

GENERAL NOTES

Cory's Shearwater in South Carolina.—On August 18, 1940, one week after a tropical hurricane had hit coastal South Carolina, the badly decomposed remains of a large shearwater were found by Dingle on the Isle of Palms, eight miles east-northeast of Charleston. The yellow bill attracted immediate attention. Because of a certain amount of white on the inner webs of the primaries, the writers were inclined to consider the bird *Puffinus diomedea diomedea*. However, being handicapped by a lack of comparative material, we sent the specimen to Dr. Alexander Wetmore for final determination. Dr. Wetmore has advised that the bird is Cory's Shearwater, *P. d. borealis*, "the form ordinarily to be expected on the eastern coast of the United States." As far as we know, this constitutes the first definite record for South Carolina.

At this time it may be mentioned that we know of no specimen of the Greater Shearwater, *Puffinus gravis*, from this State. The late Arthur T. Wayne, in 'Birds of South Carolina' (1910: 8), states that the cyclone of 1893 destroyed great numbers of these birds, and that a few days after the storm the Long Island (Isle of Palms) beach was "literally strewn with dead birds." Examination of Mr. Wayne's record book of specimens collected during August and September of 1893 fails to disclose any record of a shearwater collected or prepared during that period. Our files contain later sight records, by other observers, and we now believe that these records may apply as well to Cory's Shearwater as to the Greater. One record in our files is based on a badly decomposed specimen found after the 1911 storm. In the 'Bulletin' of the Charleston Museum (7: 50, 1911), L. M. Bragg records this specimen as *Puffinus gravis*, "the head and bill being unmistakably that of a shearwater, and the white feathers of the throat and breast distinguishing it from the only other large shearwater found along our coast, the Sooty Shearwater (*Puffinus griseus*)." No mention is made of the color of the bill of this specimen and it is possible that the bird may have been Cory's Shearwater.—EDWARD S. DINGLE and E. B. CHAMBERLAIN, *The Charleston Museum, Charleston, South Carolina*.

Gannets along the Connecticut River in New Hampshire and Vermont.—On October 24, 1940, an immature Gannet, *Moris bassana*, landed on a tennis court on the campus of Dartmouth College, at Hanover, New Hampshire. The bird was in an exhausted condition when picked up by Professor Lauren M. Sadler and brought to me. We fed it on a diet of fish scraps until it was strong enough to be released. On October 27 it was given the U. S. Biological Survey band no. 37-715727 and placed on Occum Pond near the campus. It remained on and around the pond until November 2 when it disappeared. It was able to fly from one end of the pond to the other and readily came to the shore for food. On November 5, it was turned in to the Vermont Fish and Game Service and thence returned to me via James Otis and George Davis. It had been shot at North Hartland, Vermont, which is twelve miles south of Hanover along the Connecticut River. The bird had landed in a field with a flock of turkeys. The second Gannet, which was also an immature bird, landed in an exhausted condition at Barnet, Vermont, also along the Connecticut River, fifty miles north of Hanover. This bird was found October 23 and was kept alive for eleven days on a diet of 'hamburger'. When it finally died it was also sent to the Vermont Fish and Game Service and thence to me. This specimen will be returned to the Service for use in their study collection, while the Hanover bird will be placed in the Dartmouth College Museum.

Several other records of this bird have been made in the Connecticut Valley in New Hampshire and Vermont. One was found at Jefferson, New Hampshire, October 13, 1910, and another at East Corinth, Vermont, October 9, 1938.—RICHARD WEAVER, *Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire.*

Snowy Egret again nesting in Cape May County, New Jersey.—In 'The Auk' for January 1940, McDonald, Daly, and Gillespie reported the first nest of the Snowy Egret, *Egretta thula thula*, in New Jersey since about 1886. This nest was found "in Cape May County, New Jersey," on July 9, 1939. It is a pleasure to report a 1940 breeding record for the same species in the same vague location (correspondence with last year's discoverers discloses that the site is identical; hence the birds may be the same pair).

On May 30, 1940, the writer, accompanied by Malcolm S. Ferguson and Richard A. McLean, discovered a nest of the Snowy Egret in the above situation. It contained one egg, and reposed in a cedar tree about eight feet from the ground. Numerous Black-crowned Night Herons' nests in the vicinity contained eggs also, but a few harbored newly hatched young. Three adult Snowy Egrets were observed in the colony. No Little Blue Herons could be found. Ownership of the nest was established by retiring some distance to observe the adults, two of which promptly flew to the tree in which the alleged Snowy Egret nest reposed. A Black-crowned Night Heron's nest was in the same tree, about two feet above the egret's nest. Direct comparison of the Night Heron's eggs with the single egret's egg was possible, and the difference in size was readily discerned.

On June 18, 1940, another visit was made to the colony. The Night Herons were a third to a half grown. The egret's nest contained six eggs, which represents the maximum clutch for this species according to Bent's 'Life Histories of North American Marsh Birds.' Only one adult Snowy Egret was seen. It sat in a nearby tree and, when flushed, made only a narrow circle to alight in another tree close by. On July 8, 1940, the nest contained four young birds, evenly graded in size. No trace of the last two eggs was found. The smallest bird stayed in the nest, but the three others tried to clamber away among the cedar branches. All were caught and banded. The tips of their outer primaries had not yet sprouted from their sheaths but were pinkish white—not dark—in color, thus excluding the Little Blue Heron at once as parent to these fledglings.

On this occasion two adult Snowy Egrets were observed. One alit in a neighboring tree while the young were being banded. Periodically it uttered a single harsh note of protest. Later, when the young were returned safely to the nest and we investigated other parts of the colony, it joined its mate in soaring high over the marsh. The day was clear and the birds were seen sharply enough through a binocular against a blue sky for me to state that neither one bore a band on its leg. Last year two young birds were banded.

The young Black-crowned Night Herons were almost all fully fledged at this time and the colony was virtually deserted by this species. Young Fish Crows were flopping about, just out of the nest, while seven or eight Osprey families had just begun their chick phase. No Little Blue Herons or American Egrets were seen, but a single Yellow-crowned Night Heron showed itself for a moment before making a shy exit behind an adjacent 'island' in the marsh.

The Snowy Egret, American Egret, and Little Blue Heron all nested—or are supposed to have nested—in New Jersey during the nineteenth century, the latest records being some time in the '80's. Their lowest ebb, when they were rare even