

or with respect to its possible relationships (for recent comments on its systematics see P. S. Humphrey and K. C. Parkes, Proc. 13th Internat. Ornithol. Congr. 1963:89-90).

These observations were made while I was conducting field studies of woodpeckers under a grant (N.S.F.—GB-5891) from the National Science Foundation.—LESTER L. SHORT, JR., *The American Museum of Natural History, New York, 1 April 1968.*

**Use of man-made islands as nesting sites of the Common Loon.**—Many species of waterfowl commonly nest on islands where nesting success is generally higher than at other sites. This has led waterfowl managers to provide islands as a habitat improvement measure (Hammond and Mann, J. Wildl. Mgmt. 20:345-352, 1956). A technique was developed on the Chippewa National Forest in north-central Minnesota to provide floating sedge-mat islands for nesting sites, especially for Ring-necked Ducks (*Aythya collaris*). An unexpected result was the immediate and frequent use of the islands as nest sites by Common Loons (*Gavia immer*). Of eight water areas containing groups of islands, six had an island occupied by loons. This would indicate that loon pairs find man-made islands highly desirable for nesting. The technique may provide a means of increasing nesting success of loons throughout much of their range, should this ever become a matter of concern.



FIG. 1. Typical island occupied by nesting loons.

The islands occupied by loons ranged in size from 36 ft<sup>2</sup> to 100 ft<sup>2</sup>. Sedges (*Carex* spp.), leatherleaf (*Chaemeadaphne calyculata*), bog birch (*Betula pumila*) and sphagnum (*Sphagnum* spp.) are typical of the plant community composing the islands. They are free-floating pieces of bog, cut away from the edge and anchored in open water (Fig. 1).—JOHN E. MATHISEN, *Chippewa National Forest, Cass Lake, Minnesota, 4 September 1968.*

**Egg transportation by a female Mallard.**—In late May of 1960 in the Bethany Bog, in Bethany, Connecticut I observed a female Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) fly from its nest with its egg in its bill. At this time the water had receded below the sphagnum level leaving the area surrounding the nest dry.