

FALL NESTING OF KILLDEERS IN MISSISSIPPI

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On 16 November 1988, we discovered, captured, banded and color-banded three Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*) chicks that were accompanied by two adults near an apartment complex in Starkville, Oktibbeha County, Mississippi. At capture, the chicks weighed 11.1, 13.0, and 13.1 g, weights characteristic of chicks 1-2 days old in east Mississippi (JAJ and BJSJ, unpublished data). Following banding, the adults led the chicks towards an adjacent open area and they were not seen again.

A second brood of fall-raised Killdeer chicks was observed by Malcolm Hodges on 11 December 1988 at the Starkville Sewage Lagoons about three kilometers from site of the earlier brood discovered. These chicks were not the same ones, however, since they were not banded. Two chicks, one nearly adult size and one appearing about 3/4 adult size were accompanied by two adult Killdeers as they foraged over a mud flat.

Bette Jackson (Schardien 1981) had previously found adults tending chicks in Mississippi only as late as 18 August. Townsend (1929) reported egg dates only into early July. Imhof (1976) reported an egg date only as late as 12 June and downy young as late as 14 July for 60 Killdeer nest efforts in Alabama.

The summer of 1988 was characterized by drought conditions in the southeastern U.S. followed by near tropical weather continuing well into the fall. We suspect that this weather combination is likely the cause of the unusually late nesting efforts of these Killdeers.

LITERATURE CITED

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