

away from any source of fresh-water habitat. This report is doubly interesting since reports of King Rails from Virginia, even from the interior, Dr. Murray tells us, are very few.—WILLIAM MONTAGNA AND WILLIAM A. WIMSATT, *Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.*

**Notes from Churchill, Manitoba.**—The following observations made in the vicinity of Churchill during June and July, 1941, seem worth recording.

A female Greater Scaup (*Nyroca marila*) was flushed from her nest containing seven eggs on July 18. The nest was situated in a grassy hummock at the edge of a pond about two miles southeast of Churchill. This duck has rarely been recorded as nesting at Churchill.

On June 24, near a tundra lake about two miles south of Churchill, a female American Eider was flushed from a nest containing five eggs. Field identification proved unsuccessful, even with a blind, because of the bird's shyness, and it was necessary to collect the specimen for positive identification. This specimen has proved to be *Somateria mollissima sedentaria*, the new race recently described by L. L. Snyder (*Occas. Papers Roy. Ont. Mus. Zool.*, 6, 1941). As far as can be ascertained from the literature, this is the first positive nesting record of any race of *Somateria mollissima* in the Churchill region, although Twomey is recorded as having encountered two broods at Cape Churchill, thirty miles to the east, in 1933 (Taverner and Sutton, 'The Birds of Churchill, Manitoba,' *Ann. Carneg. Mus.*, 23, 1934). On July 12, during a trip on foot eastward from Churchill along the coast, numerous broods of young eiders accompanied by females were observed on the small tundra ponds and lakes. These ducklings appeared to be too young to have travelled the ten or fifteen miles from the nearest islands, and thus it is probable that they came from nests on the mainland instead of from island nesting grounds as is commonly the case with eiders.

The Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*) nests irregularly at Churchill, its nesting reputedly being correlated with the abundance of rodents. Two nests were found, on July 12 and 13 respectively, about fifteen miles east of Churchill. The first was built on the platform of a forty-foot wooden navigation 'beacon' overlooking Hudson Bay, and contained four downy young several days old. The second was located a half-mile farther east on a rock ledge along the shore, and held three very recently hatched young. It is interesting to note that while lemmings are considered to be the main food of these hawks in the tundra regions, the only food found on these nests containing young were the bodies of downy young Hudsonian Curlews (*Phaeopus hudsonicus*) and Willow Ptarmigan (*Lagopus lagopus*).

A nest of the Hudsonian Curlew (*Phaeopus hudsonicus*) was found near Lake Isabelle on June 25. The nest, a bare depression in dry tundra, containing four eggs, was observed daily until the young left. When the nest was visited on the morning of July 15, two of the eggs were pipped by the young chicks. A third egg was pipped the same afternoon, but a fourth remained unpunctured. The first chick did not emerge from the egg until early on the morning of July 18. It was followed by a second, late in the same afternoon. At the time that the second chick emerged, a third, which did not emerge until nearly noon of the following day, had removed the entire end from its shell, but the fourth egg showed a primary puncture only. When the nest was visited for the last time on July 20, the three successfully hatched chicks had left and the parent birds had deserted the nest and remaining egg. Thus one chick emerged in approxi-

mately seventy-two hours from the time of the first pipping of the shell, while two others required about twelve hours more. The fourth chick, which had been enlarging the opening in its shell for about forty-eight hours when the parents deserted, had made this opening nearly large enough to permit it to emerge. Upon closer examination, the embryo proved to be infested with maggots. Removal of more of the shell showed that the yolk sac was still of considerable size and that the embryo was still living. Whether this seeming lack of coordination between the assimilation of the yolk sac and the opening of the shell by the chick would have rendered it susceptible to infestation by maggots if the parents had not deserted, is open to question. Nevertheless, it presents an interesting aspect of the Hudsonian Curlew's hatching. The fact that the parent birds deserted a living embryo and that several days were required for the chicks to emerge from their shells also seems worth recording.

On June 30, some Churchill children found the nest of a sandpiper that they could not identify, near the townsite slough. It proved to be that of a Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*). Another nesting record (1938) of this bird near Churchill is given by Taverner and Sutton (*op. cit.*), in which they state that it appears from data collected that "this species may slowly be establishing itself at the mouth of the Churchill River." This 1941 record tends to substantiate their statement.—OSCAR HAWKLEY, *The Principia College, Elsau, Illinois*.

**International Swallows.**—The Saint Lawrence River is over a mile wide between Ogdensburg, New York, U. S. A. and Prescott, Ontario, Canada, yet whole colonies of Tree Swallows nest each year on the ferryboats which ply between the two ports. Though the boats are frequently docked at different piers no bird ever seems at a loss as to the whereabouts of its homesite.

The nests are tucked into any available aperture even down inside the upright, hollow iron pipes from which the drawbridges swing. Nesting materials—feathers, dried leaves, grasses—and later food for the young, are gathered indiscriminately from either shore. The birds show no fear of passengers and deckhands nor of freight-moving operations.—MINNA ANTHONY COMMON, *Watertown, New York*.

**Nesting of Mallard, Pintail and Black Duck at Washington, D. C.**—The reports of Mr. Paul Hodge, formerly caretaker at the Roaches Run Waterfowl Sanctuary, a small municipal refuge located largely in the District of Columbia along the Virginia shore of the Potomac at Washington, provide records of Mallards, Pintails and Black Ducks breeding within the refuge during the years 1934–1939. So far as the author has been able to determine, no previous nesting records for these species in the Washington, D. C. region have been published. Although an undetermined but appreciable number of wing-clipped birds were released there during that period, Mr. Hodge, a competent observer, states verbally that only Wood Ducks nested in a pinioned condition (ramps were built to their boxes) and that all Mallards, Pintails and Black Ducks that bred within the sanctuary were capable of flight. Presumably, the presence of the nesting birds in this region was influenced by the attendance of the wing-clipped individuals.

The exact location of the District of Columbia-Virginia boundary line is now in dispute, being originally designated as the high-water mark of the Potomac on January 24, 1791. It is possible that some nests were located in Virginia but it is impossible to determine this definitely.

Although Mallard and Black Duck nests were seen by the author and, presum-