

Audubon Warden H. C. Blanchard, of Brownsville, stationed usually in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, but currently patrolling the area about Corpus Christi, has furnished the writer with the following information. In the summer of 1938, he made a trip to the west coast from Brownsville, travelling by car through New Mexico and Arizona. As is his invariable habit, he kept a watch for birds on the way, and his long years of collecting and ornithological guiding in various parts of Texas and the west has accustomed him to such observation. While in the vicinity of Flagstaff, Arizona, he heard of a colony of egrets nesting not far off. He investigated this report in July, 1938, and found it to be authentic. He found twelve pairs of egrets nesting at what is known as Mormon Lake, Arizona, about thirty miles southeast of Flagstaff. He understood at the time that the elevation of this place was "about 7600 feet." The writer has communited with reliable sources in Flagstaff, and has ascertained that the exact elevation of Mormon Lake is 7000 feet. This would appear, in the lack of any additional information, to be the highest elevation at which the egret has been known to nest, at least in the writer's knowledge. The peculiar post-breeding-season migration of some of the herons has resulted in their being seen by the writer in the North Carolina mountains at elevations of at least 4500 feet, these being Little Blue Herons (*Florida caerulea*), but he has never seen an egret in the east at even this elevation, much less nesting thereat. Seven thousand feet is a considerable elevation for a bird of this species, and constitutes a most interesting record and item in the life history of the bird.—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., *Charleston, South Carolina*.

A hummingbird migration.—In the case of most birds, both the method and the time of migration are hidden by the darkness of night, and usually our knowledge of their movements is summed up in the statement that they were here yesterday and now they are gone, or the converse, that yesterday there were none and now they are here. Even in the case of those we can see because they fly by day, except for the few reports from such favored localities as Point Pelee, Ontario, we know very little of times and ways. With no other bird are the foregoing statements more emphatically true than in the case of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*), whose insignificant size removes him from our view before he has gone a hundred yards. Therefore it gave me a most pleasurable shock when I found myself with two capable assistants watching a daylight migration of those birds on August 30, 1936.

The locality was at the top of the cliff, some 150 feet in height on the north shore of Lake Erie, two miles east of Port Stanley, Ontario. This is the spot where we look each year for the autumn migration of hawks and we had actually gone there on that day hoping to see some of the first hawks, though feeling that we were probably too early. Hawks and some other birds turn west in autumn when they reach the north shore of the lake, and it is positively known that many of them cross the lake at Point Pelee, 100 miles west; it seems a fair assumption that they do so at Long Point and Rondeau also. Long Point extends about twenty miles east from the mainland, and the bay at that point is more than twenty miles from the land. At Rondeau the shore takes a dip toward the south, but no flight has been observed there. The observations of Mr. George North at Kingsville, some ten miles west of Point Pelee, in 1936, showed that all the hawks seen there were still going west. Whether all of those go around the end of the lake is yet unknown.

Now that most of our hawks have been killed, there are not enough left to

promise with any certainty that a visitor to the cliff will be rewarded on any particular day, but in the past we have seen some nice flights there. One of the great troubles in dealing with these flights is that they are uncertain, and as they occur about thirty miles from London, Ontario, the place is not visited with any regularity. While visits occur when there is no flight, flights do occur when there is no one there to observe them. The birds fly west above the cliff and the flight extends back from the lake for a mile in diminishing numbers.

And now the hummers have joined the western flight of migrants. No sooner had we arrived at the brow of the hill on the day in question than hummers began to be seen, singly for the most part, though often so close together that the one in front could be seen by the next. In a few minutes we had counted twenty-three. My companions were E. Melville Dale and my granddaughter, Kathleen Fetherston, who undertook the task of counting the birds as they passed, a task which proved to be no sinecure; in fact, after it was over, they thought that two pairs of keen eyes were insufficient to record all the migrants. In the first fifteen minutes they counted 83; in the next fifteen minutes, 52. By then it was fifteen minutes to six, and the flight was tapering off with the lowering sun. Yet there were a few hummers passing, for we saw another dozen before we got into the car and left, making a total of 170 hummers that we watched flying west in less than an hour. The conditions included a strong north wind which might readily inconvenience so small a flyer, and a threat of lowered temperature. Nearly all of the birds, except probably less than ten per cent, flew just below the brow of the cliff where they were sheltered from the force of the wind. The remaining few were seen flying above the cliff, even to fifteen feet above it, and followed exactly the same direction.

