

darkness fell, I could see only an occasional fluttering wing emerge from a mass of white feathers, in the middle of a circle of 10 or so cattle.

My subjective impression was that the cattle were badly frightened, but belligerent; and it also seemed likely that a Cattle Egret, slow to fly, would have suffered a similar fate.

Golden Eagle Specimen from Buncombe County, N.C.

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Received 15 February 1970

A Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) was found dead on 23 January 1969 by John C. Young and sent to North Carolina State University to be prepared as a study skin. It was found in the NW corner of Buncombe County near Sandymush Bald, about 10.25 air miles W-NW of Leicester, N.C., at an altitude of about 5,000 feet. It proved to be an immature female with ova 2x2 mm in diameter and had a light accumulation of body fat. Several Mallophaga and one Hippoboscid fly were the only external parasites found. The scapulars and the back were molting heavily; and the breast, abdomen, head, and neck were molting lightly. All of the rectrices were old feathers except No. 1 left and No. 1 right which were about one-third developed. The primaries were also undergoing molt. On the right wing, primaries No. 1, 2, and 3 were new feathers; No. 4 was three-quarters developed; and the remaining ones were old. On the left wing, primaries No. 1 and 4 were broken off at the base (apparently shot), No. 2 and 3 were new feathers, and the remaining ones were old.

The specimen was prepared into a study skin and deposited in the North Carolina State Museum collection as NCSM No. 3937.

[Observations of Golden Eagles in North Carolina are unusual. Most records are probably of immature birds, such as the above, which have wandered east of their usual range—DEPT. ED.]

Nesting of the Bald Eagle in the Charleston, S.C., Region

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Received 1 March 1970

During the winter of 1968 and the spring of 1969 S.C. Langston and I made an intensive effort to locate nests of the Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) in the area between Georgetown and Beaufort. Most efforts were centered around Murphy's Island and the French Quarter Creek area of the upper Cooper River.

Many abandoned nests were found, some of which were being used by Great Horned Owls (*Bubo virginianus*). Six active nests were located. In addition one known young and possibly two were fledged on Cat Island according to Mr. Wilkinson, manager of South Island Plantation. At Bulls Island on the Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge, Bald Eagles returned but failed to nest for the first time in many years.

It is believed that on Middleburg Plantation eggs were incubated in the nest, but for the first time in 35 years no young were produced. Four other nests in the French Quarter Creek area also failed to produce.

A new nest on the Wedge Plantation owned by Dr. Dominick was watched closely. Long after the eggs should have hatched they were examined and found to be infertile.

An interesting and new source of food was used by three immature Bald Eagles in the Muddy Bay area near Cat Island. For several years the colony of White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*) on Pumpkinseed Island in this bay has been banded extensively. During the 1967 season three posts supporting no-trespassing signs were erected to discourage needless molestation of the colony.

On 18 May 1969 a Bald Eagle was found perched on each of the three posts in the edge of the White Ibis colony. Two of the eagles appeared to be of the current season's hatch and one from the 1968 season. When we began to check the ibis colony it was quite evident that a tremendous amount of egg breakage had taken place close to the areas where the eagles were securing the young for food. A rough estimate showed that nearly 1,500 nests were abandoned. The eagles continued to feed in the colony for several more days and were still present on 21 May. It may surprise some to learn that instead of reducing the number of White Ibis that fledged, a significant increase in nesting success was found by the end of the season.

Late Summer Record of a Saw-whet Owl

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Received 26 December 1969

While observing the sunset from Barnett Knob Fire Tower on the Swain-Jackson county line in the Cherokee Indian Reservation in North Carolina on 14 August 1969, I heard the unmistakable call notes of the Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*). The time was approximately 8:15 PM EDT. The bird gave its call twice with an interval of about 8 minutes between the calls. Mike Browne and Darryl Moffet were also present.

The area surrounding the summit of Barnett Knob is second-growth deciduous forest. Spruce is not present save for three small trees at the base of the tower. These appear to have been planted. This observation thus constitutes a late-season calling record for North Carolina as well as a record from outside of the normal habitat of the Saw-whet Owl. The elevation of Barnett Knob is approximately 4,500 feet. The bird was not heard on subsequent visits.

Leconte's Sparrow at Franklin, N.C.

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Throughout the summer of 1968 I noticed small webs on the undersides of the leaves on the lower limbs of my sycamore tree. As the leaves fell they became attractive to several species of birds, including an Ovenbird, Carolina Wren, Tufted Titmice, Chipping, Field and Song sparrows, and Rufous-sided Towhees. Because of the activity among the leaves, I periodically checked the birds working on them.

About 5 PM on 17 October I thought I detected a movement in the fallen leaves about 5 yards from where I stood. I picked up binoculars and focused for close viewing. The bird worked so furtively that it was difficult to pick it up. I noted the dingy orange stripe above the eye, extending from bill to the nape of neck, and that the face and neck were suffused with the same shade of dull orange. When it faced me I noted the light streak down the center of the head and that its breast and under parts were unstreaked. It definitely was not a native bird and I delayed getting out my guide until I had seen every detail. When it turned I noted the sparse, and short, sharp tail, then reached for Peterson's guide. With close study it appeared to be a Leconte's Sparrow, so I checked it again and found the narrow stripes under the wing, and the narrow paler streaks around the nape of the neck, which contrasted sharply with the dark heavy stripes on its brown and buff back. In sunlight the streaks on the nape of its neck might have looked pink, but the sky was overcast and they appeared to be only a paler brown than the rest of its streaked plumage.

A Chipping Sparrow was feeding near it, and the Leconte's Sparrow seemed even smaller in comparison. A Carolina Wren was feeding about 6 feet beyond it and in comparison seemed larger. Its movements were barely perceptible, and it took so long for it to work its way across the driveway that I had a good, close view of it from every angle.