

INTERESTING NEWSPAPER COMMENTS ABOUT BANDED GULLS

by C. Brooke Worth, M.D.

In going over some of my old notes, I came across the following items that appeared in the daily newspaper, "El Mundo", in Tampico, Mexico, in 1942. They involve the appearance of three banded gulls in Tampico harbor. I quote excerpts to avoid repetition (translations my own):

"A Seagull, wearing on one of its legs a metal ring similar to the rings commonly put on carrier pigeons and bearing an inscription, was captured day before yesterday afternoon by Mr. Platon Arellano, agent of the safety commission of this port. (March 17: data incomplete, ---667426-C.B.W.)

"It is worthwhile to explain that the capture of this seagull, effected by agent Arellano, was a mere accident. He went fishing, at which sport he is very proficient, and the seagull, most tired of carrying this ring so long on its leg and of having borne it on a long trip, from Washington, chose to rest on Arellano's boat and let itself be captured as if it were a domestic bird. Arellano collected the aforementioned ring which bore the following inscription in English: Notify (Etc.).

"We report further that the captor took great care of the small animal and personally fed it with biscuits broken up and soaked in milk, explaining that these ministrations take origin in the hope that the famous F. & W. Service of Washington, D.C., to which he had already sent notice of the capture of the seagull, may answer him with a check in dollars and a request that he return the animal in a little cage."

"Fisherman Gonzalo Tovar, of the humble class declared that he was fishing in the Gulf when the Seagull approached too near, and he was able to capture it. ...It seems that these animals are instruments of scientific investigation performed by the Biological Department of the city of Washington (March 31: 40-685454)."

"It appears that the seagulls of the Institute for Biological Studies in Washington are deserting, or that for reasons of a scientific nature, they have been launched in flight, since animals of this class, bearing the shield of this institute, arrive continually in this

port. ...Yesterday, Senor Geronimo Reyes, who works at Section One of the Main Depot, was working in the yard, and suddenly a Seagull arrived at a nearby platform scale. ...The Seagull waited quietly and let itself be taken without demonstration of fright...". (Apr. 7, data incomplete: ..685768)--516 Walnut Lane, Swarthmore, Penna.

(The newspaper story does not give sufficient information for identifying the species of gull concerned, although it is likely that they were Laughing Gulls; however, the band size used (No. 6) is normally used on the larger Herring Gull. Perhaps a reader will recognize the records as referring to his birds and will supply the proper identification and other data. The account is presented by Dr. Worth primarily for its human interest value.--Ed.)

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JOHN A. GILLESPIE DIES SUDDENLY

On Monday evening, March 12, John A. Gillespie, long an EBBA member, suffered a relapse following an operation twelve days earlier and died suddenly. In addition to his widow, Mabel B. Gillespie, also an EBBA member, Mr. Gillespie is survived by a married daughter and two sons. His passing will be mourned by a host of friends both in the business world and in the various bird organizations of which he was a member.

Before his recent retirement, Mr. Gillespie was a buyer for the Sun Oil Company. Joining the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club in 1922, he was later elected a Fellow of that organization and served a term as its president. In his earliest days as a bander, in 1936, your Editor recalls the cordial and hospitable manner in which he was received by the Gillespies and the aid which they gave him in getting started as a bander. Dr. Harold B. Wood, in a recent letter, says that he believes that he first met Mr. Gillespie in 1931 but that he doesn't believe that Mr. Gillespie was one of the charter members of EBBA when it was organized on April 24, 1923.

Always active in the affairs of EBBA, Mr. Gillespie's last appearance was at the Annual Meeting at Hawk Mountain last April, at which time both he and Mrs. Gillespie presented papers. Mrs. Gillespie plans to continue operation of the banding station which she and her husband operated at their home 313 Sharp Avenue, Glenolden, Pennsyl-