

## GENERAL NOTES

**A Rufous Hummingbird in Devon, Pennsylvania:** On 6 November 1975, an adult male Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) was observed in the garden of Mr. and Mrs. John Donatone. Anne Donatone was attracted to him by the whirring sound made by his wings as he approached the late blooming Pineapple Sage (*Salvia graiaistyla*). She knew this was not our usual Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilocus colubris*) for this bird was very buffy in appearance with plump cinnamon body, whitish underparts, a metallic red gorget and an emerald forehead.

The area was heavily hit by frost for several nights but the hardy Pineapple Sage was still blooming. It rained on 11 and 12 November. We then supplemented the hummingbird's food supply with fortified nectar placed in a glass tube feeder. The feeder had to be taken in at night due to freezing temperatures.

The Rufous Hummingbird was in a torpid condition during the chilling nights. He roosted in a fire thorn growing up the stone wall of a chimney, perhaps being warmed somewhat by the house. The bird came to feed as early as 6:40 a.m.—on 7 November. During the day he fed about every twenty minutes either from the now wilting flowers or the artificial nectar. The bird rested between feedings in a clematis vine, in a nearby spruce tree or in ivy type vines. He fed as late as 5:25 p.m.—on 9 November.

News of the hummingbird's presence was placed on the Delaware Valley Birding Hot Line and some 150 birders observed him. Because of impending winter weather, a decision was made to capture him. This was done on 14 November. The Rufous Hummingbird was placed in the Philadelphia Zoo where he was still residing as of June 1976.

This constitutes the first Pennsylvania record for the Rufous Hummingbird. The only other records for the northeastern United States are 3 observations from Maryland. (Rowlett, Richard, *Atlantic Naturalist*, 26 (1971) 125). This species customarily nests in the northwestern United States and northward in western Canada to southern Alaska. It generally migrates west of the Rocky Mountains and winters in Mexico.

On 18 July 1976, a Rufous Hummingbird appeared in Contoocook, New Hampshire. It was present for four days. (Tudor Richards, private communication.)

—Kate Brethwaite, Ithan-Villanova, PA 19085.

**The Pocono Environmental Education Center:** In 1972, the National Park Service and Keystone Junior College of La Plume, Pa., formed a partnership to convert a resort, located near Dingman's Ferry, Pa., into the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC).

PEEC's 36 acres of woodland, ponds, streams and waterfalls on the eastern escarpment of the Pocono mountain plateau make an ideal setting for field studies. Birders can use the Center as a base to explore more than 200,000 publicly owned acres in the surrounding Delaware Water Gap National Recreational Area and Pennsylvania State Parks and Forests. Nearby are 39 natural areas deemed suitable for preservation and study by the Nature Conservancy.

The forests are in transition. The dominate species are Chestnut Oak and Scarlet Oak. The understory consists of Rhododendron and Mountain Laurel. Highbush Blueberry occurs in bogs and marsh borders. Stands of Hemlock with a rhododendron association exist in sheltered ravines.

Lower elevations were formerly farm land. Old fields are being taken over by Red Cedar and Grey Birch. Scattered stands of pine, hemlock and hardwoods also occur.

The area encompassing PEEC is on the natural bird migration route along the Delaware River. During seasonal migrations, countless numbers of blackbirds fly through. Warblers and other passerines are dominant when they migrate in spring. The Kittatinny Mountains which cut across the recreation area offer several vantage points to view the fall hawk migrations.

Available at PEEC is a checklist of the 256 bird species known within the area. It is designed for use within the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, the Pocono Escarpment and the state lands of northwestern New Jersey.

Groups can learn more about PEEC by contacting Director Jerry Howard, Pocono Environmental Education Center, R.D. #1, Box 268, Dingman's Ferry, PA 18328.

—Barbara Keeler, 1215 30th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50311.

**Autumn Bird Records from Bake Oven Knob, Pennsylvania (1969-1975):** Since 1961 detailed field studies on autumn bird migrations have been in progress at Bake Oven Knob, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania. These studies have focused mainly on migrating hawks (Heintzelman, 1975; Heintzelman and MacClay, 1975), but efforts also have been made to gather data on other birds. During the period 1961 through 1968, for example, 118 species were observed at the Knob (Heintzelman, 1969). Between 1969 and 1975 another 30 species were added to the Bake Oven Knob list. These additions are summarized here.

