

## General Notes.

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NOTES ON TERNS. STERNA HIRUNDO, S. DOUGALLI AND S. ANTILLARUM. The Penikese Island colony of Terns (*S. hirundo* *S. dougalli*) was reported as larger this past summer than last year, though not as large as in the summer of '99. The Woepecket Island colonies have increased in size the past two summers. On two of the three islands there were quite a number of Roseates (*S. dougalli*), but the greater number were Common Terns (*S. hirundo*). A few Least Terns (*S. antillarum*), were found breeding on Martha's Vineyard Island, near West Chop, by Dr. H. Smith, late in July.

I kept two young Roseates and one Common Tern this past summer for about a month in connection with some work on feather pigmentation. In my experience, the Roseates are less easily tamed and they learn to take food less readily. In the course of two weeks, however, the young Roseates became quite accustomed to me and would set up a violent screaming for food at the sound of my steps outside of the room in which they were kept. They usually refused to take food from other persons unless very hungry. My young Common Terns have been uniformly less noisy.

Especially interesting to me have been the wing exercises carried on with evident delight for several days before the birds were able to lift themselves above the ground. On being removed from a cage to an open space, they would grow greatly excited in the pleasure of these wing trials.

So far as my observations go, the young birds do not have to catch fish themselves until a considerable time after they are able to fly. In early August one sees many young birds about Woods Hole accompanied and fed by their parents. The fish-catching habit seems to be acquired largely by imitation and to be only partially instinctive. The young Roseates were left for 7 hours one day without food except for some live young mummichogs (*Fundulus*) swimming in a dish of water in the same room with the birds. The Terns became very hungry, but

they did not make any efforts to catch any of the fish, though they noticed the splashes of the latter.

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FIVE DAYS AMONG THE ISLANDS OF LAKE ERIE. Five days, from August 5th to the 9th, spent among the islands near the western end of Lake Erie yielded surprising results. We two insatiable bird cranks, Rev. W. L. Dawson and the writer, left Oberlin on the noon train and left Sandusky on the 3:30 boat and were landed on the wharf of Middle Bass Island at 6 o'clock. The work of recording the resident birds began at once. A large pond near the middle of the island was swarming with shore birds of eight species, not to mention a half dozen Great Blue Herons, nine King Rails, many Green Herons, a Bittern and a flock of fourteen Black Ducks. Swallows skimmed the water's surface and Common Terns winged across the island. A solitary Kingfisher sprung his rattle upon us. This was a most propitious beginning. Yellow Warblers were apparently still in full song.

I shall not take the time to go into detail now, but rather briefly summarize the work done.

From Middle Bass we secured a row boat, and in it visited nine islands, involving about 30 miles of rowing, some of it in rough seas. Upon four of the islands Common Terns were still nesting in considerable numbers, while perhaps half of the birds flying about were in young plumage. On one island the Purple Martins formed a roost of nearly 2000 individuals. The best of evidence pointed to a considerable roost of blackbirds on one other island.

It is interesting to note that Carolina Wrens and Cardinals were seen and heard singing on East Sister island, well into the Canadian boundary, while in Lorain county they are not at all numerous. Indeed, the Carolina Wren is a rare find at any time of year. On the other hand, Yellow Warblers were not recorded north of Middle Bass, where they were in full song. The physical conditions were apparently as favorable on East Sister as on Middle Bass, and certainly no less so on North