

## NOTES, NEWS, AND QUERIES

**Editors' Report.** Although this particular issue has gotten well behind schedule, we wish to report that a number of items are in process.

1. Material for the July-August issue of the *News* is in hand and will be processed in the near future.

2. Organizational problems have delayed the appearance of the first *Raptor Research Abstracts*. Most of them have been overcome and its regular issues will be soon ready. The first issue or two will be a little smaller than we anticipate to be average and will also contain less of the unusual items, but we hope to be able to increase the scope of our coverage each month. Special effort will be made this fall to arrange prompt coverage of the European literature.

3. The Index and Title Page for Volumes 1-3 of the *News* has been unduly delayed, but is nearly ready for distribution to all subscribers.

4. The report on the Cornell Conference which was to be completed shortly after the conference was at first delayed by late receipt of some abstracts, and then by the press of the regular issues of the *News*. It is now nearly ready for printing and will be sent to subscribers shortly.

5. The first number of *Raptor Research Reports* a literature review on falconiform reproduction is nearly all set up for printing, and we hope to have a flier advertising its availability in our next issue. We think it is a valuable work at a modest price.

This fall Lee Eberly will be assisting in the editorial duties while Harrell is away. Dr. Harrell will be on a four-month trip in Europe with the principal aim of contacting raptor workers in western Europe. We hope to have some reports on the status of research on raptors in this area.

**Bald Eagles Poisoned by Mercury.** Two American bald eagles found dead in Minnesota last year apparently were victims of mercury poisoning, according to a spokesman for the U. S. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife.

The spokesman said that tests for mercury showed that the eagles' kidneys contained 117 and 130 parts per million of mercury residues, enough to cause death.

The tests were conducted at the bureau's wildlife research center at Patuxent, Md. The Minnesota eagles were the first to be tested for mercury poisoning, the spokesman said.

One of the eagles was found on a street in Red Wing. The other was reported by Alfred Grewe, a professor at St. Cloud State College.

Both birds had been checked for DDT and other pesticides but test results showed low amounts of those substances.

The spokesman for the federal agency said that bureau wildlife specialists were "shocked" at test results because it may mean that mercury represents a new threat to the survival of the rare bald eagles.

Scientists suspect the birds accumulated the mercury by eating fish from mercury-polluted waters.

In recent months commercial fishing has been stopped in parts of Canada and Michigan because of the presence of mercury in fish. (From AP report from St. Paul, Minnesota, quoted in *Sioux Falls Argus Leader*, June 14, 1970).

**Osprey Management in Oregon.** An agreement was reached on October 10, 1969, between the Forest Service of the United States and the Oregon State Game Commission on the management of Osprey at the Crane Prairie Reservoir. The Memorandum of Agreement appears in a well illustrated pamphlet, "Management Plan for the Crane Prairie Reservoir Osprey Management Area" prepared by Hadley B. Roberts, Wildlife Biologist, Descheutes National Forest, Bend, Oregon.

**Harvesting the Peregrine.** In 1968 the Fish and Wildlife Branch of British Columbia gave permits for the capture of 30 Peale's falcons (the local race of peregrine), but it is believed that a further ten were taken illegally. In 1969, a quota of only ten was allowed, all to be taken by the Fish and Wildlife Branch itself, and the fee was increased from \$20 to \$200, to compensate the Branch for the extra costs. (*Newsletter*, Federation of B.C. Naturalists). (From *Kingfisher* 5(3):9, Jan.-Feb. 1970).

**Birds of Prey Protected.** All birds of prey and owls are now protected in Morocco, by a decree of the Minister of Agriculture in September 1969. (Information: H. Deetjen.) (From *Kingfisher* 5(3):12, Jan.-Feb. 1970).

**Peregrines in Ireland.** The peregrine population in Ireland is going the same way as in other countries where the environment is severely contaminated by pesticides, according to the Irish Wildbird Conservancy. The number of breeding pairs in the Irish Republic fell from 163 in 1947/50 to only 36 in 1967, and the 1968 figures, still being analysed, show another startling decrease in breeding success. (From *Kingfisher* 5(4):7, Mar.-Apr. 1970).

**RSPB's New Film.** One of the RSPB's (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) main contributions to European Conservation Year is its fine film of European birds of prey, *The Winged Aristocrats*, which has taken two and a half years to make. All 5000 tickets for its premiere at the Royal Festival Hall, London, on February 21 were sold out ten days before the show. It is hoped that a quarter of a million people will see the film this year. (From *Kingfisher* 5(4):7, Mar.-Apr. 1970).

**A Word for The Predators.** "To the game preservers", said the Minister of Agriculture at the London Conference on "Agriculture and the Environment" in January, "I ask for a more generous attitude to predatory birds and mammals. Nearly all the scientific evidence shows clearly that the effect of bird predators on game stocks is insignificant". (From *Kingfisher* 5(4):8, Mar.-Apr. 1970).

**Golden Eagle Protection.** R. W. Burwell, Regional Director of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife (Twin Cities, Minnesota 55711) issued the following notice on April 21, 1970.

Secretary Hickel recently announced that blanket permits to control depredation by golden eagles will no longer be issued.

In recent years, such permits have not been provided in Region 3, nor have individual permits been issued or contemplated.

In the interest of protecting golden eagles, all field personnel shall be on the alert to learn of known or rumored losses to livestock by eagles, and to investigate such reports to determine validity and/or extent of damage.

Any reports of dead eagles or the location of carcasses of eagles shall be promptly reported to the nearest U. S. Game Management Agent who shall, with the aid of Wildlife Services and other available Bureau personnel, investigate the matter to determine the cause of death.

Persons responsible for the death of eagles shall be vigorously investigated and prosecuted whenever possible.

