## GENERAL NOTES

**Albinism in the Herring Gull.**—Since there are few records of albinistic Herring Gulls (*Larus argentatus*), I herewith report those observed at the Bowdoin Scientific Station, Kent Island, Bay of Fundy, New Brunswick, Canada.

A lone, pure white bird was reported by various observers in 1931 and in 1932 I was able to confirm the identity of this or a similar bird as an albino Herring Gull. It was very conspicuous among the thousands of normally plumaged gulls. The albino visited a nest containing two normally colored eggs being incubated by a normally plumaged female. The albino was wary and exhibited behavior perhaps best described as "nervous" when other gulls (which frequently attacked it) were near.

On 6 July 1932 two young were hatched in the nest just mentioned; one was normal in coloration and the other a pure white albino (Figure 1). The albino adult

Figure 1. Albino male Herring Gull at nest with food for newly hatched young.

brought food to the nest on this day. The inference, compatible with a single locus recessive mode of inheritance, is that the adult female was heterozygotic with reference to the gene for albinism and the male homozygotic. The normally colored female and the normal chick were seen near the nest the following day but the albino chick had disappeared and was not seen again.

On 10 July 1947, Raymond A. Paynter, Jr., found a second freshly hatched albino Herring Gull in a nest on Kent Island. Both parents, evidently heterozygotic for albinism, were of normal coloration, as were the eggs. The albino chick lived only one day. No other albinos have been observed in the enormous population of gulls

at Kent Island and indeed I know of only one other definite record, a bird reported by W. L. Lyon (*Bird-Banding*, 9: 102, 1938) from Upper Green Bay, Michigan, and the only albino seen by him in many years of active banding in the Great Lakes region.

It is, however, not out of the question that other albino Herring Gulls have been seen but misidentified. Such misidentifications may have accounted for such reports as that (T. M. Brewer, *J. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist.*, 6: 304, 1852) of Iceland Gulls nesting in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, far to the south of the high arctic breeding range chiefly or solely occupied by that species. Similar southerly breeding records (Bay of Fundy region) of the latter species vaguely reported in Baird, Brewer, and Ridgway's *The water birds of North America* (Boston, Little, Brown and Co., 1884; see vol. 2, p. 218) could have been based upon albinos of Herring Gulls or of other species. A like case of near misidentification, involving an albino Bonaparte's Gull (*L. philadelphia*) at first taken for an Ivory Gull (*Pagophila eburnea*), was reported by A. D. Cruickshank (*Proc. Linn. Soc. New York*, 50 and 51: 31–32, 1940).

The coloration of the eggs of the Herring Gull is extremely variable. About two per cent of the thousands I have examined was nearly white with only faint markings. However, on 28 May 1942 I found a set of two pure white (or "albinistic") eggs. On 28 May 1944 there was a second set of pure white eggs (two) and again on 3 June 1945 a third set (three). All three clutches were in a nest at the same location and apparently all were laid by the same gull. Both members of the pair were of normal coloration and, since albino chicks, as noted above, hatch from normal eggs and normal chicks from "albino" eggs, it would seem that, as is to be expected, there is no similarity between the genetic basis for albinism and the genetic basis (if any) for laying pure white eggs.—Alfred O. Gross, *11 Boody Street, Brunswick, Maine.*

**An additional record of the Yellow-billed Tropicbird (*Phaethon lepturus catesbyi*) from Pennsylvania.**—Records of southern water birds and vagrants found in the northeast as a result of the hurricanes which occurred in the fall of 1954 were summarized in the February, 1955, issue of *Audubon Field Notes.*

To the single record of the Yellow-billed Tropicbird (*Phaethon lepturus catesbyi*) listed from Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, there may be added an additional record from that state. A female of this tropical form was recovered at Nanticoke, Luzerne County, on 16 October 1954, by Mr. David M. Christian. The specimen is now no. 457964 in the collection of the U. S. National Museum.—Gorman M. Bond, *U. S. National Museum, Washington 25, D. C.*

**Nesting of the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher on Long Island, New York.**—The Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila caerulea*) is one of several southern species whose breeding ranges in the eastern states have been expanded northward in the last two to three decades. In 1942, southern New Jersey was listed as the northernmost breeding limit, except for one record from Sussex County in northwestern New Jersey (A. D. Cruickshank, *Birds around New York City*, The American Museum of Natural History Handbook Series, no. 13, 1942; see p. 352). The first discovered breeding in northeastern New Jersey was in 1947 (Fry, *Linnaean News-letter*, 1: 3, 1947). In more recent years nestings in northern New Jersey, southern New York, and Connecticut have been reported in *Audubon Field Notes* as follows: 11: 393, 1957 (Green Village, Morris