

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Long-eared Owl breeding on Long Island: The following are a few of the more pertinent details of the nesting of the Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*) at the Muttontown Preserve, East Norwich, Nassau Co., in the Spring of 1977. This is the first documentation of nesting Long-eared Owls in Nassau Co. since the 1940's. Notes were kept on the nest area and behavior of these owls from the time of their first sighting, on 12 December 1976, until a final observation of the young birds on 30 June 1977. My sightings and identification of the nest and young have been confirmed by William E. Paterson, Naturalist, Nassau County Museum; Otto Heck, Professor of Biology, Trenton State College, Trenton, New Jersey; and Ralph Cioffi, Federation of New York State Bird Clubs Breeding Bird Census for Northern Nassau County.

A family group of five Long-eared Owls was first located on 12 December 1976, in a large stand of conifers consisting mainly of Eastern White Pines (*Pinus strobus*). During the winter the owls evidently hunted over open fields; an analysis of 303 pellets taken from the roost showed that 90% contained remains of Meadow Voles (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*). On or about 23 March 1977 the three young of the previous year were evicted from the area by the two adults, presumably in preparation for the coming breeding season. The nest was located in a pine with a breast-height diameter of eleven inches, in a section of the Preserve consisting of open fields, which had been mowed within the past year, surrounded by stands of conifers. The nest was an old crow's nest, partially rebuilt by the owls, and was in a crotch 43.6 feet from the ground.

Only two young appear to have fledged. I located them on 8 June 1977 on the ground, and from their plumage I estimated that they were between four and five weeks old. The nest tree was not climbed at this time. A final sighting of the two young and one adult bird was made on 30 June 1977. In the future, this area will be left as undisturbed as possible to encourage the owls to stay for at least another year.

The complete nest record, with photographs, is on file at the Nassau County Museum, at the Muttontown Preserve.

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Green-tailed Towhee on Long Island: A Green-tailed Towhee (*Pipilo chlorurus*) was first noticed on December 9, 1976, at the feeders of Robert Adamo, Wading River, Long Island. Mr. Adamo, who had previously seen the species in the West, notified Aline Dove who confirmed the identification the next day. It was seen by the writer and other observers on December 11 and by many other competent birders on later dates. The bird was in perfect adult plumage and associated primarily with White-throated Sparrows (*Zonotrichia albicollis*).