

appearing at intervals, usually after a storm. On February 21, 1934, while the writer was standing in the entrance of the local grain elevator he saw a solitary Heppburn almost at his feet, picking up waste wheat. On March 9, some forty finches visited our hay stacks, and from these, five specimens were collected, three *tephrocotis* and two *littoralis*. It is likely that in any good-sized flock there will be found a sprinkling of the latter kind.—LAURENCE B. POTTER, *Gower Ranch, Eastend, Saskatchewan, Canada, April 4, 1935.*

Nesting Colonies of the Herring Gull in British Columbia.—Recent authors have recorded the Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus smithsonianus*) as nesting at Atlin Lake (59° N, 133° W), in the extreme northwest, and at Babine Lake (54° N, 126° W), in the central part of the Province. So far as I know, these are the only published nesting records for British Columbia. The first of these, reported by E. M. Anderson (Rep. Provincial Museum Nat. Hist. for 1914 [1915], p. 9), has

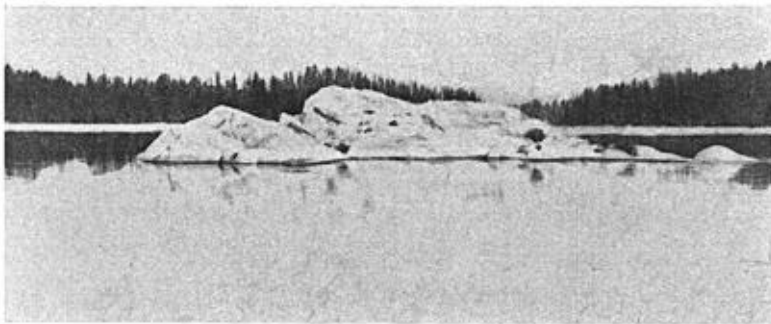


Fig. 42. Nesting site of Herring Gulls on islet in Bridge Lake, British Columbia.

been substantiated by Allan Brooks and R. M. Stewart, both of whom have visited the nesting colony which is situated on an island close to the village at Atlin. The record for Babine Lake is based on less satisfactory evidence. The reference apparently was first published by Cooke (U. S. Dept. Agr., Bull. 292, 1915, p. 36). Miss M. T. Cooke, Bureau of Biological Survey, Washington, D. C., informs me that the statement is based on a record by E. A. Preble (MS 1903, Bureau of Biological Survey, Washington, D. C.) which reads as follows: "A few Herring Gulls were seen daily near the outlet of Babine Lake, August 17 to 19. A native told me that they nest in small numbers on Babine River a few miles below the lake, as well as on certain islands in Babine Lake."

The purpose of this paper is to describe a Herring Gull colony located on Bridge Lake (51° N, 120° W), approximately 200 miles south and 200 miles east of Babine Lake, which I visited on July 26, 1933. Local residents report that this colony has existed for many years.

Bridge Lake, four and one-half miles long and a mile and a half wide, is one of a number of deep-water lakes which occupy a well wooded and picturesque plateau in one of the less frequented regions of the Cariboo District. The zonal association is predominantly Canadian. A forest of lodge-pole pine, Douglas fir and black spruce intermixed with trembling aspen extends to a shore-line growth of willow, birch and alder. Here and there, particularly on the south and east, trembling aspen occurs in clear stands of tall, slim, white-barked specimens. The shores are rocky and in some places steep. There are twenty-six islands in the lake, ranging in extent from a few square yards to one of approximately 180 acres. The islands are well timbered, with one exception noted below; even the smallest support some tree growth. The lake shore is irregular, with deep bays and long peninsulas so that it is not possible from any one place on the shore to see the lake as a whole nor to distinguish always between mainland and island. The waters are not very

productive of plant life or invertebrates. Some of the bays are shallow but support little aquatic vegetation, this chiefly *Potamogeton perfoliatus*. Only one stand of tules was observed, a sparse growth on a submerged reef close to the west shore measuring approximately 10 by 150 feet. Two kinds of molluscs were collected.

