

THE EGG OF THE ORNATE HAWK-EAGLE (*SPIZAETUS ORNATUS*)

by

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Two eggs laid recently by an Ornate Hawk-Eagle (*Spizaetus ornatus*) in the Los Angeles Zoo appear to be the first that have come to the attention of ornithologists. The eggs are now in the collection of the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology (WFVZ).

The female hawk-eagle was obtained by the zoo in 1966 and was probably captured in Guyana. Although she has laid at least annually since 1976, all previous eggs were destroyed before they could be retrieved by zoo personnel.

An egg (WFVZ 107,978) laid 19 February 1979 was unspotted and bright bluish-white in color when fresh but rapidly faded to a much paler bluish-white after it was blown. The whole egg weighed 60.294 g before preparation and measured 57.71 x 44.18 mm; the empty dry shell weight is 5.216 g. The egg is short oval in shape (Preston in Palmer, *Handbook of North American Birds*, vol. 1, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, 1962), not glossy, and has a somewhat pitted surface.

A second egg (WFVZ 108,034) was laid by the female on 21 March 1979, or 30 days after the first egg. The specimen is identical to the first in color, shape, and texture. When whole, it weighed 58.520 g, and it measures 58.17 x 43.37 mm. The empty dry shell weight is 5.056 g.

Although nests of this species have been reported from Chiapas, Mexico, and Panama (Brown and Amadon, *Hawks, Eagles, and Falcons of the World*, vol. 2, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1968) and from British Honduras (Russell, *A Distributional Study of the Birds of British Honduras*, A.O.U. Ornithol. Monogr. no. 1, 1964), the clutch size could not be determined with certainty at any of the sites. A *Spizaetus ornatus* nest found in Oaxaca, Mexico, in 1968 contained only a single well-grown nestling when found (R. Galley, pers. comm.). The laying schedule of the Los Angeles Zoo female also suggests a clutch size of one, as appears to be typical for other species in the genus (Brown and Amadon op. cit.; Kiff, *Raptor Research* 13(1):15).

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