

A Set of Twelve Eggs of the Woodcock, *Philohela minor*.—In common with other members of the family, a set of eggs of the Woodcock almost always numbers four. Sets of five are rare and sets of three are not common, although found once in a while. The following occurrence is, therefore, of unusual interest.

On April 30, 1938, Paul Bryan of the Tennessee Valley Authority found a nest of this bird at the Wheeler Reservoir, near Decatur, Alabama, that contained 12 eggs. When the report was received with other distribution and migration data, I naturally assumed that an error had been made and wrote Mr. Bryan to that effect. He replied that "The nest of twelve Woodcock eggs is correct. I saw the bird on the nest, flushed her off and counted the eggs. There could be a possibility of several [birds] laying in the same nest although I have never heard of it. I made a complete check of the nest and contents. The eggs were all Woodcock eggs and there were twelve in the nest."

As Mr. Bryan states, this set could have been the product of three females laying in the same nest, but even if this explanation is accepted, the record is most exceptional.—FREDERICK C. LINCOLN, *Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D. C.*

Greater Yellow-legs, *Totanus melanoleucus*, Swimming.—On October 18, 13 Greater Yellow-legs were seen feeding along the edge of a small fresh-water pond on the edge of the salt marsh near Cape May Court House, New Jersey. My companion and I advanced cautiously, and the birds, becoming uneasy, waded out into the pond. Instead of taking flight, as we expected, they continued wading until they floated and then gathered into a close group and continued swimming gently towards the center of the pond. They swam easily, with the fore-part low and the stern high, and kept up a musical gabbling as they progressed. After they had gone about 50 yards and had reached the center of the pond they suddenly sprang into flight and made off, calling the usual tri-syllabic note.

Earlier in the day we had watched a single bird swim across a ten-foot channel in the marsh while chasing small fish, and I have a note of an exactly similar occurrence last year on October 12.

Bent (U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 142: 328, 1927) quotes J. T. Nichols' reference to this not infrequent swimming of the Greater Yellow-legs. It is to be expected that shore-birds can swim; what is surprising is that they do it so seldom.—J. D'ARCY NORTHWOOD, *270 North Fullerton Avenue, Monicclair, N. J.*

Wilson's Phalarope, *Steganopus tricolor*, a New Record for the West Indies.—On September 25, 1949, an example of Wilson's Phalarope, was collected by Mr. François Hayot at Petit-Bourg, Martinique, French West Indies. Identification of the specimen has been confirmed at the American Museum of Natural History, New York, to the collection of which it has been added.

This constitutes a new record for the West Indies, a somewhat remarkable fact because Wilson's Phalarope is a regular migrant to South America and was originally described from Paraguay. The species, unlike the two other phalaropes, is primarily a bird of inland waters rather than of the ocean, and pelagic records in either the Atlantic or the Pacific are extremely rare.

The Martinique specimen is a young bird, wholly comparable in plumage and measurements with others of the same season of the year. Its youthful character was confirmed by examination of the gonads. Its stomach was full of insects in a state of digestion that made identification impossible. The terrain in which it was collected was a bare, flat stretch of land separated from the sea by a mangrove swamp and showing only a few tufts of sedge among pools of rainwater.

Possibly the presence of Wilson's Phalarope at Martinique may be explained by the violent atmospheric disturbance that prevailed over the Caribbean area during September, 1949. Between September 20 and 23 there were similar depressions and anticyclones over the southern United States and the Gulf of Mexico, and on the 24th of the month a hurricane swept over the Tampico district with violent repercussions as far east as the Lesser Antilles.

From July to November, Martinique lies on the flyway of many migrant shore birds, including *Totanus melanoleucus*, *T. flavipes*, *Tringa solitaria*, *Numenius phaeopus*, *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*, *Micropalama himantopus*, *Ereunetes pusillus* and *E. maurii*, *Erolia melanotos*, *E. fuscicollis*, *E. minutilla*, *Pluvialis dominicus*, and *Squatarola squatarola*. Under the circumstances it is likely that further observation in the Lesser Antilles may show that the species here recorded is a less uncommon migrant than has been believed in the past.—REVEREND FATHER PINCHON, *M. Bon-Saint-Come, Martinique*.

The Pomarine Jaeger, *Stercorarius pomarinus*, in South Carolina.—Heretofore, there has been but one record for the occurrence of *Stercorarius pomarinus* in South Carolina—a sight record by Allan R. Phillips, off Charleston, November 4, 1943. On October 28, 1950, while fishing in Lake Moultrie, Santee-Cooper, Berkeley County, S. C., Mr. Ben Scott Whaley of Charleston secured a male Pomarine Jaeger with a boat paddle! It was making an attack on a Laughing Gull, *Larus atricilla*, and had knocked the latter out of the air into the water three times when Mr. Whaley came up to it in an outboard skiff. The jaeger was so intent upon its victim that it was itself killed in the above mentioned manner. The specimen was presented to the Charleston Museum. Two others were seen the same afternoon.

This record, aside from constituting the first actual specimen of the species for the state, is the more remarkable on account of the location. The writer has seen jaegers but twice from South Carolina beaches, though they occur regularly offshore. Lake Moultrie is a huge, impounded body of water, created for hydroelectric power, about 30 miles in from the coast. Its presence attracts numerous gulls, and one supposes that these jaegers must have followed such birds inland. The writer is indebted to Mr. Whaley for the privilege of recording this important capture and observation.—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., *The Crescent, Charleston 50, S. C.*

Nests of the Barn Owl, *Tyto a. pratincola*, and the Red Crossbill, *Loxia curvirostra*, in Essex County, Massachusetts.—The Barn Owl has nested regularly for many years on Martha's Vineyard, off the southeast coast, but there are few records of breeding birds for the mainland of Massachusetts. Several for the Springfield area, Cambridge (1942-1944), Concord and Pittsfield (each in 1945) are the only printed records found for this century. In Essex County the bird has been considered an accidental visitor, with eight records prior to 1949; three of these are substantiated by specimens in the Peabody Museum in Salem. These were collected over a wide span of years: Lynn, 1862; Danvers, 1900; and Ipswich, 1931. On May 9, 1949, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Poor, Jr., of the latter township found an owl sitting on four eggs in their barn; this was identified by Mrs. Lionel Shepherd as a Barn Owl. On June 7, 28 days later, one egg hatched. The adult continued to sit on the remaining eggs until they were removed on June 24, after they had been incubated for more than six weeks. Two proved to be empty, the third was infertile. The single young was photographed and banded on July 9; on July 20 it left the rafter near the nest and was not again seen until July 23 when it was found, well-feathered out, in a "nest" of old automobile tires piled on the floor below. It was noted intermittently