

First nesting of Forster's Tern in South Carolina.—While examining some oölogical specimens recently, the writer made the discovery of an omission which is being rectified herewith. Early in January, 1937, he was given a set of eggs of *Sterna forsteri* by Dr. Eugene E. Murphey, M.D., of Augusta, Ga., which had been collected on Vessel Reef, Bull's Bay, S. C. on June 24, 1904. It is the first record of the nesting of that species in South Carolina. This fact should have been recorded before, as intimated above, and the writer was under the impression that it had been, but search of the literature reveals the lack of it. Some details of the matter are of interest.

The eggs were found by a cousin of Dr. Murphey's (Elwood Murphey) who was visiting the South Carolina coast with Dr. M. T. Cleckley of Augusta. He pointed out the eggs to Cleckley who recognized them for what they were, and knowing their rarity, he collected and prepared them. On his original data now in the writer's possession, Cleckley wrote that the identification of the eggs was doubted by Arthur T. Wayne of Mt. Pleasant, S. C. for many years the well known ornithologist of this area. They were submitted to the Smithsonian Institution at Washington where the identification was confirmed. Dr. Murphey adds that: "My cousin Elwood blundered on to the nest with its eggs and called them to Cleckley's attention who immediately collected them for he knew what they were by reason of his great familiarity with eggs as such."

The eggs number three and were laid in a "slight depression in the sand, on a small elevation." Vessel Reef has since disappeared by action of storm tides. Bull's Bay has other tern colonies today, consisting of Royal Terns (*Thalasseus m. maximus*), a few Cabot's Terns (*T. sandvicensis acuflavidus*), and Caspian Terns (*Hydroprogne caspia*), many Least Terns (*Sterna a. antillarum*) and an occasional Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica aranea*). Anyone familiar with the eggs of these birds will of course, understand how unlike they are from those of *S. forsteri*. Apparently this recording of a first breeding record comes literally under the heading of better late than never!—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., *The Crescent, Charleston 50, S. C.*

Harlequin Duck on the Texas coast.—On January 14, 1945, while traveling north on Highway 35, six miles from Rockport, Texas, I saw a small raft of ducks to the left (Copano Bay side) of the rock breakwater on the south end of the Copano Causeway. They were about 12 feet from shore and about 50 feet from where I stopped my car. Twelve of the ducks were American Golden-eyes. White markings on the face of one small duck immediately attracted my attention and very quickly I saw that a male and female Harlequin Duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*) were present. I was so close that glasses were not actually necessary, but I put the glasses on them (Zeiss 8 X 40) and compared their markings at the same time with the figure in Peterson's 'A Field Guide to the Birds.' The identification was unmistakable. I kept them under observation for about 20 minutes and afterwards continued up the highway but returned about two hours later. The ducks had not left the vicinity and they were watched again for about ten minutes. They have not been seen since. On January 30, Mr. Ralph Friedman, of New York City, who came to Rockport with Dr. Fleisher, of Brooklyn College, to observe birds, told me that on the previous day he had identified a Harlequin Duck on the Aransas Wildlife Refuge, near Austwell, Texas. He felt rather sure of the identification but nevertheless felt that it was "too fantastic" and therefore had scarcely known what to think about it.

Dr. Harry C. Oberholser has informed me that the Eastern Harlequin Duck (*H. h. histrionicus*) has been recorded as far south as Florida. According to Musgrove and Musgrove ('Waterfowl in Iowa,' State Conservation Commission, Des Moines:

65, 1943), the Western Harlequin Duck (*H. h. pacificus*) is a rare straggler in Iowa. Dr. Oberholser has written me that the species has been recorded in Colorado and he is of the opinion that those I saw also belonged to the western subspecies. This is the first time I have seen the Harlequin Duck here during nine years of daily observation and, so far as I can ascertain, it is the first record from Texas.—CONGER N. HAGAR, *Rockport, Texas.*

Canada Geese nesting in Maine.—There is a rather widespread belief among sportsmen and bird lovers that the Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis canadensis*) regularly breeds in limited numbers throughout Maine, despite the fact that there appear to be no references in the literature relative to such breeding. Actually there are but two Maine records known to the writer that could be considered as reasonably authentic instances of nesting by wild geese.

In the lower Kennebec River valley of south-central Maine, and in the coastal portion of Washington County in the extreme eastern part of the state, there have been frequent reports during the past decade of nests or broods of this species. All reports that were investigated, however, have been found to pertain to the nesting of released or escaped semi-domesticated birds. A number of releases of pen-reared geese have been made in the vicinity of Lubec, in Washington County, by a sportsman who for several years maintained a small waterfowl sanctuary. Moreover, from time to time, wing-clipped birds escaped from the sanctuary and occasionally nested in the general vicinity. Similar dispersals have occurred in southern and central Maine from pen-reared stock.

The first authentic record of breeding in this state by strictly wild geese was apparently in 1939 in the Gilman Falls section of Old Town, Penobscot County. The nesting area was in a meadow flowage on Pushaw Stream, surrounded by open woods and farmland. Local residents found the nest and reported it to Deputy Game Warden C. M. Chaples. It was said to have been located at the edge of a small clump of maples near the water and to have contained five eggs. The nesting attempt was a failure as a poacher shot the female with a rifle. Warden Chaples arrested the law violator and obtained a conviction in court. The specimen was brought to the laboratory of the Maine Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit for examination, and partly developed eggs were found in the ovary. The bird was not banded, and since the male had been observed by Warden Chaples at very close range with no band being apparent, it seems likely that these birds were of wild strain.

The other record occurred in 1944 at Chemquasabamticook Lake (known locally as Ross Lake) in northwestern Piscataquis County, about 20 miles from the Quebec border. George J. Stobie, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Game, received reports of a brood of goslings being seen at that body of water and investigated early in July. The area is very remote and Stobie was flown in by Warden Pilot William Turgeon. As the plane circled over the water at a low altitude, two broods of geese were seen, each accompanied by both parents. The plane was landed and the lake was explored by boat. The observers were able to relocate only one brood, but this—consisting of four young in downy plumage—was watched for several minutes at a distance of about 50 feet. The young were attended by both adults and the family was in a small cove of the lake. Although it was impossible to detect the presence or absence of bands on the adults, the occurrence of the birds at this wilderness lake so far removed from any area where captive geese are known to have been released would constitute rather strong circumstantial evidence of breeding by wild birds.