

Fifty Years Ago in *The Chat*—December 1963

This was the second issue edited by Eloise Potter. A report on the nesting status of the Barn Swallow in the southeast was presented by James F. Parnell, Thomas L. Quay, and Allan Griggs. The authors focused on the expansion of the Barn Swallow nesting range in North Carolina and into South Carolina, from the late 1950's to 1963. The authors provided data from "intensive observations" of nests from Bodie Island in North Carolina, south to Edisto Island in South Carolina, and provided special reference to nests built in Wake County. Barn Swallows had successfully nested in the mountains and the coastal plain and were beginning to expand into the Piedmont. First nests were discovered in Stanly County in 1958, Southern Pines in 1959, and Wake County in 1961. Nesting in Wake County grew from one nest in 1961 to twenty nests in 1963, found at four separate localities.

David A. Adams published a report on the banding activities conducted on Battery Island (near Southport, N.C.) from May through July 1963. The breeding colony at Battery Island had been studied since 1938, but several changes were noted in recent years. An entirely new breeding area was established on the south side of the island due to damage from "the devastating hail storm of 16 May 1961". White Ibis bred in 1963 for the first time. Nests of Snowy Egrets and Little Blue Herons had dropped from a high of more than 100 Snowy Egret nests and over 60 Little Blue Heron nests to a current total of fewer than 10 and 20 nests, respectively. Nesting of the Cattle Egret, a relative newcomer, was noted as having continually increased with over 300-400 adults being present. The author speculated that the reduction in the successful breeding of both Snowy Egrets and Little Blue Herons might be "directly attributable to competition with the aggressive Cattle Egret".

There were two field notes of special interest. The first was a second record of nesting evidence for Red Crossbill in North Carolina - submitted by David W. Johnston (former Chat Editor). Dr. Johnston, Tolliver Crunkleton, and C.H. Ekdahls, found a pair of crossbills gathering and depositing nesting material, two miles north-northwest of Highlands, NC. A second field note was submitted by Dr. John Grey (first editor of *The Chat*). It indicated that specimens of Sandhill Crane killed in North Carolina in 1957, had been identified by Roxie Laybourne as being from the subspecies nesting in Michigan, not the subspecies that nested in Florida, as had been previously expected.

- Don Seriff, editor