

**Pilot black snake predation on the Long-billed Marsh Wren.**—On 6 June 1965 we observed a juvenile pilot black snake in a Long-billed Marsh Wren (*Telmatodytes palustris*) nest in a marsh along the Potomac River 4 miles south of Washington, D.C. The snake was collected and two fresh Long-billed Marsh Wren eggs were found in its stomach.

The nest containing the snake and several nearby nests were built in narrowleaf cattail (*Typha angustifolia*) at a height of about 4 feet above high tide and at a distance of about 15 yards from the river. The snake, 38.25 cm in total length and 0.75 cm in diameter, was identified as *Elaphe o. obsoleta* by Dr. James A. Peters of the U.S. National Museum.

According to Wright (1957, "Handbook of Snakes," pp. 230-235) this snake is one of the most arboreal of northeastern snakes and is found mostly in hilly, rocky, or scrubby mountainous regions. It lives upland, away from lakes and swamps, and is not generally considered an aquatic or semiaquatic snake. However, Kilham (1959, *Wilson Bull.*, 71:191) observed a pilot black snake near a Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*) nest in a swamp over a period of 5 days.

Uhler et al. (1939, *Trans. Fourth N. Amer. Wildl. Conf.*, pp. 608, 612-613), in a study of pilot black snake food habits in Virginia, reported that birds and their eggs constituted 13.31 per cent by volume of this snake's diet. No marsh wrens were reported as food items but this is to be expected since the study area did not contain marsh wren habitat. Apparently this is the first record of snake predation on the Long-billed Marsh Wren and is certainly the first record for the pilot black snake.—ROGER CLAPP AND TINA C. ABBOTT, U.S. National Museum, Washington, D.C., 7 September 1965.

**Nesting record of the Hermit Thrush in the Black Hills.**—On 19 June 1965, while attending the Wilson Ornithological Society meeting in the South Dakota Black Hills, we observed a Hermit Thrush (*Hylocichla guttata*) nest in the vicinity of Sylvan Lake. Recorded sightings of the Hermit Thrush in the Black Hills are few and no nesting records have been recorded, according to Pettingill and Whitney (1965, "Birds of the Black Hills").

The nest site was approximately 1 mile northwest of Sylvan Lake near the top of the western slope of the canyon below the dam. The nest was about 35 feet from the ground in a birch (*Betula papyrifera*). About 15 feet north of the tree was a sheer granite up-rising estimated to be at least 100 feet in height. South of the tree was a smaller rock about 30 feet in height from which we stepped into the tree to observe the nest. Pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), spruce (*Picea glauca*), and birch were the dominant trees in this moderately wooded area.

We first sighted the nest at 6:30 AM and a bird, presumably the female, was sitting on the nest. After observing no conspicuous eye ring we flushed the bird and immediately saw the reddish tail. The nest held four unmarked blue eggs.

We returned to the nest site at 7:30 AM with Dr. George M. Sutton, who verified our finding after observing the incubating bird and one of the eggs.

We carefully observed the nest from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM, during which time the female remained on the nest. At 9:30 AM a second bird, presumably the male, flew to the large lateral branch supporting the nest. The male, approximately 8 feet from the nest, stayed in this position for 1½ hours, during which time the only movements observed were several head twists, one seemingly in response to the call of a Western Flycatcher (*Empidonax difficilis*). At 11:00 AM he moved down the branch and stood on the edge of the nest. No interactions were noted between him and the incubating bird. The