On the way south to the lake, we had stopped at a fine growth of jewel-weed, which has great attraction for these birds, and there we saw six of them feeding at the flowers. Since then, odd ones have been seen and our latest autumn date is in early October.

In 1906, Taverner and Swales recorded hundreds of these birds feeding at jewel-weed on Point Pelee on September 1, 2, and 3, which fully corroborates the date on which this migration of 1936 was witnessed, one hundred miles farther east. At Point Pelee the hummers fly to the south end of the Point, and then, dropping down to near the level of the water, they usually direct their course towards Pelee Island in the southwest and are out of sight in a moment. Almost every observer who has been at the Point at the proper date has seen a few of these birds disappear over the lake, but opportunities to watch their passage over the land have been so rare as to be almost unheard-of; in fact, I do not recollect having read of any such flight. It may be that the north shore of Lake Erie offers an exceptional opportunity to observe them in late August and early September.

Since 1936 we have attempted to repeat this observation almost every year, but there has been no occasion when all the conditions have been fulfilled,—namely, the proper time on the calendar, a strong north wind, and a clear day. Several times we have been at the spot, eagerly looking, and once, on September 10, 1940, we saw a few migrants, of which we counted twenty-one; on the other days we drew a blank. But never shall the end of August come without our thoughts going back to that spectacular day with its one hundred and seventy hummers in less than an hour. Besides the hawks and hummers, we have found that Goldfinches, Pine Siskins, domestic pigeons and great concourses of monarch

butterflies have been seen following the same route of migration, but never again the hummers.—W. E. SAUNDERS, *London, Ontario*.

Male Baldpate attending young.—On June 12, 1941, a male and female Baldpate (*Mareca americana*) accompanied by a brood of five young were seen on a large slough east of Amulet, Saskatchewan. Knowing that males of most ducks usually desert the females soon after incubation begins, a short notation was made of this unusual occurrence. Just west of Amulet, only enough time to eat lunch having elapsed, a brood of six young attended by both sexes was seen, the male definitely taking an interest in the care of the young.

A short distance westward, at the next slough, imagine my surprise at seeing a brood of eight Baldpates with only the male in charge. He led the young away, swimming slowly toward the opposite shore, but as I approached more closely, he seemed to desert the brood, flying toward a slough nearby; in flight he gave a series of trisyllabic, unmusical notes, best rendered as *tī-chück'-tück*. A few seconds later he returned with the female, and it was she who led the brood to safety. The male followed his family, but gave the impression that he was relieved at turning over the responsibility to the female.

West of Horizon, Saskatchewan, a brood of nine Baldpates was seen, and again both male and female were in attendance. In this case the male began to feign injury, splashing the water with drooping wings, while the female led the brood away.

These four broods were the first observed in the 1941 season. Although I was in the field nearly every day from May 26 to August 29, 1941, and from May 30 to August 25, 1940, these were the only broods of the Baldpate seen where the drake was assisting in the care of the brood. All of these observations were made on one day, June 12, 1941, and all within a radius of about eight miles. Previous to this time Baldpates were seen in pairs, or males were seen singly.

It may be that the male is more likely to assist the female in caring for early broods, since the sexual instinct would be then better developed than later in the season, and since the moulting of flight feathers would not yet have forced the males into hiding. Possibly this aberrant behavior pattern has been developed in this restricted area to meet, or as the result of, some localized environmental factors.—ROBERT C. McCLANAHAN, *U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D. C.*

Ruby-crowned Kinglet as host of Cowbird.—On July 22, 1941, quite near my house at Scarboro Beach, Me., I heard a young bird calling loudly for food, and soon saw a tiny bird, not half its size come and feed it. Closer observation made me certain that the foster parent was a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, as it flashed its orange-red crown repeatedly; the dull brown, streaked young must have been a Cowbird. The kinglet was quite unable to satisfy the appetite of the huge fledgling, which kept after the tiny foster parent as though it would like to eat it, too. Dr. Herbert Friedmann in his 'The Cowbirds' (1929) states on page 256: "*Regulus calendula calendula*. A very rare victim [of *Molothrus ater*]. I have come across but one record. Davie writes that Mr. Montague Chamberlain records a nest taken at Lennoxville, Quebec, May 15, 1882 . . . It contained nine eggs, one of them a Cowbird's."—W. L. HOLT, *Scarboro, Maine*.

A probable case of parasitism in the Starling.—In May, 1940, I stopped at one of my many Bluebird boxes expecting to band young birds. When I lifted the hinged top, I was surprised to find a filthy nest with four half-grown Bluebird