#### ANNOTATED LIST

- WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE. One on 12 October 1971 (MacClays). This constitutes the second eastern Pennsylvania record for this century.
- MALLARD. Five records between 17 October (1970; MacClays) and 24 November (1970; Hendrick). A maximum of 60+ on 24 November 1970 (Hendrick).
- BLUE-WINGED TEAL. Six on 13 October 1971 (MacClays).
- WOOD DUCK. Eight on 3 November 1972 (Mears) and 2 on 24 November 1972 (Mears).
- COMMON MERGANSER. Twenty-two on 16 November 1972 (Heintzelman), 1 on 23 November 1972 (MacClay), and 1 on 1 December 1973 (MacClay).
- RED-BREASTED MERGANSER. One on 14 October 1969 (MacClays), 29 on 18 September 1971 (Heintzelman), and 2 on 1 December 1973 (MacClays).
- BLACK VULTURE. One on 27 September 1974 (fide Mears *in* Heintzelman and MacClay, 1975).
- SWAINSON'S HAWK. One on 20 September 1971 (Graham, 1972).
- KILLDEER. One on 19 September 1970 (Mears) and 1 on 21 September 1975 (Wiltraut).
- BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER. One on 12 September 1975 (Mears).
- COMMON SNIPE. One on 18 October 1970 (MacClays).
- GREATER YELLOWLEGS. Thirteen on 18 October 1974 (Mears).
- BONAPARTE'S GULL. Eleven on 7 November 1970 (Heintzelman).
- WHIP-POOR-WILL. One on 16 September 1973 (MacClays).
- GREAT HORNED OWL. One on 15 September 1974 (Fitzpatrick) and 1 on 20 October 1974 (Fitzpatrick).
- EASTERN KINGBIRD. One on 7 September 1971 (Hendrick).
- LEAST FLYCATCHER. One on 24 August 1970 (MacClays), 1 on 30 August 1971 (MacClays) and 1 on 16 September 1974 (Heintzelman).
- HORNED LARK. Eight records between 10 November (1972; Mears) and 4 December (1971; Mears). A maximum of 8 on 15 November 1974 (Mears).
- BANK SWALLOW. One on 10 September 1970 (Tilly).
- BOREAL CHICKADEE. One on 21 October 1975 (Wiltraut).
- BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER. One on 15 August 1972 (Steffey), 2 on 21 August 1973 (Wiltraut), 1 on 28 August 1973 (Wiltraut), and 1 on 23 September 1973 (MacClays).
- WATER PIPIT. Ten on 24 November 1970 (Hendrick).
- YELLOW-THROATED VIREO. One on 4 October 1974 (Mears).
- TENNESSEE WARBLER. Six records between 15 September (1973; MacClays) and 11 October (1975; Fitzpatrick).
- PRAIRIE WARBLER. One on 9 September 1971 (Bergey) and 1 on 21 August 1973 (Wiltraut).
- BOBOLINK. One on 15 September 1973 (MacClays).
- EASTERN MEADOWLARK. One on 19 October 1973 (Mears).
- RUSTY BLACKBIRD. Six on 18 October 1970 (MacClays) and 1 on 26 October 1973 (Mears).
- INDIGO BUNTING. One on 27 September 1969 (Heintzelman).
- HOUSE FINCH. Fifteen on 9 October 1971 (Mears) and 1 on 5 September 1974 (Wiltraut).
- CHIPPING SPARROW. One on 3 October 1971 (Heintzelman).

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following persons provided records included in this summary: A. H. Bergey, F. Fitzpatrick, E. W. Graham, R. R. Hendrick, A. MacClay, F. K. Mears, D. Steffey, F. Tilly, and R. Wiltraut.

#### LITERATURE CITED

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Heintzelman, D. S. and R. MacClay

1975 The 1973 and 1974 Autumn Hawk Counts at Bake Oven Knob, Pennsylvania. *Cassinia*, 55: 17-28.

—Donald S. Heintzelman and Robert MacClay  
629 Green Street, Allentown, Pennsylvania 18102  
and 625 Schuylkill Street, Cressona, Pennsylvania 17929.

**Barn Swallow Nesting Data:** The Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) is a natural cliff and cave nesting bird which has readily adapted to the use of man made structures. A typical colony is located in a barn and contains 6 to 8 nests. Nests from previous years are frequently repaired and used again. When such an existing nest is used, there is a strong tendency to raise 2 broods in one season. When a new nest is constructed, only one brood is customarily raised. Approximately half the total number of nests in a colony are used for two broods. The clutch consists of 4 to 6 eggs, with an incubation period of about 15 days. The nestlings then spend 18 to 23 days in the nest prior to fledging. (Bent, A.C., Life Histories of North American Flycatchers, Larks, Swallows and Allies, Dover, 1963 & Harrison, Hal H., A Field Guide to Birds' Nests, Houghton Mifflin, 1975).

During the spring of 1971, a limited study of Barn Swallow nesting was made at a colony located about 11 miles west of Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania. The area around the colony was rolling countryside and was several miles south of the Blue Mountains. Observations were made at weekly intervals beginning on 30 May and ending 11 July.

