

FIELD NOTES

American Widgeon Breeding near Massena: The Wilson Hill Game Management Area is an 1800-acre stabilized impoundment on which construction was completed in July 1958 by the New York State Conservation Department in cooperation with the New York State Power Authority. The area is five miles west of Massena, adjacent to the St. Lawrence Power Pool (Lake St. Lawrence).

The response by waterfowl since the initial flooding in 1959 has been exceptionally good. Blue-winged Teal, Blacks, and Mallards are the common nesting species, but Pintails, Shovelers, Wood Ducks, and Green-winged Teal are found in lesser numbers as breeding species.

During the late spring of 1960 a census of nesting pairs indicated that American Widgeon were established on breeding territories. The annual brood census conducted at Wilson Hill on July 7, 1960 substantiated the fact that these birds were breeding there. The following count was made at the West Pool:

American Widgeon, female	7 young; 1-2 weeks
American Widgeon, female	7 young; 2-3 weeks
American Widgeon, male (4 adults)	
American Widgeon, female	no young observed

On July 26, 1960, Dirck Benson, Waterfowl Project Leader of the NYS Conservation Department, sent a memo to us with regard to brood counts made by the Waterfowl Research Staff on July 18, 1960. This memorandum indicated that three broods of American Widgeon had been observed on the east pool of the Wilson Hill Game Management Area, but there was no reference to brood size or age.

These observations would indicate the establishment of a nucleus breeding population of American Widgeon on the Wilson Hill area. To the writer's knowledge, this constitutes one of the very few New York State breeding records for this species, at least in recent years (Ed. note — the American Widgeon appeared at Montezuma Refuge as a breeding species in the summer of 1959; see **Kingbird**, October, 1959, p. 126. As Sally Hoyt points out in her regional summary in this issue, the American Widgeon bred again at Montezuma this year. With the upkeep of suitable nesting habitat, it seems probable that this species will, like the Ruddy Duck, increase its nesting range in the eastern states. Are there other places in New York State where the American Widgeon is now known to breed?).— John E. Wilson, New York State Conservation Department, P. O. Box 84, Watertown.

A Partially Albino Hummingbird: On July 22, 1960, Mrs. Robert Meylan noticed an unusual hummingbird in her garden in West Nyack.

The bird was the size of a ruby-throat, but there was no iridescence or metallic sheen on its back. The back was a soft buffy tan, and the tail feathers were somewhat darker. The tail itself was rounded, the outer feathers being tipped with white. The crown was a light lemon yellow; the eyes and bill dark; the cheeks, throat, underparts, and wings pure white.

The bird would perch for five to ten minutes at a time in an apple tree while preening its feathers. Then it would dart out in true hummingbird style to feed, with wings aflutter, on the red flowers of bee balm. I succeeded in getting one good picture, a 35 mm ektochrome slide, taken with 300 mm lens, f8 at 1/100 second. I would judge the bird to be a female albino Ruby-throated Hummingbird. — Marjorie R. Hopper, 278 North Midland Avenue, Nyack 4.

Red-breasted Nuthatches Breeding in Rensselaer County: During the first part of September 1959 more Red-breasted Nuthatches than usual were seen in our section of Nassau, Rensselaer County. As many as eleven were counted on September 9 feeding on seeds under a stand of white pine. A pair was seen at frequent intervals throughout the winter at a suet feeder. With the arrival of warm spring days in April, 1960, I made daily trips to the pine grove. A pair was noticed almost every day, and on April 29 the male was feeding the female, indication of the possibility of a nesting pair. On May 10, after three hours of watching and

listening for the feeding call of the male, I located the nest in a small hole five feet from the top of a dead tree trunk perhaps thirty feet high. When the tree was lightly tapped, the female would poke her head out of the hole.

But where was the pitch that was supposed to be daubed on the rim of the nesthole? Not a speck could be seen at first, but on May 21, eleven days after the nest had been located, the first pitch was in place. By June 7 the entire rim of the nesthole had been daubed with pitch so plentifully that it was dripping down the old tree trunk.

I can vouch for the fact that young Red-breasted Nuthatches are hungry individuals indeed. In one hour on that date (9:00 — 10:00 AM) the parent birds together made 97 trips with food for their young.

The nesting site was surrounded by old apple trees, white pines, Norway spruces, maples, a few red cedars, and was at an elevation of 450 feet.)Editor's note — A similar nesting was also reported from Red Rock during the spring of 1960 by Mrs. Myra Smilow. Red rock is located in Columbia County about ten miles south of Nassau. Insofar as is known by local observers, these constitute the first area breeding records for the Red-breasted Nuthatch). — Beatrice Shineman, Nassau.

Mockingbird Nesting in Onondaga County: During the second week of June, 1960, a singing Mockingbird was noticed near the Harry Yeiser home on Broad Road, on the outskirts of Syracuse. A second bird soon appeared, and about this time the male ceased singing.

On July 2 Mr. Yeiser observed one of the birds going in and out of the spruce trees on his property, and on investigation he located a nest with several young. On July 3 there were four rather well-feathered young. The four young birds successfully left the nest sometime later, and the entire family group disappeared shortly thereafter. The nest, young, and adult feeding the young were all duly photographed.

Area records for the nesting of the Mockingbird are limited. There was a report from the Geneva area a few years ago, and Professor Guthrie of Keuka College reported an active nest near Branchport earlier this year.

I wish to thank Mrs. N. P. McGowan for bringing the significance of this particular nesting record to my attention. — Benjamin P. Burt, 109 Haffenden Road, Syracuse 10.

Hawk Owl in Oneida County: On March 16, 1960, while coming in from the Oneida County Airport (Whitesboro), I observed a Hawk Owl perched in a tree less than forty feet from the road. Although it was overcast, the day was bright and the light very good.

The bird was roughly crow-size, and it had the longest tail I have seen on an owl. It perched on the branch, more like a hawk. The breast was heavily barred and the face marks enunciated, as Peterson notes, with "sideburns".

I returned about two hours later, but the bird had flown away. I also searched again the following day, but with no success. — Winston W. Brockner, 63 Ardmore Place, Buffalo 13.

Tufted Titmouse Nesting on Long Island: A couple of decades ago the Tufted Titmouse was regarded as a very rare visitor on Long Island. According to Allan D. Cruickshank, **Birds Around New York City** (1942), less than four yearly reports normally came from the area, the bird being a rare possibility at any time of year. Several years ago one wintered at the border of Massapequa and Seaford in the Tackepausha Preserve. It was a familiar sight, popular with visitors, and the bird was frequently photographed. Since then the Tufted Titmouse has been reported from time to time on the north shore of western Long Island.

Becoming Titmouse conscious, Long Island ornithologists have reported several recurring or lingering brds during the past year.

In **Audubon Field Notes** (Vol. 14, No. 3, June, 1960) Charles K. Nichols, after noting the northward ranging of the Tufted Titmouse with two reported in Franklin County in northern Massachusetts and several others farther south in the Connecticut River Valley, remarks "the species is extending its range on Long Island; two were seen at the Roosevelt Bird Sanctuary at Oyster Bay on March 19, a first record for the locality (J. Callaghan)".