

GENERAL NOTES

Audubon's Shearwater ashore on Long Island.—On July 24, 1938, after an extremely rainy week accompanied by southerly winds, my friend, Robert Rorden, picked up on the beach near Point Lookout, Long Beach, Long Island, New York, a dead shearwater which we identified as Audubon's Shearwater (*Puffinus lherminieri*). On taking the bird to the American Museum of Natural History, our identification was confirmed by Mr. John T. Nichols. Although the bird's feathers were all in place, to have made a satisfactory skin of it would have been difficult, so its skeleton was prepared and is now in the Museum's collection. Mr. Nichols estimated that the bird had been dead probably about two weeks and might have drifted a considerable distance after its death.—RALPH LIND, 35 Lewis Ave., Floral Park, New York.

A Record of the Black-capped Petrel from Haiti.—Mr. L. Dalencour, civil engineer, of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, under date of June 30, 1938, forwarded to me a description of a curious bird found on the Champ de Mars in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, that seems certainly to have been the Black-capped Petrel (*Pterodroma hasitata*). The specimen, which was picked up alive, was said to have been white and dark gray varying to almost black in color, with palmated feet. The wing measured 44 centimeters in length. These notes on color and size are accompanied by a very exact sketch of the bill which leaves no question as to identity. It is interesting to add that, while the bird seemed fully grown, down feathers still adhered to the plumage on the back of the head, the back, and beneath the tail. It would seem therefore to be a juvenile not long from the nest, indicating that there is a nesting colony of this rare species somewhere in the mountains of this island. The bird was kept alive for a brief period but unfortunately was destroyed by a cat after the letter had been written to me regarding it.

In 'The Auk' for 1932 (vol. 49, pp. 107-108) I recorded another capture of this species by Dr. R. Ciferri at Moca in the Dominican Republic.—ALEXANDER WETMORE, U. S. National Museum, Washington, D. C.

American Egret nesting along the Illinois River.—Formerly the American Egret (*Casmerodius albus egretta*) nested abundantly with the Great Blue Heron and Cormorant in the Illinois River valley. The last-known colony of this species in Illinois was located a few miles below Hennipen (Putnam Co.) near the Illinois River. Containing hundreds of egrets' nests at one time, according to R. M. Barnes of Lacon, Illinois, the colony was reduced to five or six nests by 1907, and these were destroyed by plume hunters in that year.

The writer, while investigating a rookery of Great Blue Herons, Black-crowned Night Herons and cormorants at Duck Island, discovered an American Egret's nest on June 17, 1938. This was twenty miles below Peoria near the Illinois River. The egret's nest was situated, along with approximately seventy Great Blue Herons' nests in a flooded black-willow swamp between Big and Goose Lakes. It was placed twelve feet up in a living black-willow tree, which also contained two nests of the Great Blue Heron. At that time the Great Blue Herons' nests held nearly full-grown young, while the egret's nest contained three eggs. When first noticed, an adult was incubating the eggs, but upon closer approach the egret moved to a limb several feet from the nest, where it voiced alarm notes (Plate 5, upper figure). On July 8, Leo Borgelt, U. S. Deputy Game Warden, and the writer found three young about two weeks old in the nest. Both adults were in the vicinity of the nest, and one made



BELLROSE: AMERICAN EGRET NESTING ON ILLINOIS RIVER



WILLIAMS: BLACK-NECKED STILT NESTING IN SOUTH CAROLINA

repeated ventures to it despite our presence twenty feet away. The young remained in a prone position, only once arising to call for food. When Mr. Borgelt visited the nest on July 15, the young clambered to the far side of the nest but made no attempt to leave. On July 27, all three young were completely feathered out and perched on limbs near the nest. The largest of the trio escaped, but the smaller two were captured and banded.

An interesting side-light was the presence of aigrette feathers on the breeding birds when first observed on June 17, their worn, frayed appearance on July 8, and the absence of these feathers by July 27. Throughout this period there were from twenty to thirty American Egrets in the same vicinity, but not one of the non-breeding birds displayed a vestige of these plumes.—FRANK BELLROSE, JR., *Illinois Natural History Survey, Urbana, Illinois.*

Snow Geese in New England.—On November 26, 1937, a single immature Lesser Snow Goose (*Chen h. hyperborea*) joined the semi-domestic Canada Geese belonging to Richard Borden, in Fall River, Massachusetts. The bird was captured by Mr. Borden on the following day. Measurements taken by the writer are as follows: folded wing, 15.25 inches; tail, 6.00; culmen, 2.40; tarsus, 3.00.

On November 11, 1937, the O. L. Austin Ornithological Station at North Eastham, Massachusetts, enjoyed a rather similar experience. About noon of that day a Lesser Snow Goose was observed in company with the Station's semi-domestic Canada Geese and was present throughout the afternoon, but absent the following morning. Identification was made by Dr. Oliver L. Austin, Jr.

Mr. L. R. Nelson reports the visitation of a flock of seventy-five snow geese near Winchester, New Hampshire, on April 15, 1937, one-third of which were in immature plumage. He collected an immature male from this flock and identified it as *C. h. atlantica*. The only measurements I have of this specimen are: length, 31 inches; weight, five pounds, nine ounces.

Inasmuch as snow geese on Cape Cod are rare, and records are few, the following observation may be noteworthy. In the late afternoon of April 23, 1938, Maurice Broun, William H. Drury, Jr., and the writer, observed a flock of fifteen snow geese flying north off the Wellfleet shore of Cape Cod Bay. A 35-power telescope supplemented our 8-power binoculars and permitted very satisfactory observation. The observers deemed it safe to refer this flock to the race *atlantica*.

The status of snow geese in New England is admirably summed up by Bagg and Eliot in their recent 'Birds of the Connecticut Valley.' Single birds, when measured, have invariably proved to be Lesser Snow Geese (*Chen h. hyperborea*), while birds occurring in flocks of a dozen to a hundred or more individuals are apparently Greater Snow Geese (*Chen. h. atlantica*). This seems the logical expectation when one considers the flyways of these two races.—ROLAND C. CLEMENT, *804 Walnut St., Fall River, Massachusetts.*

Turkey Vulture breeding in Norfolk County, Ontario.—While visiting the horticultural grounds of Mr. John G. Trafford in Simcoe, Norfolk County, Ontario, on August 18, 1938, I was shown two young of the Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura septentrionalis*). The birds were fully feathered, but the skin of the heads was practically black with some short brownish down around the nape of the neck and over the crown, a sure sign of immaturity. Mr. Trafford later in the day informed me that the Turkey Vultures were taken as downy young about six weeks or more prior to my visit, and that they were found in a piece of woodland about one mile north-west of Port Rowan, in South Walsingham township, Norfolk County. He was