

Notes on Nesting of Purple Finch at Oxford: On July 6, 1966 I noticed a Purple Finch incubating 4 eggs in a nest about 6 feet from the ground near the top of a young balsam close to our house at Oxford, N.Y. Every hour or so during the day, and especially in the morning, at noon, and late afternoon, the male came, the female left the nest and with much twittering and fluttering of wings was fed by the male. After the feeding, the female sometimes flew with the male to the bird bath and sometimes returned directly to the nest. Several times I heard the female sing a little song for a minute or two after returning to the nest. The song was finch-like but quite different from that of the male. During the second week of incubation, the female stayed on the nest when fed by the male.

When we checked on July 14, there were four young in the nest. On July 28 the young were leaving the nest, and on the 29th they could be heard in the birches on the lawn. For a week they stayed around some small trees a little farther away.

Mrs. Lewis Stratton, R.F.D. #2, Oxford, N.Y. 13830

Precocity in Spotted Sandpipers: Observations were made on July 4, 1961 at the nest of a Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*) located in Niskayuna, New York from prior to the hatching of the first egg until two hours after the hatching of the last egg.

The Spotted Sandpiper is a precocial bird, the young quickly assuming normal maintenance activities. In the observed nest, the chicks hatched at 8:30, 1:32 and 5:28. A. C. Bent (1927, U.S. National Museum Bull. 142, Part I, 83) cites one observation where the young ran immediately upon freeing themselves from the egg, and another instance where the young were "able to run and follow the parent when about half an hour from the egg." I found the chicks took 53, 61 and 72 minutes from the time of complete freedom from the egg until movement away from the nest. Although exact times were not noted for other nests observed, in no case did the chicks immediately begin to move upon freedom from the egg, and in all cases the time period was close to an hour.

Joanna Burger, Biology Dept., State University College, 1300 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, N.Y. 14222

Marbled Godwit at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge: While scanning the Black Lake area of the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge with a 30× Balscope at 4:30 P.M. on 9/7/66, I spotted a large, uniformly buffy brown shorebird with a long, slightly upturned bill which I studied under excellent light conditions for an hour. I concluded that it was a Marbled Godwit (*Limosa fedoa*). The sun was behind me and it was possible to observe the bird in detail as it fed on a mud flat about 1000 feet distant.

The back and wings were buffy brown with fine dark markings or mottling. The head and underparts were a lighter buff with no discernable markings. The under tail coverts were a still lighter buff. Twice the bird raised its wings, once while its back was turned directly toward me, and I was able to note that the tail and rump were of the same buffy brown color with no white on either. The tips of the tail feathers appeared darker. The legs were dark with a slightly bluish or grayish cast. The bill was yellow at the base shading to black at the tip.

Between 9/7/66 and 9/16/66 I observed the bird eight times and, with the exception of the last observation on 9/16/66, it was always feeding continually on the same mud flat. Other observers, who included Dorothy McIlroy, Esther Stiles, Mr. and Mrs. Loren Ward and others, also noted the continual feeding activity. The bird probed deeply into the soft mud, pushing its bill in to its full length and then shoving its face into the muck up to its eyes. On occasion it braced its legs and moved its body from side to side as though trying to push its head in still deeper. This activity resulted in getting mud on the bird's face and crown so that it appeared to be a

dark-faced bird. Occasionally it would use its foot to scrape the dirt from its head. The feeding was confined almost entirely to shore area and only once for a brief moment did I see it enter the water and probe.

In checking with the Montezuma Refuge personnel I found that there is no previous record of the Marbled Godwit at the Refuge.

Walter E. Benning, Clyde, N.Y. 14433

Nesting of the Turkey Vulture in Wayne County: I first saw the Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) in the Clyde area of southeastern Wayne County in the mid 1930's. I have long suspected that it might be nesting in the area but had no definite knowledge of its breeding here until the summer of 1965 when Joel Thorn, part owner of the Marengo Swamp, told me that there was a nest at the base of a sycamore deep in the swamp with one young bird in it. He said he had found the nest the previous year, also with one young bird. I searched for the nest, but my time was limited, the swamp is a vast area, and I failed to locate it.

On June 15, 1966 Mr. Thorn told me that the nest was being used again. This time I located it about 1500 feet into the swamp in the base of a large sycamore



Photograph by David G. Allen, Courtesy Bird Photographs, Inc.