

several in the vicinity. I presume the honeycreeper chanced upon the behavior pattern and repeated it when it worked.—DENNIS R. PAULSON, *Burke Museum DB-10, Univ. Washington, Seattle, Washington 98195. Received 11 Nov. 1987, accepted 15 Feb. 1988.*

Wilson Bull., 100(3), 1988, p. 504

Osprey hunting on ground for small mammals.—Ospreys (*Pandion haliaetus*) are known hunting specialists that feed primarily on fish. Their hunting technique involves plunging feet first into water to capture prey. In contrast, here we report an Osprey successfully hunting on the ground for ground squirrels (*Citellus* sp.). The observation was made 27 June 1987 approximately 2 km south of Henry Lake, Idaho. The Osprey was observed walking along a dirt road for approximately 30–40 m. Every several meters it would turn its head to the right and either stop or continue to walk. Suddenly, it turned to the right, opened its wings and glided about 2 m, hitting the ground with its legs extended. The Osprey then hopped back toward the road with a ground squirrel in its talons, and flew off with its prey. The species of ground squirrel is unknown. However, ground squirrels were abundant in the area. Several Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis*) also were seen feeding on ground squirrels. Therefore, we assume that the Osprey opportunistically adopted this particular hunting technique to utilize a locally abundant food resource. Although our assessment is subjective, the Osprey did appear to be accomplished in this hunting procedure, suggesting that the technique had been utilized previously. In addition to their regular diet of fish, Ospreys may feed on birds, frogs, crustaceans, and small mammals (Wiley and Loher, *Wilson Bull.* 85: 468–470, 1973). However, there are few actual sightings of Ospreys capturing mammals, and their hunting procedures are not well known. Proctor (*Wilson Bull.* 89:625, 1977) observed an Osprey capturing a small vole (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*) in a salt marsh. In that case the bird was observed to “hover in the same pattern it would in catching a fish and then plunge to the ground.” In contrast, we observed a rather unusual pattern (for Ospreys) of hunting by moving along the ground. Thus, at least two different hunting patterns may be used by Ospreys to catch small mammals. Since, in this instance, the observation was on hard ground rather than in a salt marsh, it is possible that the normal diving method of Ospreys precludes efficient swooping onto prey on hard ground, thus resulting in this particular bird’s adopting the walking hunting technique.—JOHN H. WERREN AND C. JEANNE PETERSON, *Dept. Biology, Dept. Pediatrics, Univ. Rochester, Rochester, New York 14627. Received 15 Dec. 1987, accepted 18 Feb. 1988.*

Wilson Bull., 100(3), 1988, pp. 504–506

Unusual Greater Sandhill Crane egg.—Normally, the eggs of a given species of bird are uniform and fixed in coloration so that a species can be identified by its eggs (Welty 1975). Furthermore, individual birds ordinarily lay eggs of consistent color and pattern (Littlefield 1981, Harrison 1984). Although variations do occur within species, a contrary phenomenon occurs when a bird that normally lays pigmented eggs lays white eggs lacking in color (Welty 1975). This has been documented previously in at least 34 North American bird species (Gross 1968), but until now has not been observed in Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis*). Here we describe the white egg of a Greater Sandhill Crane (*G. c. tabida*) found on Modoc National Wildlife Refuge (N.W.R.), Modoc County, California, during 1986.

The 2543-ha Modoc N.W.R. surrounds the confluence of the north and south forks of

the Pit River, near the town of Alturas in extreme northeastern California. Geographically, the refuge is situated on the western edge of the Great Basin at an elevation of 1322 m. Sandhill Crane production receives high priority as a wildlife objective on the refuge, requiring collection of nest data for annual production estimates.

