

Gull-billed Tern nesting in Florida.—In the April 1940, 'Auk,' Alexander Sprunt reported the nesting of Gull-billed Terns (*Gelochelidon nilotica aranea*) in Florida. On June 21, 1940, I found a small colony in the north end of the Indian River, near the Haul-over Canal. On June 30, there were eight nests, with a few young recently hatched. The birds came readily to a blind, and while no specimens were taken, they were photographed with some two hundred feet of kodachrome. There have been a few reports of this species in the Haul-over area in recent years, sight records of one or two birds, but this is my first contact with Gull-billed Terns in over thirty years of observation along the Florida east coast.

Attention may here be called to the previous record of a nest with two eggs of this species found near Pensacola Bay, Florida, by Francis M. Weston (Auk, 50: 215, 1933).—R. J. LONGSTREET, *Daytona Beach, Florida*.

Foot-washing by the Black Skimmer.—Pettingill (Auk, 54: 343, 1937), in discussing injury-feigning in the Black Skimmer (*Rynchops n. nigra*), tells of seeing the birds swoop down to a shallow pool and drag their bellies in it. This bit of behavior has been familiar to me for years, and I have thought it to be simply foot-washing. It has been noticed most often among birds in winter or early spring, or among the non-breeders that remain on the sandbars in winter plumage during the nesting time. It has not appeared to be connected with any of the behavior peculiar to the reproductive season.

Flocks of skimmers often congregate on sandy shores where there is some mixture of mud or clay, and when disturbed the entire flock will swing out over the water and repeatedly dip the feet and the lower belly in the water. There is then no appearance of nervousness about it, and the habit is as common as the oft-reported gull habit of 'picking its teeth' or scratching its head, with a toenail, while in flight. Skimmer legs are small and would soil the belly feathers if pulled up when covered with mud or clay.

While on the subject of skimmer feet, the very inadequate size and musculature of the feet and legs present counter evidence against Arthur's theory (Auk, 38: 566-574, 1921) that the species feeds as a wader. The bird has enough difficulty landing on a good hard beach at times, ever to be able to maneuver those long wings and that weather-vane head in a flawy breeze, and display enough agility to catch small fishes, in the bare inch of water its length of leg would allow. The water of the Savannah River is usually quite yellow, and easily stains white feathers. If the skimmers waded at all, our local birds would have the belly feathers soiled, rather than immaculate.—IVAN R. TOMKINS, *U. S. Dredge DeWitt Clinton, Savannah, Georgia*.

Saw-whet Owl in Tennessee.—On March 16, 1940, two high-school boys, Leslie and Eugene Davis, caught a Saw-whet Owl (*Cryptoglaux acadica acadica*) at their home in a closely built residence section of Nashville, Tennessee. As it perched high in a rose vine, they reached it with a ladder, later taking it to their biology teacher, M. S. Carter, who brought it to me for feeding and banding. This constitutes the second positive record of this species for the State. The other individual was seen on March 1, 1936, at Memphis by Ben B. Coffey, Jr., who almost caught it (The Migrant, 7: 19, 1936).

When received by me, the owl weighed 100.8 grams. It snapped its beak belligerently when one put a hand near it. In a few days it weighed 104.5 grams, had adapted itself to its new environment to such an extent that it had ceased