

Following the passing of a cool front in late August, E. Levine recorded an early Pigeon Hawk. From then on each passing cool front brought increasing numbers of migrants of various species, including hawks. September produced a number of excellent flight days which, unfortunately, occurred on week days when most of us must pursue other matters and therefore went mainly unobserved. Irwin Alperin, marine biologist of the N.Y. State Conservation Dept. was able to make some observations during his regular chores along Long Island's barrier beaches. On Sept. 20th. at Smith Point he recorded 15 Pigeon Hawks and 45 Sparrow Hawks. On the previous day, he recorded the season's high of 24 Ospreys. His observations indicated continuous daily movements of the above species, with Peregrine Falcons appearing at the beginning of October.

On Oct. 13th at Jones Beach a truly fine flight of falcons occurred, with the sharp eyed among us spotting seven Sharp-shinned Hawks coming through with the others. I estimated that for the day, from around 8:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M., upwards of 300 Sparrow Hawks, 110 Pigeon Hawks, eight Peregrine Falcons, several Ospreys and Marsh Hawks along with the accipiters were seen. This flight was observed at the east bath house on the north side of the road. Interestingly, the next day the winds shifted from Northwest to Northeast and hawk migration was still noticeable, but at a very high altitude. These birds could easily have passed unseen. Such high migration has been observed before and needs further study. Through the remainder of the period migration was much in evidence but not nearly on the scale of that Oct. 13th.

Buteos, other than the Rough-legged Hawk, are rare on the beaches but I did see a Red-tailed Hawk at Jones Beach on Nov. 12 and J. Elliott reported one at Freeport on Nov. 7th. Approximately six-seven Rough-legged Hawks were seen through Nov., all passing through indicating these birds might be regular migrants in late fall. They are known as winter residents mostly. One was reported from Montauk on Nov. 10th. (G. Raunor). At Dix Hills, comparatively inland, two Bald Eagles were seen on Sept. 25th., a rare sighting.

Of really unusual occurrence was the appearance in Hempstead Lake Park of a "large black bird with a big beak" as reported to Mr. Ed. Morgan of the Tackapusha Preserve in Seaford. Investigation proved the bird to be an immature Bald Eagle. This bird, first reported Nov. 19th., was observed by many people and was noted to be wearing a band on its right leg. On Dec 13th Al Wollin reported seeing an adult Bald Eagle sitting in the same tree with the immature bird. The adult was also seen by other observers.

Some experienced observers believe that many of the Peregrines seen from Fire Island by-pass the Jones Beach strip and do not hit land until well on to New Jersey. What of the smaller hawks, which have been seen several miles out to sea? Do they cross the large body of water to reach New Jersey or do they seek a narrower crossing? These questions could probably be answered by an organized watch along the coastal strip, an interesting project for the future.

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Carolina Chickadees: About September 1st, of this year, I noticed five chickadees flying about the sunflower feeder in a rather unusual manner. I had been watching for the return of the blackcaps (*Parus atricapillus*) to the feeder from their summer nesting period in our woodlot, and supposed that the parents had brought their young with them, since two of the birds were noticeably smaller than the others.

The larger ones knew their way to the seeds, but the smaller ones were obviously new to it as they tried to pull the seeds through the hardware cloth basket instead of going to the small openings at the top corners.

I began to notice also that the smaller birds were trying to drive the larger ones away. This seemed a little strange as I had never seen our regular blackcaps act in this aggressive manner. Not only did the smaller pair drive the others away from the feeder while they themselves were there, but they would fly in from nearby bushes or trees whenever the larger ones approached the basket. Only occasionally were the

blackcaps able to obtain a seed. At the end of a week's "skirmishing" only one of the larger birds remained, still trying to get at his familiar food supply. He made intermittent and usually unsuccessful attempts, finally giving up entirely by the end of the month. I have not seen any of them since then. In the meantime the two smaller ones have been and still are frequent daily visitors, having soon learned how to reach the seeds.

About the third week in September, I happened to be near the open window close to the feeder when I heard a whistled "warble". Expecting to see a migratory warbler, I looked out, but saw nothing but one of the little chickadees on top of the feeder chopping into a seed. As I watched, he did the "warbling". Amazed, I continued to watch while he sang as he worked. The next day, while in the garden, I saw him as he flitted through a nearby pear tree hunting for food, alternating continuously the "dee-dee-dee" with the whistled "song" until he finally flew off.

After reading what I could find in Peterson, Eaton and Sprunt, I wondered if these two could be Carolina Chickadees (*Parus carolinensis*) north of their usual range. I asked Mrs. Vireo Whitaker about them. She came early one morning and after hearing the song said there is no doubt in her mind that they were the Carolina Chickadee.

I wrote to Dr. Kellogg about these birds. He imitated the "song" of the Carolinas on his next radio broadcast. It was identical with that of these birds. It seemed there was no doubt then, these must be a pair of the southern variety.

Some descriptions speak of less white on the wing of the Carolinas. These seem to have just about the same amount as the blackcaps, as far as I can tell. The descriptions admit that this is variable and unreliable, especially where the ranges overlap.

There are some minor differences which I noticed at first when I could see both varieties together, but which need more study when (or if) the blackcaps return. I believe these smaller ones are quicker in flight and that there is a slight difference in their "dee-dee-dee" call.

These then are the chief characteristics which differ from those of the blackcaps, as I have observed with this pair:

- (1). the **song** — a 4-note "warbling" whistle, in a **major key** instead of the 2-note minor key.
- (2). the **size** — noticeably smaller, even when not seen with the blackcaps.
- (3). the **aggressiveness** — toward the blackcaps; their refusal to allow the latter to eat from "their" feeder. — Mary J. Wheeler.

Sixth Report — Operation Bluebird (1962) in Warren County, Penn.: W. L. Highhouse. The nesting season of 1962 saw the Eastern Bluebirds raise their breeding numbers to 432 which is an increase of 60% over 1961.

The total of 432 fledged Bluebirds break down as follows:

62 nesting boxes had an initial occupancy by Bluebirds with a total of 297 eggs laid. Of the 297 eggs laid, 265 hatched and 265 Bluebirds were fledged.

51 nesting boxes had a second occupancy by Bluebirds with a total of 210 eggs laid. 167 of the eggs hatched and 167 Bluebirds were fledged.

Thus 432 Eastern Bluebird eggs hatched and 432 Bluebirds were fledged.

The remarkable fact that no Bluebird nestlings died in any of the boxes under observation is due to the spraying of the eggs once or twice with a mild flea powder to control the larvae of the birdnest screw-worm fly, Genus *Apaulina*.

One box not under observation and which was not sprayed had four Bluebird nestlings die in the box.

In a second unsprayed box 4 Tree Swallows were found dead.

In four instances, nesting Tree Swallows were followed by Bluebirds.

In two instances, nesting Bluebirds were followed by Tree Swallows.

The total for the season for the 94 boxes under observation is, 140 pair of nesting Bluebirds and Tree Swallows producing a total of 542 fledglings.

c/o Struthers Wells, Corp., Warren, Penn.

I learned of Mr. Highhouse's Bluebird operation through Mr. Gilbert Burgson, of Jamestown. I was so impressed with the Warren County, Penna. results on Bluebird and Tree Sawllow nest boxes for 1962, that I am here printing a portion of the report with an added comment of James Hartshorne of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.