

to March 26, 1910, in Scarborough, Maine (Norton, Auk, 28: 255, 1911). These are both in the Brock collection, now in the museum of the Portland Society of Natural History.—ARTHUR H. NORTON, *Portland Society of Natural History, Portland, Maine.*

Yellow-billed Tropic-bird in Maine.—A few days after the destructive hurricane of September 21, 1938, a specimen of *Phaethon lepturus catesbyi* was found at East Winn, Penobscot County, Maine, about seventy miles inland. This specimen, which has been acquired by the Portland Society of Natural History through the estate of the late Walter J. Clayton, is an adult bird (sex unnoted), apparently in good health, though molt of its flight feathers was in progress. Counting from without, primaries 9 and 7 in the right wing are less than four inches long, while in the left wing, primaries 10 and 8 are about four inches long, and the third primary is about a fourth of the full length of that feather. It would seem that loss of these feathers had reduced the bird's powers of flight on that critical occasion, causing it to be driven before the gale to its doom.

This appears to be the first instance in which this bird has been noted in Maine.—ARTHUR H. NORTON, *Portland Society of Natural History, Portland, Maine.*

A method of remaking old bird skins.—Probably few of us who began making bird skins thirty or forty years ago, have what may be referred to as an artistically flawless collection. Certainly my own was liberally sprinkled with eyesores—the harvest of early, misguided efforts. So far as remembered now in respect to study skins, not a single pamphlet or book on taxidermy possessed in those days, stressed the prime necessity for using body-length neck sticks which fitted firmly into either the throat or the brain cavity. As a result of this, scores of my youthful specimens, with only a cotton filling, eventually developed broken necks, or the heads became twisted about and permanently set at violent angles. The bodies, too, through lack of support, often became distorted into unsightly caricatures. Another early and frequent fault was over-stuffing of the breast; this in conjunction with a lean neck imparted a grotesque appearance that unflinching jarred upon one's sensibilities at every contact.

At long last I determined, to the best of my ability, to remake these offending skins so that they would more nearly conform to the superior product of today. Considerable experimentation was carried out at various times involving specimens ranging from warblers to the larger waders, etc. At first the faulty skins were immersed in water for relaxation and dried in warm sawdust; this orthodox method was certainly effective enough in softening the skins, but as anyone knows who has tried it, an excessive amount of time and labor is exacted for drying and fluffing the feathers. The following much simpler method was finally developed. It is to be understood that only smaller skins up to about medium-sized hawks have been so manipulated.

The first step is to sever the abdominal stitches with surgeon's scissors. By very careful use of the forceps all, or most, of the cotton filling can be removed without tearing the dry but somewhat flexible skin. With a long-nozzled syringe a small quantity of warm water is injected into the neck and skull through the ventral opening. Next, the body skin is gently swabbed inside with wet cotton and a quantity of this moist material placed there to carry on the work of relaxation. If the feathers are held out of the way with the left hand while this is being done they remain dry about the incision. It will be noted, in fact, that the feathers