

artificial lake near Branchville, New Jersey. These, together with the three that stayed several weeks during late summer and early autumn of 1916 in the vicinity of Van Cortlandt Park, New York City (Chubb, S. H., Auk, Oct., 1916, p. 433), one of which returned in the summer of 1917 to the same place (Rogers, Charles H., Bird-Lore, Sept.-Oct., 1917, p. 276), the one reported from Setauket, L. I., in the summer of 1916 (Nichols, Murphy, and Griscom, Auk, Oct., 1917, p. 440), and other recent records, would seem to indicate that the laws for the protection of this beautiful bird are bearing fruit.—G. CLYDE FISHER, *American Museum of Natural History, New York City.*

Brooding Habit of the American Coot.—Two nests of the American Coot (*Fulica americana*) were hatched in the North American waterfowl lake in the National Zoological Park during the summer of 1918, and one curious habit of the bird, which I do not recall having seen noted, attracted my attention. Until the young birds are about twenty days old, almost as large as small quails, and have lost the reddish markings on the head, they return to the nest each evening and are brooded by a parent bird, presumably the female. I had never supposed before that these birds returned to the nest once the young had left it, almost immediately after they were hatched. In one case the nest was placed on the dry ground, under the overhanging branches of a low tree, about two feet from the bank, and in an excellent position for observation from the shore. I repeatedly saw the Coots between sundown and dark, one parent on the nest, the young under her wings or nestling about her after the manner of the domestic fowl. The other parent at these times patrolled the nearby shore and savagely attacked any ducks that wandered into the immediate vicinity.—N. HOLLISTER, *Washington, D. C.*

Stilt Sandpiper (*Micropalama himantopus*) in Wyoming.—The occurrence of the Stilt Sandpiper (*Micropalama himantopus*) in Wyoming seems to be rare enough to render it advisable to place on record the existence of four specimens even if the records are decidedly old. In recently working over the series of this species contained in the collection of the United States National Museum, I found that four specimens, all males, were secured at Fort Laramie, Laramie County, Wyoming, May 15, 1875, by Dr. J. S. Newberry. Of these, Number 69918 was sent to Mr. E. E. T. Seton. The existence of these birds has evidently been unknown to Wyoming ornithologists as neither Knight (Birds of Wyoming, 1902, Bull. 55, Univ. of Wyoming, p. 47) nor Grave and Walker (Birds of Wyoming, 1913, Univ. of Wyoming, p. 35) make any reference to them.—B. H. SWALES, *U. S. National Museum, Washington, D. C.*

Notes on Migratory *Anatinae* and *Limicolæ* from Western New York.—Realizing that most ornithologists are interested in obtaining

data regarding the effects of the present ban on spring shooting, the writer has decided to place on record a series of observations made during the past two seasons in the township of Hamburg. The species noted were all seen on the wet meadows which lie between the highway and Lake Erie, directly north of the village of Woodlawn. The area, according to the map, is about a quarter of a mile wide and half a mile deep, and is the property of the Lackawanna Steel Company, whose immense plant is situated only a short distance away to the north. Interurban cars pass to and fro at frequent intervals on the tracks along the highway, and the highway itself carries a heavy traffic. Moreover, a railroad track runs along the north and west sides of the region, and here a switch engine is almost continually at work.

Mr. James Savage of Buffalo, a well-known western New York observer, was the first to discover that the meadows were used as feeding grounds by migratory water fowl and shore birds. On Sunday, May 13, 1917, he was returning by automobile to his home in the city after an early morning excursion in the woods of East Hamburg with the writer. As he stopped his car on the turnpike to scan the flooded fields, he was very much surprised to note two beautiful Mallard drakes and a duck, and also sixteen pairs of Pintails. It was clearly evident that the latter species had already mated, for the birds were feeding or resting two and two. The individuals of both species had probably been on the meadows for some time, as no attention was paid to passing traffic or to the switch engine working on the lake side of them. Four Greater Yellow-legs, two Lesser Yellow-legs, and one Pectoral Sandpiper were also seen, besides some smaller species which could not be identified on account of the great distance, as Mr. Savage made all of the observations without getting out of his automobile.

The writer was unable to visit the locality until the following Saturday, May 19. There were only two pairs of Pintails left at that time; these were very tame and permitted him to approach within about thirty feet before they finally flew off toward Lake Erie. Although the Mallards and Yellow-legs were not found, two Pectoral Sandpipers, four Red-backed Sandpipers and four Semipalmated Plovers were noted near the highway. The occurrence of *Pelidna alpina sakhalina* at this season is somewhat noteworthy, as spring records for western New York are scarce. Two of the specimens were in full plumage and showed the characteristic red backs and black bellies; the slightly curved bills of all four were easily visible. The Red-backs were especially sluggish; they waded slowly around and leisurely probed for food, allowing one to approach within fifteen or twenty feet.

During the following spring four visits were paid to the area; these were begun in late April in order to list some of the earlier Anatinae. On April 21, 1918, there were feeding on the meadows one pair of Blue-winged Teals, one Pintail drake, and a single Coot. On April 22, however, the number

of birds had greatly increased. A pair of Baldpates and a female Shoveller had appeared; there were now two pairs of Blue-winged Teals, and no less than forty Pintails, the males and females occurring in about equal numbers; the Coot was also noted.

On April 25 the number of Baldpates had increased to eight, and one small flock of eight Green-winged Teals was flushed near the railroad track. The two pairs of Blue-winged Teals and the female Shoveller were again found; twenty pairs of Pintails were noted, and the number of Coots had increased to three. On Sunday, May 5, a final visit was paid to the area, and twenty pairs of Pintails were noted; the remaining birds had evidently passed on.

Inasmuch as the birds were easily observable from the highway, many persons in this vicinity have commented both upon their numbers and their tameness. The Pintail appeared to be the most unsuspecting species, and the Green-winged Teal the most wary; the Baldpate, Blue-winged Teal and Shoveller were somewhat more difficult to observe than the Pintail, probably because they were usually feeding among the grasses. In no case, however, was it necessary to guard against the danger of exposing one's self in order to make an identification; apparently none of the *Anatinae* paid any attention to the observer, providing, of course, he did not get too near them. Most of the ducks, and especially the Pintails, seemed somewhat stupid, as though their excess vitality had been entirely used up by a series of hard flights or an exceptionally severe winter. Instead of their being continually on the alert for danger, they fed or rested leisurely, apparently quite oblivious of their somewhat unfavorable environment.

Although numbers of foreign laborers live near the region, no attempts were made to molest the birds, probably on account of the Lackawanna policemen who regularly patrol the outskirts of the area. It might be added that the Coots recorded here are the first the writer has ever seen at this season in this vicinity; they are included because of this fact and also because they were on the meadows with the *Anatinae*.—THOMAS L. BOURNE, *Hamburg, N. Y.*

Spring Shore-birds in Connecticut.—An unusually heavy flight of shore-birds appeared in Connecticut in the spring of 1918. Not only were the common spring species in unusually large numbers, but a number of species usually rare at this season appeared. The main part of the flight as I observed it at Norwalk was between May 25 and June 1. The following species, rare or unusual at this season, were recorded.

***Macrorhamphus griseus griseus*.** DOWITCHER.—Four of these birds were observed clearly on May 25. They were seen from a distance of about 150 feet, in a very clear light, and with seven diameter binoculars. On May 27 more birds believed to be this species were seen, but on account of fog nothing but their outlines was visible. On May 28 several more