

The Black-headed Gull at Pea Island is apparently the second record of the species in North Carolina, the first sighting having occurred at Fort Macon on 10 August 1967 (Cox, 1968).

#### LITERATURE CITED

- Cox, Geraldine. 1968. Black-headed Gull at Ft. Macon, N.C. *Chat*, 32:28.  
Robbins, C.S., B. Bruun and H.S. Zim. 1966. *Birds of North America*. Golden Press, New York.  
Witherby, H.F., F.C.R. Jourdan, N.F. Ticehurst and B.W. Tucker. 1941. *The Handbook of British Birds, Vol. V - Terns to Game Birds*. H.F. & G. Witherby Ltd., London.

### Observations of the Barn Owl in the Southern Appalachian Mountains

MARCUS B. SIMPSON JR.  
Department of Pathology  
Yale University School of Medicine  
310 Cedar Street, New Haven, Connecticut 06510

ROBERT C. RUIZ  
300 Wilson Avenue, Swannanoa, N.C. 28778

7 January 1973

As pointed out by Van Tyne and Berger (1959), the Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) is one of the most widely distributed of all birds, occurring throughout the western hemisphere, Eurasia, Australia, and many island groups. In light of this extensive distribution, it is interesting that the first two editions of *Birds of North Carolina* (Pearson et al., 1919, 1942) list no records of the owl from the Appalachian Mountain region of western North Carolina. Furthermore, the rather thorough field work in the region by Brewster (1886), Cairns (1887, 1889, 1891, 1894), Oberholser (1905), and T.D. Burleigh (pers. com.) contain no records of the owl from the area. To date, there are only three published records of the bird from western North Carolina. Pearson, Brimley, and Brimley (1959) mention a report from "Lake Summit" but give no supporting details; and Johnston (1964) mentions a bird reported at Highlands, Macon County, N.C., in the summer of 1962, but again no details are given. The only observation with substantiating data is Stupka's (1963) report of a single bird collected at Fontana Village, Graham County, N.C., on 24 September 1947 and brought to him for identification.

In light of the paucity of records, the authors sent inquiries to a number of ornithologists and conducted field work in much of the region in search for Barn Owls. The following records have come to light as a result of the investigation.

In Buncombe County, N.C., John Young (pers. com.) found two dead Barn Owls in an abandoned administration building at the old Asheville-Henderson Airport in August and October 1971. Young also reports seeing Barn Owls on several occasions along the French Broad River south of Asheville, but the exact dates and localities are not available. Subsequently, Ruiz found a dead Barn Owl on 17 August 1972 along Rt. 191 approximately 100 yards S of the Haywood Road Overpass.

In Henderson County, J. Lee and Barbara Brittain (pers. com.) informed us that a pair of Barn Owls nested for two consecutive years in an out building on the Old Turnpike Road near Mills River, with two young being successfully fledged in June of 1971. The owls abandoned the site in October 1971 and have not been reported there since that time.

At Highlands, Toliver Cumkleton (pers. com.) informed us that the Barn Owl is a "summer resident and probably a permanent resident" with specific records coming during the summers of 1965, 1966, and 1967. Thelma Howell (pers. com.) reported that

the record mentioned by Johnston (1964) was based on a single Barn Owl that was heard calling each night near Lake Ravenel at the Highlands Biological Station from 26 June through 9 July 1962 by R.E. Gordon and William Woolcott. These records from the Highlands Plateau represent the highest elevation at which the bird has been reported in the southern Appalachians, with the observations coming from 3,800 feet to 4,100 feet.

A total of twelve records of the Barn Owl have been reported from the Appalachian Mountain region of western North Carolina. These sightings have been from four counties, Buncombe, Henderson, Macon, and Graham, all located in the southern portion of the mountain region. A single record of successfully fledged young indicates that the bird breeds in the area, and the highest elevation at which the species has been reported is at 4,100 feet on the Highlands Plateau of Macon County. The extent of the species' occurrence in the region and its status during the winter months are unknown. Observers should remain alert to document additional records of the Barn Owl in the southern Appalachian Mountains.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- Brewster, W. 1886. An ornithological reconnaissance in western North Carolina. *Auk*, 3:94-112, 173-179.
- Cairns, J.S. 1887. List of the birds of Buncombe County, North Carolina. *Orn. and Ool.*, 12:3-6.
- . 1889. The summer birds of Buncombe County, North Carolina. *Orn. and Ool.*, 14:17-23.
- . 1891. List of the birds of Buncombe County, North Carolina. Privately printed.
- . 1894. List of birds taken and observed in western North Carolina. Unpublished manuscript. Perkins Library, Duke University, Durham.
- Johnston, D.W. 1964. The birds of Highlands, North Carolina, with a preliminary list from Cashiers and nearby gorges. *J. Elisha Mitchell Sci. Soc.*, 80:29-38.
- Oberholser, H.C. 1905. Notes on the mammals and summer birds of western North Carolina. Biltmore Forest School, Asheville.
- Pearson, T.G., C.S. Brimley, and H.H. Brimley. 1919. *Birds of North Carolina*. Raleigh.
- . 1942. *Birds of North Carolina*. Raleigh.
- . 1959. *Birds of North Carolina*. Revised by D.L. Wray and H.T. Davis. Raleigh.
- Stupka, A. Notes on the birds of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville.
- Van Tyne, J., and A.J. Berger. *Fundamentals of ornithology*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York.

### **Red-cockaded Woodpecker in Laurens County, S.C.**

JANE P. HOLT

Department of Biology, Presbyterian College  
Clinton, S.C. 29325

22 February 1973

On 11 May 1972, through the cooperation of District Ranger Junius O. Baker Jr., I visited a colony of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers (*Dendrocopos borealis*) in the Enoree Ranger District of the Sumter National Forest. While this colony has previously been surveyed by Melvin L. Hopkins, Wildlife Assistant, USDA, Forest Service, it has not been reported in *The Chat*.

The colony is located just off SC Hwy 72, 12 miles E of Clinton, Laurens County, S.C. *South Carolina Bird Life* (1970, p. 339 and 611) records the Red-cockaded Woodpecker inland along the western edge of the coastal plain to Aiken, Richland, Lee, and Chesterfield Counties. The Laurens County site extends the range of the species approximately 50 miles into the South Carolina piedmont. Newly discovered piedmont