

slit in the side, we found two 11 to 12-day-old nestlings dead in the constricting folds of the snake's body and noted two visible lumps on the snake's ventral surface. The stretched nest was approximately 9 cm in internal length, its internal diameter was 6 cm, and its entrance only 2 cm in diameter. The snake weighed 223 g, was 102.5 cm long, and had a maximum diameter of 2.5 cm.

When we fluoroscoped the snake the next day three or possibly four nestlings were discernable in its digestive tract. We kept the snake in captivity and on 28 April 1972 found remains of at least one nestling in its excreta. Microscopic examination revealed one complete tarsometatarsus and tarsal bones with a possible second set of tarsal bones also present. The remainder of the casting consisted of matted, broken feathers. Gopher snakes have been known to rob bushtit nests (Baldwin 1933, unpublished M.A. thesis, Stanford, California, Stanford Univ.), but the complete entry of a snake into the narrow confines of the bowl of a bushtit nest has apparently not been reported before this. Research was supported by a Chapman Memorial Fund Grant.—STEPHEN ERVIN and CYNTHIA ROSE, *Department of Biology, University of California, Santa Barbara, California 93106*. Accepted 28 Jul. 72.

First Brown Booby specimen from Texas.—On 21 September 1971 Mr. and Mrs. Herbert O. Mueller of San Antonio, while visiting Port Aransas in Nueces County, Texas, saw a grounded sulid beside the road across from the City Hall building and notified the junior author. The bird proved to be an immature Brown Booby (*Sula leucogaster*), apparently exhausted and unable to fly. In spite of being fed finger-size mullet (*Mugil* sp.) and small pen fish (*Lagodon rhomboides*) the bird died 25 September.

The senior author prepared the bird as a study specimen, which is now in the University of Dallas bird collection. Extensive scar tissue on the midneck region suggested the bird had sustained a rather deep and severe injury. The specimen (No. 1864) proved to be a juvenile male, with soft parts as follows: yellow iris, slaty blue bill, and yellowish-orange feet. Measurements are as follows: length 736 mm; tail, worn, 160 mm; wing, flattened, 403 mm; and bill, 99 mm. This is the first Brown Booby specimen for Texas.

Reports of this pelagic species for Texas are few. Sight records known to us include one that was caught 12 September 1937 by a fisherman in the Gulf of Mexico and brought to Mrs. Myrtle Braman of Victoria, Texas, for identification (files, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service); birds off Rockport in June and September (Hagar and Packard 1952, Check-list of the birds of central coast of Texas, Rockport, Texas, privately printed); and of two different adult birds, 12 and 15 miles off Mustang Island on 10 August 1961 and an adult, 8 miles off shore and 17 miles southwest of Sabine Pass, on 18 August 1961 (Webster 1961, Audubon Field Notes 15: 479).

Hurricane Fern spawned in the western Gulf of Mexico around 8 September some 200 miles off the Texas coast. This storm moved erratically in a northerly direction over the next several days, with sustained maximum winds around 100 mph. Although not a very strong storm, Fern covered a rather large area and was quite diffuse and unorganized. After approaching the coast close to Galveston, the storm veered southwestward, paralleling the coast, until it made landfall just east of Port Aransas on 10 September. Early in the afternoon on this date the eye of the storm actually passed over Port Aransas.

The period after this tropical storm was generally quite warm and mild with only a few rainstorms passing through Port Aransas. Winds varied from the northeast to

east to northerly in direction and ranged from 0 to 35 mph in velocity with a mean average of 20 mph for the 13–21 September period. Possibly the turbulence from Fern was responsible for the occurrence of the Brown Booby in this locale. The published sight records indicate that this species may be expected in coastal Texas waters during the summer when turbulent weather disturbances, spawned far out in the Atlantic and Caribbean, occasionally reach Texas.—WARREN M. PULICH, SR., *Department of Biology, University of Dallas Station, Irving, Texas 75060*, and WARREN M. PULICH, JR., *Marine Science Institute, University of Texas, Port Aransas, Texas 78373*. Accepted 10 Aug. 72.

Census of Kirtland's Warbler in 1972.—The population of Kirtland's Warblers (*Dendroica kirtlandii*) on the nesting ground in northern Lower Michigan remained level from 1971 to 1972, although down 60 percent from the level of 1961 and 1951. The count of singing males in June 1972 was 200 as compared to 201 the preceding year. It was 502 in 1961 and 432 in 1951. As we believe the number of males and females to be approximately equal, we judge the total adult population to have been about 400 at the beginning of the 1972 nesting season.

Virtually all Kirtland's Warblers now nest in three counties, Crawford, Oscoda, and Ogemaw. We found two males in one location in Wexford County, but isolated individuals had vanished from three counties where found in 1971, Otsego, Iosco, and Montmorency. All of this species now nests in 11 "colonies" on 27 surveyors sections (square miles).

The decline of the last decade was marked by a withdrawal from peripheral habitats and a contraction into the heart of the nesting range, where the density of the population in favored areas is as great as ever. From the standpoint of efforts to preserve the species, this concentration is fortunate because it has placed 45 percent of the entire population on tracts already designated in state and national forests as Kirtland's Warbler management areas. In addition to these, nearly all of the remainder also are nesting on public forest lands, where special attention can be given to them.

The only factor that has been clearly demonstrated to be detrimental to Kirtland's Warbler is the Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*). In recent years several samples have revealed between 60 and 70 percent of warbler nests parasitized, with a heavy loss of young. Therefore in 1972 the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the U. S. Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife, and the Michigan Audubon Society undertook a cooperative effort to remove cowbirds, mainly by trapping, in the most important nesting localities. This work was carried out with the advice of a committee named by the Michigan Audubon Society and representing various groups interested in the preservation of this rare bird.

Nest studies in two of these areas by Lawrence H. Walkinshaw disclosed only two instances of parasitism among 32 nests and the highest yield of fledglings ever recorded for the species in a sample of respectable size. This report was encouraging, but the effect cannot be fully appraised until the 1973 campaign, which will ascertain not only the number of warblers returning to breed but also changes in the cowbird pressure in this restricted and specialized habitat.

For details of census methods and other circumstances, see my reports of previous censuses (Auk 1953, 70: 17; 1962, 79: 173; 1972, 89: 263).

In the 1972 count 31 people participated as follows: C. T. Black, Arlow Boyce, Jerry Brow, John D. Byelich, Doris Chopard, Jack Cook, Marvin Cooley, William A. Dyer, Warren R. Faust, Elsworth M. Harger, Ronald Hoffman, Thomas Heatley, George W. Irvine, Victor S. Janson, John Joldersma, Eugene E. Kenaga, Harold D.