

GENERAL NOTES.

The Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) in the North Carolina Mountains.—In a conversation with my friend, Mr. Alan Nicholson, of Union, S. C., he told me that he had recently seen a specimen of a Gull shot near Montreat, Buncombe County, N. C.

I interviewed the taxidermist who had the bird, Mr. G. C. Joyner, and he kindly allowed me to examine it. The bird is an immature Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*). Mr. Joyner told me that it was taken in October, 1925, by Horace Rees, on a small lake at Montreat. Mr. Rees shot the Gull as an unusual bird, and took it to Mr. Joyner for mounting. It was, however, never called for, due to the death of Mr. Rees, and so remains in the possession of Mr. Joyner.

Montreat is a summer resort in the Blue Ridge section of North Carolina, located eighteen miles east of Asheville. The lake, an artificial body of water, covering about two or three acres, is about 2600 feet above sea-level. Mr. Joyner informed me that there had been a severe wind and rain storm a day previous to the appearance of the bird, and he had himself seen it fly along the creek in front of his house, this creek being the outlet of the lake.

I have examined the range of the species in several ornithological books but can find no record of the bird having been taken, or recorded from the Blue Ridge Mountains. The occurrence there is, of course, purely accidental, but the circumstances connected with the record are indisputable and, I think, worthy of record. I am indebted to Mr. Nicholson for calling the bird to my attention, and to Mr. Joyner for allowing me to examine it and furnishing me with the information relative to its capture.—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., *Curator of Ornithology, Charleston Museum, Charleston, S. C.*

Forster's Tern in Massachusetts.—Dr. Winsor M. Tyler and I, in looking over a flock of Common Terns on the beach at the mouth of the North River in Scituate, Mass., September 23, 1928, found in it two Forster's Terns (*Sterna forsteri*). I had been introduced to this species by Mr. A. C. Bent at Chatham, Mass., September 1, 1924, and had no difficulty in recognizing it on meeting with it again. One of the two birds had the crown whiter and the blackish stripe through the eye much more sharply defined than the other. This bird was noticeably lighter in general coloration above than the Common Terns of the flock, and, so far as we could see, showed no dark markings on the nape. It was probably, therefore, an adult in winter plumage, while the other was doubtless an immature in first winter plumage. Both, characteristically, stood higher on their feet than the Common Terns. We had these two birds under observation with our binoculars at rather close range for some

time, both on the beach and flying—for the flock frequently took wing and alighted again—and we were fully satisfied with our identification. The apparent absence of any dark markings on the nape of one of the birds might suggest the possibility of its being a Trudeau's Tern, if that possibility were not almost too remote for consideration, Audubon's specimen of that South American bird obtained from Great Egg Harbor, New Jersey, in 1840, being still the only record for North America; but it seems probable that the absence of the dusky markings was apparent rather than actual and that an examination of the bird in the hand would have revealed them. At all events the darker of the two birds was undoubtedly a Forster's Tern, and there can be little doubt that both were of the same species. Forbush's 'Birds of Massachusetts' lists six records of Forster's Tern for the State, of which the Chatham bird referred to above is the last. The present, therefore, makes only the seventh record, but I suspect that the species may not be so rare on our coast as this would imply. It would be easy to overlook a bird or two in a large flock of Terns, old and young. In the present case, Dr. Tyler and I were deliberately looking for Forster's Terns when we found these two birds, first one and then, a few minutes later, the other.—FRANCES H. ALLEN, *West Roxbury, Mass.*

Sooty Tern (*Sterna fuscata*) on Long Island, New York.—On September 19, 1928, Long Island was hit by an unusually severe storm. This was probably the tail end of the Florida hurricane that a few days before caused so much damage on the southern coast and which followed the coastline closely up as far as Long Island. It rained the entire day and this was accompanied by very strong winds. The average temperature was about 58°. The storm had subsided by the next morning, as it was clear with very light south wind and with a temperature of 68°.

On September 21, I made a trip to the ocean beach on the south shore of Long Island looking for any stray birds that might have been driven north by the storm. It was early in the morning on this day that I found an adult Sooty Tern lying dead upon its back, about one mile east of the Moriches Coast Guard Station. It was near to the one road that runs parallel with the beach and about 400 feet from the ocean front. I noticed it as I was driving along in my car. It appeared to have been dead at least one day and probably died during the storm on the 19th. It was very emaciated, weighing only four ounces in the flesh. The two outer tail feathers are 5.25 inches long and are black. The outer tail feathers marked with white had probably been molted. The length is fifteen inches and wing-spread from tip to tip thirty-four inches. Upon skinning the specimen I found that there were no marks of any wounds or injury upon it and from all appearances it succumbed from the effects of the storm. The skin is now in my collection.

The only two former records for Long Island are: September 13, 1878, and September 18, 1883.—LEROY WILCOX, *Speonk, L. I., N. Y.*