

**Early nesting at Cape Sable, Florida.**—Cape Sable, in Monroe County, lies at the southern tip of the Florida peninsula and is the most southern point (excluding the Florida Keys) in the United States. It is well known that the breeding season of the birds of this region varies considerably from year to year, and that most species nest earlier there than in more northern parts of their range. The only settlement on the Cape is Flamingo (at about 25° north latitude) and often no one lives in any of its half-dozen houses.

On December 26, 1933, Douglas S. Riggs, J. Adger Smyth and the writer visited Alligator Lake, which is about five miles west of Flamingo. Here we discovered a colony of about five hundred pairs of Wood Ibis (*Mycteria americana*) nesting in both living and dead red mangroves (*Rhizophora mangle*), mainly along the southern edge of this small, shallow, salty lake. The nests were placed from three to thirty feet over water that was only a few inches deep. Exceptionally large clutches were the rule this season, for of the two hundred nests examined the majority contained four eggs and five nests held five eggs each. No young were seen but some of the eggs were at least two weeks advanced in incubation. Fifteen Roseate Spoonbills (*Ajaia ajaja*) were observed in the rookery. One of them seemed to have a nest as it alighted fifty feet away and gave a few low, guttural quacks. No nest was located, however. A Black-crowned Night Heron's (*Nycticorax n. hoactli*) nest, containing a single fresh egg, was examined. Two Florida Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus floridanus*) were flushed from fresh, completely built, but empty nests. The nest of a Southern Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus l. leucocephalus*), located eight miles west of Flamingo, was examined on this date and found to contain a single fresh egg. The nest was twenty-five feet up in a black mangrove (*Avicennia nitida*).

Palm Key, which lies in Florida Bay about five miles offshore to the east of Flamingo, was searched for interesting birds on December 31, 1934, by the party mentioned above. Four nests of the Osprey (*Pandion haliaëtus carolinensis*) were examined and each held three eggs. The nest-stained condition of one of these sets of eggs indicated that incubation was well advanced. All of these nests were in black-mangrove trees. Young birds of the following species were banded: Great White Heron (*Ardea occidentalis*), Florida Cormorant, Ward's Heron (*Ardea herodias wardi*), and Eastern Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus o. occidentalis*).

On December 28, 1936, Harry Roberts took a party composed of Edward M. Davis, John Fluno, Douglas S. Riggs and the writer, in his launch east from Flamingo to Dildo Key—a distance of about eight miles. Nesting on this key were 250 pairs of Black-crowned Night Herons, twenty pairs of American Egrets (*Casmerodius albus egretta*), at least one pair of Great White Herons and a pair of Southern Bald Eagles. The night heron's breeding season was at its height. A few nests were just being constructed and many young were already on the wing. A few nests were built on the ground (often under a rather dense bush or clump of grass) and others were as much as five feet up; twenty-six were more than two feet above ground while thirty-five were less. Sixty-one nests were examined. Of these, one was empty but newly built; five contained two eggs each; eight held three eggs each; one held four eggs; five held one young each; fifteen held two young, thirteen contained three young; and thirteen were empty but recently had held eggs or young. Evidently nesting had started in early November and perhaps some eggs were laid in late October. A. H.

Howell, in 'Florida Bird Life' (1932: 109) states that nesting "apparently begins in December in southern Florida." A number of dead young night herons were found in and under the nests. None of these young had been torn up by predatory mammals or birds, indicating that few natural enemies of these birds were present on the island.

Seventeen nests of the American Egret were examined, of which two were recently completed but empty; one contained a single egg; five had two eggs each; and nine held three eggs each. No young egrets were observed. The egrets' nests were placed higher on the average than those of the night herons. The plumes of the egrets were well developed. Howell, in the work cited above, gives only a single record of this species nesting as early as December. He reports a set of eggs taken at Lake Jessup, Florida, on December 8, 1859.—JOSEPH C. HOWELL, *Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.*

**Unusual North Carolina records.**—In 'The Chat' (Bulletin of the North Carolina Bird Club) of January 1940, the Reverend John H. Grey, its editor, had a paper on 'Unusual [North Carolina] Records in 1939.' As 'The Chat' has a small and mostly local distribution, I secured Mr. Grey's permission to present to 'The Auk' in condensed form such of these records as seem to be of more than local interest, with some additional notes by myself.

AUDUBON'S SHEARWATER, *Puffinus l. herminieri*.—Unusually plentiful—for the species. Observed by Churchill Bragaw off the mouth of the Cape Fear River on July 23, 1939. Walker found them on Pea Island on July 21, 28, 29, and August 20, 1939, and three were identified near Oregon Inlet on August 17. Walker also reported eight at Oregon Inlet on July 27, 1938, and found seventeen dead in one day along the beach, none being oil-soaked.

GREATER SHEARWATER, *Puffinus gravis*.—S. A. Walker and T. Gilbert Pearson picked up a dead bird on Currituck Beach and Walker found another on Bodie Island Beach on June 26, 1939.

YELLOW-BILLED TROPIC-BIRD, *Phaethon lepturus catesbyi*.—A specimen was picked up dead by Walker on the north shore of Oregon Inlet on July 5, 1939.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE, *Anser a. albifrons*.—One was observed by S. A. Walker on the Pea Island Refuge on February 2, 6, 7, 21, and March 5, 1939. He had also identified a single bird on January 19, 1938.

BLUE GOOSE, *Chen caerulescens*.—Observed by Walker on Pea Island from November 2, 1937, to February 9, 1938; a flock of thirteen was seen on February 8. Our earliest record for the species is October 18, 1939, by Walker. Since 1927, this species seems to have become a regular winter visitor on Pea Island, though in comparatively small numbers.

An immature specimen was recorded by Theodore Empie, of Wilmington, North Carolina, as taken a few miles west of the mouth of the Cape Fear River, on November 18, 1939, our farthest southerly record for North Carolina.

GADWALL, *Chaulelasmus streperus*.—Our first record of this species breeding in the State is by Walker, who found an adult accompanied by ten young on one of the Pea Island Refuge ponds, on June 12, 1939. The family was again seen on July 26, when one young was caught and banded.

FLORIDA RED-TAILED HAWK, *Buteo borealis umbrinus*.—A new form for the State list. Reverend Dr. F. H. Craighill, of Rocky Mount, secured two specimens taken near Nashville, North Carolina, one in January 1939, and the other some two years earlier. Dr. H. C. Oberholser upheld Craighill's tentative identification and stated that these were the first satisfactory records of this form outside of Florida.