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Osprey Nest Relocation at Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, Florida

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ticular vegetation (Hanson 1965, *The Giant Canada Goose*, Carbondale, So. Ill. Univ. Press). No gander was present at the nest with the brooding female, and the goose immediately returned to incubate as I left the area.

A second nest was approximately 6 m above the ground in the crotch of a large live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) where several large limbs emerged. The nest was constructed of Spanish moss (*Tillandsia usneoides*). I was unable to determine the size of the clutch; however, four goslings are known to have been hatched from this nest as they were sighted with a pair of adult geese on 2 May 1978 (about eight days after discovery of the nest). The nest tree was located approximately 60 m from a large pond where nesting tubs and platforms are provided for the geese. These were the only geese using this pond during the 1978 nesting season.

Both nests were at Southwood Farms near Tallahassee (3.5 km SE), Leon County, Florida.

Occasional tree-nesting by Canada Geese has been known since the time of Audubon and the early explorers of the northwest (Coues 1874, *Birds of the northwest*, Washington, D. C., U. S. Govt. Printing Office). It has been most frequently reported for the race *B. c. moffitti*, but the giant Canada Goose frequently nested in trees in northwestern North Dakota (Audubon 1969, Audubon and his journals, *The Missouri River journals*, New York, Dover); in the Reelfoot Lake area of Tennessee, and in the "bootheel" area of Missouri (McKinley 1961, *Bluebird* 28(3):2-8). A tree nest of *B. c. interior* in the muskeg country of northern Ontario was reported to Hanson (1965) by an Indian. The old nests of Ospreys, hawks, herons, or ravens usually serve as the platforms for such nests (Hanson 1965). Thus, although occasional tree-nesting has been observed in other areas, this is the first record of tree-nesting by Canada Geese in Florida so far as the author could determine.

These nesting geese are part of a large group of birds introduced into the Tallahassee area by the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission over the past 10 years in an effort to establish a non-migratory flock of Canada Geese.—THOMAS M. GOODWIN, *Wildlife Research Laboratory, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, Gainesville, Florida 32601*.

Osprey nest relocation at Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, Florida.—Because of Corps of Engineers dredging activities in the Banana River at the Merritt Island National (NWR), Brevard County, Florida, an Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) nest resting on barge canal pilings had to be relocated. This Osprey nesting site had been active and successful annually since April 1973, when two young were raised.

The relocation activity was undertaken on 24 March 1978 by personnel of the Merritt Island NWR. At 0730, the nest was inspected and removed intact from the piling. The pair of Ospreys exhibited little anxiety or hostility at the removal even though the nest contained one egg. The nest was installed at a pre-erected artificial Osprey nest structure in the Banana River approximately one km south of and visible from the original nest site. Both sites were over and approximately 20 feet above the water. The old site, on five mooring pilings fastened together, had a base of solid wood 3 feet in diameter. The new site, elevated by a single "telephone pole type" support, had a base of 1 × 2 inch welded fencing material 3 feet square. Although erected in 1974, the artificial nest structure was never used as a nesting site. After relocation the nest was arranged as similar to its original configuration as possible, except the egg, originally found covered by nest material, was exposed. The total operation took three hours.

During the relocation operation, the Osprey pair remained in the area, and they were observed loafing on the artificial nest site before nest relocation. The Osprey pair was not observed (one hour of observation time) at the new nest following relocation. However, the next day two Ospreys were seen at the new site, and on a number of occasions following relocation, an adult Osprey was seen bringing nest material to the new site, repairing the nest and/or incubating the egg. On 19 May 1978, the nest was inspected and found to be empty and undisturbed. Despite

this loss, Ospreys remained in the vicinity of the nest throughout May. Whether the birds at the new site were the original pair or a different pair is unknown because the original pair was not marked and had no distinguishing characteristics. The Merritt Island NWR has a resident breeding population of approximately 6-10 pairs of Ospreys and a total peak population of approximately 50 birds, therefore, it is possible the original pair followed the nest but this is only speculation.

The relocation nest site will be watched during the next nesting season to see if it is used by Ospreys.—WILLARD P. LEENHOUTS, *Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, P. O. Box 6504, Titusville, Florida 32780.*

First nesting of the Caspian Tern in the Florida Panhandle.—The Caspian Tern (*Sterna caspia*) is one of the more recent additions to the list of breeding birds in Florida, first found nesting in Pinellas County in 1962 (Woolfenden and Meyerriecks 1963, *Auk* 80:365-366). By 1974 (Dunstan, et al. 1975, *Fla. Field Nat.* 3:16-17), five additional nesting sites had been discovered in peninsular Florida, four on the gulf coast (Charlotte Co., Hillsborough Co., Pinellas Co.—2) and one on the east coast (Brevard Co.).

In 1978, Caspian Terns nested on a spoil island about 50 m off Eastpoint, Franklin County, Florida. Annual checks of this island over a period of 30 years had indicated no previous nesting of the species, but much additional fill was added to the island in the early spring of 1978. On the highest part of the new portion, I found four Caspian Tern nests on 10 June, three of which contained two eggs each and the other only one. A few empty scrapes of similar size were also noted. On that date I estimated the number of adults at 15. Estimates of adults of other species nesting there were 100 Black Skimmers (*Rynchops niger*) and 200 Least Terns (*Sterna albifrons*).

I did not return to this island until 11 July, when I found several Caspian Tern nests containing eggs and/or young, as well as two downy young on the beach and a few empty scrapes. Two downies were taken for specimens (No. 3600, Tall Timbers Research Station; No. 3375c, Florida State University). As nesting was not entirely synchronous, it was difficult to determine the number of occupied nests. There may have been as many as 10, although I was never certain that as many as 20 adults were present.—HENRY M. STEVENSON, *Tall Timbers Research Station, Rt. 1, Box 160, Tallahassee, Florida 32312.*

Cliff Swallows continue to nest in Florida.—Cliff Swallows (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) were first discovered nesting in Florida in June 1975, on the east side of Lake Okeechobee under the U. S. Highway 441 bridge across the St. Lucie Canal at Port Mayaca, Martin County (Sykes 1976, *Wilson Bull.* 88:671-672). Of the nine nests at the site, two were found to be active. The location of the nests on the concrete structure was described. A male (NMNH 567576) of the nominate race and shell fragments of two fresh eggs were collected and sent to the U. S. National Museum. This small colony was inactive 1976-78, and the bridge is to be demolished and replaced.

In 1978, I discovered two occupied Cliff Swallow nests on 17 June, among a group of five beneath a low concrete bridge on U. S. Highway 441 4.5 km (2.8 mi.) north of the original colony. At least five adults were present on 17 and 26 June. On the latter date two young extended their heads out of one nest and a sixth nest was under construction. Contents of the other nests were never determined. This bridge is considerably lower and smaller than the one used in 1975 (Fig. 1), with a span of 18.3 m, a width of 9.9 m, and the underside of the roadbed 1.5 m above the water. The typical gourd-shaped mud-pellet nests were built against the vertical surfaces of the middle of three transverse beams and the underside of the roadbed. The beams, oriented east-west, are mounted on concrete pilings. Three nests were on the north side of the beam and three on the south, and all were about 1.4 m above the water.