

GENERAL NOTES

Nests of Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift in México.—Prior to Edwards' (1959. *Auk*, 76:358-359) discovery of an occupied nest on the trunk of a tree at Tikal, Guatemala, the Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift (*Panyptila cayennensis*), north of Honduras, was known only from a bird taken at Presidio, Veracruz, México, in June, 1943 (Moore. 1947. *Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash.*, 60:143-144). Edwards' note appeared shortly after I had submitted the following related observation made some 160 miles from Tikal, but in Mexico. These developments fulfill Moore's expectation and suggest that the Veracruz specimen may not represent a disjunct population.

On July 24, 1958, at Palenque Ruins, Chiapas, Mexico, elevation about 800 feet, I found a remarkable nest under the portico of the Temple of Inscriptions. From my sketch and notes made on the scene, I have been informed that it was a nest of *P. cayennensis*.

The nest, about 18 inches long, was fastened on the corbeled wall some 12 feet above the floor. Only the upper one-third, about 6 inches in diameter, was attached. The remainder, consisting of slender entrance tubing, hung vertically free. Honey-colored and rough-textured, it seemed to be made entirely of long-tailed achenes that glistened. A torn place in the top, however, exposed numerous small feathers.

This swift, known to nest in buildings, makes either a straight tube, or one with a bulbous top. The Palenque nest was of the latter type. Essentially, it fitted accounts given by Richmond (1898. *Auk*, 15:7-10), Haverschmidt (1954. *Wilson Bull.*, 66:67-69; 1958. *Auk*, 75:121-130), Sick (1958. *Auk*, 75:217-220), and others, except that the free-hanging entrance tube was bifurcated.

Beneath its bulbous top, the nest tapered before branching into two nearly parallel tubes forming the lower third of the structure. Both orifices were smooth inside, between two and three inches in diameter, and perfectly round. The left tube was about two inches shorter than its mate, with a slight outward tilt. It seemed possible that both tubes were functional, rather than the shorter one's being a "false entrance," such as Salvin (1863. *Proc. Zool. Soc. London*, p. 191) shows for the Great Swallow-tailed Swift (*P. sancti-hieronymi*). They were nearly equal in diameter and emerged symmetrically; whereas, in Salvin's drawing the "false entrance" is quite short, appearing as an inverted, open pocket midway on the outside of a long, six-inch-wide tubular nest.

I saw a second nest (badly damaged and apparently single-tubed) high on a wall inside the ground floor of the nearby Observatory ruin. The caretaker, attributing such nests to "swallows now gone for the season," voluntarily remarked that these birds had built in the ruins in previous years also.

Deploring destruction of nests of this rare Mexican bird, Sr. Miguel Alvarez del Toro, Instituto de Ciencias Naturales de Chiapas, is conferring with authorities toward ending an abuse that is doubly distressing, since, according to Haverschmidt (1954. *op. cit.*: 68-69), a nest may be used for more than one season.—LOVIE M. WHITAKER, 1204 West Brooks Street, Norman, Oklahoma, July 29, 1959.

Ross Goose taken at Horseshoe Lake, Illinois.—While undertaking research dealing with Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) in the area of Horseshoe Lake, Alexander County, Illinois, during the fall of 1956, two small white geese were repeatedly seen on and near the refuge. Very few Snow Geese (*Chen hyperborea*) were in the area that season and none was reported killed. On November 26, one of the two small white geese was killed by a hunter and given to me for mounting. It was a Ross Goose (*Chen rossii*) in