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— 305 West Pinehurst, Spring Hill, FL
33512.

BREEDING RANGE EXPANSION

First Arctic Tern colony in the contiguous western United States

An 825 mile southeastward extension of the Pacific coast
breeding range of *Sterna paradisaea*

David A. Manuwal, Philip W. Mattocks, Jr.,
and Klaus O. Richter

WHILE STUDYING BIRD use of dredged material islands in 1977, we discovered a colony of Arctic Terns on Jetty Island, Everett harbor, Snohomish County, Washington (48°5'N, 122°30'W). The nearest known colony was on Tracy Arm, south of Juneau, Alaska, 825 miles to the northwest (Gabrielson and Lincoln 1959, *Birds of Alaska*). Open sandy or gravelly sites for the nesting of Arctic Terns are uncommon between southeastern Alaska and Puget Sound. The many natural islands here are usually tree-covered or rocky. Islands of dredged material, however, often provide excellent habitat for tern nesting in other areas (Soots and Parnell 1975, Sea Grant UNC-SG-75-27 North Carolina State University).

We visited Jetty Island June 9, July 21, and August 30, 1977 and estimated the population to be seven pairs. In 1978 our coverage was slightly more thorough and after censusing on May 27, June 10 & 28, and July 3, 7, 13, 15, we estimated the population to be ten pairs. These estimates were based on the numbers of nests found (3 in 1977, 7 in 1978) and the number of territorial adults observed at each of the several nesting areas. At the north end of the island the birds occupy a Vel-

vet Grass (*Holcus lanatus*)/bare ground habitat, while near the middle they occupy a Large-headed Sedge (*Carex macrocephala*)/bare ground habitat.

Clutch size for the two years combined was 2.9 (n = 10). In 1978, egg-laying was noted to be distinctly asynchronous, as we observed free-flying young, flightless chicks, and incubating adults all on July 13. Fledglings were routinely fed while on log rafts adjacent to the island. These rafts provided a safe environment from rats and other potential predators.

JETTY ISLAND WAS CREATED between 1894 and 1903, and at 81 hectares at high tide during 1977 is the largest dredged material island in Puget Sound. Siltation of the nearby Snohomish River has prompted subsequent dredging in 1916, 1921, 1938, 1945, and 1969 (Parks 1973 unpubl. report, Port of Everett). The island is relatively flat; slightly

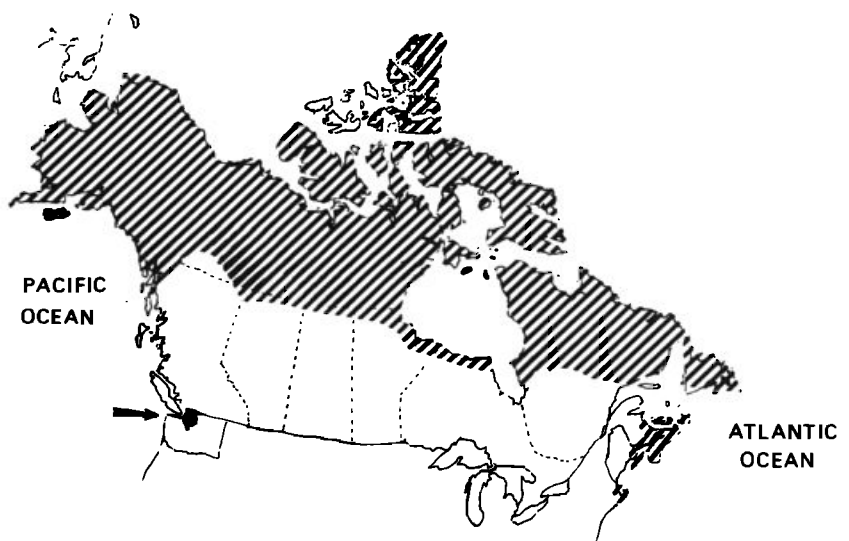


Fig. 1. Known distribution of breeding Arctic Terns in North America showing location of new colony (arrow).



Fig. 2. Incubating Arctic Tern on Jetty Island, Washington (Photo/Klaus O. Richter).

higher at the northern shrub-covered end and grading toward a central and southern grass-covered portion. It is currently being used as an undeveloped recreation area by the Port of Everett. The number of visitors during the summer season appears to be low; however, despite easy access to the island. Owing to more intensive recreational use in the

near past, and the dumping of dredge material during 1969, we consider the colony to be of fairly recent origin.

There is a colony of approximately 100 pairs of Glaucous-winged Gulls (*Larus glaucescens*) adjacent to the tern nesting area on the north end. Other species breeding on the island, based on nests, fledglings, or persistent territorial birds,

were Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Common Nighthawk, Red-winged Blackbird, Savannah Sparrow, and White-crowned Sparrow. In addition, a small group (4 adult, 7 immature) of Common Terns (*S. hirundo*) was present from at least June 28, 1978 through July. These terns remained quietly and exclusively on the mudflats and are presumed to be summering non-breeding individuals. Photographs of both species of terns, and of the Arctic Tern nests, eggs, and fledglings, are on file with the Washington State Bird Records Committee. We also found Norway Rats (*Rattus norvegicus*) and an unidentified *Microtus* sp. on the island.

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— Wildlife Science Group, College of Forest Resources (Manuwal), Dept. of Zoology, University of Washington, Seattle, 98195 (Mattocks); John Graham Company, Seattle (Richter).

DISTRIBUTION

New records of birds for the Virgin Islands

Sight records of birds added to the Virgin Islands list, with additional distributional notes

Robert L. Norton

During my most recent visits to the Virgin Islands, October 3-6, 1976 and December 29, 1977 - April 17, 1978, I recorded several bird species that enlarge the local list of recorded migrants; six of these are new for the United States and British Virgin Islands. In addition, there are five species recorded below which have not pre-

viously been found on St. Thomas, but have been recorded on neighboring islands (Philibosian and Yntema, 1977). Nomenclature follows Bond (1971).

Ring-necked Duck, *Aythya collaris*. One female was observed feeding in a small freshwater pond, Smith Bay, St. Thomas, on January 2, 9, and 29, 1978, two observers on Jan. 29 (RAD and RLN). This is a new record for

the United States and British Virgin Islands. A previously known record for this area is from Puerto Rico in 1878 (Wetmore, 1927). Incredibly, an adult male was observed at Grootpan Bay salt pond near Lameshur Bay, St. John, February 8, 1978.

Peregrine Falcon, *Falco peregrinus*. An adult male was observed chasing dove spp. near Rata and Durlow Cays, north of Cruz Bay, St. John, April 13, 1978. Peregrines have not been recorded for the northern United States Virgin Islands. It was again observed at close range at Tobago Island in the British Virgin Islands on the same day.

Clapper Rail, *Rallus longirostris*. An adult with downy week-old chick was observed at the "Lagoons" near the sanitary landfill, St. Thomas January 9, 1978. The last known breeding record for this species is approximately 1940 (Nichols, 1943).

Herring Gull, *Larus argentatus*. An immature bird was compared with Laughing Gulls, *L. atricilla*, at the "Lagoons" October 3, 1976. This is a first record for the northern Virgin Islands.

Chuck-will's-widow, *Caprimulgus carolinensis*. One bird was observed in Mandhal, St. Thomas January 21, 1978 providing a new record for this island, although this species is a common winter resident on neighboring islands.