

ing to capture an animal of some kind, but the animal was not immediately in view. After six or seven passes, the raven flew away with a snake in its grasp. As the raven departed, the reflexive movements of the snake were clearly visible through binoculars indicating a live capture by the raven.

On 4 May 1975 I received a report from Shawn Knickerbocker, who at the time was completing a series of raven observations for the U.S. Forest Service. Knickerbocker reported seeing a raven dive into brush and capture a small mammal. His sighting was also on Tennent Mountain.

On other occasions in 1974 and 1975, I observed ravens flying low on the perimeter of areas that were being prescribed burned. My inclination was to interpret this behavior as a hunting activity, but it may have indicated curiosity or coincidence. For example, during the controlled burn on Graveyard Ridge in April 1975, I observed from one to three ravens flying low through or along the perimeter of the burn on three occasions, but no capture attempts were observed.

During the fall burn near Sam Knob on 5 November 1975, I observed 28 ravens near the burn, but none passed close enough to cause suspicion of hunting.

The large size of the raven certainly would enable it to function as a predator in situations where its beak could replace talons as a primary attack weapon. Small mammals and snakes are well within the size limits which it could dispatch.

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A Case of Suspected Double-broodedness in the Carolina Chickadee

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The Carolina Chickadee (*Parus carolinensis*) is generally considered to be single-brooded. The species account in Bent's *Life Histories of North American Jays, Crows and Titmice* (U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 191, 1946, p. 344-352) makes no positive statement on the subject, but one brood per year is implied by the use of the expression "bred annually" on page 347. *South Carolina Bird Life* (1970, p. 375) quotes Wayne as saying that the species is single-brooded and reports full sets of eggs from "as early as" 23 March until "late April or even early May" in "backward seasons." *Birds of North Carolina* (1959, p. 258) states that April is the usual month for nesting and that eggs have been found at Raleigh, Wake County, N.C., from 3 April to 11 May.

In view of the above information, the nesting behavior of Carolina Chickadees in my yard near Zebulon, Wake County, N.C., during the 1975 breeding season seems worth reporting. On 15 February 1975, Jack Finch of Bailey, N.C., installed two of his excellent bluebird nest boxes on predator-proof metal poles at the edge of my yard adjoining the golf course. On 21 February a pair of Carolina Chickadees investigated one of the boxes. In March they drove Eastern Bluebirds (*Sialia sialis*) from the site. At mid-April the box contained a nest with six eggs, which hatched on 22 or 23 April. Young left the nest on 10 or 11 May. I removed the 3-inch-thick pad of nesting

material on 11 May. It was made of green moss and well lined with white dog hair and tiny feathers. On 22 May I saw chickadees carrying material into the same box. On 3 July the adults were feeding several well-developed young birds. This brood apparently left the box while I was away from home on 5 July. After the box was no longer in use, I removed the nesting material. The pad of green moss was only 1½ inches thick, and it appeared to be unlined. A few bits of fur and feathers mixed in the moss probably were the remains of a thin lining trampled into the pad by the nestlings.

Although there is no absolute proof that the events described above represent two successive nestings by the same pair of birds, the permanent resident status of the Carolina Chickadee and the late date the nestlings were in the box strongly suggest the rearing of a second brood. Allowing 11 days for incubation and 17 days for young to remain in the nest places the time of laying about the first week in June, which would be extremely late for a replacement clutch by a species that normally lays its eggs in April. Certainly this unusually late nesting by the Carolina Chickadee demonstrates once again that we cannot assume everything is known about a species just because it nests in our own yard year after year.

ADDENDUM

During the 1976 breeding season two broods of Carolina Chickadees were reared in the same nest box described above. Building began at mid-March, and the nest was well lined when the male mounted the female on 28 March. This brood left the nest on or before 4 May. Construction of the second nest was first noted on 17 May. Young were out of the nest on 23 June but returned to the box for the night and left for good on 24 June. Both 1976 pads of nesting material were about 2 inches thick and contained a fairly good amount of lining material in addition to the moss.

Worm-eating Warblers in the South Carolina Coastal Plain in June

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Although breeding season records of Worm-eating Warblers (*Helmitheros vermivorus*) exist from the southern coastal plain in several states (A.O.U. 1957, Griscom and Sprunt 1957, Oberholser 1974, Lowery 1974, Imhof 1962, Pearson et al. 1959, Scott and Cutler 1963), a very few are from the lower coastal plain, within approximately 100 miles of the coast. Typical breeding habitat is described as forested hillsides and ravines with moderately dense understory (Griscom and Sprunt 1957, Bent 1953). One lower coastal plain locality where the bird breeds regularly, St. Francisville, Louisiana, (Kennedy 1974) is typical hilly habitat (S.A. Gauthreaux Jr., pers. comm.). An increasing number of recent records in atypical habitat indicates that the status of the species in the southern coastal plain, especially in the Carolinas, needs reevaluation (Gauthreaux 1971). LeGrand (1975) gives the breeding status in the North Carolina coastal plain as very rare in the north to absent in the south, based on data complete through 1973. Two 1975 reports have since been added to the list of coastal plain records for that state (Lynch 1976, Fussell 1976).

Burton (in Supplement, Sprunt and Chamberlain, 1970, p. 621) lists the bird as a rare transient along the coast of South Carolina, 7 April-5 May. Sprunt and Chamberlain (1970, p. 437) mention two of A.T. Wayne's records as possible indications of