

FERRUGINOUS HAWK BREEDING DOCUMENTED IN SARGENT COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA — Two Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*) nests were found in the sandhill region of western Sargent County in 1979. Both of these nests are approximately 40 miles further east of their recently reported breeding range (Stewart, R. E. 1975. *Breeding Birds of North Dakota*. Tri-college Center for Environmental Studies, Fargo. 295 pp.). In South Dakota no nests are shown in the eastern 1/3 of the State (Whitney, N.R., Jr. et al. 1978. *The Birds of South Dakota*. The South Dakota Ornithologists Union, Vermillion. 311 pp.). In Minnesota the birds are considered accidental in the summer, and no positive breeding evidence has been obtained for the State (Green, J.D. and R.B. Janssen, 1975. *Minnesota Birds: Where, When, and How Many*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis. 217 pp.).

The first nest was found in T. 129 N., R. 58 W., Section 7, in a cottonwood tree surrounded by grassland. This nest was occupied by a Ferruginous Hawk pair in both 1978 and 1979. On 13 April 1979, an adult was already on the nest. We did not check for eggs as Ferruginous Hawks are prone to abandon a nest if disturbed early in the nesting cycle (Fyfe, R.W., and R.R. Olendorff. 1976. Minimizing the dangers of nesting studies to raptors and other sensitive species. Occasional Paper No. 23. Canadian Wildlife Service). A week prior to fledging, 1 of 5 nestlings was found dead under the nest tree after a severe thunderstorm.

The second nest was in T. 130 N, R. 58 W., Section 10, approximately five miles north of the first nest. This nest, in a lone cottonwood tree associated with native pasture, produced two young. A third pair of Ferruginous Hawks was reported by local residents in the same vicinity.

It is not likely that these nests represent actual range expansions for the species. Rather, I suspect that the species has nested in the area previously but was not reported. It is possible that this prairie species may nest further east into the Sheyenne Grasslands of Richland and Ransom Counties as well. — *Rod Schmidt, Biology Branch, Water & Power Resources Service, Bismarck, N.D. 58501.*