

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.

Audubon (Ornithol. Biogr., 1:212, 1831) claimed that if the eggs of a Chuck-will's Widow (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*) were disturbed the bird would carry them off in its beak. This claim has been disputed by Ganier (Wilson Bull. 76:19-27, 1964). Dr. and Mrs. F. M. Baumgartner (in litt.) reported that they observed a Yellow-shafted Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*) fly off with its eggs after the breaking of a branch uncovered the nest. Truslow (Nat. Geographic, 882-884, 1966) observed a female Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*) carry off its eggs after the nest site was uncovered when the trunk above the nest broke off.

These examples suggest that egg carrying in bills by birds may be more widespread than has been reported. Conditions which seem to expose the nesting site may be a factor which motivates birds to move their eggs.—ALPHONSE AVITABILE, *The University of Connecticut at Waterbury, Waterbury, Connecticut, 19 February 1968.*

**A record of the Tufted Duck for Connecticut.**—A recent article (Gochfeld, Condor, 70:186-187, 1968) brings to mind a heretofore unreported record of the Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*) for Connecticut. On 11 November 1956, a male was seen and photographed by the author and several members of the Hartford Audubon Society at Giant's Neck (about 2.5 miles southwest of Niantic), East Lyme County. The bird was on a small brackish pond in the company of Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*), Black Ducks (*A. rubripes*), and Mallard  $\times$  Black Duck hybrids. This is the first Connecticut report of this species and one of the earliest for eastern North America.—GEORGE T. AUSTIN, *Department of Biological Sciences, Nevada Southern University, Las Vegas, Nevada 89109. (Present address: Department of Biological Sciences, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona). 30 July 1968.*

**Great Horned Owl nesting in a populated area.**—The usual nesting habitat of the Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) in the midwest is in rural woodlots or forests, occasionally near farm buildings, and well removed from human activity (Bent, U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull., 170, 1938; Baumgartner, Auk 56:274-282, 1939; Austing and Holt, *The world of the Great Horned Owl*, Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1966).

A Great Horned Owl was seen occasionally on the inhabited part of the campus of Western Illinois University in Macomb, Illinois, during January, 1968, and its nest was discovered there on 15 March. The nest was upon a deserted nest of a fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger*) 38 feet above the ground in a 51-foot-tall European larch (*Larix decidua*). The nest was positioned against the south side of the tree trunk, and contained one small nestling at the time of discovery.

The nest tree was located in mowed lawn nearly separated from other trees, and only 100 feet from the central administration building (Fig. 1). Based upon a few one-hour counts, the sidewalks near the nest tree carried a minimum of 3,400 persons past the nest each weekday between the hours of 08:00 and 17:00.

While almost continually brooding the nestling in the daytime during the period 15 March through 25 March, the parent owl (sex not ascertained) watched pedestrians with an alert but unalarmed posture. After the nestling was old enough not to require constant brooding, the parent bird spent little time at the nest during the daytime, but instead perched within view of it at the base of a dome atop the university administration building. The young bird left the nest about 15 April and remained in the nest tree until 24 April.

The selection of this nesting site in a congested area is especially puzzling since