

A Curious Tern Accident.—On April 22, 1933, at 4:30 P. M., I was coming up the river about five miles below the city, and seeing something white draped across the top of an old piling, crossed to the north side to investigate. It proved to be a Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia imperator*), with its bill firmly driven into the top of the partially decayed and spongy piling. I had to twist the bird's head considerably before the tapered bill could be withdrawn. One inch from the end of the upper bill the fibers of the horny sheath were broken, as the mandible had bent, and this mark still (March 16, 1934) shows on the prepared skin.

On manipulating the wings before skinning, a gush of water came from the lungs. The plumage was immaculate, except for a slight stain, where the breast had rested against the muddy pile.

The tide at this time was six feet above local low water, and the piling lacked one foot of being covered. I had quite accurate knowledge that the tide had been eight and a half feet above local low water, at about 8:00 A. M., some two miles farther up river. So at no time could the piling have been covered more than one and a half feet.

It seems likely that the tern had seen the dark piling top through the swirling yellow water, or that a fish had actually swam over the top, and the bird in diving had fastened itself and drowned.

Gulls, with their competition of numbers and the diversity of their ways of feeding, are prone to all manner of accidents, such as the Herring Gull (*Larus a. smithsonianus*) which, a year or so ago, picked up a Gillette razor blade as it was thrown into the water alongside of the dredge, and swallowed it, to fly away a little distance, alight on the water and die within a few minutes. But this is the first similar tern accident to come to my notice.—IVAN TOMKINS, *U. S. Dredge Morgan, Savannah, Ga.*

The Blue-gray Gnatcatcher Moving Its Nest.—During 1932 and 1933, several notes regarding the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher's habit of moving its nest were published in the WILSON BULLETIN. Still another instance may not be amiss, as it contains one fact that is at least unusual. On April 30, 1934, I found a nest about half finished in an old orchard near Lexington, Virginia. It was saddled on a limb about twelve feet up in a small apple tree. After watching the work of construction, in which both the birds shared, I climbed to the nest. The birds did not seem to be particularly alarmed. On May 5, Rev. John Grey found another nest in an apple tree about fifty yards away. As I had seen only one pair in the orchard, I investigated and found that the first nest had disappeared, only a few scraps of it being left. It seems evident that the first nest had been destroyed and its material utilized in the construction of the second. On May 11, the second nest contained two eggs. The novel point referred to about this second nest is that it was not saddled on a limb, but set between three small forks of an upright crotch, in the manner of the nests of the Yellow Warbler and Redstart. The Blue-gray Gnatcatcher is an uncommon summer resident here.—J. J. MURRAY, *Lexington, Va.*