

DO EARED GREBES HAVE DUMP NESTS?

By **J. B. Gollop**, Canadian Wildlife Service, Saskatoon

On June 5, 1958, R. A. Lamont of Kindersley and the author examined the 1,600-acre "Redtop Slough", three miles north of Mantario, Saskatchewan. A twelve-foot aluminum car-top boat with an airthrust motor was used for the survey. The slough is divided by a peninsula of land from the north side into two parts, the west section being open and the east section being mostly covered with smartweed (*Polygonum* sp.). The smartweed reached a foot above the water. The water in most of the area examined in the east arm was about 24 inches deep, the maximum depth located being 54 inches.

Colonies of Franklin's Gulls and Eared Grebes were found. A complete census was not attempted but a rough estimate of 1,000 nests of each species could easily be on the conservative side. An examination of twelve Franklin's Gull eggs indicated that the majority were one-third to two-thirds incubated. The more advanced Eared Grebe embryos had considerable feathering.

Several conglomerations of Eared Grebe eggs were noted. These were probably deposited and abandoned by a number of females. Unlike a somewhat similar situation in Redheads there was no nest under the eggs. Instead, they lay on the tangled vegetation between adjacent, ap-

parently normal, nests which were about three feet apart. The eggs had apparently been added to the pile but many had moved down into the tangled vegetation or rolled off into the water. The eggs in two of these pyramid-like dumps were counted. Counting all the eggs above the water, submerged in the vegetation and on the slough bottom in the immediate vicinity for about a foot, 101 eggs were found in the first dumping area and 94 in the second. It is doubtful whether all the eggs were found in either area. The first dump nest was between incubated nests of 3 and 4 eggs in 24 inches of water. The second was surrounded by incubated nests of 5, 6 and 8 eggs in a depth of 21 inches.

The purpose of the trip was to investigate the prospects of Mallards moulting in the area. Possibly 3,000-4,000 flying drakes were seen—Pintails, Mallards and Shovelers being most abundant. A flock of nine, apparently non-breeding, Canada Geese were grazing on a crop on the east shore. Other species noted in numbers and apparently nesting were Redwinged Blackbirds and Yellow-headed Blackbirds, American Coots and American Avocets. There was no evidence of nesting waterfowl except for a Pintail hen acting as though she had a brood.

GOLDEN EAGLE NESTING AT BEECHY, SASK.

By **Dave Santy**, Beechy, Sask.

The South Saskatchewan River cuts deep through the Coteau Hills for sixty miles between Saskatchewan Landing and the Beechy ferry. The topography here is rough and rugged for over three miles back from the river on both sides, and these river breaks provide a home for the majestic Golden Eagle.

Although it breeds in this area, the Golden Eagle does not seem to increase in numbers. I do not know of any other bird or animal that preys on it, and in this district eagles are not hunted or shot. It seems that eagles are not prolific breeders. Should the two eggs (the usual number to a nest) hatch out, the

stronger of the two young will likely, in time, kill the other.

The Golden Eagle in this district usually nests on an outstanding peak or in a cleft in the face of a cliff. We have observed several nests throughout the years. Our most recent observation was made on June 29, 1958, with Frank Roy, who hoped to photograph the eagle. We tried to reach the eyrie on the side of an earth cliff in the river breaks south of Beechy. We were able to climb up only to the base of the big structure of sticks and earth. The bird continued throughout to sit on the nest, and hand-clapping and even small lumps of dirt thrown by us and land-