

Josselyn Van Tyne's Common Nighthawk nesting return.—Among the notes and files turned over to me for "Fundamentals of Ornithology," I found three paragraphs of a first draft of a paper which Josselyn Van Tyne obviously intended to finish as a general note on the return of a Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*) to its breeding ground. Van Tyne had prepared some bibliography cards on the subject through 1952. The three paragraphs are hand-written on the back of a page of *Conservation News*, dated 15 May 1955, so we can only assume that this is the approximate time that he jotted down his first ideas. It is almost certain that he did no further work on the project because, despite his remarkable command of current world literature on birds, he did not include a reference to Dexter's second paper on Common Nighthawk returns (1956. *Bird-Banding*, 27:9-16).

Why Van Tyne did not complete the short note is purely conjectural at this time. He spent the period of 10 to 26 June 1955, in field studies: 12-13 and 24-26 June in his Kirtland's Warbler study area in Crawford County, and the intervening period in Michigan's Upper Peninsula with Dr. L. H. Walkinshaw and Dr. and Mrs. W. Powell Cottrille. He was also devoting a considerable amount of time to the AOU Check-List during this general period.

Van Tyne's hand-written notes read as follows:

"While studying Kirtland's Warblers with us in June, 1942, ten miles southeast of Mio, Oscoda County, Michigan, Frances Hamerstrom found a Nighthawk nest with 2 eggs in a little open area on a hillside among the jack pines that sheltered the Kirtland's Warblers.

"On 20 June 1942, I set a carefully concealed bow-net at the nest and caught and banded the incubating female (No. 41-222357).

"We studied the same area in 1943 but found no Nighthawk nest. However, on 24 June 1944, I found a nest in a similar habitat 450 feet south of the 1942 nest. Capturing the female with a bow-net, I found that I again had No. 41-222357."

The area "ten miles southeast of Mio, Oscoda County" was in Section 19, T25N, R4E. Parks (1946. *Bird-Banding*, 17:168) reported on a Common Nighthawk which returned to lay its eggs on the roof of the same high school in two successive years, in Hartford, Connecticut, and Dexter (1952. *Bird-Banding*, 23:109-114; 1956. *Bird-Banding*, 27:9-16) told of the return of a banded bird to the roofs of several buildings of Kent State University in Ohio. Van Tyne, however, appears to have been the first person to make observations on a banded Common Nighthawk returning to the same general nesting area on the ground, the original primitive nesting site for this species. It may be recalled that Van Tyne also was the first ornithologist to show by banding that passerine birds return to the same wintering ground in the tropics (1932. *Bird-Banding*, 3:110).—ANDREW J. BERGER, *Department of Zoology, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii, 14 July 1966.*

Retarded or arrested cranial development in *Myiornis ecaudatus*.—A pair of Short-tailed Pigmy-tyrants, (*Myiornis ecaudatus*) were obtained, 19 August 1966, from rain forest, near Los Guaraunos, Estado Sucre, Venezuela. They were feeding two nestlings that were nearly ready to leave the nest.

While preparing the specimens, we observed that both had partially pneumatized or incompletely ossified skulls. The frontals and parietals were almost completely unpneumatized (single-layered), thin, transparent and flexible structures. Only the anterior parts of the frontals and posterior parts of the parietals were pneumatized

(double-layered). In passerines, this condition is usually found only in the sexually immature birds whereas, actually breeding adults have a completely pneumatized skull.

This condition of unpneumatized skull has been reported in individuals of several passerine species which were sexually mature or actually reproducing. Noteworthy are the following: *Loxia curvirostra* (McCabe and McCabe, 1933, *Condor*, 35:136-147); *Quelea quelea* (Disney and Marshall, 1956, *Proc. Zool. Soc. London*, 127:379-387); *Lepidocolaptes lachrymiger*, *Euscarthmornis granadensis*, *Elaenia obscura*, *Mionectes striaticollis*, *Myadestes ralloides*, *Molothrus bonariensis*, *Tanagra xanthogaster* (Miller, 1963, *Univ. California Publ. Zool.*, 66:1-78), *Synallaxis albescens* (Miller, 1955, *Acta XI Congr. Intern. Ornith. Basel*, p. 495-503). Grant (1966, *Amer. Midland Nat.*, 75:142-149) also observed the same phenomenon in *Myiopagis viridicata* and gave a good review of the genera and families in which retarded or arrested skull ossification has been reported.

According to Dwight (1900, *Ann. New York Acad. Sci.*, 13:73-360) and Nero (1951, *Wilson Bull.*, 63:84-88), the skulls of passerine species appear to pneumatize completely at about eight months of age. On the other hand, Miller (1963, op. cit.), indicated that in some of the tody-flycatchers there are single-layered regions in the skull that may prove to be permanent. Concerning the genus *Mionectes*, Miller (1963) said, "the skull either is slow in attaining adult double-layered condition throughout or never attains this state in some individuals." He also reported (Miller, 1946, *Bird-Banding*, 27:33-35) that complete pneumatization (doubling) may never be complete in some non-oscine families such as the Furnariidae. Since *Myiornis ecaudatus* is not biologically well known, we can not specify whether or not the incomplete pneumatization is the result of an arrested or a retarded process. Neither can we say that this phenomenon is of usual occurrence in this species. It also seems possible that individuals of this species are sexually mature or actually reproducing while still being very young as indicated by the presence of unpneumatized skulls.

We thank Mr. James Dale Smith for helping in the preparation of the manuscript, and the Shell Foundation of Venezuela who provided a vehicle for field work. This study is a byproduct of ecological research while the senior author was a Ph.D. student of the Department of Zoology of the University of Montreal. Financial support was given by the University of Oriente in Venezuela and the National Research Council of Canada.—RAYMOND McNEIL AND AIDA MARTINEZ, *Departamento de Biología, Universidad de Oriente, Cumana, Sucre, Venezuela*, (Present Address (McNeil), *Department of Zoology, University of Montreal, Montreal, Canada.*) 12 September 1966.

The gaping response of nestling Bank Swallows.—Because of the hole-nesting habit of Bank Swallows (*Riparia riparia*) the behavior of the young on the nest is difficult to observe. Beyer (1938, *Wilson Bull.*, 50:122-137) observed Bank Swallows on their nest by digging an observation hole behind their burrow. He reported that the parents gave a high pitched call when entering the nest. If this did not release gaping, the adults would nudge the young. In the summer of 1964 I undertook to study the gaping response of young Bank Swallows from an observation hole similar to that described by Beyer (op. cit.).

On 7 July 1964 near the W. K. Kellogg Biological Station of Michigan State University, Barry County, Michigan, I found a large Bank Swallow colony and began construction of an observation hole. The nest contained three young estimated from Beyer's fledging dates to be eight days old. Before completion of the hole I observed that the young birds gaped vigorously and gave begging calls when I darkened the nest chamber by placing