Of the 18 nests initially present, four were not active at any time. Subsequently, 6 additional nests were built. Only one of the 6 new nests was active, with 4 eggs and the same number of young. The data in the table are confined to the original 14 active nests. For the purpose of analysis, it was assumed that the nest which contained 4 young on 30 May had previously contained 4 eggs.

Two distinct cycles are apparent in the data. The first cycle contains 61 eggs in 14 nests, giving an average clutch size of 4.36 eggs per nest. These eggs produced 52 nestlings. Apparently, 50 young were fledged. Thirty-one eggs, half the total, hatched during the week ending 6 June. From this, it is apparent that half the eggs were laid during the interval 16 May to 23 May. Egg production for the first cycle spanned the interval of approximately 12 May to 6 June.

Because observations of the second cycle were incomplete, the following comments can only be considered tentative. The second cycle contained 24 eggs in 6 nests, for a clutch size of 4.00 eggs per nest. Egg production for this cycle commenced during the week ending 27 June and may not have been complete at the time of the final observation, 11 July. Poole cites Pennsylvania egg dates as late as 23 July. (Poole, E. L., manuscript, ref., *Cassinia*, 1916). From this, it can be inferred that nestlings would be present in this colony until at least mid-August.

Nests completed prior to 30 May showed a high rate of use, 78%. Nests completed after this date show a very low occupancy, 17%. However, it is possible these nests would be used in subsequent years. This suggests the possibility that nests of the year, rather than being used for one brood, may typically not be used at all.

In the first cycle, this Barn Swallow colony showed high hatchability, 85% and little loss of nestlings prior to the time for fledging, 4%. A second cycle of nesting occurred. It probably involved only 6 nests. Clutch size in the second cycle was smaller than in the first. Assuming similar trends in hatchability and nestling success, the second cycle would produce about 25% of the colony's young for the year.

#### Weekly Nest Record

Nest Number	Date						
	30/5	6/6	13/6	20/6	27/6	5/7	11/7
1	5-0	1-4	0-4	0-4			
2	5-0	0-4	0-4		2-0	4-0	4-0
3	0-4	0-4	0-4		5-0	5-0	0-4
4	5-0	0-4	0-4			2-0	
5	5-0	0-5	0-5	0-5			
6	6-0	1-5	0-5	0-5	1-0	5-0	5-0
7	2-0	2-0	0-2	0-2	0-2		5-0
8	5-0	0-5	0-5		1-0	3-0	3-0
9	2-0	5-0	2-3	0-5	0-3		
10	3-0	4-0	4-0	0-3	0-3		
11	3-0	3-0	2-1	1-1	0-1		
12	4-0	5-0	3-1	0-4	0-4		
13		3-0	3-0	0-2	0-2	0-2	
14	4-0	0-4	0-4	0-4			
Totals							
Eggs	49	24	14	1	9	21	17
Young	4	35	42	35	15	2	4

Table: The first digit of each pair is the number of eggs, the second digit, the number of young. No entry indicates the nest was empty at that time.

—Edward L. Altemus, 7021 Lafayette Avenue, Fort Washington, PA 19034.

**The Blue Grosbeak in Bucks County:** The first published sighting of the Blue Grosbeak (*Guiraca caerulea*) in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, was recorded by Lester Thomas on 12 August 1956 at Churchville Reservoir. He reported a male, a female and two young birds. (Thomas, Lester, *Cassinia*, XLII (1957) 23). During this past summer, three separate series of observations of this species were made. A nest was located, one of the few ever found in Pennsylvania. (Poole, Earl, *Pennsylvania Birds*, 1964).

On 16 June 1975, David Styer sighted a first year male Blue Grosbeak about one mile north of Newtown. On 18 and 20 June, he observed a female with the male. The birds were not seen after the latter date.

The next series of observations began on 19 June and occurred at the Neshaminy Mall, located 6 miles south of Newtown. I found a fully mature male singing from the top of a goldenrod spike. Upon being disturbed, he moved to a Black Locust, through some small trees and up into a mature White Ash directly across Bristol Road from the site. This general behavior continued until 22 July when a female was first noted. The next day, the tall grass in the area was cut. The nest was readily discernable in a small White Dogwood shrub. It was located about ten feet from the crown of the hill near the corner of Bristol Road and

U.S. Route 1. The disturbance did not chase the Blue Grosbeaks away. On 26 July, the nest contained one egg. Incubation continued with both the male and female visiting the nest. On 11 August, disaster struck when all the growth on the hillside was cut. The nest was found empty and was collected. There was no sign of the family, but the next morning, the male was seen singing from the weeds below the ash tree. He frequently rose to the lower branches. He was repeatedly seen carrying food, but there was no sign of the family. On 3 September, the male was last seen.

