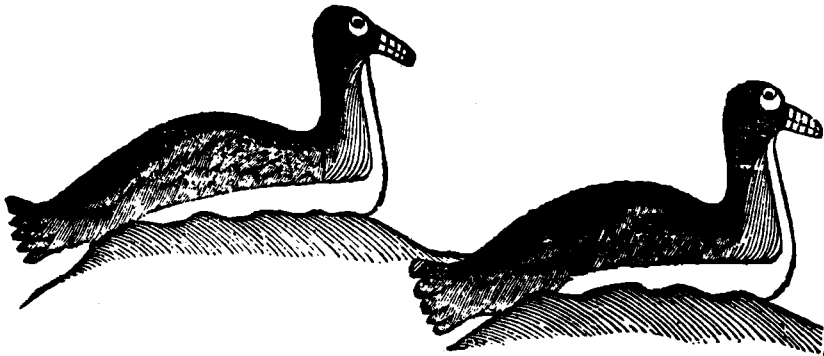


except that each note (or double note?) was given as the bird tossed its head upward and far over its back. Twice the male took a step forward, but each time the female headed him off and continued calling. At about the thirty-fifth (counted) bob by the female, her companion began to toss his head too and call. For the first two or three bobs the male was not in rhythm, but his next three or four calls and bobs were each in unison with those of his mate. She thereupon postured and he at once climbed upon her back. Copulation lasted about ten to fifteen (estimated) seconds, during which the male seemed to maintain his position without the use of the bill. Thereupon the female appeared to throw him off and both birds became more or less motionless and completely silent.

Courtship actions continually impress one with the effectiveness of the symbolic actions which the birds use. This one is particularly interesting because the female initiated the ceremony with no other immediate stimulus (as far as the observers were aware) than the mere presence of her mate. In addition, it is worth noting that these gulls were still on migration, the nearest-known nesting colonies being roughly one hundred miles away.—JOSEPH J. HICKEY, *New York City*.

An early figure of the Great Auk.—In the December 1939 issue of the 'Field Engineers' Bulletin,' of the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, there is an article entitled 'The First Thousand Years of Finding New York,' by Thomas M. Price, Jr., which gives an interesting account of early voyages to America and describes the development of nautical charts and navigational methods, from early times to the present. In looking through this article, which is illustrated with a number of reproductions of charts, old and modern, my attention was at once attracted to a picture of two odd-looking birds, riding stiffly on waves which seemed as unreal as the birds themselves. This picture was reproduced from a book called 'The English Pilot,' which was a standard guide for voyages into American waters some two hundred years ago. Several editions of the book were published in London, the first in 1706, and I obtained from the Harvard University Library a copy of the 1742 edition, from which the figure is reproduced herewith (Text-fig. 1). The descriptive matter



TEXT-FIG. 1.—An early figure of the Great Auk (1742).

accompanying the picture of the "Penguins" makes it evident that they were Great Auks (*Plautus impennis*) and that they were mentioned in the book because they were said to serve the mariner as an indication that he had reached the Newfoundland Banks. The compiler of the work comments: "I have read an Author that says, in

treating of this Coast, that you may know this by the great quantities of Fowls upon the Bank, viz. *Sheer-waters*, *Willocks*, *Noddies*, *Gulls* and *Pengwins*, &c without making any Exceptions; which is a Mistake, for I have seen all those Fowls 100 Leagues off this Bank, the *Pengwins* expected. It's true, that all these Fowls are seen there in great Quantities, but none are to be minded so much as the *Pengwins*, for these never go without the Bank as the others do; for they are always on it, or within it, several of them together, sometimes more, other times less, but never less than 2 together." The figure and account are referred to in a footnote in Grieve's work on the Great Auk, but seem worth reproducing in full. Unfortunately both birds in the picture are facing in such a way that only their right sides are visible, so that the reader cannot verify for himself the curious statement that they have "a Milk white Spot under one of their Eyes, which Nature has ordered to be under the right Eye, and Extraordinary remarkable: (for my part I never saw any with such a spot under their left Eye)." However, by turning to the front cover of 'The Auk,' one can readily see that the A. O. U. does not agree with this statement!—H. S. SHAW, *Exeter, New Hampshire*.

A detail in the ecology of the Mourning Dove.—During corn-cutting in September 1937, I noted an interesting and at times fatal habit of the Eastern Mourning Dove (*Zenaidura macroura carolinensis*). The birds occasionally roosted at night on cornstalks which had become bent over in such a manner as to allow them to perch with comfort. Being thus close to the ground, they were easily available to predators walking between the corn rows. In the eighteen-acre field I found that four of the birds had met their deaths as evidenced by the sufficiently conclusive amount of feathers in such locations. Near one of these spots were found the tracks of a fox.—GORDON W. JONES, *Wilderness, Virginia*.

Notes on Woodpeckers from West Virginia.—During field work for the U. S. National Museum in Kentucky in 1938, Mr. W. M. Perrygo, at my request, secured certain additional specimens from southwestern West Virginia. Notes on certain woodpeckers thus obtained, with observations on some specimens collected earlier, in 1936, follow.

BOREAL FLICKER, *Colaptes auratus borealis*.—Recent studies (Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., 86: 191, 1939) have indicated to me that this race of flicker, though not recognized in the fourth edition of the A. O. U. 'Check-list,' is valid, with a breeding range extending from Labrador to Alaska, south to northern Minnesota and eastern Montana, and in migration to the States to the south. The wing in this race measures from 161 to 170 mm., a size considerably above that of *C. a. luteus*. In the collection made by Perrygo in West Virginia in 1936 there is one female taken at an elevation of 3000 feet on Flat Top Mountain, near Flat Top, on October 20, that is definitely this far-northern bird, present as a migrant, as it shows the following dimensions: wing, 163.0; tail, 103.0; culmen from base, 37.0; tarsus, 30.3 mm.

EASTERN HAIRY WOODPECKER, *Dryobates villosus villosus*.—A specimen collected at Crum, July 7, 1938, has a wing measurement of 117.8 mm., which is rather small for the typical race but still within its limits.

NORTHERN DOWNY WOODPECKER, *Dryobates pubescens medianus*.—Females taken in Wayne County, one mile north of Wayne, July 5, 1938, and three miles north of Crum, July 7, 1938, have the wing 91.9 and 93.1 mm. respectively, thus agreeing with *medianus*, and adding further corroboration that this is the resident form in the southwestern part of the State.

In the original paper on the West Virginia collection of 1936 (Proc. U. S. Nat.