

GENERAL NOTES

Snowy Egret and Little Blue Heron breeding in Oklahoma.—The first nesting colony of Snowy Egrets (*Leucophoyx thula*) and Little Blue Herons (*Florida caerulea*) known in Oklahoma was found in 1951 in a ten-acre patch of oak woods on the farm of Paul A. Robertson, nine miles west of Oklahoma City near Lake Overholser, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma. In addition, the colony included nesting American Egrets (*Casmerodius albus*) and Black-crowned Night Herons (*Nycticorax nycticorax*), not previously known to breed in Oklahoma County.

Mrs. Marcelle Tattan of Oklahoma City, niece of Mr. Robertson, first discovered the birds in May, 1951. Mr. Robertson reported the find to A. D. Goodwin, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Game Management Agent, Oklahoma City, who in turn informed the State Game and Fish Department. On June 20, 1951, Mr. Robertson, Mr. Goodwin, Alden Kimsey, and I counted 136 nests in the area, which was located a quarter-mile from the North Canadian River and 100 yards from a busy highway. Nests were situated from 15 to 35 feet above the ground; usually there were several nests per tree. The colony was estimated at approximately 200 birds. Numbers of each species were: Black-crowned Night Heron, 45 pairs; Snowy Egret, 35 pairs; Little Blue Heron, 18 pairs; American Egret, 2 pairs.

Mr. Robertson said that the Black-crowned Night Herons had nested in the area for the past five years, but that the 1951 season was the first for the egrets and Little Blue Herons.—WALLACE HUGHES, *State Game and Fish Department, 118 State Capitol, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, January 24, 1952.*

Nesting-height preference of the Eastern Kingbird.—Nests of the Eastern Kingbird, *Tyrannus tyrannus*, have been reported as low as two feet and as high as 100 feet. In the literature we read that nests in trees are commonly at heights of about 20 feet, while in open country nests are placed frequently on top of fence posts. Recently I had an opportunity to investigate the nesting-height preferences of these birds where a large number of almost identical nesting platforms were offered at various heights.

From Mio, Michigan, eastward there is a line of high-voltage electric towers that provide nest sites for a number of Eastern Kingbirds. Intersecting braces at each of the four corners of these towers form platforms suitable for nests. The first set of such intersections is at a height of about six feet. Then a similar pattern—almost identical and equally suitable as judged by human eyes—is repeated at heights of 21, 26, 31 feet and so on to the top of the tower.

On June 28, 1951, I examined 16 nests on these towers (all with eggs or young). All but one of these nests were at the six-foot level. The one exception was at the 21-foot level, and in this instance a nearby hill had the effect of reducing the apparent height. Along the line of the towers for a width of about 100 feet, the vegetation is kept to a height of a foot or less by mowing; so a nest at six feet is placed prominently above the immediate surroundings except for the tower itself. However, the neighboring countryside outside the mowed swath varied widely in character. In some places it consisted of grasslands; in others, bottomland deciduous forest and upland pine forest.

The evidence here suggests that the Eastern Kingbird prefers a nest site considerably below 20 feet, provided that platforms are available and that the nest site stands out over most objects nearby.—HAROLD MAYFIELD, *2557 Portsmouth Ave., Toledo, Ohio, December 31, 1951.*