On 9 August, I found another singing male Blue Grosbeak at Core Creek County Park, in an area directly behind St. Mary's Hospital. This is located about 2 miles south of Newtown. No nest was found, but the activities of the male were monitored daily. On 15 August, a female and three young birds were seen in the tops of a thicket below a large White Ash tree. The next day, only two young were seen with the female. The family moved about the area visiting an evening primrose-goldenrod area and a nodding fox-tail grass area. This latter (*Setaria faberii*) was observed to be used as food. The tip of the grass would be broken off by the bird and fed to one of the other birds or eaten. This family was last observed on 23 August.

One or both of the latter two sightings were also seen by Julian Boryszewski, Mike Bodri, Alan Brady, Jack Dyer, Joe Klemberg and Dorothy Orolin.

—Bob Maly, 2411 Acorn Rd., Neshaminy Hills, PA 19047.

**Gull-billed Tern in Pennsylvania:** A Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) was seen on 6 August 1975 at Gov. Prinz Park on the Delaware River in Delaware County, Pa., by Franklin and Barbara Haas. It was first observed flying over the river catching butterflies. It came in toward shore and rested on a piling. The bird's pale plumage and large black bill were quite evident. There were several Foster's Terns (*Sterna forsteri*) in the area for comparison. When we returned home, we called Keith Richards who drove down to the park and also observed the bird. Others looked for it on following days, but it was not seen again.

Poole (Pennsylvania Birds, 1964) lists this species as hypothetical in Pennsylvania. He cites four previous records from the late nineteenth century. While no specimens are extant, this record reinforces the notion that the Gull-billed Tern occasionally occurs in Pennsylvania as a post breeding wanderer.

—Franklin and Barbara Haas, Forge Road, Media, PA 19063.

**Lark Sparrow Sightings at Island Beach State Park:** On the evening of 5 September 1975, Bob Schutsky and I flushed an adult Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*) that had been feeding along the roadside at Island Beach State Park in New Jersey. The site was opposite the old Coast Guard Station near the far end of the park. We were able to observe the bird for some time. It was in nearly adult plumage with a complete chestnut earpatch and a clear breast with a small, somewhat indistinct breast spot. The throat was still somewhat greyish, as was the median and eye line. This bird was seen in the same location on 6 September.

On 12 September, I located another adult plumaged Lark Sparrow feeding along the roadside approximately 3 miles north of the previous location. This bird had a larger, very distinct breast spot. The eye and median line were whiter than those of the previous bird. This bird was seen again on 13 September.

On 15 September, I found 2 Lark Sparrows in the late afternoon. They were feeding along the roadside about one and one half miles from the entrance of the State Park. One bird was fully adult with a small breast spot but a very clear median and eye line. The other was an immature bird with a faintly grey upper breast and pale head markings. The two remained inseparable during the time they were observed. The immature was seen again the next day.

On 19 September, an adult Lark Sparrow was found feeding about  $\frac{1}{8}$  of a mile south of the Coast Guard Station. This bird was in striking adult plumage with a very white throat and intensely white median and eye line. The breast spot was larger and darker than that of any adult previously observed.

On 20 September, we observed a Lark Sparrow perched on telegraph wires and later feeding along the road. This bird was in partial adult plumage, for it lacked the dark chestnut ear patch but was clear breasted with a distinct breast spot. This bird was at the upper end of the island. Later that day, a second bird, the adult in striking plumage was seen feeding at

the same location as on the nineteenth.

This leads me to the conclusion that during the week of 14 September, there were at least four (4) different Lark Sparrows at Island Beach.

On 21 September, an immature Lark Sparrow was observed feeding just south of the old Coast Guard Station. While this bird was being observed, several of us watched a partial adult plumaged bird feeding at the upper end of the park. That afternoon, around 3:00 P.M., we observed an adult bird feeding at the end of the island opposite the Coast Guard Station. Fred Lesser also reported seeing a Lark Sparrow on Sedge Island, southwest of the roadside observation and off the island proper about noon on this date. He could not recall the specific plumage of the bird.

The last Lark Sparrow I observed that fall was on 22 September. This series of records documents the Lark Sparrow's status as a rare but regular fall migrant along the New Jersey Coast.

—Jesse Grantham, Northbrook Road, Kennett Square, PA 19348.

