

pin-feathers within about two weeks. At first their food cries were not noticeable, but within a few days the brood became vociferous when begging. Now any disturbance in the garage started an uproar of hunger cries that sometimes lasted a full minute or more. During their first week (perhaps longer) the young were brooded at night by one of the parents. At no time did the nest become soiled by droppings.

When they were fairly well feathered the young swifts left the nest — not to fly, but to cling to the wall. First only one climbed out, then the other three, all three at about the same time. For a day or so they clambered about, out of the nest part of the time, then back in it. During the last week of June they ventured well away from the nest, always clinging to the wall. On several occasions I found one or more of them fully 7 feet below the nest, only inches from the floor.

The smallest of the brood I found dead on the floor when it was about three weeks old. The others continued to develop rapidly. As I watched from day to day, I could see that their primary wing feathers were growing longer. As the birds matured they wandered less from the nest and from each other. During the first four days of July they crowded together so closely that they sometimes looked like a single bird with three heads.

When about a month old, the young swifts exercised their wings a great deal. Presently they were flying. I did not witness their first flight. Indeed, I now suspect that they had been flying for some time — and returning to the garage to roost each night — before I even knew they could fly. One of the brood killed itself flying into a telephone wire not far from the garage. The other two and their parents roosted together in the garage night after night for a week or so before they departed for good.

Swifts did not nest in the garage in the summer of 1972.

BOSQUE DEL APACHE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, SAN ANTONIO, NEW MEXICO
87832, 10 MARCH 1973.

A HUMMINGBIRD NEST IN GHOST HOLLOW

BY MILDRED RICKSTREW

Finding the nest of a hummingbird in Ghost Hollow, just northeast of Ripley, Payne County, north-central Oklahoma, was pure luck. The hollow is a favorite birding spot for my sister (Margaret Williamson) and me, but we seldom have seen a hummingbird there.

On 16 May 1973, while I was standing motionless hoping to observe a Louisiana Waterthrush (*Seiurus motacilla*) go to its nest on the opposite bank (see Rickstrew, 1975, Bull. Oklahoma Orn. Soc., 8:3-5), a female hummingbird — presumably a Ruby-throat (*Archilochus colubris*) — settled on a tiny, lichen-covered nest, about the size of a walnut, directly in front of me. The nest was in a small bur oak that stood beside the road and hung over the creek; it was

attached to a small drooping limb at a fork just above eye-level. The nest and bird were conspicuous enough once I had seen them, but had the bird not flown to it I'd never have noticed the nest, for it looked like part of the limb.

My sister and I watched the nest from 16 May (when it probably contained eggs) until the young fledged on 21 June. On 5 June we used a mirror attached to a fishing pole trying to see the contents, but leaves above the nest blocked our view and the female hummingbird fought the mirror so hard that we feared she would injure herself or damage the nest. On 7 June we saw what appeared to be a small stick protruding from the nest. Had something disturbed the tiny structure? Binoculars proved the "stick" to be the slightly open beak of a young bird. Later that day we saw two "sticks" above the nest's rim.

On 12 June we sat in the car and watched the mother bird put her long bill down the throats of the young birds, thus feeding them by regurgitation. According to Bent (1940, U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 176, p. 342) "a considerable part of the . . . food consists of insects, chiefly those that come to the flowers the hummingbird visits."

Several bird-watchers aside from my sister and me enjoyed watching the mother hummingbird and her young during the final days of the fledging period. We last saw the young on 21 June. By that time they had grown so large that they could remain in the nest only by facing in opposite directions.

BOX 27, RIPLEY, OKLAHOMA 74062, 25 SEPTEMBER 1973.

GENERAL NOTES

Common Loon, Virginia Rail, and Marbled Godwit in Cimarron County, Oklahoma.—Early on the mild, overcast morning of 2 May 1975, several of my ornithology students and I heard the call of a Common Loon (*Gavia immer*) at Lake Carl Etling in Black Mesa State Park, Cimarron County, far western Oklahoma. A few minutes later the bird flew low overhead, allowing us to see it clearly. According to Sutton (1967, Oklahoma birds, Univ. Oklahoma Press, Norman, p. 5), the Common Loon has not heretofore been reported from Cimarron County.

As we explored the small cattail-choked stream below the dam, we twice flushed a long-billed rail about 7 or 8 inches long that we felt sure was a Virginia Rail (*Rallus limicola*). The darkness of its plumage suggested that it was immature, though the date was early for a full-fledged bird of the year. The Virginia Rail has not been reported from Cimarron County though it has bred in Beaver County at the eastern end of the Panhandle (Sutton, *op. cit.*, p. 161).

Three times we flushed a Marbled Godwit (*Limosa fedoa*), first at the north end of the lake, then twice along the west shore. We saw it clearly. No black or white showed in the tail, the wing linings were rich cinnamon-rufous, and the wings lacked the white stripe that is characteristic of the Hudsonian Godwit (*L. haemastica*). No godwit has thus far been reported from the Oklahoma Panhandle. The westernmost county from which the Marbled has been reported is Woods, in the northwestern part of the main body of the state (Sutton, 1974, A check-list of Oklahoma birds, p. 17).—Jack D. Tyler, *Department of Biological Sciences, Cameron University, Lawton, Oklahoma 73501, 15 May 1975.*