

breed the first year is substantiated. We learned through trapping the adults that occasionally they return to nest in the colony where they were hatched, and we hope by more intensive trapping next year to bring to light additional facts.

Auburndale, Massachusetts.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A BIRD-BANDING TRIP

By WINSOR M. TYLER

ON the way to Penikese from New Bedford we see little of the terns until the boat passes to the eastward of the island. Our first sight of them in any numbers is as they fly overhead on their way to and from their feeding-grounds; those flying toward Penikese have food in their bills. But even now, within sight of one of the largest colonies of breeding terns on the New England coast, the number of birds in the air gives no suggestion of the thousands which are near.

They straggle along, perhaps more often alone than with a companion, and are generally silent, although a bird may scream on occasion even with a fish in its bill. They are making good progress, however, and, with strong, regular wing-beats, are holding a straight course toward their nests or their fishing-ground.

At a distance, when the birds are too far away for us to see the color of their beaks, the two species which breed on Penikese Island may often be easily distinguished. The mantle of the Roseate Tern is paler than that of the Common Tern, but this difference is an unreliable mark in bright sunlight. A *positive* mark, however, readily seen in the field, results from the Roseate Tern's longer outer tail feathers. These feathers are so long that the bird's progress through the air twists them, and exposes to our view their wider upper or under surface. At a certain distance, the part of the feather just above the tip is invisible, and this peculiarity gives the effect of a tern pursued through the air by a tiny white butterfly. I have never seen this effect in the case of a Common Tern.

Penikese is a lonely, green little island—two grassy hills with a strip of sandy beach between. The grass covers the slope of the hills almost down to the sea, where there is a narrow stony beach. The terns nest almost everywhere on the island, perhaps most numerous on the stretch of sandy beach, but many lay their eggs in the tall thick grass on the hills, on the rocky beaches where the stones are not too large, on the windrows

of dry seaweed piled up by the tide, and even on little platforms of earth overhung by sod where high tides have undercut the hills.

As we walk among the nests, a "cloud of witnesses" hangs above us, lovely, graceful, delicately colored birds to the eye; harsh, ear-piercing, almost venomous they seem to our sense of hearing as they swoop over our heads. In contrast to the hysterical adults, the little downy chicks crouch, quiet and unconcerned like fluffy kittens, or toddle away, stumbling over the pebbles. When we pick them up to band them, some lie passive in our hand, others struggle, the larger ones often biting our fingers. It seems strange that individuals but a few days from the egg, whose experience during their short life can have varied little, should manifest such different behavior. I can think of no more probable explanation of this difference than that some of the chicks are well-fed and sleepy and that others are made restless by hunger.

The difference between the chicks of the Roseate and Common Terns is astonishing, considering the strong resemblance between the adult birds. The chick of the Common Tern is buff with blotches of black, whereas the little Roseate Tern is a uniform color on the back—very like the fur of a cotton-tail rabbit. The tarsi and feet of the young Common Tern are either flesh-colored or pale orange, those of the young Roseate are dark, suggesting the color of a negro's skin. The behavior of the young birds differs also; the young Common Terns either lie quiet or run, often making for the water and leading a lively chase, whereas the tendency of the young Roseate is to hide, concealing itself under a bit of driftwood or the edge of a flat stone, or sometimes only pushing its head, ostrich-wise, against a roll of seaweed.

Very early in their lives, certainly by the time they have acquired their first real feathers, the young terns cry out when picked up. The Common Terns are much noisier and use a note very similar to the sharp cry of their parents,—*tee-arr*. The Roseates give a very different cry, that of *their* parents, a rasping, low-toned *a-a-a-a* (*a* as in *at*).

Intensive bird-banding in a big tern colony is no picnic. One's attention is confined to finding the young birds and avoiding stepping on either birds or eggs. We found ourselves while on Penikese in the situation of the blueberry-picker who is so concentrated on the blueberries that he does not see or hear the birds about him, or the golfer who while he is a golfer cannot be an ornithologist. Therefore these notes represent only what we saw or heard out of the corner of our eyes and

ears, but they recall to me three delightful days spent in the company of Laurence B. Fletcher and fifteen thousand terns.¹

INFORMATION DESIRED REGARDING BIRDS OF PREY

IN the Second Bulletin of the International Committee for Bird Preservation Dr. T. Gilbert Pearson prints the following summary of the remarks of Dr. Einar Lönnberg, a delegate from Sweden to the conference which was held at Geneva, Switzerland, May 21-22, 1928:

“Dr. Lönnberg states that the returns from Hawks banded in Sweden have shown a large percentage of them killed during the period of migration. For example, of the Hen Harrier [a species closely related to our Marsh Hawk] he says, ‘Three score were banded as young; not less than 18 of these have been killed by man and reported. Thus as far as is known the relative death was 30 per cent.’

“Of 56 Common Buzzards [closely related to our Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks] banded in southern Sweden bands have been returned from 10, giving known death rate 17.8 per cent. Of the Eastern Buzzard 9 were banded, 4 returned, known death rate 44 per cent. Of 23 Rough-legged Buzzards [congener of our Rough-legged Hawk] banded 2 bands were returned. Of the Honey Buzzard 27 were banded and 7 rings reported, making known death rate 26 per cent. Fifteen Ospreys banded; 4 returns; making death rate 26.6 per cent. Peregrine Falcon [like our Duck Hawk] 15 banded; 4 returns; making death rate 26.6 per cent. Of 24 specimens of the Kestrel [related to our Sparrow Hawk] banded only 2 bands have been returned. In all, during 7 years, 270 birds of prey belonging to 11 species have been ringed in Sweden and of these not less than 60 have been reported as killed. This is 22 per cent of the total.’

“Dr. Lönnberg makes the point that these records tend to show a very large killing of the Swedish birds of prey, and urges international action to preserve these interesting and in most cases useful birds.”

In the *Bulletin of the Northeastern Bird-Banding Association*

¹ The Common and Roseate Terns banded by Tyler and Fletcher referred to in this article numbered approximately three thousand. The bands were placed from July 4 to 16, 1929.—EDDROD.