

We thank John O. Whitaker, Jr., who identified the contents of the gizzard and proventriculus of the collected specimen as follows: earthworms, 45%; flesh (fish ?), 7%; vegetable matter (mostly tubers of an aquatic plant), 15%; snails, 3%; fairy shrimp, 25%. Considerable bluish-gray mud was also present. Seven mallophaga from the bird were determined by Roger D. Price to be *Colpocephalum leptopygos*; we thank Price for his determination and Nixon A. Wilson for forwarding the parasites to him.—RUSSELL E. MUMFORD AND LARRY E. LEHMAN, *Department of Forestry and Conservation, Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana, and Department of Natural Resources, Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Game Area, Medaryville, Indiana, 23 October 1968.*

Breeding status of Whistling Swans near Churchill, Manitoba.—Bent (U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull., 130, Part II. 300, 1925) and the AOU Check-list of North American birds (1957) do not list the Whistling Swan (*Olor columbianus*) as a nesting species in the Churchill area. However, Godfrey (The birds of Canada, 1966) reported that nesting occurred but did not give information on the nesting status of the species.

From late May through August 1968, while employed as biologists with the Manitoba Department of Mines and Natural Resources, we noted swan numbers and nests while conducting surveys for nesting Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*). Aerial surveys by helicopter were conducted 25 and 27 June, and daily from 16 through 20 July. Ground and aerial surveys were also conducted on 20 May, 9 June, 18–22 June, 22 July, and 17 August in the Churchill and Cape Churchill areas.

Twenty-five adult swans summered in the area in 1968. Sixteen, or 65 per cent, of these birds were known to have nested, with eight nests being located. Four of eight nests contained four eggs, while the clutch size of the remaining four was not determined. Seven nests were followed through the study period.

Highest nesting density was from 5 to 10 miles south of Cape Churchill, but nesting pairs ranged from Gordon Point, 12 miles east of Fort Churchill, to 43 miles south of Cape Churchill, near Thompson Point. All nests were within 1 mile of the Hudson Bay coastline. On 11 June, a single low-flying swan was seen 48 miles south of Churchill, near Fletcher Lake. On 22 July, a pair of swans was observed in the same area, but no nests or young were located.

Measurements of two nests and their contents were recorded. Both were in similar habitat and consisted of the following measurements.

Nest 1.—Nest materials consisted of 40 per cent sedge (*Carex* spp.) and 60 per cent unidentified mosses. Measurements were as follows: eggs—109.4 × 68.9, 108.8 × 67.9, 108.2 × 68.6, 106.3 × 68.0 mm; nest base diameter—164.0 × 190.0 cm; nest height—282.5 mm; nest cup depth—142.5 mm; cup base diameter—18.5 cm; nest crown diameter—90.0 × 42.9 cm. This nest was located on a peninsula in a lake of approximately 15 acres. One side of the nest was surrounded by willows (*Salix* spp.), while open water and scattered sedge occurred on the remaining three sides.

Nest 2.—Nest materials consisted of dried mosses, sedges, and unidentified grasses. Measurements are as follows: eggs—108.1 × 69.9, 107.5 × 71.0, 104.4 × 69.5, 101.3 × 67.7 mm; nest base diameter—160.5 × 140.0 cm; nest height—220.0 mm; nest cup depth—140.0 mm; cup diameter—47.6 × 42.9 cm; cup base diameter—20.5 cm; nest crown diameter—80.0 × 84.0 cm. The nest was among 6-inch-tall willows, grasses, and sedges and was located 2 inches from a temporary 8 × 6-foot pool. The nearest permanent water was 35.7 meters northeast of the nest site and consisted of approximately 12 acres.

Vegetation used in nest construction had been pulled from a area 1 to 2 meters around the site.

During incubation, only one pair occupied a lake, pond, or slough. Shortly after hatching the young left the nest, and broods were occasionally seen near other family groups. On 17 August, two pairs, each with three young, were sighted on Norton Lake, approximately 18 miles east-southeast of Fort Churchill. One pair, with their young, apparently had traveled at least 2 miles overland from their nesting site.

Of six broods observed following incubation, five contained three young, while one consisted of four young. One clutch was destroyed by an arctic fox (*Alopex lagopus*), while the fate of the remaining nest was not determined.

Although the number of breeding Whistling Swans located in the Churchill area represents a small percentage of the total North American population, they were common in 1968 where suitable habitat existed. Future studies will have to determine if the local population is decreasing, static, or increasing.

We are indebted to Clait E. Braun and Dr. Ronald A. Ryder, Colorado State University, for help in the preparation of this note.—ALLAN J. PAKULAK AND CARROLL D. LITTLEFIELD, *Department of Fishery and Wildlife Biology, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado 80521, 25 November 1968.*

Eider hatching goose egg.—On 23 June 1967 I found a nest of a Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*), containing four Eider eggs and one egg of a Blue Goose (*Chen caerulescens*). The incubating Eider appeared to be the sole inhabitant of an island 40 meters in diameter, situated in the South Branch Delta of the McConnell River, N.W.T. (60° 50' N, 94° 25' W). Only 11 other Eider nests were located in the 6 sq km delta and six of these were on one island. The Delta represents a peripheral breeding area of the McConnell River Blue Goose colony: not more than 200 Blue Goose nests were located here and none was within one quarter km of the Eider nest described above.

The Eider and her brood left the nest, located in the middle of the island, at noon on 9 July and swam towards an adjacent island 60 m distant, where I was observing from a tower 4 m in height. On land the four young Eiders had difficulty keeping up with the hen. They ran after her, flapping their wings for balance but falling every few meters. As a result they were strung out behind the hen over a distance of two–three meters. The blue-phase Blue gosling, on the other hand, walked beside and sometimes in front of the hen, feeding as it moved. When in the calm water between the two islands the gosling and Eiders experienced no difficulty in keeping up with the hen.

Upon arriving at a pool on the tower island the hen and her young immediately entered the water and began to swim rapidly about while feeding below the surface. The gosling remained out of the water, feeding on sedge (*Carex* sp.). When the family moved to another island on their journey down the Delta they crossed at the bottom of a riffle and swam obliquely up it against the current. Here the gosling was at a disadvantage. The Eiders, when falling far behind the hen, "hydroplaned" back up to her. The gosling, however, was unable to keep up and continually trailed the last Eider.

Later when the family left an island at the top of a very fast, choppy, riffle the gosling did not enter the water. Instead it ran along the bank paralleling the course of the Eiders. Seconds later the hen, followed by her brood, swam back to the island but the gosling did not join them in the water. Eventually the Eiders moved down the riffles staying as close to the bank as possible, and the gosling followed. At the end of the island the gosling jumped off the bank and joined the family in the still water. At this