

best field-mark, provided the observer is not looking down on the bird, as I happened to be in May, 1929.

I believe that these two individuals may well be the same ones we have been seeing for several years. It seems more likely that they reached this region by way of northwestern North America than that they came across the North Atlantic. Their close association with Bonaparte's Gulls suggests that they first accompanied birds of that species on their southward migration, and now winter with them, though they probably do not migrate as far as the breeding ground of Bonaparte's Gull. Indeed two Little Gulls which had already molted from the breeding dress were seen several times between July 27 and August 27, 1933 near Great Kills on the Staten Island shore.¹

One was seen again that afternoon by Marc C. Rich and at 6 P.M. by me, while on May 3 at 5 P.M. and again on May 4 Mr. Rich observed it. On every occasion it was in the company of Bonaparte's Gulls.—JAMES P. CHAPIN, *American Museum of Natural History, New York*.

Status of the Black-backed Gull.—In the January number of 'The Auk' (Vol. 53, p. 81) reference was made to an early migration of the Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*) on the Atlantic coast as far south as southern New Jersey by the last of September. This note has brought forth a number of comments on the distribution and migration of the bird that seem worthy of further mention. Harry S. Hathaway, of South Auburn, Cranston, Rhode Island, wrote that he observed an adult of this species on August 5, 1935, and on almost every day thereafter until September 5, when two adults were present resting on the sand flats that border the southern edge of Quonochontang Pond near Charleston, Rhode Island. No Black-backed Gulls were seen again until September 15, when a flock of twelve appeared at this same place. Eight of the birds were in adult plumage while four were young of the year. Mr. Hathaway writes:

"Doubtless this flock was part of a wave that was migrating on the most favorable wind, strong southeast, with light rain and moon full, causing high tides. None seen again until November 2, when one bird was in the same locality."

Mr. Hathaway further records that these are his earliest records for Rhode Island, and he states that the birds normally do not make their appearance until early in October.

Mr. J. T. Nichols, of the American Museum of Natural History, in commenting on the early appearance of Black-backed Gulls on Long Island, New York, wrote:

". . . Of recent years a few individuals, adult and sub-adult, have overwintered there. Prior to this it is my memory that the first stragglers appeared the end of September. One was noted at Long Beach, Sept. 27, 1913.

"On Sept. 2, 1928, I observed a bird in spotty juvenal plumage at Mastic, L. I. (1928, *Bird-Lore*, XXX, p. 399). My Journal entry reads as follows: 'Observed a juvenal plumaged Great Black-backed Gull flying west to east along the beach, interesting on account of the date. Its large size, slow flight, whitish belly and rump and spotted plumage noticeable,—there can have been no mistake in identity.' I have assumed that this individual must have been a migrant, and noticed the correspondence in date with that of the appearance hereabouts of the first Herring Gulls in fresh juvenal plumage."

An all-day aerial survey from a navy hydroplane, flying over coastal Virginia and North Carolina on March 4, 1936, revealed the presence of a fair number of these

¹ Proc. Linnæan Society of New York, Nos. 45, 46, 1935, p. 92.

birds along the coast as far south as southern Pamlico Sound, North Carolina. Seven were seen in one flock near Cape Hatteras, and three in another near Ocracoke (N. C.). Single individuals or birds in flocks of Herring Gulls were noted near Manteo, N. C., and at various places throughout Pamlico Sound. These facts and reports from the New England and Canadian coast point to an unquestioned increase in the Black-backed Gull population along the American Atlantic coast.—CLARENCE COTTAM, *Biol. Survey, Washington, D. C.*

Snowy Owl in Virginia.—On March 14, 1936, M. B. Newman, taxidermist of this city, showed me a Snowy Owl (*Nyctea nyctea*), in his collection which he had mounted. He stated that it was killed by a hunter, the latter part of November, 1934, about five miles from the city in Roanoke County.

As little is known of the occurrences of this specie in the state, I believe this record worthy of note.—A. O. ENGLISH, *Roanoke, Va.*

The Chuck-will's-widow in Maryland.—While the Chuck-will's-widow (*Antrostomus carolinensis*) has been recorded as a breeding bird in St. Marys County, in southern Maryland by E. J. Court (Auk, 1921, p. 282) records for the state have been more or less casual. Kirkwood in his 'Birds of Maryland' (Maryland Acad. Sci., 1895, p. 314) records two seen near Odenton in July; Wetmore and Lincoln (Auk, 1931, p. 121) have recorded one near North Beach, Maryland; Clark and Forbes (Auk, 1932, p. 479) have noted one August 14, 1932, at Clements in St. Marys County; and S. E. Perkins, III (Auk, 1933, p. 368) has recorded a mounted specimen in the Cambridge High School taken near Fishing Creek in Dorchester County on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

From my own observations of the past year it seems that this bird is a regular summer resident in fair numbers in suitable localities through the southern part of the state. On the evening of May 30, 1935, two miles south of Morganza, I heard two, and on June 15, two were calling steadily shortly after dark in second growth woodland near Cornfield Harbor. Three were noted simultaneously near Point Lookout June 25, and on July 14 at Morgantown the headlights of my car revealed one clearly as it rested beside the road while two others were heard nearby. On May 12, 1935, I recorded one near Laurel, which brings the species within the limits of the Washington region.

It appears that the Chuck-will's-widow is common in the southern part of the peninsula between the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay, and that in lessrs number, perhaps irregularly, it extends north to the central part of the state in thie same region. Its northern limit on the Eastern Shore of Maryland has still to be ascertained.—ALEXANDER WETMORE, *U. S. National Museum, Washington, D. C.*

Sennett's Nighthawk in Ohio.—The autumn Nighthawk migration reaches its peak in the Cleveland region during the last week of August and the first week of September. At certain times during this period, at favorable localities, particularly in river valleys, one may see hundreds of these birds in the air at one time. One such favorite locality is that part of Parma Heights, a suburb of Cleveland, which overlooks the valley of a branch of the Cuyahoga River. It was this locality which Mr. O. E. Mueller chose as a collecting station for Nighthawks during the autumn migration of 1934 and 1935 when it was decided to obtain a series of these birds for The Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

Five birds were taken during the last week of August and the first week of September in 1934, four of which turned out to be *Chordeiles minor minor* and one *Chordeiles minor sennetti*, the latter, an adult male, collected on August 31. In 1935 six birds