

Random notes from Florida.—In the course of recent field work in Florida several birds were noted that are of sufficient interest to justify being placed on record at this time. Although collecting was incidental to other activities a gun was always available, and in each case identification was verified by having the specimen in hand.

ARKANSAS KINGBIRD, *Tyrannus verticalis*.—A bird seen November 14, 1941 was on a telephone wire at the side of a road four miles west of Madison, and approximately fifty miles east of Tallahassee. On being collected it was found to be a female, in partial moult, and exceedingly shabby in appearance. There appear to be few recent records for this species in Florida, and none for this part of the state.

MIGRANT SHRIKE, *Lanius ludovicianus migrans*.—An adult male taken at Bell, thirty miles south of Lake City, on November 23, 1941 is typical of this northern race in respect to both color and measurements. Both above and below it is noticeably paler than specimens of *Lanius ludovicianus ludovicianus* taken at this time, a character that frequently makes it possible to separate these two races in the field. The wing measures 97.0 mm., the tail 96.8 mm., these measurements comparing closely with those given by Dr. Alden H. Miller for typical *migrans* in his 'Revision and Natural History of American Shrikes' (University of California Publications in Zoology, 38: 57-59, 1931), in which the average tail measurement is given as 98.25 mm., the wing as 98.42. This is apparently the first record for the occurrence of this race in the state, but it is suspected that a close scrutiny of all shrikes encountered would reveal other individuals.

OVEN-BIRD, *Seiurus aurocapillus*.—A male taken at Tallahassee on January 30, 1942 marks the northern limits reached by this species during the winter months, as it has never been recorded at this season of the year in either Georgia or Alabama.—**THOMAS D. BURLEIGH, Gulfport, Mississippi.**

Bird records from Virginia.—From June 15 to 20, 1941, the authors made a collecting trip to the Atlantic side of the eastern shore of Virginia in the Delmarva peninsula. The observations here recorded were made on Rogue Island, Acomac County. This island, a low untenanted marsh, is eleven miles off the main coast, and is situated between Hog and Cobb islands. The island is approximately forty acres in extent. Not over twenty per cent of it is above tide level. Along the middle of the island is an elevated ridge, which at its highest point is possibly five feet above the high-water level. The ridge forms a long crescent-shaped strip, about one hundred feet wide and runs east and west along the northern side of the island. This portion is characterized by a heavy growth of eel grass and more or less continuous clumps of 'tide-water bushes.' The latter are low shrubby plants rarely growing over four or five feet in height. Among the drier marsh-grasses we found many nesting Willets (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*), Clapper Rails (*Rallus longirostris*), one King Rail (*Rallus elegans*), and Seaside Sparrows (*Ammodramus maritimus*). Boat-tailed Grackles (*Cassidix mexicanus*) were everywhere on the island. Along the middle of the ridge are three isolated groups of stunted cedars. These probably cover less than an acre altogether. The area was at one time completely forested, but after many fires these few cedars are the only surviving trees. Among the wind-buffeted cedars and the tide-water bushes several herons nested in considerable numbers, among them the Louisiana Heron (*Hydranassa tricolor ruficollis*), found for the first time nesting in Virginia.

Snowy Egrets (*Egretta thula thula*), Louisiana Herons (*Hydranassa tricolor ruficollis*), and Little Blue Herons (*Florida caerulea caerulea*) nested side by side in a

fine rookery among the cedars. Some of the trees, none of which was over twenty feet tall, supported as many as twelve nests. In most of the trees we found the nests of all three of the herons, some of them only a foot or so apart. About five per cent of the nests still contained eggs, whereas the others had young ranging from mere 'hatchlings' to full-grown birds about to fly. Half-grown birds climbed awkwardly in reptilian fashion along the limbs; many had impaled themselves on jagged twigs, others had hanged themselves on forks of branches and some had fallen to the ground where they lay in a decaying mass. There were in all about three hundred nests.

Although the Snowy Egret was at one time a common breeder in Virginia, in recent years it has been considered a rare bird. Dr. J. J. Murray of Lexington, Virginia, tells us that this bird "for a long time now has been exceedingly scarce, and is probably coming back to some extent." There were forty or fifty nests of these birds on the island.

There is little doubt that the discovery of the Louisiana Herons marks the first nesting record of this bird in Virginia. Rives (A Catalogue of the Birds of the Virginias, 1890) listed the species as a rare summer resident, but gave no breeding record. Bailey (Birds of Virginia, 1913) made no mention of this bird in the list of the breeding birds of Virginia. Dr. Murray informs us that he has no other record of breeding Louisiana Herons in that state.

The Green Herons (*Butorides virescens virescens*) which were common on the island did not nest with the other herons. Instead we found them nesting on the tide-water bushes, their nests being only two or three feet from the ground. We found at least thirty nests and all contained eggs, with the exception of one which had three newly-hatched young.

