

**Common Tern (*Sterna h. hirundo*) Breeding in the Netherlands Antilles.**—The islands of the Netherlands Antilles—Aruba, Curaçao, and Bonaire—are situated in the Caribbean Sea off the Venezuelan Coast.

The only previous breeding records of the Common Tern in the Netherlands Antilles have been from the island of Bonaire, where Hartert found eggs of the species in abandoned flamingo nests in 1892 (Ibis, 1893: 337) and where Rutten saw a single downy chick a few days old in 1930 (Ardea, 20: 104, 1931).

Annually from 1952 through 1955, we have found loose colonies of two to seven nests on four small islands or groups of islands in the inland bays of southern Curaçao (Isla Makwakoe, Spaanse Water, Nieuwe Haven, and Jan Thiel). Adult birds and eggs have been collected and sent to the Amsterdam Zoological Museum. There Dr. K. H. Voous has identified the birds as specimens of the nominate race, whose only other known tropical breeding ground is off the coast of Nigeria, West Africa.

The eggs average  $41 \times 29$  mm. Their shape is the same as in the northern breeding range, but the color is different, being very light cream, heavily marked with small olive-brown and gray blotches. Complete clutches of one, two, and three eggs have been found, a clutch of two being by far the commonest. Egg dates range from April 26 to August 2.—F. H. ANSINGH AND H. J. KOELERS, *Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles*.

**Southernmost Records for the Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*) in the United States.**—On November 8, 1954, three ducks, which I tentatively identified as mergansers, appeared on the rock pit lake in the Long Pine Key Fire Tower area of the Everglades National Park in south Florida. Their silhouetted outlines looked like those of Hooded Mergansers, but they were in too poor light for me to be sure. I saw these same three ducks several times in the next few weeks, and by November 20 I had identified them as the Hooded Merganser.

Part of the time only two ducks were present and were either a pair, or a female and an immature. When there were three, the group was always composed of a male, a female, and an immature. The last behaved in a consistent manner every time it was present. It was a little smaller than the others and remained close to the female, seeming to do everything the female did. It always remained a few inches behind, never swimming abreast of the female, never going ahead. The pair, however, whether on the lake by themselves or with the immature, remained relatively close but moved about independently.

On December 12, 1954, David Karraker, a park naturalist, reported seeing two Hooded Mergansers, a male and a female, in Barnes Pond on Long Pine Key road, which is but two miles from where I had been observing them. Since the birds which I had been watching disappeared for two or three days whenever boy scouts or other campers came in, there is little doubt that the Barnes Pond individuals were also those visiting the rock pit.

On December 16, I recorded in my notes, "The Mergansers were here [at the rock pit] again at dawn, but there are four this time . . . one male, two females, and the immature. The behavior of the immature and one of the females remains the same."

Mr. Daniel Beard, Superintendent of the park, stopped at the rock pit the next day and was amazed to see the four Hooded Mergansers, his "discovery" making me aware of the rareness of this species in this area and leading me to discover that the southernmost records for these birds have not been published. Mr. Charles Brookfield, of Tropical Audubon, Miami, saw a pair of these ducks on a small pond

near Nine-Mile Bend in the park about 7 years ago. On February 7, 1949, Mr. Willard E. Dilley, park naturalist, flushed a pair of Hooded Mergansers on the same pond. Their records, and mine, which have not appeared until now in the literature, constitute the farthest points south for Hooded Mergansers seen in the United States. The only other record for this species in south Florida is that published by Louis A. Stimson, who saw it off the Tamiami Trail in February, 1941. My rock pit mergansers were 40 miles south of Stimson's, and the birds seen by Brookfield and Dilley were about 60 miles south of the Tamiami Trail and only a mile or two, as the crow flies, from the Gulf.

The rock pit mergansers disappeared during the Christmas holidays as a result of an influx of campers. They were very shy birds, taking several weeks to become accustomed to me without flying off as soon as I appeared. As of the latter part of January, 1955, they had not reappeared.

No record exists for Hooded Mergansers in the Florida Keys, and the pond where Brookfield and Dilley saw them is almost on the bottom edge of the continent. Bond (*Field Guide to Birds of the West Indies*, 1947, p. 44) lists this merganser as a rare winter resident in Cuba. Sprunt reports more of them in Florida than anyone else; in his revision of Howell's 'Florida Bird Life' (1954), he says that he has personally found this merganser to be a regular visitor in small flocks in the ponds of the Kissimmee Prairie, where he says the Audubon trip people see it; but that is well up into the central section of the state.

There are several scattered records for central and northern Florida. Shannon (*Fla. Nat.*, 7: 31, 1934) lists two of these birds shot at Merritt's Island on November 21, 1933. The Christmas 1949 count (*Aud. Field Notes*, 4: 107, 1949) lists 9 Hooded Mergansers for the St. Marks area in northwestern Florida, and Stoddard saw 11 in the same area on October 26, 1950. Longstreet (*Fla. Nat.*, 26: 186, 1953) calls this duck an unusual species for Florida; he says that he first saw the species in this state, a flock of 7 with one male, on December 4, 1925, though he had previously recorded a possible one near Coronado back in December, 1913. He records several near Port Orange, just south of Daytona, on December 12, 1927, and some males and others near Coronado on January 29 and February 19, 1928. On a field trip with Dr. Witmer Stone, then editor of 'The Auk,' he saw a pair near Wilbur on February 3, 1930. At the same place, in company with Eaton and Savage, he saw three on December 26, 1930. On a Christmas census, in 1936, he saw one male and three females, then he saw no more until coming upon one female on a cypress pond on November 15, 1952.

The only breeding records for Florida are cited by Howell (*Florida Bird Life*, 1932, p. 158). He states that Brewster reported this species breeding commonly on the Wekiva River in March, 1877. Young about a week old were seen on the St. John's River near Blue Springs on March 28, 1877. On March 3, 1929, Hellman and a companion saw a female in a cypress swamp near St. Augustine. She was shot and several young scattered in all directions. There have been no breeding records for Florida since then, and strangely, there are no definite nesting records for the species according to Sprunt (1954), in Georgia, and only two for South Carolina.

The Hooded Merganser is an uncommon winter visitor in Florida in general and is exceedingly rare in the southern, sub-tropical portion of the state. The presence of four of these birds in the Everglades National Park this past season raises hope that the protection which the park offers them will encourage them to return and to attract others of their kind into the area.—MARY P. SHERWOOD, *Everglades Natural History Association, Homestead, Florida.*