

FIELD NOTES

Singular Brown Pelican Feeding Behavior

On 8 September 1974 an immature Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) was observed swimming in a shallow freshwater pond located in Panama City Beach, Florida. The bird appeared to be stalking prey hidden in the flowers of the Water Lily (*Nymphaea odorata*).

Open flowers were cautiously approached by the bird; then, with a lunging stab, they were engulfed by the pelican's pouch and plucked from their stems. The pelican proceeded to shake the flower about in its pouch, make several obvious swallowing motions, and then expel the flower.

Prey identification was never possible, but it was fairly apparent that food of some sort was being secured, although animal food could hardly have been present in large amounts. This process was repeated more than half-a-dozen times in the course of 8 to 10 minutes.

As the pelican soon flew off strongly toward the Gulf and then westward along the coast, it is not likely that its singular feeding behavior should be attributed to sickness or injury. During that day, however, Hurricane Carmen had created considerable turmoil in the Gulf; quite possibly the 3 to 5 foot waves then rolling in discouraged the pelican's characteristic plunge-diving and forced it to adopt a different feeding procedure.

Other recent observations (Dinsmore, *Florida Field Naturalist*, 1974:11) have noted that Brown Pelicans may forage while swimming in salt water. The present record not only indicates that pelicans are adaptable enough to utilize fresh water while feeding, but also demonstrates that food sources other than fish may comprise at least a small part of their diet.—Stephen J. Stedman, 1407 East Sixth Court, Panama City, Florida 32401.

Whip-poor-will Singing in Winter

On 31 December 1973 at dusk near the intersection of the Fellsmere Canal and Lateral Q, Indian River County, Florida, I heard a Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus*) give a series of four or five "whip-poor-wills" from a strip of woods between the far side of the canal and the adjoining pasture.

Nelson, quoted by Tyler in Bent (1940, U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 176:179), said that the Whip-poor-will is not in song during the winter in central Florida, but just before it starts northward late in March it sings for a few evenings. Sustained singing after arrival in fall and continuing oc-

asionally as late as mid-November was reported by Robertson and Ogden (1968, Florida region. *Audubon Field Notes*, 22:29). Sprunt (1954, Florida Bird Life, New York, Coward-McCann:259-260) in 17 winters at Okeechobee heard the species only twice, in the same hammock two successive years on 31 January 1949 and 30 January 1950, both warm winters. The temperature was about 83 degrees when I heard the bird sing.--Margaret Coon Bowman, Box 783, Wabasso, Florida 32970.

Foods of the Osprey at Newnans Lake ¹

Newnans Lake in eastern Alachua County, three miles east of Gainesville, has a high Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) population. During the spring and summer of 1972, Ospreys were observed with telescopes and field glasses as they fished there, prey species were identified, and size estimates made of prey.

Thirty-four captures were observed. All prey were fish, 25 (73.5%) of which were Gizzard Shad (*Dorosoma cepedianum*) and Threadfin Shad (*D. petenense*). The remaining nine (26.5%) fish were sunfish (*Lepomis sp.*), Black Crappie (*Pomoxis nigromaculatus*), Large-mouth Bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), or were unidentifiable. The average length of captured prey was about 18 cm with a range of 7.5-35 cm. At least eight (23.5%) captures were of dead or dying fish floating near the surface.

Fishery studies (unpublished) by the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission revealed that shad make up 34.0% of the fish population in the lake. Threadfin Shad comprise 32.3% and Gizzard Shad 1.7%. The average length of Gizzard and Threadfin Shad taken from Newnans Lake in this fishery studies was 13 and 10.3 cm. respectively.

Ospreys were preying on shad of above-average length at a rate greater than their relative abundance would indicate (even after eliminating from the count those shad picked up as dead or dying). A ratio of 1.1 attempts per capture (excluding those of dead or dying fish) suggests that shad are especially vulnerable to being captured by Ospreys. This is even more apparent when this capture ratio for shad is compared with a ratio of four attempts per capture on another area where the primary prey species was sunfish, *Lepomis sp.*--Stephen A. Nesbitt, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, 4005 South Main Street, Gainesville, Florida 32601.

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