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Published by Ronald Caplan on 1980/8/1

Cormorants they burrow into the ground and tend to nest around the roots. The burrows go sort of twisty and turny between the roots. They lay one egg near -the back. Dan: The first time I was on the island we found one Petrel burrow. (Of course, the spruce trees are gone, and they were there formerly. Here's what Bayley says about it: "Leach's Petrel breeds in large numbers on both Hertford Island and Ciboux Island, the birds making their burrows in the soft turf of the island tops wherever there is a little irregularity to give a start. For example, in an old stone wall made of loose flat stones, which have been gathered near the lighthouse on Ciboux, the burrows are very numerous.") Dave: The only time to really count Petrels is at night. They fly in and out of their colonies at night. (Bayley: "At night one can hear the shrill eerie cries from the islands and then their (the Petrels') activities take the place of those of the Puffin and other birds of the daytime,") Dave: I wouldn't like to say there are no Petrels there, unless I had gone at night, Dan: Two years ago we spent a lot of time looking for Petrel nests • and we only found one. I've never even seen pictures of Bird Islands with trees on them • but I would see it as the loss of that habitat as the prime cause. Dave: I was up last year and I didn't see anything that even resembled a Petrel hole. Dan: And come to think of it, the one we found • it was down by a stone wall. (About the GREAT CORMORANT, Bayley wrote in 1925: "...the nesting of this species is especially interesting, as it is believed that this is the only recently recorded breeding occurrence in...Nova Scotia....These Cormorants nest principally on the higher ledges near the cliff top on the northern end of Hertford, 60 to 80 feet above the sea....") Dave: We counted 60 nests today and one of them had 7 eggs in it. Dan (looking into Tufts' Birds of Nova Scotia): In 1940 Robie Tufts visited the islands and "made a fairly accurate count of 39 occupied nests of this Cormorant." We were out there today and we counted 511 on Hertford and 245 on Ciboux. Dave: But I would believe that record (1940)--not only Tufts said that, Erskine said that too-- and about that time they were worried that the Great (or European) Cormorant was going extinct through all of eastern North America. Really had grave fears for that bird. Dan: We saw about 700 birds so you can bet there's at least 350 nests and probably something like 500 nests there now. As opposed to a "fairly accurate" count of 39 in 1940. (And that's really interesting because Bayley in 1925 said "there were probably 100 pairs of adult breeding birds and as many immature, roosting, around,") Dave: Well, they were going down when Bayley was there, pretty well hit their lowest around 1950 • and since then they've been coming up. Fishermen were very hard on Cormorants until a study was done to show what types of fish they ate--and after that, they started coming back again, (Bayley adds that the DOUBLE-ORSTED CORMORANT probably comprise about 1/5 of the colony,) Dan: The tv70 Cormorants are very similar, except for a breeding patch. The only way to distinguish them at a distance is that brood patch, a little white patch the Greaters have that the Doubles don't, Dave: And that patch disappears right around now and you don't see it--and that's the only way to tell them apart from a distance,



Dan: You go around the colony today and only about a third of the birds will have that white patch, but if you had gone*around a month ago, every one of the Greater would have had it, (Bayley adds: "It is believed that this is the first breeding record for the species (Double- crested Cormorant) in Nova Scotia, and even records of occurrence are scarce,") SPOTTED SANDPIPER, (Bayley saw "nests in grass slopes--3 pairs noted,") Dave: We saw a few more than that today. Five alto? gether. But they'd be so easy to miss. And we saw a PURPLE SANDPIPER--did Bayley see one? (No, And Tufts says it is seen only in winter.) Dave: Then we might have a new record. And the Bird Society saw DICKCIS- SEL out there. (Usually a rare fall visi? tor.) MERGANSER. ("Nesting on grassy slopes... usually...under the thick scrubby spruce" and ground yew bushes.") Dave: We didn't see any. And that's it: where you find Mergansers you find the nests hidden under something. (The scrubby spruce are gone, and so are the Mergansers. And so are most birds that would depend on trees. Bayley mentions one nesting pair of MAGNOLIA WARBLER--"in the plum thickets," There are no wild plum thickets now.) Dave: The SAVAN? NAH SPARROW and the VESPER~SPARROW are more of a grassland bird. But I wouldn't think JUNCO nest there any longer. There are Swallows. I'd say there's more BANK SWALLOWS than BARN SWALLOWS. Dan: But there's no habitat for TREE SWALLOWS any? more . (But actually you don't try to count all the species there.) Dave: That's right. We (52)