

GENERAL NOTES

A second Ohio record for the Eared Grebe.—On November 24, 1945, I saw from a window of my home on South Bass Island, Ottawa County, Ohio, a small grebe fishing in the high waves of Lake Erie about 125 feet distant. The slightly upturned bill, poorly-defined dark portions of the head and neck, and small size, were quite unlike the normal appearance in autumn of the Horned Grebes (*Colymbus auritus*) that are present about the island in small numbers at this season. Hoping to obtain a better view of the grebe, I went outdoors, but the grebe dove, and I saw it no more on that day. At daylight on November 27 I saw what I believed to be the same bird, this time on the opposite side of the island, about a half mile distant from where I had made the first observation. I saw one again on the morning of November 28. Before daylight on November 29, I placed some duck decoys offshore near the place where I had seen the grebe the day before. At daylight, the bird, seeing the decoys, swam among them with typical grebe curiosity, and I succeeded in collecting it. The skin of this bird, a female Eared Grebe (*Colymbus nigricollis californicus*), is No. 7739 of the bird collection of the Ohio State Museum.

This appears to be the second record of the capture of this species in Ohio. The first record was made by W. Earl Godfrey (1943. *Auk*, 60:452) when he collected a specimen on April 22, 1941, at Corning Lake, Lake County, Ohio.—MILTON B. TRAUTMAN, *F. T. Stone Laboratory, Put-in-Bay, Ohio.*

Northern water birds summering on the Gulf Coast of Texas.—In 1945, I observed the following water birds in the vicinity of Rockport, Aransas County, Texas, between June 4 and 14, when such species are normally in the more northern States or Canada.

Anas strepera. Gadwall: 7 records, 73 individuals, of both sexes, all in apparently normal breeding plumage.

Anas americana. Baldpate: 4 records, 9 individuals.

Anas acuta. Pintail: 1 record, 3 individuals.

Aythya valisineria. Canvas-back: 2 males and 2 females observed together on June 15 by Mrs. Jack Hagar.

Aythya affinis. Lesser Scaup Duck: 5 records, 22 individuals; 10 males, none in bright plumage—white areas dull, heads lacking gloss; females without the white facial area or with only a trace of it.

Mergus serrator. Red-breasted Merganser: 1 individual, a female in exceedingly pale plumage—chalky all over except for the dull brown of the head; behavior sickly.

Squatarola squatarola. Black-bellied Plover: 6 records, 17 individuals, all in apparently normal plumage.

Arenaria interpres. Ruddy Turnstone: 5 records, 15 individual, mostly in winter plumage, but a few showing rusty-black breast patterns with white areas reduced.

Totanus melanoleucus. Greater Yellow-legs: 2 records, 6 individuals.

Totanus flavipes. Lesser Yellow-legs: 1 individual.

Erolia fuscicollis. White-rumped sandpiper: 3 records, 12 individuals.

Limnodromus griseus. Dowitcher: 2 records, 37 individuals, all in winter plumage.

Ereunetes pusillus. Semipalmated Sandpiper: 3 records, 21 individuals, all apparently in winter plumage.

Ereunetes mauri. Western Sandpiper: 4 records, 24 individuals.

Crocethia alba. Sanderling: 5 records, 13 individuals, 2 in partial breeding plumage, others in winter dress.

Sterna hirundo. Common Tern: 1 individual.

Chlidonias nigra. Black Tern: 4 records, 20 individuals, all in first winter or adult winter plumage.

All of the 17 species listed above winter in greater or lesser numbers in the Rockport area, but none of them is known to breed there. Mr. Jack Hagar tells me that this summering of non-breeding species is a regular occurrence in the Rockport area; it presents an interesting problem in the study of the migration and breeding habits of birds.—R. A. O'REILLY, JR., *Detroit, Michigan*.

Crow killed by a Duck Hawk.—The observation by Philip Baumgras, "Crow killed by a Red-tailed Hawk" (1945, *Wils. Bull.*, 57:129), adds interest to a similar record of my own. On May 14, 1936, at North Cape, Erie Marsh, Monroe County, Michigan, my attention was attracted by the loud cawing of Crows (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) in a near-by clump of cottonwoods; a moment later, however, an adult Duck Hawk (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) came from the trees carrying a Crow in its talons, with another Crow in wild pursuit. I assumed that the Hawk had taken a young bird from a Crow's nest.—JOHN J. STOPHLET, 2612 Maplewood Avenue, Toledo 10, Ohio.

Snake depredations at bird nests.—During the past nine years I have recorded 12 instances of snakes discovered in the act of rifling bird nests or found coiled in the boxes after having presumably swallowed the broods. Most of the 12 instances occurred in Warner Parks, Nashville, Tennessee, a natural park situated among wooded hills, with thickets, open meadows, and tiny streams, where I have conducted a Bluebird (*Sialia sialis sialis*) nestbox project for the past decade.

In three instances, although moving too fast for capture, the predators were identified as black racers (*Coluber* sp.). On June 17, 1937, I approached a box as a racer clung there with a 10-day-old Bluebird in its mouth, which proved to be the last of the brood of five. The adults were flying excitedly from perch to perch near by. The snake made off with the screeching nestling and disappeared into a crevice before it could be overtaken. On July 26, 1940, a racer was seen inside a Bluebird box as it was swallowing the last of three large nestlings, and on June 8, 1943, a racer dropped out of a box when I arrived. The nest was found to be empty.

In nine instances, the predators were pilot snakes (*Elaphe* sp.), known locally as "chicken" snakes because they frequent chicken houses and eat chicks and eggs. Seven of these large, slow-moving reptiles were found coiled inside of Bluebird boxes which had contained nestlings—apparently remaining there to digest the meal. They measured from 48 to 60 inches in length, usually completely filling the large-size boxes. One was sent to Jesse M. Shaver, of Peabody College for Teachers, who identified it as the Southern Pilot Snake (*Elaphe obsoleta obsoleta*). The first of these was taken in 1938. On July 6, 1940, in abnormally cool weather, three were caught during the morning, two in Warner Parks and one on private grounds where several boxes had been placed. The 60-inch individual had apparently eaten four Bluebirds, at least 16 days old, due to leave the box on that or the following day. One snake, measuring 52 inches, that was opened contained three 10-day-old Bluebirds and one egg. On May 10, 1943, a 53-inch pilot snake was found resting in a box that had contained a brood of five, also 10 days old.