

The attendance of members at the recent Congress was much larger than at any previous one. They came from distant parts of the United States and from Canada.

JNO. H. SAGE,
Secretary.

GENERAL NOTES.

A Rare Record for Eastern Long Island.—On October 7, 1899, I received a fine specimen of the Fork-tailed or Sabine's Gull (*Nema sabinii*). It was shot the day before in Gardiners Bay, between Orient, L. I., and Shelter Island, and sent me in the flesh. It was the only one seen. It was in young-of-the-year plumage, and on dissection proved to be a female. It was in excellent condition, with a thick layer of fat all over the body. The stomach contained an entire cut-worm moth (*Agrotis*), and the macerated remains of other insects, picked up, without doubt, from the water where they had fallen exhausted, having wandered from the land. The above, so far as I am aware, is a new record for Long Island, and the farthest south for the species under consideration.—W. W. WORTHINGTON, *Shelter Island Heights, N. Y.*

Some Notes on the Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*).—The evidence that there is no such bird as *Larus argentatus smithsonianus* continues to accumulate. Doubts of the validity of this subspecies have been expressed before, both orally and in print. (Cf. Knight, List of Birds of Me., p. 19; Maine Sportsman, July, '98, p. 13; Journal of the Me. Orn. Soc., Oct. 1899, p. 37). These records refer to the occurrence in Maine of specimens referable to *L. argentatus*, and finally question the existence of any subspecific differences between American and European specimens. While in Portland a short time ago I had occasion to visit the shop of a local taxidermist and noticed a large number of these birds which he had skinned for sale to milliners. After carefully examining fully 100 specimens, which had been shot in Portland Harbor and vicinity, I was delighted to find ten specimens which were, as regards the first primaries, typical examples of *L. argentatus*. Three of the birds had the first primary entirely white at the tip without any trace of a black bar or dot, and the others had the black bar only slightly indicated. Other specimens had the black bar more complete, and a perfect series of gradations could be found between adult birds with

only white on the apical part of the first primary and birds having a black bar half an inch wide near its extremity. The non-existence of the so-called subspecies *L. a. smithsonianus* seems to be completely demonstrated. At the same time I had the opportunity of examining a large number of Kittiwake Gulls and found a greater variation in their primaries than in those of the Herring Gull. In both cases specimens examined for comparative purposes were adult birds. — ORA W. KNIGHT, *Bangor, Me.*

The Occurrence of the Egyptian Goose in North America. — It gives me great pleasure to bring to the attention of the American Ornithologists' Union a specimen of the Egyptian Goose (*Chenalopex ægyptiacus*) shot on Dec. 5, 1898, at Havre de Grace, Md. I received the bird in the flesh on the 10th, through the kindness of Walter T. Jackson of that place, who sent the following note with it: — "Shot by John Simpers along shore 100 yards from Point Concord Light, Havre de Grace, Md. Two other birds of same species were seen the following day."

A few days later I visited Havre de Grace; John Simper was off on the 'flats,' but everyone in that duck shooting town knew of the strange bird, so I had no difficulty in hearing of it. I visited the scene of the shooting, which was a small indentation in the shore, with considerable growth in it, and a marshy piece of ground at its head; here the bird was seen early in the morning, and John Simper went for his gun, came back and shot it. With regard to the two reported as seen next day, I heard several contradictory stories, and question the identity of the birds seen.

The bird shot was in perfect plumage, and showed no signs of having ever been in confinement; the body, however, was emaciated to the last degree, and the stomach contained only two or three small gravel stones; the bird was evidently in the last stages of starvation, which would account for the remarkable tameness freely commented on at Havre de Grace.

As far as I know the only other record for this species in North America, is of one taken at Canarsie, L. I., on Jan. 3, 1877, and recorded by John Akhurst of Brooklyn, N. Y., in the Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club, Vol. II, April, 1877, p. 52. Mr. Geo. N. Lawrence, in a letter to Mr. Akhurst, stated in regard to this specimen: "Its acquisition is worthy of being noted, and whether a straggler or an escaped specimen may be ascertained in the future." Apparently this statement governed Baird, Brewer, and Ridgway in their note on the species (*Water Birds*, p. 434), where they say "a common species in aviaries; so that it is altogether probable that the example in question [the Canarsie bird] was one escaped from confinement." Bechm's 'Thierleben' (*Birds*, Vol. III, 1882, p. 471), in commenting on the occurrence of this species in various European countries, says practically the same thing, but the species is generally included as a valid one in the countries where it has been taken in a state of nature.