

November 1968 slightly north of the Salton Sea in southern California (McCaskie, Audubon Field Notes, 23: 108, 1969).

Pulich hypothesized for the Texas bird a route of travel down the Atlantic Coast and westward along the Gulf during the winter, after which it might have joined northward-migrating Franklin's Gulls (*L. pipixcan*). For the Mississippi bird one could speculate similarly about the route of travel prior to its joining northward-bound Bonaparte's Gulls. A supposition of equal or greater merit might be that the bird accompanied Bonaparte's Gulls down the Illinois Waterway and Mississippi River route from the south end of Lake Michigan (where the Little Gull has been reported many times since the 1940s) in the fall or winter. It then may have been moving northward again by mid-March. I had examined carefully several larger groups of Bonaparte's Gulls at this spot in January and February without detecting any unusual species—for which I was particularly alert because a year previously I collected a Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) under like circumstances at this same site (Davis, Auk, 87: 804, 1970).

I am indebted to M. G. Vaiden for preparation of the specimen, for data cited above, and for confirmation of the identification.—W. MARVIN DAVIS, *Department of Pharmacology, University of Mississippi, University, Mississippi 38677*. Accepted 19 Aug. 70.

A documented instance of reverse migration in the Pintail.—The recovery of U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service band number 636-13408 documents a spectacular instance of reverse migration in the Pintail (*Anas acuta*). U.S.F.&W.S. banders placed this band on an immature male Pintail they caught and released at the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge near Willows, Glenn County, California on 29 August 1969. In February 1970 the Bird Banding Laboratory received a letter (BBL File Reference 6251) from Mike Hay, Box 431, Wrangell, Alaska 99929, stating that while hunting on the Stikine River Flats, approximately 10 miles north of Wrangell, Alaska on 11 October 1969, he killed a Pintail wearing this band. He did not enclose the band in his letter but, when queried by the Bird Banding Laboratory, he sent a photocopy verifying the band number. We feel it safe to assume that this record is valid and that this young male Pintail traveled at least 1,600 miles in a northerly direction in the 43 days between its 29 August banding date and 11 October, when it was shot.—EARL B. BAYSINGER, *Bird Banding Laboratory, Migratory Bird Populations Station, Laurel, Maryland 20810*, and RICHARD D. BAUER, *Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge, Willows, California 95988*. Accepted 16 Sep. 70.

Herring and Ring-billed Gulls paired or courting in Maryland in January and February.—At Woodlawn, Maryland, a piedmont location just west of Baltimore, a dammed stream forms a pond that from early October to early April is commonly frequented in the daytime by small numbers of Herring Gulls (*Larus argentatus*) and by Ring-billed Gulls (*L. delawarensis*) in numbers that at times exceed 100. In late afternoon the birds fly off toward Baltimore harbor or Chesapeake Bay, to return the next morning. At this pond, from 28 February through 21 March 1969, and from 8 to 23 March 1970 I regularly found two Herring Gulls that plainly were paired, and on 27 January 1970 two Ring-billed Gulls that seemed to be either paired or courting.

Herring Gull.—In both 1969 and 1970 the male Herring Gull had the ringed bill of a third-year bird (Poor, Auk, 63: 149, 1946) and the female had a fully adult bill. The birds were sexable by the male's greater size and, in 1969 especially, by the

female's behavior. The signs of paired status included: idling or fishing, they associated almost continuously; they sometimes flew from place to place together, and once I saw them leave the pond together; repeatedly, when one called the other flew to it; they sometimes called and bowed together. Also, once in 1969 the female went to the male and they touched bills, and once in 1970 something similar occurred.

In 1969 I watched the paired birds for 9 hours on 11 days. Outstandingly, on 17 March the female once walked directly toward the male in the horizontal posture that Tinbergen (*The Herring Gull's world*, London, Collins, 1953: pp. 105-107) describes and pictures as that of a female "proposing," and she once nibbled the male's neck and the two then "sparred" with their bills in what seemed to be the courtship-feeding prelude described by Tinbergen (op. cit., pp. 51, 106), although no feeding occurred. On 20 March the female once walked a short arc beside the male in the "proposing" posture.

I watched the 1970 pair for 4½ hours on 8 days. Curiously, 17 March again was the day of most striking activity. The male once uttered cries as the female alighted beside him and the two then gave a number of upward tosses of the head. A bit later the male called and the female alighted directly in front of him and they came close to touching bills. Still later they called steadily, in almost regular alternation, for more than a minute, and again called briefly in unison. Once the male chased a first-winter bird that settled on the water between him and the female, and once the female chased away a subadult that came near them.

