

Great Horned Owl attacking squirrel nests.—The Great Horned Owl, *Bubo virginianus*, occasionally preys on the fox squirrel, *Sciurus niger* (see Errington, Hamerstrom, and Hamerstrom, 1940, *Research Bull.* 277, *Agr. Exp. Sta., Iowa State Coll.*, p. 791). However, the manner in which the owl catches this prey has not been recorded. Several observations have been made in Douglas County, Kansas, of the Great Horned Owl apparently seeking out squirrels in the daylight hours in an unusual manner.

At 10:30 a.m., on 19 November 1953, at the University of Kansas Natural History Reservation, while in the vicinity of Hole Woods (see Fitch, 1952. *Univ. Kansas Mus. Nat. Hist., Misc. Publ.* No. 4:10), I observed a Great Horned Owl slowly circling above the trees. Suddenly this bird glided swiftly downward at approximately a forty-five degree angle toward a yellow oak, *Quercus muehlenbergii*. When the owl was within about ten feet of the upper branches, it extended its feet and legs and then struck a squirrel leaf-nest in the periphery of the tree. A fox squirrel emerged, climbed down the supporting branch to the trunk of the tree and crouched there, facing the nest. The owl twice slowly circled the tree and alighted on the branch which bore the leaf-nest, facing the squirrel approximately eight feet away. When the owl lit on the limb, the squirrel began clicking its incisor teeth and continued this noise for about two minutes until the owl flew away south over Skink Field (Fitch, *loc. cit.*). Thereupon, the squirrel descended to the ground and ran west, disappearing in understory vegetation. Immediately following the disappearance of the squirrel, I inspected the nest and thought it intact enough for further use by squirrels. Repeated observations and checks of the nest until March, 1954, however, revealed that it has deteriorated; it seemed not to have been used by squirrels after 19 November.

At 4:30 p.m., on 5 March 1954, three miles west and two miles south of Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas, north of the Wakarusa River, I noticed a Great Horned Owl flying just above an American elm, *Ulmus americana*. The owl attacked a leaf-nest approximately forty feet above the ground in this tree, but no squirrel was flushed. The owl flew into woods to the west. Examination through binoculars showed the nest to be mutilated externally.

Cloud cover seemed not to govern the described behavior of the owls, for the sky was overcast on November 19 and cloudless on March 5.

Mr. Terry A. Vaughan, a fellow graduate student, told me that at 3:00 p.m. on 7 February 1954, two miles west of Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas, he saw a Great Horned Owl carrying a dead fox squirrel. The owl flew out of a tree which seemingly was being used for a roost. Mr. Vaughan and I examined this area on 21 February 1954, and located five pellets, none of which contained any squirrel remains. In the immediate area, however, there were several leaf-nests damaged in a fashion similar to those described above.

In review: the Great Horned Owl catches fox squirrels in daylight, regardless of cloud cover, by searching out and striking leaf nests.—ROBERT L. PACKARD, *State Biological Survey, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, April 1, 1954.*

Pied-billed Grebe taking flight from land.—On April 26, 1954, a live, healthy Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*) was brought to my home in Mount Pleasant, Michigan. It had been found stranded on a wet highway which it presumably had mistaken for water. When placed on the lawn in my back yard, it sat quietly for several minutes while three people stood by it. Little or no wind was blowing. Suddenly the bird arose and beating its wings rapidly ran with pattering feet through the two-inch-high grass