

during the first week of May, the males usually preceding the females by a week or so. Presently the trees are well leafed out, and the birds, concealed above the thick foliage, are feeding vigorously on early caterpillars as they go about their nesting. In 1956 the tanagers returned on their normal schedule, but were greeted by conditions far from customary. The foliage was not advanced, nor were large insects abundant. Tent caterpillars appeared, but these are frequently disdained by tanagers. The hatch of other caterpillars was delayed, but the hordes of warblers present at this time appeared to find an ample supply of small insects for food.

By May 15 the tanagers, particularly the males which had been in the vanguard of the flight, were noted with unusual frequency. And, surprisingly, they were seen mostly on or within a few feet of the ground, foraging for whatever might befall. By May 23 the National Audubon Society, the A.S.P.C.A., and the Bronx Zoo were swamped with inquiries from a curious public. Specimens were brought in, information was sought on proper first aid treatment and on the cause of the phenomenon. On May 25, at four locations in the New York Zoological Park, I observed nine male and four female Scarlet Tanagers; all were near the ground, many congregated about trash receptacles where scraps of food were to be found. They obviously were undernourished; their wings often drooped, they flew reluctantly and with difficulty, and sometimes even clung on vertical tree trunks to rest. Several were brought to the Park for treatment, picked up by hand from the ground, though uninjured. Within a few days they responded to a standard insectivorous bird diet. The public was advised to offer them bread crumbs and raisins, which served as an acceptable substitute.

The cold weather abated by May 29 and conditions for the tanagers improved quickly. By June they had resumed their normal stations in the tree tops where, presumably, their proper food was finally available. They were noted feeding on alate ants and on the larvae of noctuid moths. The crisis caused by a slight fluctuation in temperatures was past, but we have no indication of the mortality attributable to starvation, heavy automobile traffic, or terrestrial predators during this period. The entire episode graphically demonstrates how narrow is the threshold which may, when disturbed, radically affect a natural population.—RICHARD H. MANVILLE, *New York Zoological Society, Bronx 60, New York, June 9, 1956.*

Hudsonian Godwit in Colorado.—A male Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*), apparently the first of the species to be collected in Colorado, was secured by the undersigned and his grandson, Jack Murphy, along the shores of Clarkson Reservoir at the Mile High Duck Club, Adams County, on May 26, 1956. It was in company with a Lesser Yellow-legs (*Tringa flavipes*), an Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*) and a Long-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*). Its actions resembled those of the latter bird, but the godwit was noticeably larger and darker. The white band across the lower back was not evident as the bird fed in the shallows. There is a prior observation for the state (*Colo. Bird Notes*, 2[10]:10) by John and Margaret Douglass, a lone bird which they identified as this species, near Jackson Reservoir in Morgan County on May 22, 1955.—ALFRED M. BAILEY, *Denver Museum of Natural History, Denver, Colorado, June 22, 1956.*

Water moccasin preys on Pied-billed Grebe.—On December 28, 1953, a large water moccasin (*Agkistrodon piscivorus*), was killed in Gulf Hammock, Levy County, Florida. Dissection revealed the presence of an adult Pied-Billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*) in the alimentary canal.

The omnivorous appetite of this reptile is well known to many who have had the curiosity to examine a number of their partially digested meals, as attested by Allen and Swindell (*Herpetologica*, 1948: 1st suppl.). Although "birds" are not uncommonly listed as prey of this reptile (Ditmars, 1936. "The Reptiles of North America," p. 329, 330; Carr, *Tech. Publ. Univ. Florida, Biol. Ser.*, 3[1]:94) few have cited specific instances as have Adams (1956. *Wilson Bull.*, 68:158) and Carr (1937. *Proc. Fla. Acad. Sci.* 1:86-90) in his delightful essay on the Gulf-Island Cottonmouth.

The unusual size of the species ingested seems worthy of record in this instance.—
B. B. LEAVITT, *Department of Biology, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, July 16, 1956.*

Egg-carrying by the Whip-poor-will.—On June 26, 1956, in Tamworth, New Hampshire, a Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus*) flew from the ground at noon and hovered irregularly back and forth before my face. With tail depressed, the bird's flight was fluttering and moth-like. It alighted parallel to the limb of a fallen tree, approximately four feet above the ground and 10 feet from where I stood. The Whip-poor-will was facing me and holding an egg in full view, beneath its body and against the bark, as my two sons could readily see. Although the bird's feet were not visible, it appeared that the egg was being held with the legs and feet. The Whip-poor-will flew away a minute later, carrying the egg. I now discovered two more eggs lying on dead leaves six or seven feet from where the bird had been perching. One was whole and a chick had just begun to pierce the shell of the second one. The eggs, although shaded, lay adjacent to a bare area exposed to full sunshine, 100 feet from a field, in woods of low growth and slash resulting from hurricane damage.

I returned an hour later. The slash made a quiet approach difficult. The parent bird flew up as before, carrying an egg in the region of its legs and hovering before my face. It again alighted on the limb of the fallen tree, with the egg in full view. Then it flew to a log on the ground, about 25 feet from its nesting site. It perched parallel to the log, with egg pressed against the bark. One downy, brown chick had completely emerged at the nesting place. It made a low "bee-rp" note. I returned again at 2:30 p.m. The Whip-poor-will hovered in hesitating fashion, then perched cross-wise on a limb behind me. It was not carrying an egg. A chick and an egg were at the nesting site. It appeared possible that the bird had lost its third egg when flying away with it at the time of my second visit. The second chick had hatched by the following morning. On June 28, the parent bird fluttered in front of me, then perched cross-wise to a limb with wings drooping and, with throat puffed out, gave a grotesque appearance. It made several low notes; a "chuck," a "qu-irk," and a "qu-irr." The two chicks were a few inches from where they had been located originally.

The above incident appears of interest because of the scarcity of recorded information on how a Whip-poor-will may carry an egg and the fact that three eggs were present. Although I have encountered no adequate descriptions of egg-carrying in related birds, Dr. Herbert Friedmann has furnished the following reference regarding an African coucal (1929. *The Bateleur.*, 1:29). "Mr. C. Giles reports that a coucal (probably *Centropus superciliosus*) at Kampala, Uganda, removed its chicks one by one to a place of safety, when the elephant grass in which its nest was constructed was on fire, by carrying each one in turn between her thighs. Mr. Giles is most emphatic in describing what he observed and is certain that the adult bird did not carry the chicks in her feet."—LAWRENCE KILHAM, 7815 Aberdeen Road, Bethesda 14, Maryland, July 10, 1956.