

between the rafters and roof of a rustic pagoda, at the top of a 200 foot, south facing escarpment of the Shawangunk Mountains. The senior author made primary confirmation of this identification on July 8 and it was later substantiated by Bradley J. Snyder, Fred N. Hough, Virginia Smiley, Alice Jones, Helen Manson, Davis Finch, Robert Smart, Tom Davis, et al. The nest, very loosely constructed of twigs, grasses, and hair, was 6' above ground level and 1490' above sea level. It contained (probably) 3 young in light down estimated to be 2-4 days old, but no good views of the nestlings could be obtained.

In the course of the nesting period, songs and alarm notes were noted and compared with recordings. The adult plumage and characteristic sideways jerking of the tail left no doubt in any observer's mind as to the identity of the birds. Both adults were seen at once, eliminating the possibility of a Bewick's X Carolina hybridization.

The young left the nest on July 17 and a group of 5 (3 young, 2 adults) were seen on the 22nd. They were observed regularly until August 11, at which time they seemed to disperse; it is probable that one juvenile was lost during this period.

Food gathering in the nesting period was done mostly to the east, along the slope or at its base, where the forest is more open. After leaving the nest the group was seen only in the thick undergrowth of mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) or among the tumbled rocks around the mountain top. Insects and larvae were the only foods observed to be taken.

Five distinct vocalizations were noted: the male song, an adult alarm note (bzzzz-), an adult location note (*plit-plit*), the squalling of the nestlings, and a food-begging *weep*? of the fledglings.

The following species were seen regularly in the vicinity of the nest site: Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, American Robin, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Indigo Bunting, Rufous-sided Towhee, Dark-eyed Junco, and Field Sparrow. Significantly, no House Wrens were seen or heard in the immediate area.

Those wishing to check how far out of breeding range these birds were are referred to Bent, *Life Histories of North American Wrens, Thrashers and their Allies*, Smithsonian Institution Bulletin 195, 1948, p 181; and Todd, *Birds of Western Pennsylvania*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1940, pp 417-20. It appears the closest previously known nest-site is 180 miles to the southwest of Mohonk Lake.

Daniel Smiley and James Stapleton, The Mohonk Trust, Mohonk Lake, New Paltz, N.Y. 12561

A Winter Record of Barn Swallows in Ithaca, New York: A late January thaw which sent temperatures into the 50's and a day of strong southerly winds heralded the arrival in Ithaca on January 27, 1974 of two Barn Swallows (*Hirundo rustica*) which could truly be called the first spring migrants of 1974! Both birds were observed the following day in flight along the south shore of Cayuga Lake near the mouth of Cayuga Inlet. On January 29 only one bird was seen, and neither bird was reported after that date although the weather remained unseasonably warm until the end of the month.

Tree Swallows (*Iridoprocne bicolor*) are known for their ability to winter further north than other swallows, particularly along the coast, by feeding on vegetation when flying insects are unavailable; and there are several reports of Tree Swallows lingering about marshes in central New York into January. However, Barn Swallows are virtually unknown in North America during the winter and all returning dates available from the Cayuga Lake basin were in April. John Bull (pers. comm.) indicates that the earliest previously reported arrival dates for New York State are March 19 (inland) and March 15 (coastal). He also states that the latest fall dates are November 17 (inland), December 1 (coastal specimen) and exceptionally to December 19 on Long Island. The two Ithaca birds appear to be the only mid-

winter record for New York State.

The Ithaca observation is made all the more interesting by a secondhand, unverified report from James Briggs of two Barn Swallows appearing in the vicinity of Binghamton in Broome County during this same warm spell. These birds reportedly reoccupied an old nest on a building and fed in the area for several days.

Douglas P. Kibbe, 115 Mount Lebanon Blvd., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15228

Ed Note: Mr. Kibbe's report gives me some belated satisfaction. In the early '50's, while driving to the Cornell campus on old Route 13, the first week of February in a snow squall. I saw a Barn Swallow fly across the road in front of me, and circle back and forth several times. There was no doubt in my mind of the identification, but it seemed so impossible, and I saw it so briefly with no other observer present, that I never put the record in print. It was close to the Cornell beef cattle barns, and conceivably could survive feeding on flies and other insects in and around the barns. I did not think of this bird as an early arrival, however, but a lingerer, which did not go south at the usual time, for some unknown reason. — SHS, Field Notes Editor.

Early Nest of American Goldfinch: For the past two years I have been observing nesting habits of the American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*) in a field of approximately 5 acres located in the Town of Pompey, Onondaga County. The field is fallow, growing up to Hawthorns, Red Osier Dogwood, Staghorn Sumac and various grasses. There is a small cattail marsh at the east end of the field, a Red Pine plantation at the west end and a Scotch Pine — Tamarack plantation on the north side. Thistle grows in abundance in nearby fields.

I check this area for nests from the beginning of May as it is used by many species of birds. The American Goldfinch does not normally nest until the second week of July and continues throughout the summer. I was able to locate 33 goldfinch nests in this field in 1973.

On June 12, 1974, I was crossing the marsh and saw a female goldfinch sitting on a nest in the crotch of a small chokecherry. I approached and the bird remained quiet until I was within two feet of her. When she flew, I saw that there were two typical bluish-white eggs. Over the past two years, I have seen that the goldfinch does not start incubation until the clutch of 4 to 6 eggs is complete. I assumed that the female was on the nest to lay another egg or that part of her clutch had been destroyed and she was completing incubation of the two eggs. I returned on June 14th, but found the eggs gone and the nest abandoned. Several days later I found the nest torn apart.

I checked with the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's Nest Record Card Program and found that they have only 150 cards on this species, but that their earliest nest dates are in July.

In the Arthur Bent Life History series, he mentions that Andrew J. Berger of Ann Arbor, Michigan, found a goldfinch nest "on the early date of June 11, 1947." He mentioned that it was a two-story nest over cowbird eggs, but does not mention if there were any goldfinch eggs at that date.

Dorothy W. Crumb, 3983 Gates Road, Jamesville, N.Y. 13078