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FIRST RECORD OF KING EIDER NESTING IN MANITOBA

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The King Eider nests extensively in the North American arctic north of 60°N latitude and as far south as the Belcher Islands, N.W.T., and Cape Henrietta Maria, Ontario. No nesting records exist for Manitoba.^{2 4} Regular nesting along the Hudson Bay coast of Manitoba would complete the rather disjunct nature of the breeding distribution in this southernmost part of the species' range. Jehl and Smith suggested that a few pairs might be found nesting in the Cape Churchill region of Manitoba, however Cooke *et al.* listed the King Eider as a rare migrant in the tundra area of Cape Churchill and La Pérouse Bay.^{2 1}

A female King Eider was found on 30 June 1977 on a nest at La Pérouse Bay, Manitoba (58°45'N, 94°30'W) in a colony of Common Eiders. The nest was located 50 cm above the level of the Mast River in fairly dense cover of *Salix planifolia* and *Betula glandulosa*. The nests of four Common

Eiders and one Lesser Snow Goose were within 4 m. The King Eider nest contained five King Eider eggs and one Common Eider egg and was visited daily until all six ducklings were hatched (10 July). Photographs of the female and nest were taken and the female was caught and banded. There is little doubt that this female was mated to a King Eider male as one was seen on 16 and 18 June and a pair was seen on 12 and 17 June in the immediate vicinity of the nest. Furthermore, the egg dimensions agree very closely with those given by Palmer for King Eiders (mean of our 5-egg clutch: length 64.4 ± 1.9 mm; width 42.5 ± 0.1 mm).³ The Common Eider egg in the nest was quite likely the result of parasitic egg laying by that species (in 1976 and 1977 Common Eider eggs were also found in Snow Goose nests). Although the parasitic egg hatched, it was the last to do so and the duckling was still damp and

lethargic when the King Eiders were fluffy and active in and around the nest site.

Although King Eiders are not common at La Pérouse Bay, sightings have been made each summer since 1975. Additionally, several sightings were made near Cape Churchill in June 1977 and a male King Eider in the vicinity of an eider nest (species unknown) joined the female after she was flushed (A. Didiuk, pers comm). King Eiders nesting in such low numbers could easily be overlooked, especially if observers were present after the males had departed for their moult, and/or if the nest were located amongst many nests of Common Eider as this one was. If such regular nesting is occurring, habitat com-

petition with the abundant, earlier nesting Common Eider (and perhaps the several nesting species of dabbling ducks) may prevent King Eiders from being more numerous.

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Clark's Nutcracker.

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