On Skokholm, Wales, Fisher and Lockley state (*Sea-Birds*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1954, p. 231), Herring Gulls may begin pairing "even before the new year." On the Netherlands North Sea coast they begin to concentrate around their breeding places in February and "weeks before their first visit to the dunes they begin to form pairs" (Tinbergen, op. cit., 98). In Scotland "some display has been noted in the wintering places in the Tay estuary quite away from the nesting areas" (Boase, *Brit. Birds*, 45: 320, 1952). Although pairing by 28 February and at a distance from a breeding ground is therefore not surprising, I have been able to find no published American observation of the sort.

The similar performances I witnessed by similar birds at the same little pond at the same period in successive years suggest that these birds were the same individuals and that the "third-year" bill may be retained beyond that age. William H. Drury, Jr., comments (pers. comm.) that in his work with Herring Gulls in Massachusetts "we have not found any [banded ones] in 'third-year plumage' that were older than three years. I don't know whether anyone else has, but I would not be surprised to find that it happened. My intuitive response is that these gulls were the same birds in the two consecutive years but that the age is an open question."

Ring-billed Gull.—On 27 January 1970 three adult Ring-billed Gulls were idling on the ice-covered pond, some yards apart. After a while one walked a circle around another, at a distance of 2 yards or so. I did not notice its posture then, but immediately afterward it was moving about with body horizontal, head withdrawn and bill horizontal, and at first with its shoulders hunched. It was giving rather weak calls that sounded like "hooée." After many seconds of this, it and one of the others were side by side and the other took the same posture. Then the two gripped bills and fluttered for a fraction of a second; upon separating, one of them gave a number of cries with upward tosses of the head. Here I lost track of individual identities, but now for 2 minutes one of the three gulls followed another about, keeping the horizontal posture and at intervals giving "quéea" cries, some of which were accompanied by an upward toss of the head, some by a slight forward thrust of the slightly

lowered bill, some by no head action. Then it turned away from the bird it had been pursuing, for 3 minutes more walked about widely in the horizontal posture, then took wing and both of the others followed suit and all disappeared.

The resemblance of this behavior to "proposing" by a female Herring Gull suggests that it too was courtship. No literature available to me touches on the subject, but William E. Southern, who is studying the Ring-bill on Lake Michigan, states (pers. comm.) that the courtship behavior of the two species is indeed similar. Ring-billed Gulls were present at Woodlawn into early April, but on no other occasion did I see any indication of courtship or of paired status.—HERVEY BRACKBILL, 2620 Poplar Drive, Baltimore, Maryland 21207. Accepted 1 Sep. 70.

Molting Greater Shearwaters (*Puffinus gravis*) off Tierra Del Fuego.—In January 1966, J. P. Angle and I photographed Greater Shearwaters, *Puffinus gravis*, at the Atlantic entrance to the Straits of Magellan and observed them in and just south of the Lemaire Strait between Tierra del Fuego and Staten Island. We recorded the species on three out of four passages throughout the area 1, 2, 13, 14, and 18 January, but not 23–24 February. The most birds seen together was 100; other flocks of 10 to 25 were seen, but they were not generally numerous. Likewise, Peter C. Harper (pers. comm.) saw several Greater Shearwaters, 20 January to 15 March 1966, in the Lemaire and near South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands, while Bourne (1963) and Bourne and Radford (1961), quote sightings as far south as 54° 08' S, 43° 45' W (east of South Georgia) in early April 1961 and at 52° 30' S, 53° W (east of the Falklands) in late December 1959. There is also a specimen from "Tierra del Fuego" (possibly taken at sea off the east coast or near Bahia Orange)

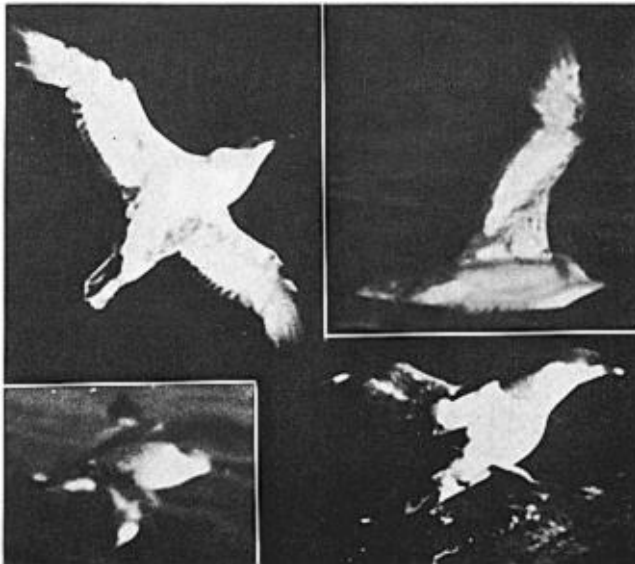


Figure 1. Greater Shearwaters at Atlantic entrance to the Straits of Magellan, January 1966. Innermost primaries and primary coverts are in molt showing irregular margin and white bases of underlying feathers.