

need at this time for additional ground feed for elk and smaller deer and the urgent necessity for more water on the game range about the height of land during the heat of summer days can well be provided by the activities of this little animal

engineer. More beaver ponds will attract more waterfowl, marsh birds, and other feathered folk to enhance the value of sanctuary and delight the eye and heart of the nature lover seeking to profit by National Park ideals.

RUNNING SPEEDS OF SKUNK AND EUROPEAN HARE

By D. A. MacLULICH, B.Sc.F.



ACTUAL measurements of the running speeds of animals are seldom obtained, therefore it is thought worth while to place on record some that the writer has been fortunate enough to observe. By way of comparison it may be mentioned that Seton (1928) states that the White-tailed Jack Rabbit, *Lepus townsendii*, can travel at the rate of thirty miles an hour; the Black-tailed Jack, *Lepus californicus*, twenty-eight miles per hour, and the Varying Hare, *Lepus americanus*, at twenty-six miles an hour. Vorhies and Taylor (1933) record that "Speedometer tests show that probably both species of jack rabbits [*Lepus californicus* and *Lepus alleni*] readily attain speeds of thirty to thirty-five miles an hour. *Lepus alleni*, at least, is capable of higher speeds on rare occasions."

A European Hare, *Lepus europaeus*, was paced by the car on a narrow gravel road in Innisfil township of Simcoe County, Ontario, on October 12, 1935. With the car about thirty-five feet behind it the hare ran in the glare of the head-lights for about two hundred yards at a speed varying between twenty and twenty-two miles an hour. It finally dodged sharply off at right angles into a field. The full moon gave bright illumination.

A second measurement was obtained near Beaverton in Ontario County, Ontario, at midnight on October 18, 1935. This European hare ran, apparently at full speed, alongside a front wheel of the car for a quarter of a mile at thirty miles an hour.

A Skunk, *Mephitis mephitis*, ran 150 yards along a narrow dirt road ahead of the automobile in the light of the head-lamps on September 21, 1933, by that part of Buckshot Lake which is within Abinger township in Lennox and Addington County, Ontario. It ran at a speed of about six miles an hour. Although it nosed off to the side of the road several times it did not leave it until it reached a clearing beyond an alder swamp. Presuming the animal would leave the track if the head-light glare were removed I switched the lights off for a few seconds but the beast continued to run down the road.

The next year, nearby, in the same township while I was passing through a sugar maple forest a Skunk ran before the car for about one hundred yards. This was on September 19. Once the Skunk stopped and turned to leave the road but apparently could not see its way quickly enough so it resumed its flight. I turned off the lights and the Skunk immediately hurried from the road. Its speed was found to be between eight and nine miles an hour. Both this night and that of the previous episode were dark, so the car lights could have been dazzling.

LITERATURE CITED

SETON, ERNEST T., 1928, *Lives of Game Animals*. vol. 4, Garden City, N.Y.

VORHIES, CHAS. T. & TAYLOR, W. P., 1933, *The Life Histories and Ecology of Jack Rabbits, Lepus alleni and Lepus californicus ssp., in relation to grazing in Arizona*. Univ. Ariz., College Agri., Tech. Bull. No. 49.

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

THE AMERICAN CASPIAN TERN (*Hydroprogne caspia imperator*) AT OTTAWA. As I was standing just outside my house, at 34 Grosvenor Avenue, in the southern part of Ottawa, between the Rideau River and the Rideau Canal, about 1.30 p.m. (Daylight Saving Time) on May 9,

1935, I heard, almost directly overhead, the loud, harsh cry, "A-a-ark!", of the American Caspian Tern. I recognized it immediately, before I looked up. On looking up quickly, I saw the Caspian Tern, which I estimated to be about 300 feet above me. It was flying eastward, and

I had a good view of it for 20 or 30 seconds. Points recognized were (1) size, about that of a Ring-billed Gull, (2) white and pearl-gray coloration, (3) angular outline of wings, quite different from the curved front wing-edges of a flying Gull. A moment after I saw it, it uttered its characteristic cry a second time. It uttered the same cry at least twice more before it passed out of sight over the house-tops. I had no opportunity to observe the bird through binoculars.

In connection with this identification it is pertinent to state that I had visited a breeding colony of American Caspian Terns, at Fog Island, Saguenay County, Quebec, every summer for the twelve years immediately prior to 1935, and that I had thus become very familiar with the appearance and the voice of the species. I am wholly certain that the bird recorded above was a Caspian Tern.

The day of this observation was warm, with a strong southwest wind. It was partly cloudy, but the light was good when the observation was made.

There appears to be no previous record of a Caspian Tern in the Ottawa district.—HARRISON F. LEWIS.

THE ROSS GOOSE (*Chen rossi*) IN ALBERTA.—When driving through the country east of Bittern Lake on the afternoon of October 12th, 1935, I noted two white geese feeding in a grain field, in company with a large flock of Canada Geese. At the time I believed them to be Lesser Snow Geese, small numbers of which occasional-

ly mix with the "honkers". On October 17th, Alex Burgess, a local hunter brought me a pair of very small white geese he had killed that morning as they rested on the sandy shore of Bittern Lake, about four miles south of where I had, a few days before, seen the white geese. These proved to be Ross Geese and were probably the ones I had seen on the 12th of the month. The absence of warty growths at the base of the bills would indicate they were birds of the year, probably less than four months old. Measurements of the male were: length, 22½ inches; extent, 45 inches; wing, 14½ inches; and bill, 2 inches. The female was slightly smaller. Legs and feet bluish and bill reddish. Weight of male 3¼ pounds, female 3 pounds. Mallards killed the same day weighed from three to three and a quarter pounds. The plumage of both birds had a decidedly rusty appearance, much like that commonly found on Lesser Snow Geese, a result of their frequenting iron-impregnated waters.

Wintering in California, the Ross Goose is believed to migrate, chiefly through Alberta, to and from its nesting grounds in the Arctic regions. There are, however, few records of its occurrence in this province, probably due to the fact that "wavies" are not popular, and are seldom killed by hunters. At rare intervals during the past 40 years I have heard of small white geese, no larger than a mallard, having been killed in Central Alberta, but those referred to above are the only ones I have ever seen. A more appropriate name for this diminutive "wavey" would seem to be the "Least Snow Goose."—FRANK L. FARLEY.

BOOK REVIEWS

Insect Enemies of Shade Trees, by Glenn W. Herrick. Comstock Publishing Co., Ithaca, New York, 1935. pp. 417, illus. 321, indexes, numerous bibliographies. \$5.00.

Intended primarily for people interested, either professionally or as amateurs, in the preservation of shade trees, this book forms a complete manual. Methods of repairing injured trees, materials and apparatus for the control of insect and other pests, suggestions for the fertilization of the soil, are all discussed clearly and comprehensively. Valuable notes on the

relative utility of shade trees and their susceptibility to pests are included. The American Elm heads the list for general utility, while the Ginkgo is first as far as freedom from insect pests is concerned, a fact which may account in part for the long life history of this interesting tree which is often referred to as a "living fossil" for it has existed unchanged for many millions of years and is now unknown in a wild state, being found in China and Japan in the vicinity of palaces, shrines and tombs where it is cultivated. This is a book which anyone interested in trees would do well to obtain.—D. L.



Lewis, Harrison F. 1936. "The American Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia* imperator) at Ottawa." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 50(5), 92–93.

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