

HURRICANE AFTERMATH

THE devastating hurricane that swept up the western Atlantic coast and on September 21, 1938, reached the latitude of forty degrees north, was remarkable in that instead of being deflected off to the eastward at this region, and passing out over the ocean, it encountered a high-pressure area that turned it northward at that point. Striking the coast of Long Island in the late afternoon of that day, it tore its way through central New England in a wide path stretching from the base of Cape Cod to the Connecticut Valley, and extending as far north as southern Canada, accompanied in western New England by heavy rains. The resulting losses of life and property, the floods and the wide destruction of forests in its path are matters of contemporary record. Fortunately the fairly late date, after much of the migration had passed, saved many birds from disaster. What the effects on forest-living species in the area covered may be in another breeding season will be interesting to determine. That many oceanic birds must have been carried along with the hurricane and that it must have affected numerous other species in some degree is clear from the following notes, which seem of sufficient importance to emphasize under the above heading.—ED.

YELLOW-BILLED TROPIC-BIRD IN VERMONT

ON September 24, 1938, there was given to me an immature female *Phaethon lepturus catesbyi* which was picked up dead in Woodstock, Vermont, on September 22, 1938, the day after the New England hurricane. The bird was identified by Dr. Richard L. Weaver at the Dartmouth College Museum where the specimen is now. This is, I believe, the first record of this species in Vermont.—RICHARD M. MARBLE, *Woodstock, Vermont.*

CORY'S SHEARWATER IN BERKSHIRE COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS

IMMEDIATELY following the great New England hurricane of September 21, 1938, I visited the lakes and flooded areas in the vicinity of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, hopefully expecting to see at least a pelican, a Noddy Tern, or something equally exciting, but nothing out of the ordinary was reported until September 28, when Game Warden Fred R. Zeigler came to the Berkshire Museum with a bird to be identified. It was a male Cory's Shearwater (*Puffinus diomedea borealis*) and had been found alive on an old road near the Hinsdale-Peru line by William Derochen. The bird had been injured about the head and was in a very weakened condition. The spot where the bird was found is approximately 140 miles from the ocean.

The identification was confirmed by Laura M. Bragg, Director of the Museum, who is familiar with the species from the South Carolina coast. The bird was obviously dying and was therefore made into an unmounted birdskin. This is the first record for Berkshire County and one of the very first for all inland New England. On the day of the storm, September 21, A. H. Cross discovered a Cory's Shearwater in Huntington, not far from Springfield.—G. BARTLETT HENDRICKS, *The Berkshire Museum, Pittsfield, Massachusetts.*

WILSON'S PETREL ON LAKE ONTARIO

ON the morning of September 25, 1938, four days following the great New England hurricane, I observed a single Wilson's Petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*) at Ontario Beach Park on the shore of Lake Ontario, directly north of the city of Rochester, New York. My attention was first called to the bird by a commotion among a flock of Herring and Ring-billed Gulls resting at the water's edge. The petrel was flying along the shore just a few feet above the water's surface and as it came opposite the gulls, several of them rose and dove at and harassed it. This was about seventy-five yards from my point of observation on the beach. The light was good and I was using a 6 x 30 binocular; there is no question in my mind as to the identity of the bird. I was able to observe the white rump-patch, the almost square-ended tail and the fairly long legs. The bird was under observation for several minutes until driven off down the lake by the gulls. It seems logical to assume that this bird was carried inland by the recent hurricane.—GORDON M. MEADE, M.D., *Strong Memorial Hospital, Rochester, New York.*

RED PHALAROPE IN VIRGINIA

ON September 18, 1938, a male Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) in almost full winter plumage was collected on a small artificial reflection pool on the campus of the University of Virginia at Charlottesville, Virginia. Identification was confirmed by Dr. H. C. Oberholser. This is the second record for Virginia (see Auk, 50: 196, 1933). The bird was first seen about fifty feet from the shore where it was bobbing around while it was swimming. It did not seem to be feeding while in the deep water, but soon came in close to shore, sometimes catching its food while in the water and sometimes venturing up on the bank where it ran around like a sandpiper. The bird was very tame and at times approached within fifteen feet of us. There was very little fat on this specimen as compared with most of the shorebirds collected here at this season.

We believe that the occurrence of this bird so far inland was probably due to the tropical hurricane that was sweeping the coast at the time.—J. C. DICKINSON, JR., AND JOHN B. CALHOUN, *University of Virginia, University, Virginia.*

CONNECTICUT VALLEY RECORDS

IT seems inevitable that birds caught in a cyclonic wind are whirled into its center. There, supported on rising air, they may remain a long time, and be swept very far from their homes. When, at last exhausted, they come to earth, the localities they strike should indicate where the center of the storm had passed.

In last September's hurricane, at least three Yellow-billed Tropic-birds were thus borne across Long Island, Connecticut, and western Massachusetts, to be deposited at last at three places in Vermont: Woodstock; Adamant, 47 miles due north of Woodstock; and North Danville, 23 miles northeast of Adamant. Greater Shearwaters were dropped at Montgomery, Massachusetts (just southeast of Huntington) and Rutland, Vermont, 94 miles north of Montgomery and 23 miles west of Woodstock. Cory's Shearwaters were let fall at Knightville, Massachusetts (just north of Huntington); on the Hinsdale-Peru town-line, fifteen miles to the northwest; and away up at Wheelock, Vermont, eight miles beyond (north of) the tropic-bird at North Danville. Leach's Petrels, perhaps because of their much lighter weight, were more widely scattered. Many were seen alive, both in the midst of the storm and on the following morning, at Southwick, Holyoke, and Northampton, Massachusetts. Stranded birds were picked up on the Montgomery-Huntington town-

line; at Rutland, Vermont, 94 miles to the north; at Hanover, New Hampshire, 35 miles east by north of Rutland, and at "Bow" (I can find mapped only "Bow Mills," just south of Concord; if a petrel was found *there*, it had obviously *not* been blown into the center of the hurricane); at Barre, Vermont, 35 miles north by west of Hanover and about seven miles south of the Adamant tropic-bird; and (two) at St. Johnsbury, which is 28 miles northeast of Barre and less than five miles southeast of the North Danville tropic-bird. Leach's Petrels, therefore, were found either along the track of the storm's center, or along the Connecticut River distinctly east of that track.

