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## Nesting Birds of Sanibel-captiva and the Barrier Islands

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In this note I report a case of solitary nesting by a pair of Great Blue Herons in central Florida. The nest, discovered by Walter M. and Ruth D. Boone in mid-February 1982, was 12 m high in a dead and weathered pine (*Pinus* sp.). The tree was near the center of the Placid Lakes Golf Course approximately 4.5 km SW of Lake Placid, Highlands County, Florida. Canals through the area provide drainage and a man-modified riparian habitat. The nest tree was at the edge of such a canal. I watched the nest on six visits for 3 hrs 5 min between 1530 and 1710 from 24 March to 28 April 1982.

On my first visit, 24 March, the nest contained two white, downy chicks. When I returned two days later, an adult was shading the young. The siblings touched bills frequently and constantly vocalized while alternately begging and holding their bill upward. On 5 April the two feathered nestlings huddled in the nest, except to stretch and gape twice. On my 14 April visit, the young stood with the sun at their backs and gular fluttered. On 19 April one nestling wing-flapped and then settled into the nest. The last day the birds were seen by golfers was 25 April, and they reported both birds frequently flapped their wings while atop the nest. The nest was empty during my last visit on 28 April, and I saw no Great Blue Herons in the area. I believe the nestlings fledged.

I observed adults foraging twice. On 5 April an adult flew to the nest from a canal 60 m away. Similarly on 14 April I saw an adult foraging at the edge of this canal. On 19 April an adult called, flew into view from the east, landed on the nest, and regurgitated food which the young took from its throat and from the nest.

The nest and its contents survived the rigors of severe storms with strong winds on 11 and 21 April, despite the fact that the old pine, riddled with woodpecker cavities, swayed in less intense winds.

DesGranges (1979, Pp. 192-201 *in* Proc. 1977 Conf. Col. Waterbird Group) and Krebs (1974, Behaviour 51: 99-134) suggested that aggregations of herons allowed the birds to locate food rapidly, and both authors discussed the importance of rookery life to the breeding success of herons. In 1962 Allen (*in* Palmer, 1962) noted that "the development of real estate and so on, cause abandonment of heronries". The nest I observed succeeded in fledging young without the benefits of a heronry and demonstrates an adaptation of this species to the effects of the destruction of large areas of natural habitat.—Marsha S. Winegarner, Route 2, Box 180, Lake Placid, Florida 33852.

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## REVIEWS

**Nesting birds of Sanibel-Captiva and the barrier islands.**—Hal H. Harrison. 1981. 52 pp., softbound \$2.95. **Roseate Spoonbills and other wading birds of Sanibel-Captiva.**—Griffing Bancroft. 1981. 55 pp., softbound. \$2.00. Both available from Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation, P. O. Drawer S., Sanibel, FL 33957.—The Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation has recently instituted a new series of publications on the natural history of the Sanibel-Captiva area. Twenty are planned. The present two are of particular interest to birders.

The first volume is an annotated checklist of nesting birds, with specific comments drawn from the author's own observations in the 1960s and early 1970s. Photographs by the author of nests of many of the species mentioned enhance the text.

A few minor errors and inconsistencies exist. In four cases the A.O.U. check-list (1957, fifth ed., Baltimore, Maryland, American Ornithologists' Union) order is not followed (Glossy Ibis, Black-necked Stilt, plovers, Mangrove Cuckoo). Three possible breeders (Long-billed Marsh Wren, Turkey Vulture, Blue Jay) are included while another, the Mourning Dove, is not. Two known former breeders, the Bobwhite and Eastern Meadowlark, are omitted while another, the Barn Swallow, is included. A breeding record for the Chimney Swift (Fred Lohrer pers. comm.) is not mentioned as it was not known to Harrison. Surely the Willet, and possibly the Purple Gallinule, nest in the area, but neither is noted. Just three "typos" were found: "Nothern" Mockingbird (twice) and "deterent."

These minor complaints aside, visitors to Sanibel and Captiva will find this a useful guide to the breeding birds of the area.

Bancroft's book, like Harrison's, is entertaining reading. The relaxed narrative treats all the long-legged waders found in the area and features the Roseate Spoonbill. For each species a description, translation of the Latin name, and comments about habits and local status are provided. Bancroft, drawing freely on his own field observations, gives the text a personal touch that I find charming. Line drawings by Steve Phillips illustrate each species. A selected list of references will be of interest to readers particularly interested in waders.

But the book is marred by errors of fact, interpretation, and typography. Some examples: White Ibis gain their white adult plumage at *one* year of age, not *two*; the Reddish Egret's bicolor bill is black at the tip and pink at the base, not dark blue and reddish yellow; young-of-the-year spoonbills are not *white*, but pale pink, with white heads and necks—and they are indeed seen in Florida. The White Ibis is not the most abundant wader in Florida; the Cattle Egret is. The account of Roseate Spoonbill populations, based largely on the work of Robert Porter Allen, makes too much of Allen's report of "fall" and "spring" nesting groups, which are treated here as genetically and geographically distinct populations. Many colonial birds in Florida have nesting seasons that appear to fluctuate according to local conditions, e. g., Brown Pelicans and Great Egrets, and spoonbills can reasonably be expected to exhibit the same flexibility. The presence of at least 12 typographical errors, including misspellings of two ornithologists' names, and three sentence fragments, further indicates lack of review in the preparation of this manuscript. There is much to enjoy in this book, both for birders and casual visitors. But I cannot recommend it in its present form.

Both books would be well served by a map of the area covered. If these volumes are any guide, the series would benefit from an editor. In revised editions, if any are contemplated, nomenclature and list order should follow the new 6th Edition of the A. O. U. check-list, due in 1983—Richard T. Paul, 1020 82nd Street S, Tampa, Florida 33619.