

An Unusual Flight of Geese.—It may be common in some parts of the country for immense flocks of geese to pass by on migrations—the writers cannot be positive of that—but it is very uncommon in Iowa, Nebraska, or the Middle West for six or seven thousand geese to pass over in a few hours.

Such was the experience of the writers on March 14, 1928, between the hours of 7 A. M. and 1 P. M., in South Dakota across the Big Sioux River west of Sioux City, Iowa. It seemed to be one continuous procession of flocks going northward, flying high or low, but never stopping on the partly ice-covered lakes of the region.

Four species of geese were noted: White-fronted Goose, 2; Blue Goose, 3805; Snow Goose, 668; Canada Goose, 2386; and unidentified geese, 316 indi-



Flocks of Blue Geese on March 18, 1928

viduals. The total number of all species was 7177. Flocks varied in size from a few to over a thousand. Snow Geese were never seen in flocks by themselves but were scattered in flocks of other species. The two White-fronted Geese were in a large flock of Canada Geese with a few Snow Geese included.

Flocks could be heard long before coming into sight. It was noteworthy that the Canada Geese flapped their wings much slower than other species, and also appeared to maintain their flock formations better.

Never, within the knowledge of bird students of the Sioux City locality, has there been as many geese seen in one day and the big, unanswered question is, what was the reason for such a large number at that time.—WALTER M. ROSEN and WALTER W. BENNETT, *Sioux City, Iowa*.

Increase of Blue Geese in the Missouri Valley.—On March 18, 1928, I had the pleasure of being in the field with Mr. Bennett and Mr. Youngworth, on the Missouri River bottoms, about twenty miles south of Sioux City. The trip was taken especially to see the geese, which had been reported to us. The geese were too numerous to count, or even to estimate with very great accuracy. But the writer put down the following figures for the Blue Goose: 1500, 250, 500, 4000, 300, 4000; and the following figures for the Snow Goose: 6, 100, 40, 100. These figures refer to birds in the air, except the two counts of 4000 for the Blue Goose, and the two of 100 for the Snow Goose. Those in flight were in many flocks of varying size, some of which undoubtedly contained one or two

hundred birds. In both cases the 4000 Blue Geese were flocks at rest in a shallow slough or mud flat. Among these were Snow Geese, estimated at 100 in each case. These birds were simply standing at ease. There was more or less commotion in places from time to time, and in the second large resting group, geese were constantly arriving in small flocks from the direction of the first large flock; when we first came upon the second flock it contained at least 2000, possibly 3000, geese, and hence was in addition to the first large flock of 4000. No Canada Geese or White-fronted Geese were seen among these resting flocks, nor did we see any Canada Geese flying with the Blue Geese; but the Snow Geese and Blue Geese were always intermingled, the latter far outnumbering the former.

On the way home, toward evening, we saw a great flock coming from the direction of the slough, and saw them alight in a stubble corn field, where they began to feed, apparently on stray kernels of corn. Flocks continued to come in and alight, making a column of geese numbering, perhaps, 1500. The column proceeded through the field, at times approaching within a hundred yards of the highway, where twenty-five or thirty automobiles were parked to enable the occupants to view the unusual sight. These birds are not included in the figures, because we assumed that they came from the flocks already counted.

I have never before seen or heard of such numbers of Blue Geese migrating through this part of the country. It is probably the result of adequate protection in the winter quarters in the south together with spring protection. Their far north breeding ground renders them practically immune during that season. I have not heard of any corresponding increase in the number of Canada Geese.—T. C. STEPHENS, *Sioux City, Iowa.*

Actions of a Young Wilson's Plover.—On June 26, 1927, I visited a colony of Least Terns which were nesting on a sand-bar close to the shore on the Indian River, right in the city of Titusville, Brevard County, Florida. While looking for types of Least Tern eggs new to me, I caught sight of a fleeting, small object near to the edge of the water, and, suspecting it to be a young Least Tern, I went to the spot where it was last seen. Here, crouched upon the ground among shells and debris, was a young Wilson's Plover about five days old. It lay with its head and neck lying on the ground, and as I stooped to pick it up it dashed away with remarkable speed. I gave chase, and when close upon it it dodged between my legs. This was repeated a number of times before I was able to catch the nimble little fellow. When captured it cried loudly, and struggled to escape. As I was chasing the young the parents flew toward the spot with sharp cries, and alighted within a few feet of me, uttering their plaintive cries while they dragged their wings along the ground, with the feathers of their backs raised.

It was such a splendid opportunity to secure good poses at close range that I decided to go for my camera in the car a few hundred feet away, so I put the young plover under a shell of a Horse-shoe or King Crab, placing wet sand around the edges to keep it from escaping. Returning shortly, I found the young lying quietly beneath the shell. It commenced to cry out as I held it, thus attracting the parents once more, but this time they did not offer anything near the previous chances to take good pictures, so I gave it up and endeavored to get one of the young. But every time I got a focus it would dive off, and right after it I went. Finally, it made its escape to the water, running out as