

was the male. An ornithological friend who has studied the nesting of the nighthawk assures me that the male broods the young by day and the female by night. Certain it is that my experience goes to prove the truth of the first part of his contention.

June 24 the young were found to have grown considerably. The pin feathers were well out. June 27 they were much larger and had developed mottled feathers over their bodies. They squatted perfectly motionless, with closed eyes, while the male did his best to draw me away. Two days later a change had come over the young birds. They no longer squatted motionless, but watched my approach with bright eyes and suddenly, with outstretched wings, wide open mouths and fierce hissings, rushed at me, evidently warning me to keep my distance. The gape of the mouth was prodigious and gave an excellent illustration of the bird's natural fly-trap as he sweeps the atmosphere for flying insects. Finding intimidation vain, the little fellows raised their wings and ran swiftly across the roof. The wing spread was marvelous,—out of all proportion to the size of the body, and marked the bird as an aviator of the very first rank. The body measured four inches, but the wing spread was fully twelve inches. As the bird ran, with spread wings, elevated at a slight angle, the resemblance to an aeroplane skimming along the ground and about to rise was most striking.

I was obliged to be absent from the city for a week, and when I returned, July 8, the birds had flown. I cannot be sure of the exact day of the laying of the eggs or the flight of the birds, but the entire interval between must have been pretty close to thirty-six days.

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Secretary Audubon Society of New Hampshire.

#### INCUBATION PERIOD OF KILLDEER,

May 25, 1916, I had the pleasure of seeing for the first time the Killdeer's nest and eggs, through the courtesy of Mr. Charles S. Ludlow, local weather reporter, who for several years has collaborated with me in reporting bird migration and taking the Bird Census. I have seen the downy young just able to run, once, many years ago. The nest is about a mile north of Red Cloud, in a fallow field that was sown last year broad-cast to cane, on a barren knoll, with absolutely no protection but that of innocence, which may be greater than we think. The dirt is scooped out the size of my hand and is inlaid with thin, flat scraps of magnesian sand shale averaging an inch long. While a few dead stems lie with the stones, there is no appearance of design in their presence.

The soft stone satisfies the mother's instinct, and holds the heat while she is off the nest.

The eggs are three, remarkably large for the weight of the bird. We agreed that the ground color was greenish, uninfluenced by the books studied later. They say creamy or buffy. The markings are as described, shining blackish, with large blotches around the larger end. The small end is almost acute. The mother had probably heard us coming, and was running a few rods away, but after our examination, when we moved about four rods into the shelter of the trees, she came to the nest without hesitation, and hovered over it but would not settle. The male has not been seen, taking apparently no further interest in the proceedings.

The eggs were all laid by the twentieth of May, when the nest was first found. We were desirous of learning what we could of the period of incubation of this class of birds. June 15, one egg was hatched and the others pipped. A day or two later Mr. Ludlow found everything gone. A bull snake had been seen in the vicinity, and probably knew all about the matter. The nestling was well covered with down, as is the case with all birds that leave the nest young. Can anyone add more accurate data as to the period of incubation?

J. M. BATES.

Red Cloud, Neb.

#### LITTLE BLUE HERONS NEAR COLUMBUS, OHIO

On July 2, 1916, two Little Blue Herons (*Florida caerulea*) in the white plumage were seen and studied at close range for some time, at a swamp near Canal Winchester, about fifteen miles south-east of Columbus, Ohio.

MRS. R. O. RYDER,

Columbus, Ohio.