

GENERAL NOTES

Longevity record of a Glaucous-winged Gull.—The most widely used method for determining longevity in wild birds is by marking (usually banding) individuals of known ages. Occasionally, however, records have been kept on individuals over a number of years whose aberrant plumage or physical deformations readily identify them. MacKay (1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1898), for example, tells the story of an unbanded Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) named "Gull Dick," which for 24 years was identified by its plumage, calls and behavior by various light station keepers in Narrogansett Bay, Rhode Island. A similar situation was experienced by Mr. and Mrs. B. Hutchings, 1907 Fort Street, Victoria, British Columbia, who for nearly 22 years had a wild, unbanded Glaucous-winged Gull (*Larus glaucescens*) visit their yard regularly. A split web between the second and third toes identified the bird. The notes that follow have been summarized from communications with the Hutchings.

In 1950 the Hutchings built a new home on a main street in Victoria, about two miles from the seashore. Birds were never encouraged to come to the yard until their cat died in 1952. In the spring of that year a bowl of water was put out on the ground to attract birds and in March or April a "white" seagull showed up for a drink. In the days that followed the gull returned at regular intervals to the water dish. Scraps of food were set out for "Dickie" and soon the gull became part of the Hutchings family returning daily for food.

Late in 1968 or early in 1969, the gull arrived with an injured left wing. Each time it landed it had great difficulty taking off from the small yard, so the Hutchings built a sloping platform to the top of the woodshed which provided the height necessary for easy flight. In a short time the wing healed and the platform was removed.

One day, in early February 1974, "Dickie" did not return and has not been seen since. The Hutchings wrote: "thus ended a 22 year very enjoyable friendship with one of our local feathered friends."

The gull visited the Hutchings' yard for at least 21 years and through early February 1974. "Dickie" was apparently full grown ("all white with a gray back") when it first arrived and, therefore, would have to be at least three years and eight months old (considering the gull year from July to July). The gull was evidently at least 25 years and 6 months of age when it disappeared. This is the oldest record for this species. Previous longevity records for Glaucous-winged Gulls have been listed at 20 years, 62 days (Campbell and Pearse, 1968), 21 years (Vermeer, 1963), and 22 years (Z. M. Schultz, pers. comm.).

LITERATURE CITED

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- R. WAYNE CAMPBELL, *British Columbia Provincial Museum, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada*. Received 15 September 1974, accepted 28 October 1974.

Easily built portable blind.—The blind in Figure 1 was designed to be made from readily available materials, to be carried in a suitcase, and to be set up quickly and easily in the field.

The frame is tripodal and is made of 1/2-inch EMT (Electrical Metallic Tubing). Each leg is composed of three segments, each 2 1/2 feet long, held together with EMT couplings with set screws. These couplings preclude the need for threading the ends of the EMT, are easy to attach even after exposure to salt air, make the legs sufficiently rigid, and require no tools for assembly. They can be tightened with a coin.

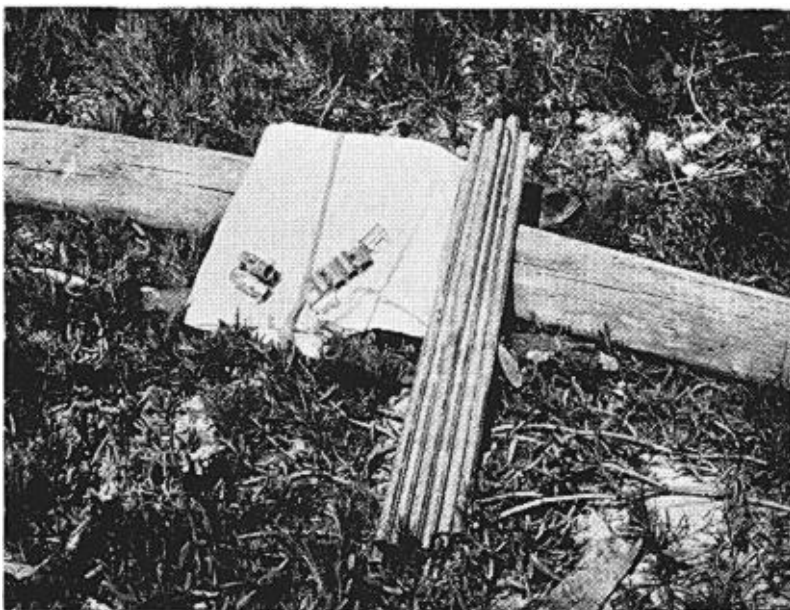


FIGURE 1a. Blind unassembled.

