

sticks carried in their bills. On 3 June I again observed that the herons avoided the canopy, centering their activities below it. The grackles, on the other hand, stayed in the upper parts of the trees where their nests were.

High southerly winds, with gusts in excess of 20 miles per hour, prevailed during the first half of June. When I entered the locust grove on 14 June the wind was very strong. On seeing me, the grackles sounded their alarm and the herons that were on nests left hurriedly. All of the heron nests were well down from the treetops. In several trees that held both heron and grackle nests, the grackle nests were invariably higher than those of the herons. The trees were so slender that they did not afford much support for the nests when the wind was high. The shallow stick platforms that the herons had built were especially vulnerable. When my coming caused the herons to leave, I realized that the wind was bending the trees over so violently that the eggs were rolling from the nests and falling to the ground. I left the grove immediately when I saw what was happening.

By 23 June the wind had subsided. Once again the grackles' alarm cries made it impossible for me to enter the grove without disturbing the herons. When two of the herons that were on nests saw me they flew off. I counted 24 shallow platform nests that day, all well below the canopy. I did not climb to any of them, but four whose contents I could see from the ground held a total of nine nestlings, all recently hatched. I could not, of course, be sure which nests were those of the Little Blue and which of the Cattle Egret. Three thin-bottomed nests that I could see through held eggs, though I could not count the eggs from where I stood. The ground under the nests was virtually carpeted with broken pale blue eggs.

I returned to the rookery on 27 June. I was alarmed when I realized that the nests that had held young on the 23rd were now empty. I climbed to one nest (about 12 feet up) and found three eggs in it but saw no sign of an incubating bird. In the trees were many young grackles out of nests but none quite capable of flight. The parent grackles were noisy and aggressive.

I returned on 28 June and again on 30 June, but saw no sign of young herons in any of the nests. On 30 June I climbed again to the nest that had held three eggs on the 27th. The eggs were gone. From 25 June to the end of the month, fewer and fewer herons frequented the locust grove. On 1 July no heron of either species flew in to the stand of locust trees.

ROUTE 4, BOX 453, TECUMSEH, OKLAHOMA 74873, 15 MARCH 1982.

### GENERAL NOTES

**Eight Mallard broods in Cimarron County, Oklahoma, one date, one locality.** — On 13 June 1980, on the largest of several sewage ponds 1 mile northeast of Boise City, Cimarron County, far western Oklahoma, I saw eight hen Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*) and carefully counted their chicks. Broods of 1, 2, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, and 11, a total of 40 chicks, all of them quite small, were in sight at one time from one position. At the ponds I saw

also several adult Ruddy Ducks (*Oxyura jamaicensis*), Redheads (*Aythya americana*), and Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*), none of them with chicks.

The above paragraph suggests that ponds of this sort, where the water-level fluctuates only a little and where animal food for the chicks is abundant, are valuable as breeding areas for waterfowl even with a minimum of "game management." — John S. Shackford, Rt. 1, Box 125, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73111, 23 June 1980.

**First nest of Whip-poor-will for Oklahoma.**—On 21 May 1980, while conducting a census of the birds present on a long-abandoned strip-mine 3.2 kilometers (2 miles) east of Henryetta, Okmulgee County, east-central Oklahoma, I flushed a female Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus*) from her nest. The nest, a mere depression in dead oak leaves, was directly under a sapling about 2 meters (6 feet) high and contained two eggs. I collected the bird, whose skeleton and spread wing (UOMZ 16381) are preserved at the University of Oklahoma. The eggs were "quite fresh," according to George M. Sutton, who prepared them as specimens. During my brief stay (about 24 hours) in the area I neither saw nor heard another Whip-poor-will.

The strip-mine was abandoned more than 50 years ago, but the long spoil-banks are clearly visible. Some of these are heavily wooded, but the Whip-poor-will nest was in a comparatively open area throughout which small trees are scattered on the ridges and in the depressions. Some parts of the mine have almost no woody vegetation today. The ridges in the vicinity of the nest-site rise only 2 to 4 meters (6 to 12 feet) above the depressions although in other parts of the mine the relief is much greater.

According to Sutton (1974, A check-list of Oklahoma Birds, Stovall Mus. Sci. & Hist., Univ. Oklahoma, Norman, p. 22) neither eggs nor young of the Whip-poor-will have heretofore been found in Oklahoma despite considerable search in areas where the species has been known to occur in summer.—D. Scott Wood, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213, 1 May 1982.

FROM THE EDITOR: Our thanks to Warren D. Harden for the time he took searching through the literature for a discussion of the plumages of the Giant Frigatebird (*Fregata minor*) and to Lawrence Curtis, Director of the Oklahoma City Zoo, for ascertaining through correspondence with thirty-some zoo directors and wildfowl breeders of the area that the Garganey (*Anas querquedula*) reported in the June issue of the Bulletin was not an "escape".—Jack D. Tyler.

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