

bird's acquaintance at any time. Shyness is one of the hawk's peculiarities, to say nothing of its retiring habits, especially in the nesting season. The bird is seldom seen during the period of incubation, except when the nest is in danger. If the male bird is present at this time the flicker-like alarm notes are a sure indication that a nest is close by. Experience (I use this term with calm deliberation) has driven me to the conclusion that the male bird is seldom at home while the female is incubating, but is off on some foraging expedition, —in many instances miles from the nest tree. Having become quite familiar with the breeding haunts of this species and meeting casually with the male in the open country, I have been able to form some estimate of the erratic movements of the smaller parent in the nesting season. Looking for sharp-shinned hawks' nests is tedious work, especially in black spruce bogs of any size, but this is the only satisfactory method of meeting the birds.

The early stragglers appear during the first week in April, but migration depends largely on the season. Some pairs start domestic duties early, as nests have been built by the end of April and contained full sets by May 8. The young have been hatched in the first days of June, but these, of course, are exceptional records. The eggs are usually laid by May 24, and the young are out of the shell about three weeks later. The number of eggs laid is three to six, usually four or five. They are richly marked, and there is an endless variety in a large series of sets.

Unfortunately the sharp-shinned hawk makes heavy raids on our song birds, the white-throated sparrow, chickadee and the warblers being the principal sufferers. I notice that the bird selects a mossy stump or squirrel's nest as a perch for plucking its victims. Again and again I have stumbled across masses of bird feathers adhering to moss on the ground and on stumps in evergreen woods. Occasionally the hawk loses a feather or two in its wild flight. These are all tell-tale signs that a pair of these destructive birds are tenants in the wood, and a thorough search always reveals the nest. Where a family has been raised the woods are almost stripped bare of song birds. The majority of nests have been found in black spruce trees, a few in balsam and an occasional one in hemlock, cedar and pine. The height varies from ten to sixty feet from the ground against the base on horizontal branches. The nest does not resemble the bulky structure of the crow as some authorities aver, but is easily distinguishable from the latter by the shallow platform of interlaced spruce twigs. A large number of nests have been built over old foundations, but as a general rule the bird constructs a new nest each season. The usual nest of this hawk is a frail affair of twigs and is sometimes lined with flakes of bark. The tree chosen is on the outskirts of the woods, or at the edge of any clearing or opening in the middle of the woods. A