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ARETAS A. SAUNDERS, P. O. Box 141, Canaan, Connecticut, May 8, 1959.

Early and elaborate nests of the Killdeer in Hancock County, Ohio.—The beginning of the nesting season for the Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*) in Ohio is usually given as "April," although it sometimes begins in March. On March 31, 1946, I found a Killdeer nest containing four eggs in front of the clubhouse of the Skeet Club, two miles southeast of Findlay, Ohio. On March 24, 1945, I found a nest containing three eggs in a stone quarry in Findlay. A fourth egg was laid on March 26.

The Killdeer may build a nest more often than is popularly supposed. Of 10 nests found in recent years, two have been elaborately constructed. One of these was found between two rows of plants in a soybean field on June 30, 1948. It contained four eggs. This nest was built in a slight depression, the bottom of which was paved with small pebbles. These stones were flat and about half an inch wide.

The other elaborately constructed nest was the March 24 nest mentioned above. This nest was four inches in diameter, placed in a slight depression, and surrounded by a rough circle of eight pieces of limestone, averaging two inches in height. The area between these rocks had been paved with approximately 180 flat pieces of limestone and coal. The paving material toward the center of the nest averaged one-fourth inch in diameter. The outer edge of the nest was higher than the center and consisted of larger pieces of stone and coal averaging one-half inch in diameter. The four eggs in this nest hatched before 9:00 a.m. on April 19.—RICHARD STUART PHILLIPS, 834 Liberty Street, Findlay, Ohio, February 11, 1959.

A hybrid White-crowned × White-throated Sparrow.—On several occasions at Fort Belvoir, Fairfax County, Virginia, in December, 1957, and January, 1958, several people, including P. A. DuMont, Donald Lamm, and I, had excellent views of what were thought to be at least three adult Gambel's Sparrows (*Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii*). The birds were in a mixed flock of sparrows, including nine or 10 White-crowned Sparrows (*Z. l. leucophrys*). I collected one of the three supposedly Gambel's Sparrows on January 5, 1958, at Fort Belvoir. The specimen was prepared as no. 468554 (U. S. National Museum).

The specimen was not prepared until mid-May but was then compared carefully to specimens of the genus *Zonotrichia* in the USNM. In the opinions of Dr. Alexander Wetmore, Dr. John Aldrich, Dr. H. Friedmann, and Mr. H. G. Diegman, specimen no. 468554 is a hybrid between White-crowned and White-throated (*Z. albicollis*) Sparrows, and not an example of Gambel's Sparrow.

The two most convincing characteristics which led to this conclusion are: (1) The very broad and large white loreal area corresponding exactly in size and shape with that area in *Z. albicollis* (which is yellow in adults of that species). This same area in every specimen of *Z. l. gambelii* at the USNM is much narrower and more confined. (2) The coloration

of the feathers at the bend of the wing in specimen no. 468554, and in all those of *Z. albicollis* in the USNM are lemon yellow, whereas this same area is cream or white in specimens of *Z. l. leucophrys* and *Z. l. gambelii*.

Several other pertinent features of the hybrid specimen are: (1) Extreme amount of chestnut in the edgings of the secondary wing feather corresponding well with the majority of specimens of *Z. albicollis*, whereas in specimens of *Z. l. leucophrys* and *Z. l. gambelii*, this color, if present, is either confined to a much narrower area on each feather and to a less extensive area on the wing, or is darker (almost umber) in color. (2) The nearly pure white belly and pure gray breast of the specimen which match the normal shades of *Z. albicollis* rather than the darker gray and/or brownish-tinted coloring of these areas in nearly all specimens of *Z. l. leucophrys* and *Z. l. gambelii*.

This appears to be the first known specimen of a hybrid between *Z. l. leucophrys* and *Z. albicollis*. Cockrum (1952. *Wilson Bull.*, 64:150) reported no record of such a hybrid. A search of the literature since that date has revealed no notation of previous examples of such a hybrid as this one.—JACKSON M. ABBOTT, 1100 Doter Drive, Alexandria, Virginia, January 12, 1959.

A nesting colony of Forster's Terns and Black Skimmers in Southwestern Louisiana.—From July 12 to August 18, 1958, a small breeding colony of Forster's Terns (*Sterna forsteri*) and Black Skimmers (*Rynchops nigra*) was observed on Rockefeller Refuge in southwestern Louisiana. The refuge is an expanse of marshland adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico. The nesting birds were concentrated on two low clay levees on the margin of Deep Lake, approximately four miles inland from the coast. The levees were parallel and separated by a canal 150 yards wide. Each levee was about five yards wide by 400 yards long, and the maximum height of either area was 18 inches above water level. Waves frequently washed across the levees in several locations. Nesting was concentrated at the ends of the levees. The vegetation was very sparse and consisted of scattered clumps of *Spartina alterniflora*, *Distichlis spicata*, and *Heliotropium curassavicum*.

The average population of the colony was 165 Black Skimmers (range 118 to 207) and 53 Forster's Terns (range 46 to 57). Actual nest concentration of the two species, however, was about equal. Maximum nest counts, on nine checking dates, were 76 Black Skimmer nests and 62 Forster's Tern nests. There were nearly three times as many skimmers as there were skimmer nests, but there was approximately one tern for each tern nest. This suggests that the Black Skimmer population was composed of breeding and non-breeding birds of both sexes. The Forster's Tern population, however, probably consisted of nesting birds of only one sex.

Terns and skimmers nested close together on both levees, but the ratio of the nesting species in the two locations was quite different. On the north levee the ratio of Forster's Tern nests to Black Skimmer nests was 4:1. The ratio was just the reverse on the south levee. There was no apparent conflict between species.

The Black Skimmer nests were merely depressions in the hard clay. The tern nests were prominent conical mounds of dead marsh vegetation, each containing a definite depression on top. The number of eggs per nest was about three for both species. Many skimmer eggs, particularly on the south levee, were concentrated at the water edge. They had either been laid at random, thrown from the nest, or washed from the levee by high waves.

The height of nesting occurred in the tern population on July 12, but the Black Skimmer population did not attain a nesting peak until July 25. Downy young terns