

determine whether these birds breed here this coming summer.—HAROLD J. BRODRICK, *Carlsbad Caverns National Park, New Mexico*.

**White-crowned Sparrow at Pensacola, Florida.**—On October 16, 1938, an immature White-crowned Sparrow was watched for some time at Kupfrian's Park, an old race-course on the outskirts of Pensacola, and finally was collected. The specimen was presented to the U. S. Biological Survey, where it was subspecifically identified and referred to the eastern form, *Zonotrichia leucophrys leucophrys*. As far as I can find out, this is the only specimen of this species ever taken in Florida.

The history of the species in Florida is brief. Howell ('Florida Bird Life,' p. 469, 1932) lists only three sight records. Since that time, two other sight records have come to hand: a single bird in high plumage was present in the garden of Mrs. Andrew L. Whigham, at Century (forty miles north of Pensacola), from April 23 to 25, 1936, where it was seen by several observers (*Bird-lore*, 38: 308, 1936); and an immature bird was glimpsed by Miss Cordelia Arnold at Altamonte Springs Hotel, in Seminole County, on February 11, 1939 (*Florida Naturalist*, 12: 100, 106, 1939).—FRANCIS M. WESTON, 2006 E. Jordan St., Pensacola, Florida.

**Birds eating tent caterpillars.**—On May 20, 1935, I twice observed the Black-throated Green Warbler, *Dendroica virens virens*, feeding upon American tent caterpillars, *Malacosoma americana*, about ten miles north of Indiana, Indiana County, Pennsylvania. During each observation, the individual warblers descended from hemlock growth at the woodland's edge to a grove of young wild black-cherry trees, *Prunus serotina*, where they tore open the nests and devoured the small larvae in some quantities. The larvae at this time were about three-quarters of an inch in length. On the morning of April 23, 1938, I again observed at close range the destruction of these caterpillars, this time by a Black-capped Chickadee, *Penthestes atricapillus atricapillus*, in a brush-grown field in Broome County, near Nanticoke, New York. When first seen, the chickadee was busily engaged in visiting a number of the newly started nests of the American tent caterpillar located in a nearby wild-apple tree, *Malus pumila*. Using an eight-power binocular at twenty feet, I observed the chickadee closely while it visited three caterpillar nests in succession. It would first tear open the web, then pick up the small worms (on this date about three-eighths of an inch long and a sixteenth of an inch in diameter) and devour them rapidly. After visits to three nests during my presence, it apparently had its fill and flew off. On examining these nests a conservative estimate showed that 75% of the contents of each had been eaten. Estimating an average of 70 to 100 worms in each (rough count in an untouched caterpillar nest) the chickadee must have consumed at least 170 tent caterpillars at one meal. The chickadee was apparently feeding before my approach, so that it had possibly eaten many more. Tent caterpillars are so tiny at this time of year that they are attractive prey for warblers and chickadees before noticeable destruction of foliage has begun. This suggests that these birds are especially important checks on tent caterpillars at a time that presages their more destructive development.—J. KENNETH TERRES, *Soil Conservation Service, Ithaca, New York*.

**Notes from Virginia.**—The birds noted below have been considered rare in this section of Virginia. The Black Rail, Pine Warbler and Dr. Smyth's Long-eared Owl are in the collection of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

BLACK RAIL, *Creciscus jamaicensis stoddardi*.—On May 27, 1939, Charles O. Handley, Jr., flushed a Black Rail from a small swamp on the college farm. The same morning, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Bailey and C. O. Handley, we flushed it again near the same place and collected it. It proved to be a male, and by all indications was not nesting. The specimen constitutes the first record for the county, and is, in fact, a good record for any inland area.

LONG-EARED OWL, *Asio wilsonianus*.—On May 9, 1939, when banding young Crows with Thomas Watkins on Price's Mountain a few miles south of Blacksburg, we came upon an adult Long-eared Owl sitting on an abandoned crow's nest about twenty feet off the ground, in a patch of scrub pine. It left the nest and immediately flew to the ground, performing the usual feigning of a wounded bird, uttering weird cries. Investigation of the nest disclosed four young, downy owls, the oldest of which had just started feathering of the wings. The other adult was not seen. On May 15, the young were twice their former size. Both adults were seen; they did not feign as before but flew about the neighboring trees uttering various calls and cries and at times, when the nest was approached closely, would fly within fifteen to twenty feet of it. The young were banded and pictures taken. By May 20, three had left the nest and were out in the neighboring trees. Many pellets and feathers were collected. Dr. Smyth's only record for the Long-eared Owl is of a pair seen in evergreens on Brush Mountain near the college, on November 26, 1915; one of the birds was collected.

PINE WARBLER, *Dendroica pinus*.—Dr. Ellison Smyth in his publication, 'Birds observed in Montgomery County, Virginia' (Auk, 29: 508-530, 1912) recorded the Pine Warbler as very rare here. He obtained only two specimens and those in September and October. On March 24, 1939, while collecting on Pearis Mountain, about four miles east of Blacksburg, I investigated what I thought was a Junco singing. It proved to be a male Pine Warbler which I collected. There were at least three birds present at the time. Later, during April and May, Charles O. Handley, Jr., and myself found the Pine Warbler very common about Blacksburg on Brush and Price's Mountains and probably nesting. These areas are between 2,000 and 3,000 feet elevation.—EDWARD ADDY, *Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Virginia*.

North Carolina bird colonies.—Covering the time of June 7-22, 1939, the writer traversed the coast of North Carolina from South Carolina to the Virginia line. The object was to learn the condition of waterbird colonies in this region and to note the changes that have taken place since he first traversed this region in the summer of 1898. He was at all times accompanied by one or more of the following North Carolina bird students: H. H. Brimley, C. S. Brimley, Harry Davis, John H. Grey, Jr., Ben F. Royal and Samuel A. Walker.

Forty-one colonies of breeding birds were listed, consisting chiefly of terns, Black Skimmers (*Rynchops nigra*) and Laughing Gulls (*Larus atricilla*). One breeding group of egrets and herons and one of Florida Cormorants were examined. The most abundant species found was the Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*) which has enormously increased since 1903 when legal protection was first secured for it, and at a time when only six pairs were known to breed on the coast. We located twenty-three colonies. Two nests with eggs of the Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) were found on islands in Beaufort Harbor. This bird had not before been known to breed this far south on the Atlantic Coast.

On Royal Shoal Island, about ten miles from Ocracoke, some six thousand pairs of