

single Hudsonian Godwit was busily feeding out on a mud bar. These last two birds were secured as Museum specimens. The Widgeon was in the molt and the testes showed no evidence of recent sexual activity. Inasmuch as the bird kept to itself and we observed no mate, we decided that it was a non-breeding bird. The Godwit proved to be a fine male with enormously developed testes but long waiting disclosed no mate. Far out on an inaccessible mud flat a flock of over 100 Terns (either the Common or Forster's) rested and gave no opportunity for a shot. Out there were also several large flocks of small shore-birds. I think they were Semipalmated Sandpipers but have no proof. I have never observed either the Common or Forster's Tern on this marsh on this date.

The unusually large congregation of water-fowl at this point may be accounted for by reason of the unprecedented drought which has undoubtedly deprived many species of breeding and feeding grounds and driven them to concentrate at certain favorable spots.—O. J. GROMME, *Milwaukee Public Museum, Milwaukee, Wis.*

A Practical Method of Degreasing Bird Skins.—During the past year I have employed a method of degreasing bird skins that is apparently not widely used but which is exceedingly practical and efficient. A brief outline of the procedure is as follows:

The bird is skinned as usual and the fat carefully scraped from the skin, after which it is stuffed as a completed skin and allowed to dry in its cotton shroud for about six weeks. The fully prepared and labelled skin (several may be degreased simultaneously) is now placed in a vat or wash-boiler containing several gallons of clear white gasoline such as is obtainable at most filling stations. It is allowed to remain here for several weeks during which period the skin is removed several times, drained, and placed in fresh gasoline. Finally it is removed and drained head downward for about an hour after which it is placed on a flat pile of newspapers which are allowed to soak up the gasoline over night. The newspapers are changed until the specimen is thoroughly dry, whereupon the process is completed. The feathers may require a little stroking to restore them to their former fluffiness but this requires only a few moments in the case of well-made skins.

Gasoline that has been used to degrease skins is strained and poured into the tank of the family automobile thus reducing the cost of degreasing to almost nothing.

It is believed that this method is far superior to that of degreasing freshly skinned birds in gasoline (or other solvents) before making them up into study skins. In the latter case it is a tedious and often difficult task to dry out and restore the feathers to their normal position and fluffiness. In the present method, however, the arrangement of the feathers is never disturbed by the gasoline and no corn meal or other drying material whatever is used. Furthermore gasoline will not penetrate a fresh wet skin nearly as well as it will a dry one, even though alcohol is added to increase miscibility in the former case.

In large greasy birds it is desirable to drill holes into the radius, ulna and tarsometatarsus so that the fat within may be more quickly removed by the gasoline.

I make it a matter of routine to degrease all fat specimens in the manner here described. This has been done successfully with various types of birds including Grebes, Ducks, Geese, Rails, Plovers, Woodpeckers, Sparrows, Thrushes, etc.

In the case of white birds such as Terns, it is necessary to degrease the specimen before the fat on the feathers has had time to oxidize and turn brown; there is no danger of this within a few weeks, however. Brown stains on the feathers of old skins can be removed by mopping with ether.

The only reference that I have found concerning the degreasing of made-up skins without relaxing them is one sentence by R. M. Anderson (Bul. 69, Biological Series No. 18, p. 105, National Museum of Canada) who makes the statement that "Small bird skins may also be cleaned in this manner." Anderson recommends the use of turpentine in the gasoline (Spirits of turpentine, 4 ounces; alcohol, 1 pint; gasoline, 2 gallons). It is my experience that this is entirely too much turpentine and that instead of restoring the natural gloss to the feathers it may give them an unnatural one. It is recommended that turpentine be used in much smaller proportions if at all.

It cannot be over-emphasized that degreasing skins in gasoline is not a substitute for carefully scraping the fat from the inside of the skin before the bird is stuffed. However, it is impossible to remove all the fat by scraping alone, hence the need of a treatment involving the use of a fat solvent such as gasoline.

Mounted birds can also be successfully degreased by the method outlined here for study skins.

I have used various methods of degreasing skins but the present one differs from the others in that it is preëminently satisfactory.

It should perhaps be pointed out that large quantities of gasoline should be used only with proper precautions against fire hazard. Such degreasing operations are best carried out in a small building at a safe distance from dwellings or other structures. Vats containing gasoline should, of course, be kept covered.

It is gratifying indeed to one who has suffered much with fat bird skins to note the brownish discoloration taken on by a vat of gasoline in which a number of fat skins have soaked for several days, and the progressively fainter yellowing of subsequent changes of the solvent.—GEORGE E. HUDSON, *Dept. of Zoology and Anatomy, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Neb.*

Notes on Audubon's Ornithological Biography.—The "delineation" entitled "Eggers of Labrador" in volume III of Audubon's 'Ornithological Biography' breaks off abruptly in the middle of a sentence. The final sentence in the manuscript abounds in corrections, and the printer could not or did not trouble to decipher them. Reference to this manuscript, in the writer's library, shows that apparently Audubon had difficulty in expressing his thoughts. The sentence should read (the italicized portion being unpublished):

"Had not the British Government long since passed strict laws of intervention against these marauders, and laid heavy penalties on all those caught in the act of landing their cargoes at New Foundland and Nova Scotia; which I have been informed is still inforced, I might *perhaps have been induced to have ere this humbly have prayed in behalf of the feathered tribe before the proper authorities in England for the extinction of the wasteful if not criminal barbarity of the Eggers of Labrador.*"

The first two volumes of 'Ornithological Biography' were reprinted in America. For these American reprints the type was entirely reset. At least two editions of Volume I appeared in Philadelphia, one in 1831 with the imprint, "Judah Dobson, Agent, 108 Chestnut Street; and H. H. Porter, Literary Rooms, 121 Chestnut Street. MDCCCXXXI." The second American edition was published the following year, the imprint reading: "Philadelphia: E. L. Carey and A. Hart—Chestnut Street. MDCCCXXXII." Professor Herrick records the latter imprint, but gives the date as 1835. Volume II was reprinted in Boston in 1835 and is correctly cited by Herrick.

Volume III was prepared for the American trade by pasting a printed slip on the half-title. This slip, which does not seem to be recorded, reads, "Entered according