

too much of an ordeal.—MALCOLM DAVIS, *The National Zoological Park, Washington, D. C.*

**Wilson's petrel in interior Florida.**—On June 10, 1948, while investigating the birdlife of Biven's Arm, a lake south of Paine's Prairie south of Gainesville, Florida, I noted a small, dark bird resting on the water about 75 yards distant. A few moments later, a low flying plane flushed the bird which was then obviously a Wilson's petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus oceanicus*). The white rump, characteristic legs and feet, were plainly visible. With me, at the time, were James Pittman and Marshall Nehrenberg, of Orlando, Florida.

The next morning an attempt was made by Dr. Pierce Brodkorb, of the biology department of the University of Florida, to secure the bird, but it was not found. The weather for this period, and both before and afterward, was quite normal.

Search of the literature fails to reveal any other inland Florida record. Biven's Arm is practically in the center of north Florida. A few days later, several of these petrels were observed en route from Key West to the Dry Tortugas, where I have seen them every June for the past four seasons.—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, 4TH, *The Crescent, Charleston 50, South Carolina.*

**Death of a brown pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*).**—On November 5, 1945, at about 7:30 a. m. on the northwest shore of Pensacola Bay just opposite its entrance into the Gulf of Mexico, my attention was attracted to a disturbance in the water approximately one hundred yards off shore. Closer inspection with field glasses revealed that a school of small fish was being preyed upon by larger fish at a point where the shallow waters of the bay met the deeper channel of the inland waterway. Within a few minutes a flight of 15 or 20 brown pelicans (*Pelecanus occidentalis*), which had also apparently been attracted by the commotion, began diving into the school and feeding on the small fish.

As the school of fish moved away the pelicans followed, still diving and feeding, with the exception of one male which remained behind on the water, apparently in some difficulty. A breeze from the southeast carried the bird toward shore as its struggles became weaker. Within twenty minutes the bird had ceased activity, except for a slight movement of the head and neck. When the dead pelican was examined a large living fish was found lodged in the pouch. It was probably the movement of the fish which was responsible for movements of the head and neck of the bird just before it was picked up. The fish, a sheepshead (*Archosargus probatocephalus*), measured about 15 inches in length and 17 inches in girth and was estimated to weigh about six pounds. The position of the fish in the pouch was such that the snout of the fish apparently interfered with the glottis of the pelican. A little water was found in the trachea and lungs of the pelican, and it was assumed that the bird died of suffocation hastened by exhaustion from struggling.

The bird had been unable to disgorge the fish because the width of the fish's body was more than an inch greater than the space between the lower jaws. It was necessary to slit the pouch of the pelican to remove the fish for examination. Experimentation demonstrated that the fish slid into the pouch quite easily by springing the lower jaws apart, but it was impossible to remove the fish, tail first, through this opening without injuring the bill. It was also impossible to turn the fish end for end within the pouch.

The question which naturally arises is whether the pelican purposely attacked such a large fish, or if, by a freak circumstance, the fish was engulfed by accident. The latter could occur if the pelican and sheepshead had arrived simultaneously at the