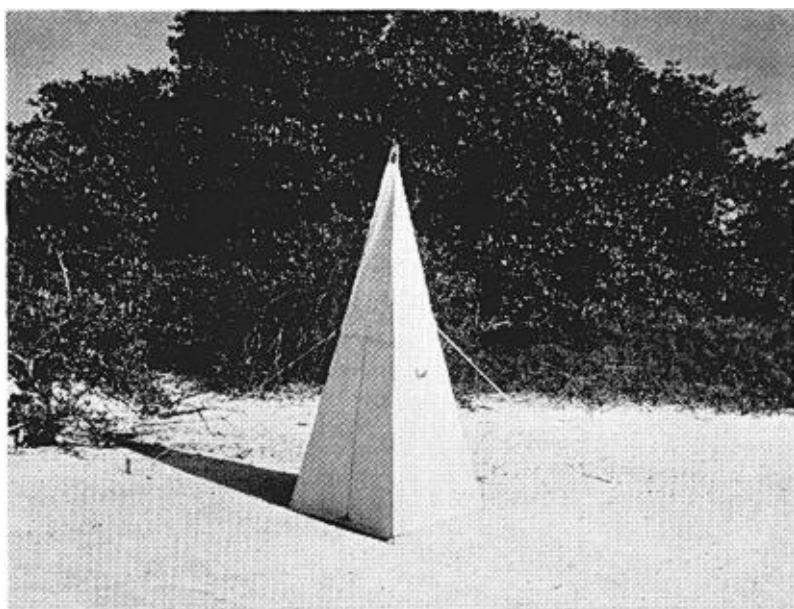


FIGURE 1b. Blind assembled.

The three legs are held together at the top by a welded piece: three 1/2-inch pipe couplings (threaded) of galvanized iron were attached to three 1/2-inch EMT connectors (one end threaded, one end with set screws). The three pipe couplings were then welded together at angles that would give approximately 40 inches between each of the legs at the bottom.

The cover was cut from 45-inch wide unbleached muslin. Each side was a triangle about 7 1/2 feet long from base to apex and was slightly truncated to allow an opening for the rather bulky welded piece at the top. A long zipper was inserted in the middle of one side and three tapes were sewn into each seam on the inside, for tying the cover to the frame.

The teepee shape has several advantages. It is tall enough in the center for the observer to stand upright, and the sloping sides provide knee room when the observer is seated in the blind yet allow one's face to be near the observation hole.

We used the blind in strong trade winds and found it necessary to use guy ropes. The light weight and color of the unbleached muslin proved ideal for us. However, modifications in the covering material might make it more suitable for other habitats. If space and weight are no problem, the legs can be made longer, giving more height and/or basal area, and larger diameter EMT can be used for greater strength.

My thanks are due Anthony Gallardo and William Heslin for their help in the design and construction of this blind. Financial assistance from the Mae P. Smith Fund is gratefully acknowledged.—MARY LECROY, *Dept. of Ornithology, American Museum of Natural History, New York, N. Y. 10024*. Received 20 September 1974, accepted 18 October 1974.

Capturing nesting Canada Geese with mist nets.—Numerous techniques have been developed for capturing nesting ducks (Sowls, *Trans. N. Am. Wildl. Conf.*, **14**: 261-262, 1949; Weller, *J. Wildl. Manage.*, **21**: 456-458, 1957; Coulter, *Bird-Banding*, **29**: 236-241, 1958), but only Atwater (*J. Wildl. Manage.*, **23**: 93, 1959) has reported a method for capturing nesting Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*). Although Atwater captured individual nesting geese using modified Hancock beaver traps, I considered the risk of egg breakage and nest damage by the captured goose too great for a study of broods. A method insuring minimum disruption of nesting during trapping and hence normal nesting success and brood size was developed during a study of Canada Goose brood behavior using radio transmitters on nesting females. The field work was done at the Crex Meadows Wildlife Management Area near Grantsburg, Wisconsin.

Females on nests that could be the most quickly and quietly approached because of their locations in the marshes were chosen for trapping. To minimize desertion, geese were trapped late in incubation or while goslings were being brooded in the nest. One or two mist nets, 121 mm mesh, 12 m x 2.6 m, were set in a V around the nest with the nest being within 1 to 2 m of the point of the V. Upon returning to the nest, Canada Geese usually swim as close to the nest as possible before walking or flying to the nest site. To avoid capturing females on their way back to the nest, nets were set with the V opening in the direction of the nearest water. The nets were set at dusk or after dark because geese returned more readily to a nest with nets set around it at this time. One or two hours after setting the nets, the nest was approached from the opening in the V by two or three persons attempting to flush the goose from the nest into the nets. If the female had failed to return to the nest after two or three return visits by the investigators, the nets were removed.

During three years of effort, 14 nesting geese were captured in 21 attempts. Of 15 females with goslings, 12 were captured, and two of four geese with pipped eggs were caught. Birds on two nests with eggs one or two days from pipping were not caught.

No nest desertion, egg breakage, or gosling mortality occurred during trapping, although both pipped clutches were lost shortly after the females had been captured. One of these clutches was chilled during a subsequent rainstorm and the other lost to mink predation the same night the goose was captured.

Geese were most easily captured from nests situated on upland islands where grass and shrubs partially screened the nest, on calm nights, and when the nests contained hatched goslings. Although the man hours necessary to