

# NOTES

## RAVEN WITH ONLY ONE EYE.

IN July, 1917, Mr. George Bolam sent me from Alston, Cumberland, a Raven (*Corvus c. corax*) which was moulting from the juvenile to the first winter plumage. The bird was considerably emaciated and the under mandible was twisted from right to left. On skinning the bird I found that the right orbit was contracted by the bone of the skull to about half its normal size : it contained no trace of an eye, and the skin covering this orbit was entirely closed and appeared never to have had an opening. The left eye was normal. Such a case must, I think, be rare in a wild bird, and seems worth putting on record.

Dr. N. F. Ticehurst thinks that the congenital absence of the eye was the cause of the contracted orbit, as there would be nothing to keep it expanded during ossification. He also suggests that unilateral vision, leading to one-sided movements during feeding, may have influenced the deviation of the bill by causing unequal development or rate of growth.

H. F. WITHERBY.

## CROSSBILL BREEDING IN KENT.

ON July 8th, 1917, I saw, near Hever, three young Crossbills (*Loxia c. curvirostra*) being fed by their parents. The young ones were quite small and could only just fly, so that they must have been bred in the near neighbourhood. The date is also exceptionally late and perhaps worthy of note.

E. G. B. MEADE-WALDO.

## CROSSBILLS IN CO. ANTRIM.

LAST year I recorded Crossbills (*Loxia curvirostra*) in County Antrim (Vol. X., p. 116). This year (1917) I have pleasure again in recording them from Fernhill, Belfast. On June 27th I first saw a flock of about a score feeding on the Scotch firs, the next day I saw them again, but this flock went north and was not succeeded till July 20th and this time by only half a dozen birds. They then stayed till July 27th and I have not seen any since. They were always on the Scotch firs and seem to have had plenty to eat. There were very few adult males amongst them, in fact I only saw one and that was in the first flock ; most of the others were young ones.

J. CUNNINGHAM.

BREEDING-HABITS OF WILLOW-WARBLER  
AND NESTING-SITES AT CONSIDERABLE  
HEIGHTS FROM GROUND.

WITH reference to this subject (*antea*, pp. 88-92) some notes on a nest I had under observation at Windermere in 1914 may be of interest.

When first found, on May 10th, the bird was sitting on six eggs, which hatched on the 19th. One of the young died on the 24th and all the rest left the nest on June 1st, making the time of fledging thirteen days.

I visited the nest between 12 and 1 p.m. each day, but though the hen became greatly excited and did not go far from the nest, I never saw the cock. Nor did he take any part in feeding the young when, on two or three days, I spent some time in photographing the birds. MARJORY GARNETT.

On June 17th, 1898, I found a Willow-Warbler's nest built amongst woodbine on an oak tree 8 ft. from the ground. The nest contained five eggs.

On May 20th, 1917, Mr. George Bolam and I found a Willow-Warbler's nest built inside a squirrel's drey near the top of a larch tree *over* 30 ft. from the ground. The nest contained two eggs. Both nests were found in the Stocksfield-on-Tyne district. J. S. T. WALTON.

MALE REDSHANK INCUBATING.

ON May 1st, 1917, while crossing a bit of waste land near Lurgan, Co. Armagh, I picked up a Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) which I saw accidentally killed on a nest of four eggs; it sat very close indeed, but the eggs were quite fresh. On being dissected it proved to be a male. J. CUNNINGHAM.

SPOTTED REDSHANK IN NORFOLK.

It may be of interest to record that on September 7th, 1917, I saw a Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*) standing beside a dirty pond on the main road between Syderstone and Docking, practically in the village of Syderstone. I stopped my car and watched the bird for about five minutes, during which time it flew round the pond once or twice, settled again and fed round the edge, and eventually flew off in a straight line for the sea, in the direction of Wells-next-the-Sea.

Though a regular visitor to this coast, this is the first time I have seen this species, though I know the birds well, having had them in confinement. The sun was very bright at the time I saw the bird, and I could not be sure whether it was adult or immature, although it was only ten yards from me, but I think it was immature. HUGH WORMALD.

## BLACK-TAILED GODWITS IN NORFOLK.

A FLOCK of eight to ten Black-tailed Godwits (*Limosa limosa*) has been on the Salthouse Marshes, near Cley, for some weeks. I first heard of them on March 9th, 1917, when I believe one bird was obtained but I did not see it myself. On July 16th I received one and was told that there were six or seven more, and a fortnight after this date I heard that the birds were still there. This is the first time I have had a Black-tailed Godwit from this district for preservation.

H. N. PASHLEY.

## LITTLE GULL IN LANCASHIRE.

MR. W. H. HEATHCOTE informs me that, whilst on a launch in the Ribble Estuary, in September, 1916, he had under observation, for some time, a Little Gull (*Larus minutus*). This makes the tenth record for Lancashire. Mitchell, in his *Birds of Lancashire*, mentions only four, Saunders adding a fifth in the second edition. In *British Birds*, Vol. VII., p. 235, I added a sixth, and in an editorial the 7th and 8th were recorded, whilst Mr. F. W. Smalley, in Vol. VIII., p. 199, recorded the ninth.

H. W. ROBINSON.

ABNORMAL GOLDEN EAGLE'S EGGS.—At the meeting of the British Ornithologists' Club on June 13, 1917, Mr. R. W. Chase exhibited a clutch of three eggs of the Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetus*), taken in Sutherland, measuring  $88.3 \times 52.8$ ,  $80.5 \times 52.5$  and  $81.5 \times 54.8$  mm. Only one of the three eggs showed traces of reddish-brown markings. Clutches of three are of rare occurrence in Scotland, though Professor Newton has recorded four sets, three of which were taken from the same nest in consecutive years. The average measurement of 100 Scotch eggs is  $76.7 \times 59.4$  mm., so that the eggs exhibited were not only exceedingly elongated in shape but also unusually narrow.

CLUTCH OF DWARF EGGS OF BLACK-HEADED GULL.—At the same meeting Mr. Chase also showed a set of three dwarf eggs of Black-headed Gull (*Larus r. ridibundus*) taken in Cumberland, which measured  $34 \times 26.8$ ,  $34.5 \times 25.7$ , and  $35.8 \times 26.5$  mm., all of which were infertile. Dwarf eggs are not uncommonly found in clutches together with normal eggs, but a clutch of dwarf eggs is very unusual. The late Major H. Trevelyan, however, took a set of three blue eggs in Ireland in 1908 (cf. *Br. Birds*, II., p. 64), but gives the measurements in inches. In millimetres they would be  $35.5 \times 27.9$ ,  $40.6 \times 30.4$  and  $43.1 \times 30.4$ , all much below the average, but larger than Mr. Chase's set.