**Gannet(s) in Delaware and Chester Counties, Pennsylvania, and New Castle County, Delaware:** On 15 October 1975, I received a call from a woman who said she had an immature Gannet (*Morus bassanus*) on her pond. The location was about one mile east of the Brandywine River at Chadds Ford and ½ mile north of U.S. Route 1 in Delaware County, Pa. She stated the bird had been discovered on 13 October in a neighbor's woods as it was being harassed by a dog. The bird was captured and placed on a nearby pond. The next morning the bird was gone. However, that evening, the Gannet was rediscovered walking up Harvey Road, several hundred yards from the pond. The bird was returned to the pond. On the morning of 15 October, the lady found the bird in her driveway and once again chased it back to the pond.

When I arrived on the scene, we could not locate the bird. We assumed it had wandered off again, for it was incapable of flight. The Gannet was well described by the several individuals who handled or saw the bird over this three day period. It was described as being in a weak or emaciated condition, but no external defects. The bird was not seen in Delaware County again. I mentioned the incident at the 15 October meeting of the Delmarva Ornithological Society.

On 17 October, Paul Beach called and said that Rodman Ward had picked up an immature Gannet in his driveway that morning. On contacting Mr. Ward, the following tale was told to me: "This Gannet was picked up by Ralph Kelly of Raintree Road on the afternoon of 9 October. Seeing it was a water bird, he tossed it into a small, nearby pond. Thereafter, it seems to have been a neighborhood pet or problem. It was in the area thru the thirteenth. Attempts were made to feed it. The bird frequently strayed from the pond and was thrown back."

Raintree Road is in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and connects to state route 52 about 200 yards north of the Delaware state line. At least one of the Gannet's rescues was made at the house of Dr. Howard L. Reed on Sycamore Lane, located just over the line in New Castle County, Delaware.

I found this bird on 17 October on Selbourne Drive in New Castle County. This was about 250 yards from Raintree Road. I took the bird to the Delaware Museum of Natural History. Kelly said the bird had never tried to fly. Mrs. Reed said she noted it had a bad eye, which was very obvious to us when we found it.

The question, of course, is how many immature Gannets were there? Raintree Road is at least 2½ miles from the bridge at Chadds Ford by the USGS map. If both birds were truly incapable of flight, it seems unlikely that only one Gannet was involved. The distance between the two sightings is approximately 3½ miles. This would be a good hike for a flightless Gannet over rough terrain and across U.S. Route 1 at least twice. However, there are interesting correlations in the observations. The last Chester County observation was 13 October. The Delaware County bird appeared that evening, and remained until 15 October. This was followed by the capture of a bird in Delaware state, on 17 October. It seems unlikely that the bird would return to the area where it was first observed.

I conclude then that there were quite possibly two immature Gannets in the area during the week of 13 October 1975.

—Jesse Grantham, Kennett Square, PA 19348.

**Green-tailed Towhee in Gloucester County:** On or about November 20, 1975, an adult Green-tailed Towhee appeared at the feeding station of Mrs. Joseph Pidgeon in Mickleton, Gloucester County, New Jersey. Mrs. Pidgeon did not keep a record of her first sighting of the bird, but she told me in a phone conversation that she specifically recalled seeing the bird on Thanksgiving Day (November 27) and on several occasions prior to that. Word of the bird's presence was not immediately made known, but after William Middleton's sighting on December 19 and subsequent "hot line" publicity, hundreds of observers visited Mickleton to see the bird. Mrs. Pidgeon estimated that at least 300, perhaps as many as 500, visitors showed up at one time or another. The Towhee's appearances at the feeder tended to be rather brief but regular, and most observers with a little patience were able to see the bird. The Towhee remained throughout the winter and was last seen by Mrs. Pidgeon on April 10. During the final two or three weeks it was seen only sparingly.

The present record would appear to be the fifth for New Jersey and the first in southern New Jersey. The first state record was the one observed in Bergen County on several occasions between December 23, 1939, and January 30, 1940 (David Fables, Jr., *Annotated List of New Jersey Birds*, 1955, p. 68). The second record was that of the bird which showed up at the feeder of George Johnson in Newton, Sussex County, on January 21, 1961 (*New Jersey Nature News*, June, 1961, p. 61). This bird remained until April 21, by which time 138 observers (the writer among them) had signed the guest register at the Johnson home (*Audubon Field Notes*, June, 1961, p. 313). The third bird appeared at a feeder in Whitesville, Ocean County, on November 25, 1962 (*Audubon Field Notes*, Feb., 1963, p. 21). This bird was present until at least March 22, 1963, during which time it had been seen by hundreds of observers (*Audubon Field Notes*, June, 1963, p. 316). The fourth record was at Flemington, Hunterdon County. A bird appeared at the Bellis feeder there on November 28, 1968, and remained for several months (Richard Kane, pers. comm.). The published terminal date of December 14 (*Audubon Field Notes*, June, 1969, p. 465) is incorrect.

