

bird of a pair and which had remained on the estate for fifteen years or more and has several times been mentioned in the columns of 'The Auk,' proved this year to be a female, built a nest on a small island in Quisset harbor and laid two eggs. One of these was broken but the other I rescued and sent to the Museum of Comparative Zoology.

Since our native Cranes are becoming so scarce would it not be a good plan to interest someone in liberating some of these interesting birds in Florida or elsewhere in the United States where they would be afforded some protection and see if they would not become acclimated, and increase?—LOMBARD CARTER JONES, *Falmouth, Mass.*

Proper Name of the Virginia Rail.—Not long after the appearance of the 1910 edition of the A. O. U. Check-List Mr. Roy Q. Curtis called attention of the Committee to the fact that the name *Rallus virginianus* long applied to the Virginia Rail was in reality based on the Sora (*Porzana carolina*). For some reason no action on the matter was ever taken although Mr. Curtis' contention is undoubtedly correct.

Linnaeus based his name on the descriptions of Catesby and Brisson and as the latter in turn quoted Catesby as his authority this author becomes the sole source of the name.

Catesby's description and plate clearly refer to the Sora so that the name *Rallus virginianus* Linn., 1766 becomes a synonym of the earlier *Rallus carolinus* Linn., 1758, and the Virginia Rail is left without a name. Dr. C. W. Richmond however informs me that there is an available name in *Rallus limicola* Vieillot. (Nouv. Dict. Hist. Nat., Vol. 18, 1819, p. 558) and hereafter the bird must be known by that name. It is inconceivable how our earlier ornithologists ever identified Catesby's figure, with its short conical bill, as the Virginia Rail.—WITMER STONE, *Acad. Nat. Sci., Philadelphia.*

A Rail Conundrum.—Early on the morning of April 27, 1930, I was "railing" over the broad expanse of fresh water marsh along the Whippany River, not far from Boonton, N. J., known as Troy Meadows. Upon a dry path I stood listening to a chorus of bird notes—the rolling whinney and frog-like *ker-wee* of the Soras; the sequenced grunts and paired *kaks* of the Virginia Rail a-wooing, and a mixture of whines and wails establishing the presence of a number of Florida Gallinules.

Suddenly, close to me—barely fifteen feet away—came a note which I had never heard. It was repeated several times. I wrote it *kik, kik, kik, kik, kik-keé er*, with the last notes slightly rasping but full and of a decidedly musical quality. It was, in fact, a song. As I looked toward the focus of these new sound waves a small bird crossed and re-crossed, quickly but in plain sight, over five feet of open marsh between tussocks. It was very close, and very black—much darker than the Virginia Rail still standing in the open, and I saw below the cocked tail on a dark-feathered background, narrow white bars. Light conditions could not have been better and I had no mental hesitation in calling the bird a Black Rail.

I had never heard these notes from the Black Rail inhabiting the Barnegat region where I am fairly familiar with the species—but since the notes came from the spot where I had seen the bird I assumed that it was the Black Rail calling, and I got some added confidence after reading William Brewster's comment on the notes of a supposed Black Rail heard in the Cambridge, Mass., region ('Auk,' Vol. XVIII, 1901, p. 321-328). However, upon consulting Forbush's 'Birds of Massachusetts,' I found that Mr. Brewster's Rail notes, identical with those I had heard, were in turn identical with the notes uttered by a Yellow-Rail kept alive by Mr. J. H. Ames. Mr. Ames described the call as a series of *kiks* ending in a *ki-queah*.

I have seen the Yellow Rail once in life, and it gave an obvious impression of light coloration. What I saw at Troy Meadows my eye says was a Black Rail. What I heard from the same spot Mr. Ames says were the notes of a Yellow-Rail. Which was it or both?—CHARLES A. URNER, Elizabeth, N. J.

Coot Breeding in Florida.—On June 29, 1930, a Coot (*Fulica americana*) was caught alive by Mr. Clyde Love, on Lake Griffin, Lake County, Florida, and put in a sack. The next morning, on removing the bird from the sack, a freshly laid egg was found. This egg was sent to the Florida State Museum, and is catalogue number 48219.—O. C. VAN HYNING, Florida State Museum, Gainesville, Fla.

Killdeer in Connecticut.—In the July 1930 issue of 'The Auk,' I note that Mr. Louis H. Porter of Stamford, Conn., comments on the apparent increase in Killdeers in this section of Connecticut. He reports finding a nest with young, or, perhaps, adults with young which had recently left the nest, and cites this as evidence that this species now may be definitely known to be breeding in our state.

I wish to report also that Killdeers are by no means uncommon here, and that Mr. Frank Benedict, of Belden Hill, Wilton, Conn., who is a keen observer of native bird life, has found Killdeers breeding near his residence, the last time being this spring. There can be little question but what Killdeers are becoming established here as regular summer residents.—DEVERE ALLEN, Little Forest, Wilton, Conn.

Willet (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus semipalmatus*) Breeding in Southern New Jersey.—In the spring of 1929 David Leas of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club reported that he had seen several Willets in southern Cumberland County, N. J., and on June 4, 1930, John T. Emlen Jr., reported that he had seen four there while on June 29, 1930, the writers had the good fortune to find them actually breeding in this region. An old bird with three downy young was found in a salt marsh after a rather prolonged search and curiously enough one of the young showed albinistic tendencies, the down being creamy white with here and there a grayish wash; the eyes and soft parts normal while the bill and legs