

PHOTOGRAPHY AND SOUND-RECORDING
TO REINFORCE SIGHT RECORDS OF UNUSUAL BIRDS

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The following is excerpted from a letter to British Birds (February, 1964) by Myles E. W. North:

It is obvious that such a bird will often be seen when the watcher is devoid of photographic or sound-recording equipment, so, in the first place, he will naturally follow the normal sight-recording procedure. However, if the bird obligingly stays put (as is often the case with tired vagrants) and he is then able to return with camera or tape-recorder, the value of his observation should be enhanced.

Where the apparatus must be carried for any distance on foot, the weight should certainly be reduced to a minimum and need not, in my opinion, exceed the following:

Minature camera with 50 mm. and 300 mm. lenses	5 lb.
Light-weight, battery-operated, transistorised tape-recorder	7 lb.
Light-weight, 18-inch, aluminium reflector with microphone and headphones	3½ lb.

No tripod is included in this list, since I normally hold both camera and reflector in the hand. Only for special reasons do I consider carrying the camera and the tape-recorder simultaneously.

Where a locality is accessible by car, one can take the equipment in it...birds are usually more tolerant to a moving car than to a person on foot, so that they can often be photographed or sound-recorded from it... similarly, a boat is frequently useful for approaching water birds.

However, the watcher who is prepared to photograph or sound-record must sometimes indeed become a 'beast of burden' and carry his equipment on foot, though he will do this only when the results are expected to justify the exertion; and helping to clinch a sight-record is surely just the time when such an exertion is abundantly justified?