The Green-tailed Towhee breeds in higher elevations in the west and southwest and winters principally in northwestern Mexico, just south of its breeding range. In view of the relatively large number of extralimital records, it is perhaps somewhat surprising that the bird has not yet been recorded in Pennsylvania. There is only one Delaware record, a bird present at a feeder near Wilmington from late January to early April, 1964. This bird was banded on February 29 and seen by many observers (*Cassinia*, 1964, p. 49).

I thank Maurice Barnhill, Richard Kane, and G. Bernard Van Cleve for helpful information in connection with the preparation of this note.

—James K. Meritt, 809 Saratoga Terrace, Turnersville, New Jersey 08012.

**Probable Breeding Record of Purple Gallinule in Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge, Delaware:** At about 7:00 a.m. on 24 July 1975, I parked my car at the edge of the road by Finis Pool at Bombay Hook Refuge, located near Smyrna, Delaware. I climbed to its roof to watch and to listen to the morning sounds of the swamp. The weather was idyllic, though the stillness made life easier for the infinity of mosquitoes who swarmed about.

After a few minutes, I caught a glimpse of what I expected to be a Common Gallinule (*Gallinula chloropus*). Eventually, the bird appeared in full view. It was distinctly blue in coloration and had a light colored shield-like growth on its forehead. Indeed, it was a Purple Gallinule (*Porphyryla martinica*)! Shortly thereafter, and much to my surprise, a second bird appeared. Now there were two Purple Gallinules in full view.

The birds remained nearby as evidenced by a continuous string of kek-kek noises. I soon discovered a much smaller grey-black colored bird moving through the vegetation. A second look confirmed this to be a chick in downy plumage. In rapid succession, two more chicks appeared. The feet and legs of these chicks were pale green, while their bills were pale yellow with a darker tip.

I continued to watch the birds, with one of the adults herding the three chicks along. Though at times the chicks would each be 5 to 10 feet from the adult, this caused no overt alarm. However, the chicks strayed no further away than this. All told, one or more of the birds was in view for nearly 30 minutes.

According to the refuge list, this was the first sighting of the Purple Gallinule for Bombay Hook and, of course, the first evidence of breeding. Along with other Delaware observations

in 1974 (Brokaw, W.A., *Delmarva Ornithologist*, X (1975) 2.), this record suggests that there may be a northward extension of the breeding range of this species.

—Stephen H. Putman, 7030 Wissahickon Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19119.

**Bobolink Nest in Chester County, Pennsylvania:** On 7 June 1975, while birding in the King Ranch area west of Unionville in Chester County, fifteen (15) singing male Bobolinks (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) were observed at a total of four (4) locations. At one of these locations, along Hill Top View Road, a male and a female were observed carrying food. While we were visible, the birds perched nearby and chipped sharp notes while assuming an erect posture and jerking their tails upward. In short, the birds appeared alarmed.

The area was in a field of rolling contour. The vegetation was grasses of undetermined species which varied in height from about 8 inches to 30 inches. A few scattered plants of other herbaceous vegetation were present.

We assumed a nest was nearby and decided to locate it. After a careful, but abortive, search of the area, strategy seemed in order. One of us concealed himself while the other left the area as a decoy. After a few minutes, the birds returned to their feeding routine, thus localizing the nest. The nest was subsequently located.

The nest was positioned on the ground under a lone specimen of Hairy Vetch (*Vicia villosa*), thus providing exceptionally dense cover about the nest. It contained four (4) young birds which had dark skin lightly covered with buffy down. We estimated their age at three (3) days. The nest itself was not elaborate, consisting of a slight depression which was lined and bordered with a scant array of grass stems. The combination of location and coloration resulted in excellent concealment.

Bobolinks have been present in summer in this area of Chester County for many years. Charles Pennock found them near Kennett Square in 1932 (Albert Conway, private communication). Poole cites their presence near Embreeville with no date specified (manuscript, Archives of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia). The West Chester Bird Club record file contains a record of nesting in Chester County in 1959 (Phyllis Hurlock, private communication).

According to A. C. Bent (*Life Histories of North American Blackbirds, Orioles, Tanagers and Allies*, 1958), the young of the Bobolink require approximately three (3) weeks between hatching and obtaining independence. Thus it is apparent that the maintenance of the Bobolink as a nesting species in southeastern Pennsylvania requires that the mowing of hay fields be postponed until at least July first.

—Keith C. Richards, 348 Summit Rd., Media, PA  
and Jesse Grantham, Northbrook Road, Kennett Square, PA 19348.