Local residents report the presence of the following fishes: Kamloops trout, lake char, ling, squawfish and two species of sucker. Remains of lake shiners were found in gull pellets.

Fifteen pairs of gulls were nesting on Stack Rocks, an island of gray and white granitic rock situated some 250 yards from the east shore of the lake. Except for one small clump of sedge this island was bare of vegetation, and it is the only one of its kind in the lake. The measurements, at the water level obtaining on July 26, 1933, were 65 feet by 30 feet. The height at the highest point was 6 feet.

As I approached the island all the adult gulls flew out and circled over the advancing boat, so that it was a simple matter to make an exact count. As the boat drew nearer to the island the young birds, numbering twelve, swam out from the rocks. These twelve young birds, apparently all that had survived, were one-quarter to one-half grown. An adult female and a half-grown female were collected and preserved. The former is in worn plumage, the white tips to the primaries largely disintegrated.

The nests, of which twigs formed the chief constituent, had been built in rock crevices, and all but one had degenerated to shapeless masses of debris mixed with an accumulation of fish-bones and other litter. The nest which had remained intact was well made of twigs, chiefly spruce, lined with moss.

On May 15, 1934, the island was visited by Mr. F. M. Bell, a local rancher, who informed me that on that date there were fifteen nests, six with three eggs each, six with one egg each, and three empty. Mr. Bell counted thirty-three gulls. He mentions also that the first gull for the season was seen on April 15 and that the ice went out of Bridge Lake on April 26.

In order to learn something of the food habits of this colony the island was searched carefully for pellets and other food remains, with rather meager results. A number of fish skulls and vertebrae were identified as belonging to suckers. These and four regurgitated pellets were the only materials collected. One pellet contained bones and abraded feathers of a passerine bird; two contained bones, including pharyngeal teeth of lake shiner (*Richardsonius balteatus*), together with fragments of moss and vegetable debris; one contained abdominal segments and other hard parts of *Dytiscus* larvae representing at least eleven individuals.

Acknowledgment is made to Professor J. R. Dymond, Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology, Toronto, Ontario, for determination of large fish bones, and to Dr. W. A. Clemens, Director of the Pacific Biological Station, Nanaimo, British Columbia, for cooperation in the study of material composing regurgitated pellets.—J. A. MUNRO, *Okanagan Landing, B. C., Canada, August 14, 1934.*

A New Name for the Large-billed Hawk of Western Costa Rica and Panama.—Transfer of the tropical American hawks formerly included in the genus *Rupornis* to the genus *Buteo* (Peters, *Birds of the World*, 1, 1931, p. 228, and van Rossem, *Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool.*, 77, Dec., 1934, p. 429) makes necessary a new name for *Buteo magnirostris ruficauda* (Sclater and Salvin) [*Asturina ruficauda* Sclater and Salvin, *Proc. Zool. Soc.*, 1869, p. 133]. The subspecific name is preoccupied by *Accipiter ruficaudus* Vieillot (*Ois. d'Amér. Sept.*, 1, 1807, pl. 14), a synonym of *Buteo borealis borealis* (Gmelin). I therefore propose as a substitute: *Buteo magnirostris petulans*, nom. nov.—A. J. VAN ROSSEM, *San Diego Society of Natural History, San Diego, California, April 3, 1935.*

Variability in Size of Gulls.—Gulls are notoriously variable in size. This is particularly true of the larger and especially of the more maritime species. The Glaucous Gull shows it in extreme measure, but it is also strongly evident in the Herring, Glaucous-winged, Black-backed and others. It is less marked in the smaller inland and land-feeding species such as the Bonaparte and Franklin gulls.

It seems reasonable to suppose that this great difference in size of individuals of certain species may be largely due to, or emphasized by, variations in food supply