

brought to her a rail that he presumably caught down by the shore, one-half mile from the house. Mrs. Bidwell thought that it was a Clapper Rail, but she took the bird to Miss Jessie Keene, also of Waldoboro, for verification. The specimen was then sent to me at the Massachusetts Audubon Society in Boston for further confirmation of identification. A few days later Mr. James L. Peters, Curator of Birds at the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University, saw the specimen and also agreed that it was a Clapper Rail. It was a male and a bird of the year. The specimen, although in poor condition, has been preserved in part, and is now in the collection of the Department of Biology at Boston University.

I note in Palmer's 'Maine Birds' (1949) that there are only four previous records of the bird occurring in Maine, the bird sent in by Mrs. Bidwell being the first December record since 1875.—RUTH P. EMERY, 155 Newbury St., Boston, Mass.

Bridled Tern, *Sterna a. melanoptera*, taken at Dry Tortugas.—On September 7, 1949, the writer and his son were on the Tortugas, observing the fall migration. About mid-day, my son saw a strange tern flying over the moat at Fort Jefferson, but caught only a glimpse of it, as I did. All we could conclude at the moment was that it was not a Sooty Tern, *Sterna f. fuscata*, of which there were hundreds about. Two hours later, I picked up the bird or a similar one in one of the casements on the second gallery of the Fort. It was still alive, though sick and exhausted, its eyes closed and beak almost touching the brick flooring. It was in immature plumage, a phase I had never seen, but we concluded that it was *Sterna a. melanoptera*. The bird died shortly after, and the skin was sent to Dr. Alexander Wetmore. He confirmed the identification.

This is, apparently, the first specimen recorded from Tortugas, and seems to be the fifth specimen ever secured in Florida. Howell ('Florida Bird-life,' 1932) lists two specimens, one given by Audubon to George Lawrence, the other taken by Hoxie and now in the British Museum. Another was picked up dead at Cape Canaveral in October, 1945, by R. T. Peterson and A. B. Klotz. Another was secured by Charles Page at Daytona Beach, in April, 1949 (Fla. Nat., 23: 68). This bird is the third seen in south Florida waters by the writer. An adult was caught and banded near Tavernier, October 2, 1940; the other was seen near New Ground Shoal, about 25 miles east of Tortugas and between Tortugas and Marquesas keys, on June 21, 1946, the latter bird again being first noted by my son (Auk, 64: 141).—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., *The Crescent, Charleston 50, S. C.*

Long-tailed Jaeger, *Stercorarius longicaudus*, from Montana.—While on a field trip at Nine-pipe National Wildlife Refuge, Lake County, Montana, in May, 1947, I picked up part of a bird skeleton which I was unable to identify. The trunk skeleton, except for the cervical vertebrae, was present and in addition the entire right leg with its tarsal covering, a tuft of breast feathers, and a tuft of feathers from the back. The specimen was submitted to Dr. Alexander Wetmore who reports that he is positive it is *Stercorarius longicaudus*. He points out that the small sternum and pelvis, the light colored tarsus and the dark colored toes are characteristic of this species. The bird probably died in 1946 or earlier. Apparently there are no previous records for this species from Montana.—PHILIP L. WRIGHT, *Montana State University, Missoula, Montana.*

Courtship in the Barn Owl, *Tyto alba*.—The several high and unused towers associated with some of the buildings of Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, have housed Barn Owls for many years. It was my good fortune to observe (and to hear of the observations of several students) what I presume to have been a

part of the courtship behavior of this species. On the night of January 5, 1950, peculiar sounds and flights of the owls were observed between 11:00 p. m. and midnight by Mr. Alexander Deanmead. The following night I spent some time on the campus to verify the report of Deanmead, but without success. However, on the night of January 11, 1950, I saw and heard the owls. The pair of owls flew in a column, follow the leader fashion, with one bird about 15 to 20 feet behind the leader. The course was a wide circle somewhat zigzagged laterally and with broad, vertically undulating waves. Throughout the flight the bird in the lead uttered a loud rapid *click-click-click* at a constant rate which I estimated to be about 200 per minute. Occasionally they departed from their circular course for a few minutes and were lost from the rays of light cast by a bright central lamp which serves to illuminate the central portion of the campus. The flight occurred between an estimated 20 to 50 feet above the ground.

Eight students presented reports which essentially corroborated my observation. I asked each of them to continue their observations, so far as possible, and found that flights were last noted on January 23; thus the display continued for at least 18 days. It is possible that two pairs of birds were courting over the same area, although only one pair was ever seen or heard at one time.—GEORGE E. GRUBE, *Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pa.*

Feeding Habits of Great Horned Owls, *Bubo virginianus*.—On February 26, 1949, I found a Great Horned Owl brooding two young on the north wall of the Museum of Natural History at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas. The nest was under an arch with three small windows separated by two stone abutments. The owls could walk along the entire length of the window ledge. The window farthest east was immediately behind the nest. A reserve food supply was maintained on that portion of the window ledge west of the nest.

The adult female was the only bird seen to feed or brood the young. At 2:45 a. m. on March 6, this bird, previously marked with white paint to make positive identification possible, had been feeding the young when it called twice from the nest. The sexes may be distinguished by an average difference of three, sometimes four, half tones of pitch in their hoots, the males being the lower (Miller, Condor 36: 207,

FOOD ITEMS BROUGHT TO NEST BY GREAT HORNED OWL
FEBRUARY 26, 1949, TO APRIL 6, 1949

	Decapi- tated	Head present	No record
BIRDS			
Domestic Pigeon, <i>Columba livia</i>	10	1	3
Meadowlark, <i>Sturnella</i> sp.	5	0	1
Starling, <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	0	0	3
English Sparrow, <i>Passer domesticus</i>	0	0	2
Tree Sparrow, <i>Spizella arborea</i>	0	1	0
Harris's Sparrow, <i>Zonotrichia querula</i>	0	1	0
American Woodcock, <i>Philohela minor</i>	1	0	0
Bronzed Grackle, <i>Quiscalus versicolor</i>	3	1	1
Coot, <i>Fulica americana</i>	2	0	0
Pied-billed Grebe, <i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	1	0	0
Purple Martin, <i>Progne subis</i>	0	1	0
MAMMALS			
Rabbit, <i>Sylvilagus floridanus</i>	6	0	0
TOTALS	28	5	10