

of the common species, and that one at least was in all probability a Forster's Tern. The only other recent reports known to the writer of the occurrence of Forster's Tern on the Niagara frontier have appeared as records of single birds reported by the Buffalo Ornithological Society in their mimeographed journal, 'The Prothonotary.' One of these records, concerning a bird of this species seen at Fort Erie on September 21, 1935, has already been commented upon by the writer elsewhere (Sheppard, Hurlburt, and Dickson, 'A preliminary list of the birds of Lincoln and Welland Counties, Ontario,' *Canadian Field Nat.*, 50: 131, 1936), while the other relates to a more recent report of another single example, seen at Niagara Falls on September 16, 1936.—R. W. SHEPPARD, 1805 Mouland Avenue, Niagara Falls, Ontario.

**Royal Tern in Massachusetts.**—On June 21, 1936, I was studying straggling shore-birds on the great flats of Monomoy, south of Chatham, Cape Cod, and turned idly to examine a large group of terns and gulls of various species resting on the mud at the edge of the water. Looming up among the terns, I was astonished to see a larger tern with an all-red bill. It was at first supposed to be a Caspian Tern, but the bird was not large enough, the bill was too light and red, and above all not proportionately any deeper or stouter than those of the adjacent Common Terns. Also the tail was long and deeply forked, projecting way beyond the closed wings. On approaching closer to flush the bird, the best field character was positively noted, the lack of black or dusky on the under surface of the spread wing in flight; also the generally more slender build and more buoyant flight. The bird was obviously a Royal Tern (*Thalasseus maximus*) in full nuptial plumage, as the forehead was not white. There are but three records for the State, all in the month of July. With the great increase of this species on the south Atlantic coast in recent years, the Royal Tern should be expected farther north as a rare spring and summer straggler. Observers, therefore, should be on the lookout for it. The more important field characters have consequently been stressed in this note. The wing character is omitted in practically all standard text-books, which give the wholly erroneous impression that the Royal Tern is a difficult bird to identify in life, on fine points of relative size and proportions.—LUDLOW GRISCOM, *Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, Cambridge, Mass.*

**Black Tern in Maryland.**—On June 9, 1935, while in western Maryland, I visited a trout pond belonging to James Todd of New York, located at a high altitude near Grantsville, Maryland. While fishing this pond from early afternoon until dark I observed two Black Terns (*Clidonias nigra surinamensis*); they stayed near me, sometimes only fifteen or twenty feet away, until I left the pond and it was too dark to see. Those who resided on the property told me these birds had been there since the spring. I am inclined to think they bred there. I was in that section June, 1936, but regret that I was unable to get to this pond and see if these tern had returned.—TALBOTT DENMEAD, *U. S. Bureau Fisheries, Washington, D. C.*

**Black Skimmers in New England.**—The striking and unmistakable Skimmer (*Rynchops nigra*) has not been seen in New England since the great invasion after the hurricane of August 26, 1924, when it occurred as far north as Nova Scotia, and remained over a month in Massachusetts waters. The status of the species has changed notably in the past twelve years. There are now flourishing breeding colonies on the New Jersey coast, and in the past few years a small nesting colony has started on Long Island. Should this increase continue, it is within the bounds of possibility that future decades may see it return as a breeding bird to Massachu-

setts. In the meantime it can confidently be expected to occur more frequently as a straggler. The evidence of the past season supports this contention. A notable southern hurricane raged on the New England coast on September 18 and 19, 1936. While Skimmers were reported on the coast after this hurricane, the species actually reached Massachusetts well before it. Thus on Sunday, September 6, 1936, a large party of us (Messrs. Hagar, Scott, Garrison, Bishop, Hinchman, Dr. and Mrs. Tousey, and Mr. and Mrs. Maclay) found an immature Skimmer resting on the great flats of Monomoy with terns and gulls at high tide. The following Wednesday, Monomoy was visited independently by two parties, Mr. and Mrs. Maclay, and Professor S. A. Eliot, Jr., and Mr. Davis Crompton. Both saw three Skimmers, two adults and one immature. The young Skimmer was noted by other equally large parties on September 12 and 13, always at high tide, never at low. Additional observers on these dates were Mrs. Fuller, Miss Juliet Richardson, and Messrs. Taber and Ward. On September 20, after the hurricane, Monomoy was visited by Dr. and Mrs. Tousey, Mr. Hagar and Mr. Garrison, who found four Skimmers. These birds were still present on the 22d (Griscom, Hagar, Garrison) and on the 23d two were collected by Mr. John D. Smith for the Boston Society of Natural History. It will be apparent, therefore, that the hurricane had little if anything to do with the presence of Skimmers at Monomoy. Another report is equally inconclusive. Mr. F. L. Jaques of the American Museum of Natural History kindly wrote me that on September 24 at Eel Point, Nantucket, he saw twelve to sixteen Skimmers. Unfortunately this coast was entirely unwatched all summer, so that these Skimmers may have been there for an indefinite period prior to the hurricane, for all we know to the contrary. No such doubt, however, attaches to the record of three Skimmers on the beach at Little Compton, Rhode Island, on September 20, and kindly reported to me by the ever-active Mr. Roland C. Clement, who 'covers' this territory with exemplary frequency and care. The occurrence of these birds so far 'inside' furnishes the second record for the State.—LUDLOW GRISCOM, *Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, Cambridge, Mass.*

**Dovekie in South Florida.**—During the early part of January, 1937, the writer was in the Florida Keys in connection with his work with the Audubon Association. While at Tavernier contacting the warden who patrols the Upper Keys, he was told by this man that there had been an invasion of many little sea-birds unknown to the natives. On Christmas Day, 1936, a Mr. G. Donaldson saw six of them in the water at Whale Harbor, a few miles east of Tavernier, swimming about and apparently very weak. He succeeded in catching one, which he brought to Tavernier and turned over to our warden, James Durden. This bird was liberated near the dock on the bay side of the key. Next day, it had come ashore again, and was again put in the water by him. The writer also talked to Judge Lowe of Tavernier, and was told that this gentleman had seen two of the birds in the canal which empties into Card's Sound just where the Over-seas Highway crosses on the long bridge. This was in Dade County, whereas the former birds occurred in Monroe County. Judge Lowe's birds were seen shortly after Christmas.

A few days later the writer was in Everglades, on the west coast, in Collier County and was presented with a skin of a Dovekie (*Alle alle*) by one of the wardens of the Southwest Coast Patrol of the Audubon Association. He had procured it from a certain Jesse Griffin, of Marco, Florida, who had picked up the bird dead on the beach near Jupiter Inlet, St. Lucie County (east coast) on December 27, 1936. Griffin had stated that there were "thousands" of the birds, most of them alive and frequenting the bays, inlets and creeks near the ocean. He saw some die in the surf