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**MALLARD (*ANAS PLATYRHYNCHOS*) AND
RING-NECK PHEASANT (*PHASIANUS COLCHICUS*)
NESTING SUCCESS AT THE OAK LAKE
FIELD STATION, SOUTH DAKOTA, 2006**

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ABSTRACT

Nesting success of mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*) and ring-neck pheasants (*Phasianus colchicus*) is widely studied. However no previous studies focusing on this have been conducted at Oak Lake. A baseline assessment was needed to assess causes of nest mortality and to determine overall success. It was anticipated that mammalian predators would be a major cause of nest failure and that overall nesting success would be low. Non-random searches with a hockey stick and a circular drag line method were conducted from May 15, 2006 to June 26, 2006. Nests were determined to be successful in \geq one egg hatched. Eggs were said to have hatched if detached shell membranes were found with shell fragments. Vegetation visual obstruction was assessed using a Robel pole at each nest. Five nests were monitored, three mallard and two ring-neck pheasant. Mammalian predators predated two mallard nests and one pheasant nest. Controlled burning destroyed one mallard nest. One pheasant nest was abandoned. None of the five nests were successful. There was no significant difference with 95 % confidence between mallard and ring-neck pheasant nest site selection in terms of vegetative visual obstruction ($p = 0.053$).