

a truck (Fatora, *Chat* Vol. 30(2): 50, 1966), and one seen near Boston, Massachusetts up to June 29 of this year (*Mass. Audubon Newsletter* Vol. 6(1): 3, 1966).

I am indebted to Mr. David Gordon and Dr. David Peakall for much of the information in this note.

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More Notes on Red-Headed Woodpeckers near Oneida: Following the publication of my field note on Red-headed Woodpeckers (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) in the Oneida area (*Kingbird* 13(4): 203, 1963), I have continued to check on their nesting sites each year. At that time about 15 locations were noted in this area. In 1964, 17 active nesting sites were mentioned in the regional report and 24 in 1965 (*Kingbird* 14(4): 228 and 15(4): 240).

This summer, 1966, all previous nesting sites were checked with a resulting total of 27 pairs, plus singles in six other places, which may represent 33 nestings. In addition, Mr. J. Heinz of Canastota has given me data indicating five more nesting pairs, none of which duplicate those listed above. All of these records are within ten miles of Oneida, with the heaviest concentration being south and southwest of that city. I have also had reports of one pair in Rome, one pair on the north shore of Oneida Lake at Cleveland, and two pairs near Nine Mile swamp in southeast Madison County.

In several places Red-headed Woodpeckers are coming to feeders, for both suet and seeds. Sunflower seeds are carried off one at a time, held on a branch or post while the meat is extracted, and a return trip made for another. At Palmer Drive in Wampsville, two pairs have nested near enough to use the feeders provided for them, and H. P. Nodecker in Kenwood also has two pairs using his feeders, with a third pair less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile away. The immature birds started coming independently to the feeders about Aug. 20. In both these places there is an abundance of dead trees, mostly elms, to provide suitable nesting.

It has seemed to me that fewer Redheads have been noticeable along the roads recently, in spite of the increase in numbers. The birds we have studied this year seem less likely to perch on roadside fence posts, but instead, keep well back in the fields and trees away from the roads, always preferring secluded areas.

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Example of Need for Caution in Publishing Reports of Rare Birds: Another example of the problems of field identification, and of the fact that even so-called "experts" can disagree, emphasizing the importance of caution in publishing positive reports of rare species, is cited below.

At 1:15 P.M. on Wednesday June 1, 1966, the attention of two graduate students of the Laboratory of Ornithology was drawn to a large falconiform bird circling over the Stuart Observatory. They alerted me, and with six or eight others I went outside to watch the bird. It was large, appearing all dark, but with a faint flash of light in the wings when it wheeled, and after a moment's observation I called out "Golden Eagle." In my own mind at that moment there was no doubt—only two months earlier I had had a number of sightings of this species and of the Bald Eagle, in the southwest, both from the ground and from an airplane. I ran for my camera and took several shots with a 240 mm lens, trying to get as good a silhouette as possible. During that time I was not observing the bird carefully, but others, two or three of whom confirmed my identification, had field glasses on it, and one telescope was also in use. We all agreed that the head seemed proportionately small and the tail rather long. The Eagle was in view about 10 minutes, circling slowly higher against a leaden sky (and also was seen a few minutes later over Mt. Pleasant by L. F. Pearsall.)

There was disagreement afterwards, among the observers, on the location of the pale under-wing areas (and in fact the observer with the telescope stated that the

bird appeared uniformly dark to him.) The question was now raised: Could it actually have been an immature Bald Eagle?" I now had my own second thoughts, for it occurred to me that a Golden, showing any light in the wing, should show some light in the tail—and this bird definitely had an all-dark tail.

When my four pictures returned from processing, my husband, Dr. Walter Spofford, examined them—and on the basis of the first picture identified the bird as a Golden Eagle. But after looking at the other three shots, he was able to identify it definitely as an immature Bald Eagle, from head and tail shape as well as plumage.

This was a valuable experience for all of us, emphasizing the need for caution and the difficulty of identification under some lighting conditions and at certain distances or from a single picture. And as D. B. Peakall pointed out in *Kingbird* 15(4) p. 219 subsequent observers often accept too readily an identification by a first observer—in this case myself! Photographs can be of great value in such circumstances.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SUMMER SEASON

June 1—August 15

DAVID B. PEAKALL

One of the most important events of the summer was the launching, on a nation-wide basis, of the Breeding Bird Survey. These surveys are organized by Chandler Robbins of the Migratory Bird Populations Station at Laurel, Maryland (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). In these surveys observers drive 25 miles with stops of three minutes every half-mile. At each stop the numbers of all species seen or heard are recorded. This summer 586 survey routes were completed in the 26 states east of the Mississippi and in four Canadian Provinces. In all 518,176 birds of 274 species were recorded. The most abundant species recorded were Common Grackle, Starling, House Sparrow, Redwing and Robin. Several of these surveys were carried out in this state, but more observers are needed and it is vital that these surveys are repeated annually. This program should complement the information obtained from the Nest Record Card Program. For example, losses on the wintering grounds would show up by a decrease in numbers on the Breeding Bird Survey although breeding success would remain normal. Conversely, with pesticides a decrease in breeding success shown by the Nest Record Card Program would be expected to precede a decrease in the numbers on the Breeding Bird Survey. These transits of the Fish and Wildlife Service study are the mechanized successor of the line transits of Gross and Ray in their Illinois survey referred to in a previous summary (Vol. 15:226) and of the singing warbler counts that Scheider has been carrying out for several years in the Tug Hill.

The Willet was added to the list of breeding birds of the state by the