

the forehead than the rest. It was later seen again by Ludlow Griscom and S. G. Emilio and identified as Wilson's Plover. It kept by itself a little apart from the Ring-necks, and had noticeably paler upper-parts and a breast-band of the same color—betokening, I suppose, a female.

This is said to be the fourth record for Massachusetts, the second for Essex County.—S. A. ELIOT, JR., *Smith College, Northampton, Mass.*

Vitality of Plover Embryo.—The unusually high tide of June 16th 1932, partially swept away the eggs of a colony of Royal Terns, Least Terns and Black Skimmers on Deveaux's Bank, near Seabrook's Island, S. C. On the afternoon of the 17th many of the eggs were found washed up on the beach of Seabrook's Island. A few of each kind were collected, among them being one egg of the Wilson's Plover, and packed in cotton in a tin box. The next day they were carried by automobile to Charleston, a distance of about thirty-six miles and when they were blown, on the afternoon of the 20th, the egg of the Wilson's Plover, after being out of the nest for at least three days and probably longer, was found to contain a large embryo which was still alive. Two days later, on the 20th, they were taken to the Charleston Museum, where their identification was confirmed by Mr. E. Burnham Chamberlain.

Although the Plover egg was found among the sedge and debris of the high water mark, there is a possibility, though not a probability, of its having been by some means transported from the breeding area of the Plovers on Seabrook's Island, about a quarter of a mile from the spot where the egg was found.

The temperature for the dates mentioned ranged from 68 (minimum) to 89 (maximum).—WILLIAM W. HUMPHREYS, *15 Limehouse Street, Charleston, S. C.*

Northern New England Woodcock.—In the vicinity of Farmington, Franklin Co., Maine, a party of three or four sportsmen, headed by the late Richard C. Storey of Boston, hunted Woodcock for thirty years. Through the courtesy of Mrs. Storey I was able to study the records of these annual shooting parties. They extended through the best part of the October flight and averaged about fifteen days of shooting each autumn.

The records are a model for this kind of upland shooting. In nearly all cases each individual "cover" is mentioned by name and the number of birds started and shot in it are recorded every day. Thus it is easy to total the number of birds started and shot each year, and the length of time in days of each annual hunt.

There has been a great difference of opinion on the status of the Woodcock and as in all cases of the sort, loose statements based on casual observations have been given more credit than they deserve. A generation ago it was held by some competent naturalists that the Woodcock was a doomed species. Even now, when for at least twenty-five years we in New England have noted a rather steady advance in numbers, the story is

far from complete, and much more must be learned about its habits, migration and periods of scarcity. It seems fair to say that the range of the species in the Middle West, where it was never very plentiful, has been greatly curtailed through drainage, improved farming and over-shooting. On the other hand, there may have been an extension of range in the East due to extensive lumbering of coniferous growth, burning, and abandonment of farms in the New England States. However, in eastern Quebec, land is still being cleared and rough "stump farming" is extending up to the very border of northwestern Maine. It is quite likely that the Woodcock is still extending its range in a northerly and easterly direction in the St. Lawrence Valley.

In order to evaluate the Farmington figures more easily from the standpoint of increase or decrease, I have divided the records into three nearly equal periods, or decades. The first period is from 1901-1912 (ten years) with the records of 1910 and 1911 missing. The second period is for the ten years from 1913-1922 inclusive and the last period is for the nine years, 1923-1931.

The following figures seem to be the most significant; the average number of birds started each day for each period, the number of birds started per trip, per period based on a trip of fifteen days, and the number of birds shot per fifteen day period for each decade. It will be seen that this last figure does not increase as fast from the early to the late period as the figure for "birds started." This is probably due to more leisurely hunting methods with advancing years, and also to the lower federal and state bag limit.

	1901-1912 (2 years missing)	1913-1922	1923-1931 (9 years only)
Average number of birds started per day per decade.....	9.2	11.2	17.
Average number of birds started per year per decade.....	139.2	171.5	310.
Average number of birds started per fifteen day trip for each decade....	138.3	169.5	255.
Average number of birds killed per fifteen day trip for each decade....	84.2	100.5	108.5

It will be noted that the figure 310, the actual average number of birds started per year for the last period is much larger than the figure 255 representing the theoretical number for a fifteen day trip. This is because during the last period the hunting trips were longer, averaging over eighteen days actual hunting each autumn.

To sum up, there would seem to be no tendency to a decreasing supply of birds in the Farmington region and even allowing for greater knowledge of hunting territory, better roads and better motor cars there can be little doubt of some actual increase in this part of northern New England in the past thirty years.—JOHN C. PHILLIPS, *Wenham, Mass.*