

UNFORTUNATELY, WE UNDERSTAND that the new Canal treaty with the Republic of Panama does not provide for the protection of any nature preserves other than Barro Colorado Island, held by the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, and perhaps the partially clearcut Madden Forest Preserve. All the important birding spots in the Canal Zone including the Pipeline Road Biological Preserve near Gamboa, Achiotte Road on the Caribbean coast and the Pearl Kite area, would be turned over to Panama immediately

without restriction. If the United States Senate ratifies the treaty as proposed, the variety of habitats that make the Canal Zone tropical America's most birdable place will soon give way to marginal cornfields and cattle pastures, as has adjacent Panama. We would advise birders who have not yet visited Panama to go now while there is still a Canal Zone.

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Nesting of the Red Crossbill in Mississippi

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ON FEBRUARY 25, 1976 Randy Warren found a pair of Red Crossbills (*Loxia curvirostra*) on Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge in Winston County, east-central Mississippi. All of us observed the female as she constructed a nest near the top of a 17 m loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*). The terminal bud of the pine had been killed and lateral branches growing upward formed a cup that was being used for the nest. The nest tree was in a 28-30-year-old stand of loblolly with some shortleaf pine (*P. echinata*). Small dead twigs were broken for the nest by the female primarily from shortleaf pine. The male frequently visited the nest site but did not assist in construction. The female finished lining the nest on February 28 and we made daily observations after that date. We do not know how many eggs were laid or when they were laid, but incubation began on March 1. Throughout incubation the male fed the female on the nest. Occasionally she would leave with him and fly out of our view, but she always returned within about three minutes. Hatching apparently occurred on March 18. On that date and for several days thereafter the male regurgitated food to both the female and the young. The interval between feeding trips ranged between approximately one and two hours. On March 21 Jackson saw the female leave the nest at 15:15 and not return until 16:25, at which time she fed the young and settled down to brood them. From March 21 both adults fed the

young. By April 1, three young could be seen in the nest. All three young successfully fledged on the morning of April 8.

While making these observations we observed up to eleven Red Crossbills at a time within 100 m of the nest. It is possible that others were nesting, though we were unable to locate additional nests.

THIS RECORD IS OF SIGNIFICANCE because it represents only the second season that Red Crossbills have been observed in Mississippi and the first known breeding of the species in the mid-South. Imhof (*Alabama Birds*, 1962) reported a possible nesting attempt by Red Crossbills in north-central Alabama. The species has been reported from Louisiana on several occasions, but is not known to breed in that state (Lowery, *Louisiana Birds*, 1974). Other records of Red Crossbills from Mississippi include sight records in 1972 and the fall of 1975 at Noxubee Refuge, a specimen found dead on a gravel road there in October, 1972 (Jackson, *Mississippi Kite* 3:3-4, 1973), and two birds observed by Robbie Howell on March 7, 1976 in Homochito National Forest between Roxie and Meadville in Franklin County.

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