**Parasitic Jaeger in Lancaster County:** On 27 August 1975 at 1230 hr I observed a Parasitic Jaeger flying over Muddy Run Pumped Storage Pond, located near Drumore, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. When first sighted, the bird was soaring along the east shore of Muddy Run in the company of Turkey Vulture, Black Vulture, Great Heron and a Red-tailed Hawk. The identity of the bird was not immediately apparent to me; it gave the appearance of a dark gull or tern. A quick look through Peterson's *Field Guide to the Birds* made jaeger seem a strong possibility, but I had missed several of the field marks necessary for a positive identification.

At 1330 hr, Theodore W. Gutzke, Enn Kotkas and I went by boat and relocated the bird soaring over mid-pond. It approached to within 30 meters of the boat, circled several times, then slowly flew away. We had an excellent view of the bird for approximately one minute and agreed that it was a Parasitic Jaeger, most closely resembling the dark phase. All distinguishing field marks were carefully noted.

We observed the jaeger twice more that afternoon. It was subsequently seen by many observers every day through 31 August and photographed on several occasions. To my knowledge it was not seen after this date.

Several behavioral observations were made during the jaeger's 5-day stay at Muddy Run. Feeding was usually observed in the morning. It fed while at rest on the water, taking dead fish from the surface. The typical behavior of robbing other birds of food was not observed. It was, however, seen to harass Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Herring Gull, Ring-billed Gull and Fish Crow, for no apparent reason. There was also an encounter between the

jaeger and a flock of twelve Tree Swallows. They continually dived on the jaeger as it rested on the water. It reacted to each attack by jerkily flapping its wings and lifting up on the water. The encounter lasted about two minutes.

All of the above observations were made between 0700 and 1430 hrs. We were not able to locate the jaeger during the remainder of the day. However, it was sighted again each morning on Muddy Run Pond.

Poole (*Pennsylvania Birds*, 1964) lists the Parasitic Jaeger as accidental in Pennsylvania. He gives a total of six or seven sight records for the state. A formerly unreported light phase bird was seen on Muddy Run Pond 3 August 1973. It is interesting that both observations on Muddy Run Pond were in August, while Poole gives sight records between 22 May and 18 June in spring and 24 September and 29 October in autumn. Scott and Cutler (*American Birds*, 29 (1975) 37) suggest possible summering of both Parasitic and Pomarine Jaeger off the coast of Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey, based on observations made by R. A. Rowlett from 7 through 16 August 1974. It is my opinion that the bird which I observed on Muddy Run Pond was a fall migrant, as it arrived after the passage of a cold front with strong northwest winds and left under similar conditions.

—Robert M. Schutsky, Ichthyological Associates, Inc., P.O. Box 12, Drumore, PA 17518.

**Winter Food of Saw-whet Owls in Central Pennsylvania:** Pellets were collected from beneath roosting sites of two Saw-whet Owls (*Aegolius acadicus*) during the winter of 1973-1974. The roosting sites were in a 200 acre mixed stand of Red Pine (*Pinus resinosa*) and White Pine (*Pinus strobus*) located near Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania. Roosts of the two owls were solitary and at opposite ends of the pine woods. Each owl favored a particular area for roosting, within which several roosting trees were used during the three months of observation. Actual roosting sites were in thickly foliated Red Pines which were typically located near the margin of the woods.

A total of 94 pellets were collected during the months of December, January and February. Pellets averaged 1.2 cm in diameter, 2.5 cm in length and 2.9 gms in weight. Seventy-eight (83%) each contained a single broken skull or mandible, 2 (2.1%) contained feathers identified as English Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), and the other 13 (13.8%) contained only fur and badly broken and unidentifiable pieces of bone. Skulls of 5 mammal species were identified. Of these, 41 (43.6%) were Whitefooted Mice (*Peromyscus leucopus*), 27 (28.7%) were Meadow Mice (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*), 5 (5.3%) were Short-tailed Shrews (*Blarina brevicauda*) 4 (4.3%) were House Mice (*Mus musculus*), and 1 (1.1%) was a Southern Bog Lemming (*Synaptomys cooperi*).

Although there is no previously published information on the food habits of this owl in Pennsylvania the results of this study are similar to the winter foods reported for Saw-whet Owls in Southwestern Ohio by Randle and Austing (1952; *Ecology* 33:422-426). The comparatively high percentage of White-footed Mice suggests that the Saw-whet Owls hunted mainly in and along the margins of the pine woods. The Southern Bog Lemming was probably taken in a wooden swamp adjacent to one of the Saw-whet Owl roosts.

