

GENERAL NOTES

Mortality of migrating birds at Mt. Washington, New Hampshire.—The following observation was reported to me by Herbert Drury of Norwich, Vermont, who was a Dartmouth College student at the time.

On April 15, 1951, Mr. Drury, in company with Mr. Brad Richardson and several other students, were skiing in Tuckerman's Ravine on Mt. Washington, New Hampshire. Mr. Drury wrote: "It was cold, snowing and blowing so hard that . . . visibility was reduced to less than 50 feet. At six that morning it had been clear with no wind. At the base of the Headwall and at least a third of the way up to the lip of the Headwall, we found several dead birds frozen in the loose snow that was blowing down into the Ravine toward Pinkham Notch. The birds were somewhat battered up. Those that I identified included: 4 Golden-Crowned Kinglets [*Regulus satrapa*]; 4 Winter Wrens [*Troglodytes troglodytes*]; one Yellow-bellied Sapsucker [*Sphyrapicus varius*]; one Robin [*Turdus migratorius*]; one female Purple Finch [*Carpodacus purpureus*]. Undoubtedly there were more birds buried under the snow; and other birds were picked up by other skiers and carried down the mountain. The downdraft winds attained velocities of 40 to 50 m.p.h. that day. We suspect that migrating flocks coming over the mountain from the opposite [west] side were caught in these downdrafts and buffeted by the swirling snow until they perished."—DOUGLAS E. WADE, *Dept. of Entomology and Zoology, Clemson Agricultural College, Clemson, South Carolina, March 28, 1952.*

Turkey Vultures attacking Great Blue Heron.—In the vicinity of Pymatuning Lake, Ashtabula County, Ohio, there is a large Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) nesting colony and a Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) roost. This colony and this roost are in a sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*)-beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) climax forest. Most of the heron nests are in beech trees, a few trees having as many as twelve nests.

Approximately 100 vultures took flight when J. B. Ross, of Decatur, Georgia, and I entered the forest on the evening of August 14, 1949. Shortly after this flight a disturbance was detected at the top of a beech. There four Turkey Vultures were attacking one adult Great Blue Heron in a nest. The vultures flew at the heron from all sides. The heron made rapid thrusts at its attackers, and after five minutes of battle, the vultures left the heron. This Great Blue Heron was the only one observed in the rookery, all of the other herons having left about the first of August. The question arises as to why this adult bird was attacked to a nest late in the summer. The nest was high in a beech, and it was not investigated.

Heron colonies in the Pymatuning area have been deserted without any apparent reason. One colony was abandoned after the eggs had been laid, another after the young had hatched (Todd, 1940. "Birds of Western Pennsylvania," pp. 48-52). Perhaps activities of the Turkey Vulture could be a factor in the moving of heron colonies.—JOHN F. MEHNER, *Pymatuning Laboratory, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, September 1, 1951.*

Light intensity and waterfowl flight; pre-flight activities.—In spring and fall, scatterings of waterfowl often appear on the reservoirs in Baltimore, Maryland. The birds stay from a few hours to several days. When they depart, it is occasionally at a daytime hour, but usually in late evening. Rarely, after an evening departure, a similar flock is present again the next day, as if the same individuals had returned from a