eagle had gained several hundred feet in altitude, whereupon it dove downward at a moderate angle and with greatly accelerated speed, thus leaving behind its more slowly flying pursuers. When the ducks found themselves outdistanced they returned to the pool whence they came. At no time did the eagle attempt to molest the ducks. The flock was composed mostly of males, as April flocks of Pintails often are.

On February 6, 1942, my wife and I observed a similar performance. While watching an eagle flying over a flooded cornfield, in Monroe County, Michigan (about nine miles north of Sylvania, Ohio), we saw about 500 ducks arise from the field and begin to pursue the eagle. The eagle circled as described above, the ducks followed the eagle in the same flock formation and manner, the eagle outdistanced its pursuers by diving at a moderate angle after gaining altitude, and the ducks resettled in the cornfield. The latter flock was composed mostly of Black Ducks (*Anas rubripes*), together with a few Mallards (*A. platyrhynchos*). Both eagles were white-headed and white-tailed.

In both instances flock unity or solidarity of the ducks was outstanding. Apparently their behavior was analogous with the more frequently seen phenomenon of a dense, globular flock of Starlings flying above or behind a hawk. No attempt was made to strike the pursued, as Crows do.—MILTON B. TRAUTMAN, *Stone Laboratory, Put-in-Bay, Ohio*.

Glaucois Gull in Oklahoma.—The Glaucois Gull (*Larus hyperboreus*) is primarily a bird of the Arctic or Sub-Arctic regions and rarely winters further south than northern California and New York. Relatively few even reach the Great Lakes. The species has apparently not been reported from Oklahoma.

On March 1, 1942, the authors, with Game Management Agents L. W. Merovka and Milton H. Boone, were met by Ranger Alfred Wensel of the Oklahoma State Game and Fish Commission, and by courtesy of the Commission were furnished a boat with which to inspect the wildlife resources of the recently impounded Grand River Reservoir in northeastern Oklahoma.