

A Hawk Owl Bathing With Snow.—As the daylight begins to lengthen in late winter and early spring, one or two Hawk Owls (*Surnia ulula*) are occasionally seen, usually for several days at a time, perched about the campus of the University of Alaska on telephone poles and in the tops of the taller spruce trees (*Picea glauca* and *P. mariana*). During one such occurrence, in March of 1950, the following observation was made.

On a clear, relatively warm morning subsequent to a light snow-fall the previous night, one of a pair of Hawk Owls, which had been about the campus for several days, alighted on the flattened top of a pole that it had been seen to frequent a great deal. About two inches of fresh, dry snow capped the top of the pole. The owl perched on the edge of the pole for several seconds, and then very much in the manner of a bird about to incubate eggs, it settled itself down into the snow-covering, with wings partially spread, the tail somewhat elevated, and the body feathers ruffed out, whereupon it commenced a vigorous bathing.

With its face partially buried in the snow, the whole head and body were shaken, thus scattering the snow generally all about, much of it falling into the air. But certain specific movements of the head were directed to throwing bits of the snow over its back and wings. After going through this exercise for several seconds, the owl would stand very erect for a few more moments and then repeat the bathing, which it did several times during the course of two or three minutes. This observation was made from a second-story window, approximately at a level with the owl and about thirty yards distant.—TOM J. CADE, *Alaska Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, College, Alaska, May 15, 1952.*

Black-crowned Night Heron Breeds in Heart of Mexico City.—Herbert Friedmann, Ludlow Griscom and Robert T. Moore (Pac. Coast Avif. No. 29, 1950:32, Distributional Check-list of the Birds of Mexico) have listed the Black-crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax hoacilli*) as a breeder and resident of several states in Mexico but no record is given for the Distrito Federal.

At this writing I have a heronry of this species under observation in Chapultepec Park in the very heart of Mexico City. There are approximately 82 herons in the colony. As a whole, the heronry is not very prolific; there are eleven productive pairs, each pair attending one nest, while all the rest of the birds appear to be unmated. The eleven nests of the heronry are all in one ahuehuete tree about fifty feet high. It is an interesting fact that four of the eleven mated females are young birds in their first or second year, which is easily determined by the difference in plumages of the young and the adults, the young bittern-like birds being predominantly brown in sharp contrast with the beautiful coloring of the older birds. This observation indicates that these birds mature sexually prior to the molt which produces a fully adult plumage.

The proportion of young "water dogs," as this heron is called in Mexico, to adults is about one to three; approximately thirty per cent of the colony are immature birds.

The heronry is at a small artificial lake in the park, and the herons are not even slightly disturbed by the multitude of canoes and row boats that are about all during the day, nor are they disturbed by automobile traffic on a street less than 300 feet away.—GUILLERMO JOSÉ TAPIA, *México, D. F., July 21, 1952.*

Winter Status of Swallows in California.—During the past three winters, 1948-49 through 1951-52, notes taken on winter occurrences of several species of swallows in California add to the published knowledge of their winter status.

Tachycineta thalassina. Violet-green Swallow. Grinnell and Miller (Pac. Coast Avif. No. 27, 1944:272) consider it as "Essentially summer resident, March to September . . . and a few, probably not every year, present in mid-winter months, southerly, and coastwise northwest to San Francisco Bay region." (Emphasis supplied.) However, this swallow has been observed during winter months in the Sierra Nevada foothills. At Hogan Reservoir, Calaveras County, several were seen on January 31, 1950. Farther north along the Sierra Nevada foothills, seven were seen at Mormon Island in Eldorado County on February 2, 1950. In the Central Valley, 20 were present at Tulare Lake, Kings County, on January 24, 1949, and several occurred at Lake Washington, Yolo County, to the west of Sacramento on February 11, 1950. To add a modern record to the one cited by Grinnell and Miller for the year 1885 at Sebastopol, Sonoma County, a few of these swallows were seen at Laguna de