

to discuss this question in the forthcoming 'Ibis' article.—W. M. CONGREVE, MAJOR, M. B. O. U. ETC., *Hafod, Trefnant, Denbighshire, North Wales.*

**Caspian Terns (*Sterna caspia imperator*) at Palmyra, N. J.**—On April 21, 1929, in company with W. C. Doak, E. G. Loomis and W. J. Emlen I paid a short visit to the open marshes along the Delaware just south of Palmyra, N. J. A slow steady rain was falling, and consequently very few birds were about. However, near the ferry dock we noticed among a small flock of Herring Gulls three birds whose whiter plumage and more graceful flight made them quite distinct. A look through the glasses revealed the typical black cap of the Terns and a short but decidedly forked tail. One of them flew up to within reasonably short range, giving us a chance to see his large red bill and short forked tail, which, aside from the size, are the principal field marks of the Caspian Tern (*Sterna caspia imperator*). All three of them flew around for some time and finally lit on a distant mud flat, where they remained partially hidden by grass.

Spring records for this bird are quite rare, and we have been unable to find any for this section.—J. T. EMLEN, JR., *Philadelphia, Pa.*

**Ducks and Other Water Birds on the Reading, Pa., Reservoir.**—During the past year the city of Reading completed an impounding dam, about seven miles from the city limits, which has created an S-shaped artificial lake some two miles in length and averaging in width about 220 yards, with a maximum width of 400 yards.

This is the only body of still water of like size in the neighborhood with the exception of the Schuylkill River, which has become choked with culm from the coal regions, and is now absolutely barren of any vegetation or fish-life.

This spring was the first season that the dam has been filled and it has proved remarkably attractive to passing water-fowl throughout the entire season. Nearly all the trees in the neighborhood have been cut down, leaving a broad expanse of gently undulating upland meadow on all sides. Perhaps this latter feature of the landscape has had something to do with the immediate acceptance of the dam by passing water-birds, which normally occur here in very small numbers, and only for a short period following storms.

It is of course too early to draw any conclusions, but if the past season is typical of what is to be expected in the future, the writer is led to believe that this locality is in the path of a much more extensive overland migration of water-birds than has heretofore been suspected. A glance at the map will show that Reading is located in the path of the shortest flight between Delaware Bay, and the New York lake region, as well as Lake Ontario.

Practically every rain or spell of "heavy" weather, especially at night, has caused a number of these transients to alight for a greater or lesser

period. Many of them left within a few hours, but some evidently found conditions to their liking and remained for several days or even weeks. It was immediately after a night of warm rain, however, that the heaviest flights were always noticed, and the writer visited the spot each morning after such a storm and before the birds had been disturbed.

The long narrow form of the dam made it an easy matter, as a rule, to stalk the groups that dotted the dam within reasonable identifying distance with the aid of high-powered binoculars, and it was fortunately possible to identify practically all of those seen with certainty, a thing not always possible on larger bodies of water.

Upon my first visit in March 31, 1929, I was told that Ducks had already been there for several weeks, or since the ice broke. At that time there were about 100 birds on the dam, including Pied-billed Grebes (2), American Mergansers (13), Hooded Mergansers (8), Mallards (4), Black Ducks (80), (a number of hybrids, Black  $\times$  Mallard, could be distinguished in this flock), Pintails (1), Baldpates (4), and Greater Scaups (5).

I also had the thrill during this visit of seeing a Duck Hawk swoop down from nowhere, and turning almost on its back, make an unsuccessful grab at a Black Duck that fairly fell into the water in his flight, while the whole concourse of Ducks remained huddled in terror until the Hawk had passed out of sight.

On April 2, four Blue-winged Teal, one Green-winged Teal, four Golden-eyes, and one Canada Goose were there, in addition to most of the others previously seen. The latter had, however, thinned out to some extent.

On April 7, the first Greater Yellow-legs appeared, and on the 13th a flock of twenty Bonaparte's and one Herring Gull were flying about the lake, while there were Golden-eyes (25), Buffle-heads (12), Lesser Scaups (12), and Old Squaws (60) scattered over its surface, as well as a goodly sprinkling of the other species.

A Loon arrived on April 14, and on the 21st, after a warm southerly rain, the largest flight of the season occurred, with about 400 individuals, including a Double-crested Cormorant, 250 Horned Grebes, 45 Red-breasted Mergansers, and four Ruddy Ducks.

The next storm, on April 23, was accompanied by a strong northwest wind, and a pair of Gadwalls, two Shovellers, and six Green-winged Teal were identified among the assemblage.

A similar storm with strong northwest wind on May 3 brought a Caspian Tern, three Black Terns, and a pair of Coots. By this time most of the Ducks had passed on, a comparatively small number of stragglers remaining.

On May 5 a large flight of Yellow-legs occurred, in which the Lesser Yellow-legs far outnumbered the larger species. They were observed together, while a number of Solitary Sandpipers were mingled with them, so that identification was certain. The proportions of these species were, Greater Yellow-legs (5), Lesser Yellow-legs (70), Solitary Sandpipers (30).

A pair of Least Sandpipers was also noted. The Yellow-legs remained in nearly the same proportions for two days.

May 7 brought a pair of Ring-billed Gulls, and five Bonaparte's; a pair of Black Terns, which may have been those of the third, was also noticed.

A Mute Swan and a Little Blue Heron in pied plumage were the surprises of May 12, while a few of the Ducks and one each of the Horned and Pied-billed Grebes remained. At this time the water commenced to lower, and by the following visit, on May 26, a considerable area of mud flat was exposed, which was tenanted by a pair of Black-bellied Plover, twelve Semipalmated Plover, and several Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers, all of which remained until May 30, when the Black-bellied was last seen, although the other species remained until June 2, and a small flock of Semipalmated Sandpipers was still about on the 6th.—EARL L. POOLE, *Public Museum, Reading, Pa.*

**Egret at Wareham, Mass.**—On July 30, 1929, I noticed two large birds coming from the southward over Buzzards Bay, as they came nearer I recognized a Great Blue Heron followed by an Egret. The pure white plumage and black legs of the latter together with its slender body, "willow flight" and my familiarity with the bird in Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina made the identification as certain as possible without taking the bird's life, which was not thinkable.

This is my second record of the Egret in this locality; the first was made some fifteen years ago.

The Blue Heron was leading as they crossed the beach and, was first to alight on the marsh back of it; the Egret lit close to the larger bird, and, evidently regarded it as a companion.—WALTER B. SAVARY, *Wareham, Mass.*

**Egret at Pocono Lake, Pa.**—Two American Egrets (*Casmerodius egretta*) have been present on Pocono Lake, Monroe County, Pa. since August 1 and are still here at present writing, August 11. Their black legs and yellow bills can be distinctly seen as they allow an approach within fifty yards or less. Egrets were reported here in the summer of 1916 by Mr. John D. Carter and photographs taken of them but I am not aware of any having been seen since.—HENRY R. CAREY, *Pocono Lake Preserve, Pa.*

**Snowy Egret (*Egretta candidissima candidissima*) in Northern New Jersey.**—Daylight on August 5, 1929, found me in a tract of fresh-water swamp known as Troy Meadows near Ridgewood, N. J. I had succeeded in crawling to within 15 feet of the edge of a pool in which several species of Herons were feeding. The actions of one small, white Heron in particular attracted my attention. Instead of searching for its prey in the manner of Little Blue Herons, it seemed to deliberately roll the water with raking foot motions and then seize the food that had