

The hen was seen first at a distance of about ten feet. She merely clucked and walked slowly away among some clumps of underbrush and stopped behind a small bush about thirty feet from where she was started. Approximately one hundred feet up the trail the male was encountered. On being disturbed he squawked and flew about thirty feet up to a horizontal limb of an open *ponderosa* pine where he perched for about fifteen minutes jerking his head this way and that, apprehensive, but not excited. Both individuals were extremely tame and apparently had never been molested by human beings. The Navajo Indians inhabiting this area during the summer do not hunt game birds unless taught to do so by the white man.

Mrs. Florence M. Bailey ('Birds of New Mexico,' p. 198, 1928) does not give the Chuskai Mountains as former or present range of Dusky Grouse. She records the bird on top of Mount Taylor and in the Zuñi Mountains but states that they are apparently no longer found there. It is of great interest to learn that this valuable game bird is still present in this area.—PAUL PHILLIPS, *U. S. Soil Conservation Service, Gallup, New Mexico.*

**Young Black Rail banded in Illinois.**—Authentic records of Black Rails (*Creciscus jamaicensis stoddardi*) in Illinois are so few, that the following items from Adams County are of interest. The first mature specimen I ever saw, was collected by O. C. Poling in May, 1896. On August 22, 1932, I captured and banded two immature Black Rails. On July 25, 1936, I was called to the garden of a yard in Quincy to see a "strange bird." Here I spied an immature Black Rail hiding under the leaves of a canna plant. We drove the bird under a minnow net and thus effected its capture. It was five inches in length, with characteristic red eyes and in typical juvenal plumage. The bird was banded with band no. 36:149101 and then released. The fact that I have captured immature birds twice recently, during the summer months, suggests that Black Rails probably nest here yearly.—T. E. MUSSELMAN, *Quincy, Ill.*

**Willet in Arkansas.**—In 'The Auk' of October, 1936, I reported the Eastern Willet from this section. Recently two skins collected during May, 1936, together with one taken in September, were sent to Dr. H. C. Oberholser of the Biological Survey at his request. He identified them as Western Willet. Willets were seen here August 16, 17, 21, 23, 26, and September 15, 1936, a single bird at each observation except on August 17 when a group of six was seen. The Western Willet has been reported from Arkansas but once, March 29, 1886.—WILLIAM H. DEADERICK, *36 Circle Drive, Hot Springs, Ark.*

**Gulls and Sunfish.**—The strangely formed Sunfish, *Mola mola*, of our Pacific coastal waters often lies horizontally on its side at the surface, with one of the small, narrowly triangular fins held vertically erect in the air at right angles to the dorso-ventral plane of the body,—a curious habit, since the fin is too small to be effective as a sail: at most, it could do no more than revolve the heavy, circular body where it lies. On December 9, 1935, while hunting pelagic birds about twenty miles off Santa Cruz, California, I noticed a Sunfish in this position with a Western Gull (*Larus occidentalis*) sitting on the water so close, that its breast feathers must have touched the fish, which it pecked hard at intervals of a few seconds. Drifting down from windward, I was able to gaff the fish, which was about fifteen inches in diameter, vigorous, and without injury, but rather heavily infested with amorphous, jelly-like copepods, 'fish-lice,' doubtless *Lepeophtheirus nordmanni* or *L. insignis*, which are known to be parasitic on the species. The pearly surface showed a few clusters of vague white marks, such as could be duplicated by a light scratch of the finger-

nail, where parasites had been removed. I laid the note away and forgot it for a year, until on December 3, 1936, when between five and ten miles off Monterey, I saw the whole performance repeated once, though I could not catch the fish, and several times noticed gulls sitting close to the Sunfish without pecking it. Furthermore my friend, Mr. Frank Lloyd, who is daily at sea off Monterey, told me he had seen the same occurrence many times. The Sunfish lie motionless, as though appreciating this marine-cowbird function of the gulls.—T. T. McCABE, *Berkeley, California*.

**Short-billed Gull in Massachusetts.**—In the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy there is a skin of a gull that came with the Brewster collection. It was originally labelled *Larus delawarensis* ? and has been kept with the Ring-billed Gulls. While examining this bird recently, I was struck by its very small bill and some peculiarities of plumage not associated with *L. delawarensis*. Comparison of specimens quickly lead to its identification as some form of *Larus canus*. *L. c. kamtschatschensis* (Bonap.) is a much larger bird than this one and need not enter into consideration, but whether the bird should be referred to true *L. canus* or to *L. canus brachyrhynchus* is not so easy to decide. The bird is in a transition plumage between the 'first nuptial' and 'second winter' and cannot be quite matched by available specimens of either race; the streaking on the top of the head, however, is much heavier than in western European examples and for this reason should, I think, be referred to *L. c. brachyrhynchus* of western North America.

The specimen in question, a female, was shot at Pleasant Bay, Chatham, Massachusetts, February 8, 1908, by N. A. Eldredge. It was acquired by Charles J. Paine, Jr., who gave it to William Brewster about a year later. It now bears the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy number 248,842. In the Brewster catalogue is the following entry in the 'remarks' column in Brewster's own hand: "Bill small for *delawarensis*; bird may be *canus* or *brachyrhynchus*!"—JAMES L. PETERS, *Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, Cambridge, Mass.*

**Forster's Tern on the Niagara River.**—Published reports, and indeed any form of record of the occurrence of Forster's Tern (*Sterna forsteri*) in the Niagara district seem sufficiently rare to warrant the following note. While travelling in company with Mr. F. W. Gregory from Niagara Falls, Ontario, to Fort Erie, via the Niagara River boulevard, on October 19, 1936, we saw among other Laridae, such as Ring-billed Gulls, Herring Gulls, and Bonaparte's Gulls, about one dozen terns in several small scattered parties. Although not by any means without precedent, the presence of terns on the river at this season was interesting. An opportunity for careful observation occurred at a point where Frenchman's Creek enters the Niagara River, and here a small party of terns was examined at very close range. Three immature, or completely winter-plumaged birds, were found to be definitely referable to the species *Sterna forsteri*. The diagnostic character of the white head, with elongated black patch through the eye only, was most plainly and repeatedly shown when the birds hovered with down-pointed bill, and dived within a dozen yards of the river bank. A fourth bird, more or less in company at the time with the Forster's Terns, was almost certainly an adult Common Tern changing into winter plumage with a whitish forehead and black cap extending over the back of the head. The several other small parties of terns seen hovering over the river, and diving, but not closely observed, may or may not have contained other examples of *Sterna forsteri*; but a rather distant glimpse of one small group of five birds, obtained while driving along the boulevard, left me with the impression that they were not all