

species, and after circling about they flew off up the river. Both birds were adults. To the best of the writer's knowledge, this is the only record of the bird in Camden County. Mr. John T. Emlen, Jr., however, recorded it on April 21, 1929, in Burlington County, N. J. (*Auk*, Vol. XLVI, Page 534).—JULIAN K. POTTER, *Collingswood, N. J.*

Fishing Ability of the Black Skimmer (*Rynchops nigra nigra*).—I have watched Black Skimmers many times "ploughing the main" (fishing?) without ever seeing them catch anything but on August 28, 1932, Henry H. Collins, 3rd, and I were watching one cutting the water in a shallow pool at Tuckerton, N. J., when suddenly it had a fish struggling between its mandibles at a point about one half way between the tip and base of bill. The bird wheeled over a dead sod bank on the edge of the pool and as it did so, the fish freed itself and dropped to the ground. Immediately the Skimmer lit and tried to secure the fish with a straight thrust. The sod did not yield and the bird seemed unable to grasp the fish, though in soft sand or mud the result would probably have been different. It then tried to get the struggling fish by turning its bill sidewise but this also failed and without further delay it flew out over the pool and started again to cut the water in its characteristic manner. Almost at once another fish was caught. This time the victim was forced far up near the base of the bill and the skimmer flew off holding it crosswise.

Mr. Stanley C. Arthur states that he has never seen the skimmer catch a fish while cutting the water with its bill. (*Auk*, XXXVII, p. 566) He also says that during the performance the bill is not held open. From my observations I believe the skimmer's bill is always partly open for the greater part of its length when actually fishing,—an open elongated notch wide at the tip of the bill narrowing to a point at the base. Naturally as the skimmer forces the bill through the water any object such as a fish that is hit by the protruding tip of the lower mandible is forced up into the notch-like opening and caught. This method of fishing appears to be the normal way for the bird to capture its prey and has been previously noticed by Dr. Witmer Stone (*Auk*, XXXVII, p. 595). That it is not witnessed more often is due largely to the fact, no doubt, that a single bird cannot be kept under observation for any great length of time. That it uses other methods of capturing fish is plainly pointed out by Mr. Arthur in the above mentioned article.

As to another possible use of the bird's peculiar bill—I have on several occasions seen skimmers on approaching shallow water to alight, apparently test the depth by the skimming and when the lower mandible struck bottom, they would come to rest. I have never seen an adult Skimmer swimming or floating on the water, but always standing in a position where its feet touch bottom.—JULIAN K. POTTER, *Collingswood, N. J.*

Least Tern on the New Hampshire Coast in July.—On July 3, 1932, while walking along Hampton Beach, N. H., I was surprised to note several Least Terns (*Sterna antillarum*) plunging into the water with the other

terns. The white marking above the bill, and the small size in comparison with the larger species, were distinguishing marks readily noted. The Least Tern was also found at Seabrook Beach, on July 4. While the Common Tern and a few pairs of Roseate Terns nest at Seabrook Beach, it is doubtful if the Least does so.

Heading out of Portsmouth Harbor on the 3rd four Least Terns passed us in the outer harbor, flying out toward a small island where, a New Hampshire Coast Guard Station is located. Three were likewise seen to pass our boat on a similar trip on July 18. I was told by one of the men on the Coast Guard boat that "the little Tern with the white crescent over the bill, nests on the Island where the Station is," and other mariners told me the same. I did not, however, have occasion to visit the island and substantiate the report.—LEWIS O. SHELLEY, *East Westmoreland, N. H.*

Florida Burrowing Owl in Pinellas Co., Fla.—During the spring of 1929 a pair of Burrowing Owls (*Speotyto c. floridana*) was found nesting on Hog Island off the west coast of Pinellas Co., Florida. As they are supposed to occur only in southern Florida the writer became interested in these new residents. They had taken possession of a land turtle's hole near the Gulf side of the island and had evidently cleared some of the sand out of it. One owl was always to be found on guard at or near the entrance of the burrow.

After the young owls had hatched both parents foraged for food and were very active during the day time.

In the following springs (1930 and '31) several more pairs were found nesting but whether new arrivals or offspring of the first pair could not be determined. The past spring an unusually high tide with a wind storm either drowned the owls or drove them elsewhere as no sign of them has been found since.

For a time it was feared that there would not be any more in this section but on May 15, 1932, a pair was found nesting on an adjacent island which is heavily populated. These birds also occupied a turtle's burrow the site being only six feet from a much travelled road and about seventy-five feet from an occupied house. They were very tame, one of them flying directly towards the observer to pick up a locust which he caught in one foot and carried to the burrow to devour.

These owls have the habit of making a collection of various articles which they place on the sand in front of the burrow, in this case an apple core, bits of paper and a cigarette package. The same thing was noticed on Hog Island, but as it is uninhabited the birds had to be content with shells, bits of sponge, and sticks. The food remains at all burrows examined consisted mainly of insects and now and then the remains of a toad.—MRS. HERMAN BETZ, *Box 508, Dunedin, Fla.*

Spix's Screech Owl in Ecuador.—In American Museum Novitates (No. 332, p. 3, 1928) Chapman records a specimen of *Otus choliba crucigerus* from the mouth of the Curaray, Ecuador. There are few, if any,