Agents-in-Charge shall advise this office by memo in all instances of known or suspected illegal kill of eagles.

**Importing Birds of Prey into Great Britain.** An order of the Home Office, Whitehall, called "Wild Birds (Importation) Order 1970)" to be effective July 1, 1970, has the following explanatory note: "This Order prohibits the importation of live birds of prey and live owls throughout the year, except under authority of a licence granted for scientific or other purposes specified in section 10 of the Protection of Birds Act 1954."

"An accompanying Press Notice included: "The Home Secretary has made an Order under the Protection of Birds Act 1954, prohibiting the importation into the United Kingdom, except under licence, of all birds of prey of the order falconiformes and all live owls of the order strigiformes. The restrictions come into force on July 1, 1970 and licenses will be necessary for all importations after June 30, 1970.

"There are 405 species affected. Of these, 271 are birds of prey such as eagles, hawks, falcons and vultures and 134 are owls. The restrictions are being imposed in the interests both of international conservation and the welfare of the birds. In recent years there has been a decline throughout the world in the numbers of birds of prey and some species are so seriously threatened as to be in danger of extinction. Many countries already prohibit the export of species whose survival is threatened and the Order will assist those countries in enforcing their ban.

"Birds of prey require special care when kept in captivity. In the past many have been needlessly lost through lack of proper attention. The Order will help to ensure that birds do not get into the hands of persons who lack the facilities to care for them adequately, or who are inexperienced and do not have access to guidance on their correct handling.

"The proposal to impose the importation restrictions was advertised nationally in September 1967. The Order was made after consultation with the Advisory Committee on the protection of Birds for England and Wales, the Advisory Committee on the Protection of Birds for Scotland and the Government of Northern Ireland.

"The Order is the third relating to the protection of birds which the Home Secretary has made during the first four months of European Conservation Year. The other two orders created bird and egg sanctuaries in Wales in the Burry Estuary and near

Haverfordwest. European Conservation Year, which was a British idea, has been organised under the auspices of the Council of Europe, to encourage more rational and responsible conservation of nature and natural resources.

“Under the Protection of Birds Acts 1954 and 1967 it will not be possible to licence importations for any purpose other than scientific, educational, aviculture or falconry.”

**Nature Protection Act.** On May 27, 1970, Senator Alan Cranston introduced a bill to provide protection for rare and endangered species by amending the Endangered Species Act and by implementation of the Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere (signed in 1940 by 13 countries and ratified by the U. S. Senate in 1941). Enabling legislation has not been presented and treaty provisions can not be enforced without such action. The treaty lists covered species in an Annex which can be revised from time to time. The only raptor on the original list was California Condor. In the latest revision (1967) the following raptors are listed: Endangered—California Condor (California), Florida Everglade Kite (Florida), and Hawaiian Hawk (Hawaii); Rare—Northern Short-tailed Hawk (Florida), Southern Bald Eagle (Atlantic and Gulf Coasts), American Peregrine Falcon (Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, Arizona, Texas, Colorado); Peripheral—Zone-tailed Hawk (Arizona, New Mexico, Texas), Gray Hawk (Arizona, New Mexico, Texas), Northern Black Hawk (Arizona, New Mexico, Texas), Northern Aplomado Falcon (Arizona, New Mexico, Texas), Northern Whiskered Owl (Mexico), Northern Ferruginous Owl (Arizona, Texas). In addition there are species of “Rare and Endangered Fish and Wildlife of the United States” which are recommended to be added at the next revision: Rare—Short-tailed Hawk (Florida), Prairie Falcon (California, Texas). The included species could not be hunted, captured, killed, taken, transported, sold, or purchased; bounties on these species are also prohibited. Special Exemptions are included for scientific purposes, public zoos, captivity propagation for later release, and for transplantation. Other details of the bill and Senator Cranston’s explanatory speech are printed in *The Congressional Record* for May 27, 1970 (pp. S7883-S2888).

**Queries and Answers.** The editors have settled on the title Notes, News, and Queries for a variety of information of interest to our readers. The idea behind the “Queries” term is to encourage the

asking of questions and suggesting ideas for comment by others. Good teachers are aware that questions one person asks are usually on other people's minds but left unasked by them. Since a number of members are interested in the care of young raptors, we have included the following answers to questions on this subject. We write this note to stimulate more of this sort of dialog. We hope that this approach will be utilized freely.

### **Answers to Questions on Care and Feeding of Young Raptors.**

The following recommendations are in response to numerous queries on this subject.

1. **Feeding.** To feed young raptors correctly learn from raptors—not from people. What bird feeds its babies liver, beef heart, and supplements? Feed young raptors what their parents would give them. Most food at this time of year is mice or young birds.

Cockerels are excellent food and can be purchased inexpensively in large quantities from hatcheries. These chicks can then be frozen and used as needed. If a freezer is not available, raise young chickens. If nothing else, crawl the barns for squabs and get out a mouse trapline.

2. **Sunlight.** Is your bird getting enough sunlight? It should spend most of every day placed so it can choose between sun and shade. I have had trouble with rickets from time to time and have tried supplements but have never yet successfully substituted for sunlight. If you put your bird outdoors, it will probably put its head in the shade and its rump in the sun with the uropygium held up to sop in sunlight.

3. **Sleeping.** Keep young birds warm at night. As long as a bird sleeps lying down, it should have a sweater or old socks over all of its body except the tail. I am convinced that this is of both physiological and psychological importance.

4. **Castings.** Horned owls sometimes give appreciable castings at about one week of age. Redtails start at roughly three weeks or even later.

5. **Crops.** Tiny hawks take up to 5 full crops a day. Small owls need to be fed just as often, but don't fret if your owlet does not fill it's crop. It has no crop!

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