



General Field Notes

JAMES F. PARNELL, Department Editor

Department of Biology, University of North Carolina at Wilmington,
Wilmington, N.C. 28401

JULIAN R. HARRISON, Associate Editor

Department of Biology, The College of Charleston, Charleston, S.C. 29401

An Eared Grebe Collected in North Carolina

MICOU M. BROWNE

North Carolina State Museum of Natural History
Box 27647, Raleigh, N.C. 27611

4 August 1975

On 30 December 1971, I picked up a female Eared Grebe (*Podiceps nigricollis*) on the beach at Oregon Inlet, Dare County, N.C. It had been dead for a number of days, and apparently had been shot. The specimen was deposited in the bird collections at the North Carolina State Museum of Natural History (No. 4431), and its identification has been confirmed by Roxie C. Layborne of the U.S. National Museum of Natural History.

Broad-winged Hawks at Pea Island N.W.R.

RICKY DAVIS

P.O. Box 277, Zebulon, N.C. 27597

June 1975

While birding at the Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge in northeastern North Carolina on 24 May 1975, I saw 13 Broad-winged Hawks (*Buteo platypterus*). I watched the Broad-wings for 10 to 15 minutes from the southern observation platform

overlooking North Pond. The birds were soaring southward in slow circles at different heights. I studied the birds with 7X binoculars and 30X scope and carefully noted the determining field marks of a broadly barred tail and small and stubby shape.

I can find no evidence of Broad-winged Hawks on the North Carolina Outer Banks either from the Pea Island list maintained by the Refuge personnel or from *The Chat*.

Apparent Nesting of Red-breasted Nuthatches in Rockingham County, N.C.

EDWARD BURROUGHS
921 Seymour Court
Eden, N.C. 27288

28 July 1975

I began keeping notes on the presence of a pair of Red-breasted Nuthatches (*Sitta canadensis*) on 9 March 1975 to establish departure dates for that species in Rockingham County, N.C. The locality was a wooded residential section in the city limits of Eden. The trees are predominately mature Virginia pine (*Pinus virginiana*).

My note of 9 March reads, "Pair of Red-breasted Nuthatches inspecting bird houses in back yard." Notes from 17 March through 4 June indicate sightings of single birds. During this period sunflower seeds were the only food taken from my feeders, and there was very little interest shown in them; generally a few seeds would be taken late in the afternoon. On 23 and 24 May I noticed a great deal of feeder activity. A Red-breasted Nuthatch would come to the feeder, take a sunflower seed, then hide it in either a cone or the bark of a pine tree. I saw about 20 of these feeding forays in a period of about 30 minutes. The preferred food during all of my observations was pine seeds. The cone crop had been heavy and obviously met the needs of the birds.

On 5 June I saw two individuals. On this day I constructed three log type bird houses and placed them in my yard. The next day a pair came to my feeder again. They fed sparingly and left. I made a point of staying outside whenever I had the chance, for I was now hopeful that I would see them select one of my bird houses and nest here. The following day, 7 June, two of the birds came to a pine adjacent to the feeder. One of the birds took a seed from the feeder, flew to the limb where the other bird was perched, cracked the seed open, and fed the other bird. I watched through 9X binoculars from a distance of about 25 feet. The bird being fed had a definite downy appearance. It fluttered its wings and assumed a position low on the limb to receive a portion of the seed from the other bird. It was obviously an immature bird. This activity was observed every day until 13 June. On that day there was no activity at my feeder. I heard calls of a Red-breasted Nuthatch from my front yard and went there to investigate. I saw three individuals on one limb of a tree, and heard another calling from the top of another tree.

From 14 June through 1 July I recorded only intermittent sightings, generally of a single bird. A search of all available references gives no indication of any previous nesting record for North Carolina outside the mountain regions. *Birds of North Carolina* (1959 revision) gives the range of this species as "Whole state irregularly in winter, resident on some of the higher mountains where it breeds."

Although I was unable to locate the nest hole of these Red-breasted Nuthatches, the period covered by my observations (9 March through 1 July) plus the sighting of an immature bird from 7 June through 1 July, leads me to believe that a pair of Red-breasted Nuthatches had a successful nesting in Rockingham County in 1975.