—Dwight G. Smith, Southern Connecticut State College, New Haven, CT 06515

**Possible Transportation of Young Great Horned Owls by Parent:** On 13 March 1976, Mr. and Mrs. Ridgway Goodwin of Wycombe, Pa., showed me the nest of a Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) on land adjacent to their own. It was about seventy-five feet up in an isolated Sycamore Tree at the edge of a field, about one hundred feet from Mill Creek. On that day, one of the adults was on the nest. Occasionally, a fuzzy young owl would show itself scrambling around under the parent.

On 19 March, I returned to the nest and was able to photograph two juvenal owls on the nest. They were quite young and fuzzy. No flight feathers were visible. The adult was being harassed by neighborhood crows and stayed in the background.

On the following day an unusual windstorm swept Bucks County. Many trees and limbs went down. With them, many precariously built bird nests fell. Ridge Goodwin checked the nest tree after the storm and the nest was gone. One baby owl was clinging to a bare branch where the nest had been. The other young bird was not seen.

On 21 March, a most amazing observation was made. Both owls were on the branches of an Elm tree located seventy-five yards away, across the twenty foot wide stream and thirty feet above the ground. One owl was sitting upright and appeared quite healthy. The other one was draped over a lower branch and seemed dead. A photograph was taken by Scott Tuttle at this time. The birds remained in the same tree for several days. The weak owl regained strength. By 10 April, they could both fly well from tree to tree.

After comparing many possibilities with the facts: the age of the birds, the height of the nest, the solitary location of the nest tree, the width of the stream, the distance to the second location and their height above the ground, I conclude that they were carried to the new location by one of the parent birds.

—Alan Brady, Wycombe, PA. 18980

**Another Exceptional Autumn Migration of White-breasted Nuthatches:** During the autumn of 1968 an exceptionally large migration of White-breasted Nuthatches (*Sitta carolinensis*) occurred at Bake Oven Knob, Lehigh County, Pa. with 297 being counted between 4 September and 24 October (Heintzelman and MacClay, *Wilson Bulletin*, 1971, 83: 129-131). Since then our autumn counts of White-breasted Nuthatches at the Knob dropped to more normal numbers: 22 in 1969, 41 in 1970, 7 in 1971, 10 in 1972, 38 in 1973, and 9 in 1974 (D. S. Heintzelman, unpublished data).

In 1975, however, another large eruptive migration of White-breasted Nuthatches occurred at the Knob. Between 10 September and 7 December, 141 individuals were counted. Two particularly notable flights were documented: 24 on 3 October (*vide* Fred K. Mears) and 81 on 4 October (*vide* F. H. Brock). These peaks occurred somewhat later than most of the important peaks in the 1968 flights (mid- to late September).

It is likely that weather conditions prevailing on 3 and 4 October 1975 were responsible for precipitating the nuthatch flights documented on those dates. On both days cool air temperatures and moderate to brisk northwest winds prevailed along with cloudless skies and excellent visibility. As with the 1968 nuthatch eruption, however, the primary cause or causes for the 1975 nuthatch eruption is (are) unknown.

Our appreciation again is extended to the many people who assisted in our migration studies at Bake Oven Knob and who recorded some of the data used in this publication.

—Donald S. Heintzelman, 629 Green St., Allentown, PA 18102  
and Robert MacClay, 625 Schuylkill St., Cressona, PA 17929.

**Yellow-crowned Night Herons in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania:** On 23 June 1973, two birds of this species appeared at the farm of Dr. Paul Angstadt, Jr., which is located midway between Fairview Village and Worcester in Montgomery County. (Cutler, *American Birds* 27, 853, 1973). There is a small stream flowing some forty-five feet from the Angstadt home, with a grassy plot between. The birds came in to feed in the grass during the last hours before dusk. When there was a shower, they often came in earlier in the day. The birds were seen periodically for about a month.

On 20 June 1974, two Yellow-crowned Night Herons returned to the area. They were seen periodically for five weeks. On 30 June 1975, two birds once again appeared, this time remaining approximately three weeks.

In each year, all birds seen were adults. No young were observed at any time. Upstream from the house about one quarter mile is a wooded area, but at no time was it possible to search for a nest.

There is a previous nesting record of this species in Montgomery County. Dr. C. Brooke Worth found a pair nesting near Ambler in 1936. (Poole, *Pennsylvania Birds*, 1964 and Edward Reimann, private communication.)

—Raymond J. Middleton, Norristown, PA 19400.

**Cattle Egret in Lehigh County:** On 19 and 20 April 1976, two Cattle Egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*) were observed by Mrs. L. W. Craig on her farm in Schnecksville, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania. One of these birds remained until 21 April when I photographed it.

The only previous record of this species in Lehigh County is of a single bird observed in a pasture at Zionsville by Miriam Schantz from late September thru 12 December 1966.

—Richard E. Wiltraut, 54 Pershing Blvd., Whitehall, PA 18052.