Completely unexpected is a report passed on to me, *in verbis*, by Dr. R. C. Murphy, that Wilson's Petrels were blown to Montreal. The St. Lawrence at Montreal is at least 95 miles northwest of the northernmost (Wheelock) Vermont record. To judge by the past, Wilson's Petrels are almost exempt from being blown inland, even when, as in late August 1933, they are much more numerous off southern New England than Leach's Petrels are. Can the Montreal report be based on a misidentification? The petrel preserved by A. A. Cross at Huntington was in the midst of molting and had outer tail feathers shorter than middle ones, and the flitting bird studied at Holyoke on September 22 also had the tail *not forked* and was therefore supposed, at first, to be Wilson's. To fit the Montreal report into the hurricane-picture requires further data than I have.

Nighthawks, swifts and swallows—none of which had been seen in western Massachusetts for several days before the hurricane—were indubitably blown back by it. At Northampton some were seen amidst the storm, and next morning; and "thousands" assembled together on September 23. At Williamsburg, two Purple Martins appeared at 8 a.m. on September 25 (and one in Marshfield, September 29)! One Nighthawk was seen as late as September 27. Gulls were blown up the Connecticut Valley in large numbers. On the morning of September 22, "a great many" were at Lake Congamond, Southwick (in the supposed path of the storm's very center), and A. C. Bagg at Holyoke saw not only Herring Gulls but five or six Laughing (very rare there), four or five Bonaparte's (rare), and two or three Ring-billed Gulls. Terns were visitors still more exciting. Just before sunset on September 21, when the worst of the hurricane had passed, one Northampton observer saw, besides one petrel, four terns, three of which struck him as immature Sooties. Of course they went by him too fast for any certainty; and the only hurricane record of that species (which other, past hurricanes have several times brought to us) that I have seen is from Manorville, Long Island, during the lull when the center of the storm was passing there (Bird-Lore, 1938, p. 459). For several days following September 21, terns were present at Hadley (flooded), too far away for specific identification; and at the Holyoke dam on September 24 I saw one adult and two immature Common Terns, and on September 26, one adult, one immature, and an adult Forster's Tern. Far to the north-east, at Athol, a Common Tern was seen on September 22.

It has been suggested that the Gannet, found alive at East Corinth, Vermont, on October 9, was another victim of the hurricane; but is not eighteen days too long a period for it to have starved without perishing? Rather this record is very like those at Jefferson, New Hampshire, October 13, 1910, and Enfield, Massachusetts, October 11, 1917. Neither is it at all certain that the three Black Skimmers seen at Monomoy, Cape Cod, on September 23, owed their presence there to the hurricane. Stragglers eastward from Long Island or New Jersey breeding grounds have been seen there in other recent Septembers.

Very noteworthy, I think, is the non-existence (till the locality of Bow, New Hampshire, is settled) of hurricane records to the east of the Connecticut Valley.

There the winds were fiercest, the waves did most damage, the forests were most ravaged, but oceanic birds were not, that we know, blown to earth. The center of the 'disturbance,' to which such birds were whirled before ever land had been reached, moved northward a little to the west of the Connecticut River, and in *its* path, not over thirty-five miles wide, almost all the records of strange birds were made.—SAMUEL A. ELIOT, JR., *Northampton, Massachusetts.*

HURRICANE LASHES LONG ISLAND

THE phenomenal hurricane that struck our northeastern States on September 21 did much damage to the avifauna on Long Island but contributed very little in the way of rare, accidental species.

I happened to be on one of the ocean beaches during the height of the storm. It was quite impossible to concentrate on any careful observations at the time but the unprecedented flight of Laughing Gulls that battled the wind with astonishing success and the flocks of small shorebirds that rather helplessly streaked by were both definitely impressive. Anticipating as many or even greater rarities than are usually recorded even after much less severe storms of tropical origin, I was actively afield for the next few days searching the Long Island shores and marshes from end to end. The results were disappointing. It is true that I found one Red Phalarope and a dozen Golden Plover near Jones Inlet, and in the same area saw the first Wilson's Plover that I have ever seen north of Virginia. But there were no exotic species and birds in general seemed to be decidedly scarcer than before the storm. Subsequent talks with scores of other observers substantiate the fact that astonishingly little of interest was deposited by the hurricane in our territory. In all probability the high velocity of the wind carried many out-of-place birds right over Long Island for now we hear reports of Yellow-billed Tropic-birds, petrels and shearwaters in New Hampshire, Vermont and Massachusetts.

Fortunately most birds were through nesting. The young in an unusually late colony of Black Skimmers on Gilgo Island were destroyed, however, when the waters of the bay rose and swept the region clean. The morning after the storm I picked up a Brant in too weakened a condition to make much effort at escaping. Many birds were undoubtedly killed. On the 22d I picked up two dead Clapper Rails, a King Rail, a Meadowlark and several Savannah Sparrows. During the next week I came upon scores of dead birds and was informed of many others.

Knowing that many reports relative to the hurricane will be presented and knowing that an analysis of such reports from scattered regions will give a broad picture of the ornithological aspects of the storm I herewith present this summation.—ALLAN D. CRUICKSHANK, *National Association of Audubon Societies, New York City.*