

were made by an insect rubbing its feet across its back! Apparently the elusiveness of the bird has entirely deceived them also.

The specimens are now in the collection of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.—ARTHUR B. FULLER, *Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Cleveland, Ohio.*

American Woodcock in Thunder Bay district, Ontario.—The first indication that the American Woodcock (*Philohela minor*) might be breeding in this locality was in June 1937, when one was heard by T. M. Shortt of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology, who was here on a collecting trip at that time. The spot was about ten miles west of Port Arthur. On May 8, 1938, therefore, I visited the same place, and heard and observed a male on this and subsequent occasions. Suitable territory in the neighbourhood was later visited and two more 'fighting' males were discovered, and on May 28, information was received that a nest had been found by a man clearing land, some distance from where the other birds had been observed. This nest was visited on May 29, when the bird was incubating four eggs. These, on examination, proved to be infertile, probably due to the cold, snowy weather of the early part of the month.

This is the first time that this species has been definitely known to occur in this district.—L. S. DEAR, *Port Arthur, Ontario.*

Baird's Sandpiper in Texas.—Apparently Baird's Sandpiper (*Pisobia bairdi*) is a rare migrant in Texas. Streker (Bull. Baylor Univ., 15: 20, 1912) lists only three Texas localities whence this species has been recorded: Boerne, Kendall County; San Angelo, Tom Green County; Alpine, Brewster County. Griscom and Crosby (Auk, 42: 528, 1925) record two specimens from near Brownsville. All these localities are west of the meridian passing through San Antonio. Williams (Auk, 55: 62, 1938) did not record it in the vicinity of Houston during his five years of observation. For this reason it seems advisable to report the taking of three birds twelve miles southwest of Eagle Lake, Colorado County, Texas, on April 15, 1938. Two others were observed on the same day in open short-grass prairie about six miles northeast of Eagle Lake. These two localities seemingly are near the eastern edge of the migration route followed by this species in passing northward through Texas. The westernmost record is from Alpine in trans-Pecos Texas.—WILLIAM B. DAVIS, *Texas Co-operative Wildlife Service, College Station, Texas.*

Scandinavian Lesser Black-backed Gull at Key West, Florida.—On the morning of March 10, 1938, Messrs. James J. Murray, of Lexington, Virginia, Edward M. Moore, of Key West, and the writer were on the head of one of the piers in the Key West Yacht Basin awaiting a Coast Guard plane for an aerial survey of the Lower Keys. Many gulls were flying about and Mr. Moore suddenly pointed out one which he described as "very dark." Catching sight of it at once, we saw that it was clearly a black-backed gull, indeed, the veriest tyro could not have mistaken it. Other than the striking coloration, the size of the bird was arresting. It was constantly in company with Herring Gulls, and was studied for an hour or more. Every opportunity was given for comparison both in the air, and at rest on a nearby breakwater. Messrs. Moore and Murray were sure that it was just the size of the Herring Gulls, the writer thought it a shade larger. Range of observation varied from about fifty to two hundred yards. The bird exhibited the following characters: under parts pure white; bill distinctly yellow as were the feet; small white spots appeared at tips of primaries and there was a white edging on the front of the wings as well as on the hinder rim; under side of wings rather dusky, this area extending toward the body on

forward portion; wings entirely black above, but the saddle, or back, was of a lighter shade, with a distinct brownish cast. That the bird was a Lesser Black-backed Gull was as obvious as anything could well be. Happily, Dr. Murray was familiar with the bird, having seen hundreds of them on a European trip recently. He concluded at the time that it was the British Black-back (*Larus fuscus fuscus*) but we subsequently found that it was possible to confuse this bird with the Yellow-footed Gull, that form of the Western Gull known as *Larus occidentalis livens*.

Dr. Murray, having to be in New York shortly afterward, went to the American Museum of Natural History and spent some while there going over skins of these gulls, and has reached the following conclusion. *L. o. livens* and *L. f. graellsii* are so similar that identification in the field is hardly possible. However, this does not apply to the Scandinavian form, *L. f. fuscus*, which is darker than either *graellsii* or *livens*, and in addition, has brown on the back which neither of the others has. The Key West bird certainly had brown in the back, and he says that "we are entirely justified in reporting it as *Larus fuscus fuscus*." This is the first record for Florida or any part of the South, and the second for North America, one having been seen September 9, 1934, in New Jersey by Charles A. Urner and James L. Edwards (Auk, 52: 85, 1935). Though aware of the fact that the above is a sight record, it appears so conclusive that no hesitation is felt in giving the record.—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., R. F. D. No. 1, Charleston, South Carolina.

Herring Gulls following the plow.—During the last two years around the New York City region I have been extremely interested in the apparently newly acquired habit of the Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus smithsonianus*) of following the farmer's plow in search for food. In other sections of the United States I have seen the Ring-billed Gulls and, of course, the Franklin's Gulls acting in this manner. On the other hand, I have known the Herring Gull quite intimately for a score of years on both breeding and wintering grounds, but not until the last two years have I seen them fluttering, gliding and diving behind the plow. Until recent years the ever increasing number of wintering gulls around New York City depended on the extensive city rubbish-disposal centers for a great deal of food. Today we find these waste dumps disappearing and the efficient incinerators taking care of all refuse disposal. Perchance this change in one of our major concentration areas of wintering Herring Gulls is causing them to seek new sources of food; and perchance within a few years these birds will be frequent companions of the farmer.—ALLAN D. CRUICKSHANK, *National Association of Audubon Societies, 1775 Broadway, New York City.*

Food of young Laughing Gulls.—At Stone Harbor, New Jersey, on July 11, 1937, I was banding young Laughing Gulls (*Larus atricilla*). During the process several of the birds disgorged their food. One disgorged twenty-three Japanese beetles, which would indicate that this bird is another potential enemy of the beetle.—HERBERT BUCKALOW, 611 East 2d St., Milford, Delaware.

Nelson's Downy Woodpecker from Colorado.—In working over the Downy Woodpeckers in the collection of The Colorado Museum of Natural History, we have found that three races are represented in the State. The resident Batchelder's Woodpecker (*Dryobates pubescens leucurus*) is the common form; the Northern Downy Woodpecker (*Dryobates pubescens medianus*) has been recorded from the eastern part of the State (Lincoln, Proc. Colorado Mus. Nat. Hist., 1913) and is represented in our collection by five specimens. This past season two examples of Nelson's Downy Woodpecker (*Dryobates pubescens nelsoni*) were taken and it may be that the majority of small woodpeckers wintering in the northern portion of the State, which have