On June 18, as we approached the heronry, the birds flew up and circled, clamoring excitedly. Then from somewhere, perhaps among the herons, a long curve-billed bird flew toward us, going directly over our heads. Having flown past it circled and returned to the general direction whence it had come. It was unmistakably a Long-billed Curlew (*Numenius americanus*). Dr. Murray, was good enough to give us the following information of previous records of this bird in Virginia: "So far as I know there is not a Virginia record for this Curlew in fifty years. Dr. William C. Rives, in his book (op. cit.) made the following comment: 'Formerly abundant in migration on the coast; many also were found in winter. It is now almost exterminated at Cobb's Island.' Miss May Cook in her Washington list records a bird taken at Potomac April 11, 1842." Rogue Island is only a stone's throw west of Cobb Island and these curlews must have been abundant on it. The most recent record of Long-billed Curlews on the Atlantic Coast is one by Coles (Auk, 41: 153-154, 1924). Coles reports seeing birds daily from 1903 to 1908, and shooting one bird in 1923 on the coast of North Carolina.

While on the island we searched the marshes for Clapper Rails which were comparatively abundant. We were surprised to take a female King Rail which from its actions, we judged must have had a nest in the vicinity. We did not succeed in finding the nest, but the bird had a fully developed, swollen brood patch. Its oviduct contained one egg with shell, and the ovary revealed nine broken follicles. This record is interesting since King Rails, although they are found in Florida nesting in brackish water, are, as a rule, fresh-water marsh-loving birds. Bent (U. S. Nat. Mus., Bull. 135: 260, 1926) says of the King Rails: "This large, handsome rail is an inhabitant of the fresh-water marshes of the interior. It is never seen in the salt marshes of the coast except on migration. . . ." It must be remembered that the marshes around these islands are strictly salt-water ones, miles

away from any source of fresh-water habitat. This report is doubly interesting since reports of King Rails from Virginia, even from the interior, Dr. Murray tells us, are very few.—WILLIAM MONTAGNA AND WILLIAM A. WIMSATT, *Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.*

Notes from Churchill, Manitoba.—The following observations made in the vicinity of Churchill during June and July, 1941, seem worth recording.

A female Greater Scaup (*Nyroca marila*) was flushed from her nest containing seven eggs on July 18. The nest was situated in a grassy hummock at the edge of a pond about two miles southeast of Churchill. This duck has rarely been recorded as nesting at Churchill.

On June 24, near a tundra lake about two miles south of Churchill, a female American Eider was flushed from a nest containing five eggs. Field identification proved unsuccessful, even with a blind, because of the bird's shyness, and it was necessary to collect the specimen for positive identification. This specimen has proved to be *Somateria mollissima sedentaria*, the new race recently described by L. L. Snyder (*Occas. Papers Roy. Ont. Mus. Zool.*, 6, 1941). As far as can be ascertained from the literature, this is the first positive nesting record of any race of *Somateria mollissima* in the Churchill region, although Twomey is recorded as having encountered two broods at Cape Churchill, thirty miles to the east, in 1933 (Taverner and Sutton, 'The Birds of Churchill, Manitoba,' *Ann. Carneg. Mus.*, 23, 1934). On July 12, during a trip on foot eastward from Churchill along the coast, numerous broods of young eiders accompanied by females were observed on the small tundra ponds and lakes. These ducklings appeared to be too young to have travelled the ten or fifteen miles from the nearest islands, and thus it is probable that they came from nests on the mainland instead of from island nesting grounds as is commonly the case with eiders.

The Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*) nests irregularly at Churchill, its nesting reputedly being correlated with the abundance of rodents. Two nests were found, on July 12 and 13 respectively, about fifteen miles east of Churchill. The first was built on the platform of a forty-foot wooden navigation 'beacon' overlooking Hudson Bay, and contained four downy young several days old. The second was located a half-mile farther east on a rock ledge along the shore, and held three very recently hatched young. It is interesting to note that while lemmings are considered to be the main food of these hawks in the tundra regions, the only food found on these nests containing young were the bodies of downy young Hudsonian Curlews (*Phaeopus hudsonicus*) and Willow Ptarmigan (*Lagopus lagopus*).

A nest of the Hudsonian Curlew (*Phaeopus hudsonicus*) was found near Lake Isabelle on June 25. The nest, a bare depression in dry tundra, containing four eggs, was observed daily until the young left. When the nest was visited on the morning of July 15, two of the eggs were pipped by the young chicks. A third egg was pipped the same afternoon, but a fourth remained unpunctured. The first chick did not emerge from the egg until early on the morning of July 18. It was followed by a second, late in the same afternoon. At the time that the second chick emerged, a third, which did not emerge until nearly noon of the following day, had removed the entire end from its shell, but the fourth egg showed a primary puncture only. When the nest was visited for the last time on July 20, the three successfully hatched chicks had left and the parent birds had deserted the nest and remaining egg. Thus one chick emerged in approxi-