

The first young left the nest either late on October 23 or early October 24. On the 24th, it was found in a tree about 20 yards from the nest and alternately flew and hopped until it had returned to the tree nearest the nest tree.

Rain again made the road impassable from October 24 to November 6, but we walked to the grove from the nearest paved road on October 30. There were two adults soaring near the grove and one bird on the nest. Whether it was an adult or an immature could not be determined, since it was well down in the nest with only its back visible. On November 6, three Harris' Hawks were flushed from the windmill about 200 yards from the nest. Two were mature, but the third disappeared into the grove before it could be seen well. One young hawk was standing on the side of the nest. It made no effort to fly, and its craw seemed to be full—as it was on every occasion when the breasts of the young hawks could be seen, though trips to the nest were made at various times of day between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.

On November 10, two adult hawks and one immature were in the east side of the grove about 300 yards from the nest. The other young hawk was standing on the edge of the nest. Its wings, head and tail appeared fully feathered; its breast was still very streaked. It left the nest either late on November 10 or early on November 11, and both young hawks were found in the grove on November 11. One called from a tree about 50 yards from the nest and then flew reasonably well. The tail and upper sides of the wings had an adult appearance. The breast was still quite streaked and the undersides of the wings were lighter in color than the adult underwing, with less differentiation between the color of the flight feathers and that of the wing linings.

Both immatures were still in the grove on November 13, but were not found again until December 21, when they and two adults were at a tank .7 mile from the grove. On December 31, two adults and two immatures were seen in the grove, and a group of four was seen on January 7, 1959, about three miles from the grove.

Bent (1937. *U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull.* no. 167) gives the latest egg dates for Harris' Hawks as June 21 (p. 147). The incubation period is "said to be 4 weeks" (p. 143), but no reference is made to any known nest. If that incubation period is correct, these eggs must have been laid on or about August 25, two months later than any eggs noted in Bent. No reference to later egg dates has been located elsewhere, and correspondence with several residents of south Texas has produced no later dates.—ANNE L. LESASSIER, 1611 W. Indiana, Midland, Texas, and FRANCES C. WILLIAMS, c/o City Carrier 102, Midland, Texas, January 27, 1959.

Laughing Gulls following the plow.—It has long been known that several members of the genus *Larus* throughout the world habitually feed in soil turned up by a plow. This practice has been associated with such insect-eating gulls as Franklin's Gull (*L. pipixcan*), Ring-billed Gull (*L. delawarensis*), California Gull (*L. californicus*), Black-headed Gull (*L. ridibundus*), Lesser Black-backed Gull (*L. fuscus*), Mew Gull (*L. canus*), and others. (See, e.g., Bent, 1921, "Life Histories of North American Gulls and Terns," Washington; and Witherby, *et al.*, 1944, "The Handbook of British Birds," Volume V, London.)

To my knowledge, this has never been recorded for the Laughing Gull (*L. atricilla*), except for a brief reference to Laughing Gulls ". . . seen . . . scattered over . . . newly-ploughed fields, regaling on . . . worms, insects, and their larvae . . ." by Wilson (Brewer, 1854. "Wilson's American Ornithology." New York). However, no reference was made here to the act of following the plow in operation.

At various times between April and July of 1955 and 1956, I frequently observed Laughing Gulls following plows on the eastern shore of Maryland and Virginia. These were

noted most often in the Sinepuxent area south of Ocean City, Worcester County, Maryland, and near Exmore, Northampton County, Virginia.

The Laughing Gull, a common nesting bird here, is rather closely associated with the seacoast and rarely strays inland when feeding. However, in this area, where farm land often adjoins the sea, this species could easily come into contact with farm land being plowed, and with other gull species following the plow. This provides a situation where learning can take place.

This learning process is not as difficult as might be supposed, for these gulls, as well as others, commonly investigate passing boats and follow those which throw off scrap fish and other food. It would not take long for a gull to learn to follow an object, in this case a plowing tractor, especially if other gulls are already feeding behind it. According to the observations of Frings, *et al.* (1955. *Wilson Bull.*, 67:155-170), on Herring Gulls (*L. argentatus*), at least some gulls are stimulated by sight and sound to investigate a group of feeding gulls.—ROBERT G. WOLK, *Department of Biology, St. Lawrence University, Canton, New York, March 3, 1959.*

NEW LIFE MEMBER



Mrs. Chandler Robbins II, a busy house wife at Eastern Point, Gloucester, Massachusetts, finds time to pursue her natural history interests in several ways. She is a volunteer associate of the Natural History Department of the Peabody Museum, and participates in the banding of pelagic birds off the coast of Cape Ann, Massachusetts.

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