

ticularly if the bird has suffered some illness or is retarded through other causes, just as a caged bird seldom acquires full summer vestiture. Apart from this it seems to me to be just as unreasonable to expect to meet with constant individuals of that class as it would be to find robins masquerading in the dress of their mates, either male or female.

In their home life, that is when they are breeding, Marsh Hawks usually select some low-lying ground though it may be many miles from water. Thus, choosing a situation usually among low bush, or at least where the trees are not very close together, they commence to build a nest chiefly of small sticks and stems of grass, the latter being used more particularly for lining. This nest is generally a bulky affair placed upon the ground. I have found them among willows close to water, also among low aspen poplars, or even tall ones, in situations by no means appropriate to the bird's name. My experience is that they prefer open prairies intermixed with bluff and marshes, though when the latter are not available they adapt themselves to the former. I have never, however, found a nest on high land away from some sort of trees. If undisturbed these birds will return to their old haunts year after year, though choosing each season a new situation on which to place their nest. It is interesting to watch them while they are seeking for a nesting site. They seem first of all to decide upon a locality, then flying to and fro looking over every inch of the ground, they gradually determine upon the actual spot. During this period of selecting and building, the male, as well as helping in the work, indulges in many antics for his mate's edification; the chief one being to turn summersaults. These acrobatic performances are most interesting. He usually starts with a sort of wobbly flight as if imitating a tipsy individual, then swooping downwards, he turns completely over, occasionally several times in succession and then darts up again with a cackle to repeat the same performance over again, often tumbling within a few feet of the female which is usually flying below. Occasionally these performances are terminated with the wobbly flight over again, at other times they neither start nor end in this manner. I have also observed the female try her skill in the same way but she lacks the confidence and grace of her husband. These birds also often utter shrill cries, more particularly when two males are present; they also sometimes fight, specially the males.

During the breeding season the hen seems to keep very continuously on the nest while her lord replenishes the larder. At such times he may be seen flying low around bush and field in search of gophers or mice, though a small bird, too, does not come amiss. If you were in the vicinity of the nest you would