

that this was a Reddish Egret. Color photographs were secured and two have been submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Photoduplicate File at Patuxent, Maryland. The photographs have been given acquisition numbers 198 ITa and 198-ITb.

This appears to be the second record of this southern wader in North Carolina. The first report was from near Charlotte on 27 July 1947 (*Chat*, 12:52, 1948). Two birds found in Berkely County, S.C., on 15 January 1934, represent the only published record of this species from South Carolina (*South Carolina Bird Life*, Sprunt and Chamberlain, 1970). The publication of this note and the placement of photographs in the National Photoduplicate File allow the Reddish Egret to be added to the official bird list for North Carolina.

A Second Hooded Merganser Brood in South Carolina

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A brood of Hooded Mergansers (*Lophodytes cucullatus*) was produced at Orangeburg National Fish Hatchery, Orangeburg, S.C. I saw a female with three young unable to fly on 2 June 1972. The brood was first seen in the hatchery's main reservoir pond two weeks earlier by Hatchery Manager Ted Dingley. At that time four young were present. No male was ever observed. The nesting site was not found, but nine Wood Duck boxes are located in the reservoir area. By 21 July 1972 the female had disappeared, but the three young remained and were observed flying from one hatchery pond to another (Ted Dingley, pers. com.).

This is the second positive instance of nesting by the Hooded Merganser in South Carolina. The first was reported by T. A. Beckett, who observed two young at Magnolia Gardens, Charleston County, in May 1967 (*South Carolina Bird Life*, 1970, p. 592). As one of these was secured for the Charleston Museum, no attempt was made to collect the hatchery birds, but on 2 June several recognizable photographs were made. During my attempts to photograph them, the young dove and disappeared from view for 30 minutes. The female scooted frantically across the reservoir in an apparent attempt to decoy me away from the brood.

Increased use of Wood Duck nesting boxes by Hooded Mergansers in states north of South Carolina raises the possibility of imprinting as a technique in promoting future Hooded Merganser nesting in this state.

Woodcock at Butner, N.C., in March

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On 21 March 1972 at 11:00 I observed three American Woodcock (*Philohela minor*) chicks near Butner, N.C. They were in a "freezing" defense in the middle of a paved road near a creek bottom. I approached on foot within 20 feet before noticing the long-billed Woodcock hen feigning injury at the edge of the woods. Before I could reach the young, a car passed over them, the backdraft tumbling them like bits of weightless fluff. They immediately resumed their "freezing" attitude and maintained it while I knelt beside them, observing them closely. They were unharmed and unmistakably Woodcocks because of their elongated bills and mottled downy plumage. They had not developed primary wing feathers. Fearing for their safety, I placed them on the shoulder of the road. They ran skillfully, with wings raised for balance. From growth characteristics cited by W. G. Sheldon in *The Book of the American Woodcock*, 1967, I estimated their

age at about 1 week. I withdrew about 50 feet, and the hen quickly returned to her brood.

This sighting may be significant for two reasons: (1) the scarcity of Woodcock breeding records for North Carolina, and (2) the early date of hatching. Critcher and Quay (*Chat*, 17:62-68) found that nests or young Woodcocks had been reported in only 13 counties in North Carolina. To my knowledge no nests or juveniles have been recorded for Granville County. Considering the age of the chicks and the incubation period (Sheldon observed an incubation period of 21 days for one nest), egg laying in the present case might have occurred in late February. C. S. Brimley gives egg dates for Raleigh as 3 March to 11 April with an average of 24 March for 16 egg records. For the Sandhills region Skinner (*Chat*, 17:63) says, "The eggs are laid as early in some cases as the latter part of February, and I have seen young birds as early as the first week in April." Breeding, egg laying, and hatching vary with the latitude, elevation, and weather. The present observation is consistent with data suggesting relatively early reproduction in the North Carolina piedmont. In addition 21 March appears to be one of the earliest dates for observed young in the northern piedmont, perhaps attributable to the mild winter of 1971-1972.

Nesting of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in Great Craggy and Southern Great Balsam Mountains of North Carolina

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Pearson, Brimley, and Brimley (1942) regarded the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*) as a breeding summer resident in the higher mountains of North Carolina, but they mentioned only four specific localities where the bird had been observed: Roan Mountain, Highlands, Joannana Bald Mountain, and Greybeard Mountain. Elsewhere, the bird has been reported during summer in the Unicoi Mountains by Ganier and Clebsch (1944), the Great Smoky Mountains by Stupka (1963), and Mt. Mitchell by Burleigh (1941). To date, however, there appear to be no specific records from the Great Craggy or southern Great Balsam Mountains; and the following observations are therefore of interest.

SOUTHERN GREAT BALSAM MOUNTAINS: Based on my field work in this range from 1963 to 1971, the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker is an uncommon summer resident above 3,500 feet in deciduous forests that have been disturbed by logging or fires. During the months of May through August, I have a total of 16 records of individual birds at elevations from 3,600 feet to 5,800 feet. In addition to these individual sightings, groups of two or more birds have been noted at three localities in the range. At Wet Camp Gap (5,360 feet), Jackson County, a pair has been noted repeatedly in June 1963, 1965, and 1969, while on 15 June 1968 two adults were carrying food into a nesting hole some 25 feet up in a large white oak (*Quercus alba*). The cries of the young birds could be heard, but I was unable to climb the tree to examine the nest. In June 1963, 1965, and 1968 a pair was present at 5,540 feet on the eastern slope of Shining Rock, where the birds were seen entering and leaving a cavity in a yellow birch (*Betula lutea*). Although no evidence of eggs or young was noted at Shining Rock, an adult with two young was seen on 25 July 1969 just NW of Beech Gap, Haywood County at 5,400 feet.

GREAT CRAGGY MOUNTAINS: I have noted a pair at Craggy Gardens (5,300 feet) in June 1957, 1959, 1968, and 1969. During the first week of June 1957, two adults were carrying food into a nesting cavity 30 feet up in a white oak. I heard the cries of the young birds, although it was impossible to climb the tree for close examination. Elsewhere, I have noted pairs at Beetree Gap (4,900 feet) in June 1964 and 1969, at Sprucepine Ridge (4,200 feet) in June 1970, and on Craggy Dome (5,700 feet) in June 1957 and 1970.