

The Rockwood Review.

During August and September a considerable portion of the food consists of the larvæ of certain large moths which are common at this season, notably those of the elm spinix, of the Cecropian moth, and of the Polyphemus moth, and it is the exception not to find their remains in the stomachs examined. Grasshoppers, crickets and beetles are also greedily devoured.

The following quotations bear on the subject of this hawk's food:

Audubon says: "In the stomach of this bird I found wood frogs, portions of small snakes, together with feathers, and the hair of several small specimens of quadrupeds."

Mr J. W. Preston says: "Their food consists of small squirrels, frogs, and in fact any small quarry easily captured. Never have I known them to molest the poultry."

Mr. J. G. Wells, speaking of the bird in the West Indies, says. "Numerous; feed on lizards, rats, snakes, young birds, etc., and occasionally makes a raid on the poultry yard."

Dr. F. W. Langdon says. "The stomach of a specimen of this hawk taken at Madisonville in April, 1877, contained the greater part of the skeleton and hair of a small wood mouse, a lizard about six inches, and ten or twelve small beetles, with numerous elytra of the same."

Dr. B. H. Warren gives the following: "In twelve specimens examined by myself, four revealed mice; three, small birds; four, frogs; one, killed the 22d of May, 1882, was gorged with crayfish, with which were traces of coleopterous insects."

The only act of the Broad-winged Hawk which seems injurious to agriculture is the killing of toads and small snakes; the former of which are exclusively insect eaters, the latter are very largely so. In one respect its enormous value ranks above all other birds, and that is in the destruction of immense numbers of injurious larvæ of large moths, which most birds

are either unable or disinclined to cope with. The good service it does should insure it the protection extended to the other BUTEOS.

The nest, which is placed in a fork of either an evergreen or deciduous tree, usually is not over 25 feet from the ground, though occasionally it is situated in the tops of the highest trees. Sometimes this hawk appropriates the deserted nests of some other bird, notably that of the crow, or even uses for a foundation the outside canopy of the squirrel. The nest which averages a little larger than that of the crow, is composed of dead sticks and lined with strips of bark, or with dry or green leaves. The eggs, of which the complement is usually two or three, are deposited from the middle to the latter part of May, consequently this species is among the latest of the hawks to breed. The male assists in incubating the eggs as well as in the duties pertaining to bringing up the young.

Of all our Hawks this species seems to be the most unsuspecting, often allowing a person to approach within a few yards of it, and when started flies but a short distance before it alights again. During the early summer the Broad-winged Hawk often may be seen sitting for hours on the dead top of some high tree. At other times it is found on the smaller trees in the deep woods, along streams, or on the ground, where its food is more often procured. Although sluggish and unusually heavy in its flight, it is capable of rapid motion and sometimes soars high in the air. One of its notes resembles quite closely that of the wood pewee.

DESCRIPTION,

Wing less than 13.50 inches. Middle toe shorter than naked portion of leg in front. Above dusky brownish; below brownish dull, more or less broken by white spotting; belly white, barred with dull rufous, tail blackish, crossed by bands of gray or brownish white.