

In the late summer of 1901, I and my oldest son, then a boy of sixteen were spending a short vacation down on Cape Cod, at South Orleans, Massachusetts, fishing and having fair success shooting shorebirds—with one gun between us—round Pochet Island and the salt marshes called Monument Plains.

On Sunday, September 8, there was a "dry norther," a furious gale from the north and northwest, without rain, cloudy in the morning, but clearing in the afternoon. Monday, September 9, broke bright and fine, with a moderate northerly wind, and thinking that the wind might have brought along the birds, we decided to go to the shore. My son took my gun, a sixteen-bore, and I borrowed a twelve-bore and a few cartridges. We rowed down our river and across the bay, and before we reached the island, it was evident that birds had arrived, for we saw a large flock of young Black-bellied Plover, as well as several Greater Yellowlegs, two of which I shot.

Landing on the inner side of the island, we walked across to the ocean beach—the "back beach," as they say on the Cape—and started to walk north toward Nauset Harbor, shooting, as we went, at the passing flocks of Sanderlings, which were fairly abundant, though not remarkably so. Somewhere about ten o'clock in the morning, my son had stopped to pick up some birds that had fallen into the surf, while I walked ahead a hundred yards or so and sat down on the dry crown of the beach, here about fifty yards wide, and felt in my pocket to see how many twelve-bore cartridges were left. To my disgust, I found only one! While I was ransacking the other pockets of my shooting-coat, something flashed in my eyes, and, as it seemed to me, thousands of Sanderlings whirled in from the north and pitched on the dry upper beach, the nearest not twenty feet from me. It was a wonderful sight, and I longed for the camera which had been left at home.

I called to my son, who came hurrying up, while the nearest birds moved off, though not out of gunshot. When we fired, they rose in a cloud—as my son put it, "It looked like a great gray wall spotted with white." Our few remaining cartridges were soon expended, but even then we picked up sixty or seventy birds.

The birds soon recovered from their alarm, and hundreds could be seen running round the dry beach and up the slopes of the dunes, picking up insects. I have no way of estimating the number of birds in the great flock: it was simply a cloud of birds.—JOHN MURDOCH, *Allston, Mass.*

**King Rail Nesting on Long Island, N. Y.**—On June 11, 1924, I was fortunate enough to be shown the nest of a Rail at Bayside, L. I., by Mr. R. C. Wright of Flushing. The nest was situated in a small cat-tail marsh of brackish water which bordered the salt meadows, and was about four hundred yards from a large creek which emptied into Douglaston Bay. The nest was composed of cat-tails and was situated on the ground, but well built up from it, the depth being five inches.

At first thought, I imagined it to be a Clapper Rail's nest, but on seeing the bird I quickly identified it as a King Rail (*Rallus elegans*). Its general resemblance to the Virginia Rail, together with the cinnamon neck and breast, and large size, left no doubt in my mind as to the identification.

The nest was found on May 24, when it contained thirteen eggs. On the next visit, one week later, fourteen eggs were observed. On June 14, I commenced to take pictures, and was quite surprised at the bird's fearlessness. Seven eggs hatched between June 16 and 20. My next trip to the nest was on the 21st, when I found seven eggs remaining, all punctured and the contents drained by some animal. The nest and remaining eggs are now in the Brooklyn Museum, where I deposited them.

It is interesting to note that the nest of a Virginia Rail was found not sixty yards from that of the King Rail. Marsh Wrens and Red-winged Blackbirds were also to be found nesting in close proximity to the nest.—WM. J. HAMILTON JR., *Ithaca, New York*.

**Nesting of Great Blue Heron in Boothbay, Maine.**—In the spring of 1924, Mr. Frederic O. Whitman of Boothbay, Maine, found a nesting colony of Great Blue Herons (*Ardea herodias herodias*) which had been reported to us the year before, and for which we had unsuccessfully hunted late in the summer of 1923, after the birds had left.

The heronry is located in the woods between the Knickerbocker ponds and the Backriver branch of the Sheepscot river, and is about two hundred yards westward from the shore of the northern end of the ponds. Mr. Whitman counted sixty-five nests of which surely forty were occupied in 1924. The bulky structures are all in hardwood trees, most of them in beeches, a few in the maples, and one in a birch. Not a single one was found in the pines or other coniferous trees, although the heronry was in their very midst. On June 6, Mr. Whitman counted sixty-four young birds peering over the edges of the nests. On July 26, when he and I visited the site together, nearly all the immature herons could fly, and with the old birds would leave the nests with much flapping and squawking when they became aware of our presence. But there were others not yet ready to trust to their wings. These stood motionless on the nests or branches, craning their necks, evidently much disturbed. We found on the ground one whole nest that had fallen, and with it the remains of three young birds. More remains of young ones were found here and there under the trees. The ground in the vicinity of the nests was white with the droppings, and the odor of this and of disgorged fish was far from agreeable.

In view of the fact that such large colonies of Great Blue Herons are no longer common in Maine, I believe this one to be of interest.—THOMAS E. PENARD, *Arlington, Mass.*

**Little Blue Heron in Massachusetts.**—On the morning of September 4, 1924, I saw an immature Little Blue Heron (*Florida caerulea*) in Hingham, Massachusetts, in the small and shallow brackish pond which has