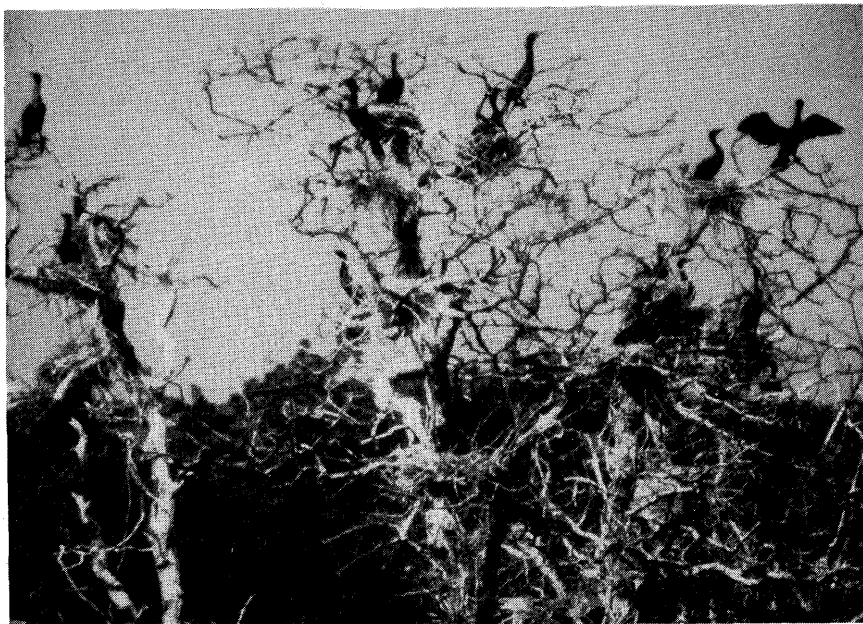


DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS BREEDING ON GARDINER'S ISLAND

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Double-crested Cormorant Colony—Suffolk County
13 June 1983 *Carl Safina*

While on Gardiner's Island in Great Peconic Bay, Suffolk Co. on 11 May 1983, Scheibel and Mike Laspia noticed 300 Double-crested Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) on Hellgate Island in Home Pond, just inland from the west shore of Gardiner's Island. Two cormorants were

seen carrying sticks to the island. On 13 June, while surveying Gardiner's Island for breeding Least Terns (*Sterna antillarum*) (none were found), Safina and Peterson counted approximately 130 adult cormorants among roughly 60 nests, which were situated in the upper branches of the dead trees (possibly *Quercus* or *Sassafras*) that cover Hellgate Island. These trees had been alive prior to 1983 and hosted 100 to 200 pairs of Snowy Egrets (*Egretta thula*), Great Egrets (*Casmerodius alba*), and Black-crowned Night-Herons (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) annually. In 1983 the island was also covered with a tangled understory, probably greenbrier (*Smilax* sp.), which grew among the trunks and lower branches of the dead trees. At the top of this green understory, approximately ten Great Egrets and four Snowy Egrets were nesting. The egrets and cormorants were vertically segregated; all of the egrets were situated lower than the cormorants.

Although known to nest on Fisher's Island, New York, off the Rhode Island coast (*Kingbird* 32: 4 p. 302; first nesting 1978), this species, while abundant on Long Island during the warm months, has not previously been reported breeding in the Long Island area.

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