

of grebe nests and some gull nests were actually located between grebe nests. Nearly all of the grebe nests were more than 18 feet from the edge of the water; several were 75 feet away. No young were seen on this date. After some time we retired to a considerable distance and later watched the grebes return to their nests. We found that they walked readily, even standing erect momentarily (Plate 17). Throughout the day they frequently left the nest without apparent provocation, standing up and slowly walking across the bare sand and gravel beach.

Although the grebes had adapted to a dry-land nesting-site, they were nesting under some difficulty. Frequently, when they walked across the beach they were struck down by Common Terns, and at every uprising of the gull colony—and this occurred often—the grebes left their nests. They suffered in other respects too, the feet of captured grebes being dry, cracked and scaly, presumably as a result of continued exposure to the hot dry air and from walking across the sand and gravel beach.

Return visits to the island for purposes of a behavior study of this species were made on June 13-June 22, June 26-July 4, and July 19-July 20. Nesting occurred throughout June but by July 19 had ceased except for desultory breeding behavior. Only a few young were observed during this period (one or two only on June 13 and June 19) and it is believed that nesting success was extremely low. It seems questionable whether this grebe colony can long survive under this condition, but there are indications of a regrowth of natural aquatic vegetation and in the future they may return to nesting in more normal habitat.—ROBERT W. NERO, FRED W. LAHRMAN, AND FRED G. BARD, *Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History, Regina, Saskatchewan.*

**The Lesser Black-backed Gull in the New York City Area.**—A Lesser Black-backed Gull of the British race, *Larus fuscus graellsii*, was collected by the author on a garbage dump near Rutherford, New Jersey, on Feb. 9, 1958. The bird (AMNH #468815), an adult female in winter plumage, weighed 825 gms. and measured: exposed culmen 49 mm, wing (flat) 410 mm, tarsus 53 mm, tail 56 mm, and ovary 15 x 6 mm; the orbital ring was bright red-orange, and the legs were yellow. The subspecific identification of the specimen was confirmed by Eugene Eisenmann. This is the first specimen of this species for New Jersey and the third for North America, the previous specimens, also identified as *graellsii*, being taken at Assateague Is., Maryland, Oct. 7, 1948 by J. H. Buckalew (Auk, 67: 251, 1950), and at Buffalo, New York, March 14, 1949 by R. F. Andrie (Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences #4084).

Sight reports of the Lesser Black-back, first noted in the United States at Beach Haven, New Jersey by C. A. Urner and J. L. Edwards on September 9, 1934 (Auk, 52: 85, 1935), have become more frequent in the New York City region in recent years (Cruickshank, "Birds Around New York City," p. 225, 1942), with several sight reports each winter, and one as late as March 29, 1945 (Alexander, Auk, 63: 258, 1946). Most reports of the bird have been at garbage dumps or near sewer outlets, in association with Herring Gulls (*Larus argentatus*). Both currently recognized subspecies of the Lesser Black-backed Gull (*fuscus* and *graellsii*) have been reported on the basis of sight observations, but subspecific field identifications cannot be considered reliable because light conditions may alter the apparent shade of the mantle. In fact, as Griscom (Bull. Mass. Aud. Soc., 28: 181-191, 1944) points out, even sight records of the species are open to considerable question due to the possibility of confusion with other dark-backed gulls. However, the prob-

ability that most sight reports of *L. fuscus* in the eastern United States are correct as to species and are referable to *graellsii* is enhanced by the fact that this form migrates along the Atlantic coast of Europe and that New World sight records are from the Atlantic watershed at latitudes frequented on the usual Old World wintering grounds.—JOSEPH R. JEHLE, JR., 385 Grove Street, Clifton, New Jersey.

**A Possible United States Breeding Area for the Violet-crowned Hummingbird.**—On a field trip to the Guadalupe Mountains of southeastern Arizona and adjacent New Mexico, July 23 to 25, 1957, my brother John and I identified as many as six Violet-crowned Hummingbirds (*Amazilia verticalis*), and one was collected. This Mexican species is reported as "casual" in the United States (A.O.U. Check-list, 5th ed.: 306, 1957). The only previously known United States specimens are: one from Palmerlee, Huachuca Mountains, Arizona, July 4, 1905 (Bishop, Auk 23: 337, 1906); another taken by H. H. Kimball near Paradise, Chiricahua Mountains, Arizona, July 16, 1925 (Journ. Wash. Acad. Sci. 37 (3): 103-104, 1947); and an adult female collected by A. R. Phillips near Patagonia, Santa Cruz Co., Arizona on August 20, 1948 (personal letter).

Our first bird was seen on the 24th about a mile above the Johnson Ranch in Guadalupe Canyon, New Mexico. It pugnaciously chased from the area a male Broad-billed Hummingbird (*Cyananthus latirostris*). After the chase we could not locate it again. Later the same day we saw another Violet-crowned Hummingbird in this canyon about 2 miles into Arizona from the state-line. It acted in the same manner as the first bird, except that it landed in a dead tree directly in front of us, so close that I could not shoot for fear of completely destroying it. We had an excellent study before it flew. All salient characters, including the clear white underparts, violet crown, and green back and tail, were carefully noted.

On the 25th we returned to the Arizona site. After waiting some time with no result, we went about a mile further up the canyon, where a Violet-crowned Hummingbird streaked over us heading for a blooming agave. The bird seemed nervous, and, as we approached, it darted into a grove of large sycamores. A Violet-crowned Hummingbird along with several Broad-billed Hummingbirds and Black-chinned Hummingbirds (*Archilochus alexandri*) were observed feeding at the agave. The Violet-crowned Hummingbird always appeared and left in the same direction. It came to the agave to feed every five to ten minutes. The bird acted in a manner suggesting that it was feeding young. When finally collected the bird proved to be a fine adult female with slightly enlarged ovaries and evidence of a recent brood patch. On the way back to our truck, a distance of two miles, we located three other individuals of this species. A violent rainstorm, the worst in many years, prevented further field work.

The greenish tail and the white wing edge of our bird agrees with Wetmore's (Jour. Wash. Acad. Sci. 37(3): 103-104, 1947) description of *elliotti*, and Eugene Eisenmann of the American Museum of Natural History has examined the specimen and confirms the racial identification. This bird is now in the Fish and Wildlife Service collection at the U. S. National Museum.—SEYMOUR H. LEVY, Route 9, Box 960, Tucson, Arizona.

**Function of Cryptic White in the White-necked Raven.**—Courtship and hostile displays of birds frequently involve the use of contrasting colors and bold patterns. Common species in the United States that use black-and-white patterns in display include the Inca Dove (*Scardafella inca*), Mockingbird (*Mimus poly-*