On 16 May 1986, I observed an adult Sandhill Crane on a nest in the southwest Sharkey Field of Modoc N.W.R. This field is an open, irrigated meadow with vegetation consisting of rushes (*Juncus* sp.), sedges (*Carex* spp.), grasses, and various forbs and is typical of the habitat type supporting the greatest number and highest density of crane nests on the refuge. On 23 May, I recorded nest data and photographed the nest which was composed of rushes, grasses, and bits of moss. It contained two long-oval eggs (Harrison 1979) of ca 20 to 24 days of age as determined by the float method (Westerkov 1950). No embryo movement was noted during flotation. One egg was light tan, marked with darker brown spots and blotches, and measured 100.0 mm × 58.0 mm. The other egg measured 98.4 mm × 57.3 mm, and was uniformly grayish white. Normal crane eggs are described as subelliptical to long oval, smooth with little or no gloss, pale to medium buff or olive in color, spotted and blotched with light to dark brown, and with pale purple or lavender spots (Udvardy 1977, Harrison 1979, Harrison 1984).

The white crane egg could not be confused with those of the Western Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis moffitti*) because of its size, color, and shape. Western Canada Geese, which have been documented as laying eggs in Sandhill Crane nests (Littlefield 1979), also nest on Modoc N.W.R., but lay eggs averaging 87.2 mm × 59.1 mm (Williams and Nelson 1943). Furthermore, Canada goose eggs are described as elliptical to subelliptical and white to creamy white (Harrison 1979).

I rechecked the nest on 6 June and found that the normally colored egg had hatched, as determined by the egg fragments and detached shell membrane. The white egg had a large hole in its side, evidence of avian predation, but was rotten and had not been consumed. Apparent lack of an embryo demonstrated that the egg was infertile or had died at an early stage. Predation of the white egg may have occurred after the normally colored egg had hatched and the cranes had left the immediate area.

Shadick (1985) described albino plumage in a Sandhill Crane, but albinism of the plumage is independent of albinism of the eggs (Gross 1968). Egg pigments are secreted by the walls of the oviduct, particularly in the region of the uterus. In albino eggs, the secretion of pigments is arrested either physiologically or by disturbance, or the egg did not remain in the uterus long enough to receive its full quota of pigment (Welty 1975). There is insufficient evidence to indicate that the trait of laying albino eggs has a genetic basis (Gross 1964, 1965, 1968).

Acknowledgments.—We thank C. Littlefield, S. Derrickson, and C. Blem for reviewing this note. Observations were made while the senior author was employed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which we thank for making information available for this paper.

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Wilson Bull., 100(3), 1988, pp. 506–507

Subadult intrusion and probable infanticide at a Cooper's Hawk nest.—We made the following observations from a tree blind 5 m from a Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) nest in Portage County, Wisconsin. On 26 June 1987, a subadult female Cooper's Hawk in juvenal plumage landed within 3 m of the nest where an adult female was feeding her four young (12–14 days old). The adult looked at the subadult but resumed feeding the nestlings. The subadult called ("kek") and leaned toward the nest as if she would fly to it, but the adult did not exhibit aggressive or defensive behavior. After about 18 min, the adult finished feeding the young and flew from view; almost immediately the yearling flew to within 0.5 m of the nest and landed on a nest support branch. The young moved away from the subadult as it walked toward them with its wings partially extended and crown feathers raised. It lunged and then flew to another nest support branch behind the young. There it resumed a threat posture and pushed itself through the young, knocking one from the nest. JMP immediately retrieved the fallen bird and returned it to the nest where it died less than 1 h later, apparently due to the fall. In the meantime, the fourth young hawk (a "runt") disappeared from the nest. We believe the subadult removed it. On two other occasions later that day (while the adult female was not in view), and again on 27 June, a subadult female Cooper's Hawk landed within 2 m of the nest but flew from view within 1 min.

This observation is similar to one we made on 24 June 1984 at another Wisconsin nest. In that instance, we watched a subadult Cooper's Hawk which likewise elicited no detectable defensive behavior from an adult female, even though it approached to within 3 m of the nest and called for 3–4 min before departing. As in the other case, the adult female showed no defensive behavior. The lack of agonistic response from adults to a nearby subadult could be due to the adult and subadult being related, or to a tendency for nesting females not to attack subadults.

Acknowledgments.—We thank W. and P. Olson for allowing us access to their land, and J. Bielefeldt, D. Evans, and G. Nuechterlein for their comments on this note. For financial support we thank C. and M. Nelson and the Lakeland, Madison, and Milwaukee Audubon Societies.—ROBERT N. ROSENFELD, *Zoology Dept., North Dakota State Univ., Fargo, North*