

5 years old. (See note elsewhere in this issue on old Purple Finch. -Ed.)

Westport Point, Massachusetts

\*\*\*

BANDING A PARASITIC JAEGER  
By Mabel Gillespie

On September 8, 1961, while I was at my summer home on Martha's Vineyard Island (south of Cape Cod), Ethel Roberts of Edgartown phoned to ask me to band an immature Parasitic Jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*). Mrs. Roberts has raised exotic birds and is adept at caring for injured or sick wild birds. The Jaeger had been found on one of the island beaches unable to fly, and was brought to her.

Accompanied by Grace Meleney and others, I drove the six miles to Mrs. Roberts' home. The Jaeger was obviously a bird of the year, and the diagnostic tail feathers were little developed. The measurements and plumage corresponded to the description in Forbush: Birds of Massachusetts and Other New England States, Vol. 1.

At the time of banding the bird could not stand up, but kept falling forward. After being cared for, fed and bathed for several days, the Jaeger was considerably improved. When Mrs. Roberts thought it might be able to fend for itself, she took it to the calm water of a bay and put it in the water. When the bird showed signs of being about to drown, it was rescued and cared for several days longer. Then it was taken to an isolated beach and left near the water. When Mrs. Roberts looked for it a few hours later it had disappeared.

Mrs. Roberts was convinced from close observation of the Jaeger and in comparison with characteristics of birds she had raised that this was a bird little more than out of the nest. However, Jaegers nest in Arctic and Subarctic regions, and dates of eggs range from mid-May to late June. (Bent: Life Histories - Gulls and Terns) The incubation period is 24 days (Forbush) and therefore birds of the year would be on the wing by August at the latest. Forbush says: "Its principal flight along the Massachusetts coast occurs on its southward migration ... the majority come in late August or September".

Jaegers are oceanic birds, though they may sometimes be seen from shore as they harry terns. Bent speaks of seeing ten Parasitic Jaegers on the beach at Ipswich, Massachusetts. A young bird on its first migratory flight might seek land if ill or exhausted. There had not been any recent stormy weather, but there was an excessive heat wave at the time. Could this have had any ill effect on the Jaeger?

Whatever the explanation, this was a new "life bird" for my banding list.

313 Sharp Ave., Glenolden, Pa.

\*\*\*