

brown and black with solid brown cap and black chin, legs and feet orange or yellow or light or deep flesh-color, bill flesh-color with blackish tip. This downy plumage changes rapidly, the black chin disappears, the top of the head becomes mottled like the back, and under parts including the throat become white. At this time the early broods were partly or fully feathered, the upper parts pale gray with forehead brownish gray blending into the black on back of head, and under parts white. There were many of these early-brood birds hiding in the edge of the sedges or flattened among the stones on the narrow beach. Some would swim out into the lake as we approached and come back after we passed on. One that seemed fully fledged I tossed into the air and it took wing and flew around with the old birds where I soon lost track of it. One hundred and twenty young Terns were banded which used all of our bands and there were many more left without bands.

Four families of young Black Ducks and a family of young Blue-winged Teal were driven out of the tall sedges, took to the water and swam out to the grass and sedges growing in the water offshore.

In 1939, we found the Islands with more and thicker vegetation and the terns had increased in numbers, it seemed almost to the saturation point. It was impossible to count the nests owing to the dense vegetation but there were at least 150 nests and many young in the down. Most of the young were well feathered and nearly old enough to fly and kept to the shores hiding in the sedges or flattened among the stones on the beach. We banded 267 using all of our bands and left fifty to seventy-five unbanded. Only about 20 Ring-billed Gulls were there which may account for the large number of young terns found.

I could not get to Oneida Lake this year (1940). The water was probably high as it was in the other central New York lakes and conditions could not have been as good for the nesting terns.—VERDI BURTCHE, *Branchport, New York.*

**Historical data on a specimen of Sooty Tern from Oswego, New York.**—On page 149, Part 1, of E. H. Eaton's 'Birds of New York' (N. Y. State Museum Memoir 12, 1910), six records of the Sooty Tern (*Sterna fuscata fuscata*) are given for New York State. The localities cited are: Oswego, Lake Champlain, Owasco Lake, Lake Ronkonkoma, Highland Falls and Montauk.

The only information given by Eaton regarding the Oswego specimen is that it was taken "about 1875" by D. D. Stone. Perhaps now the whereabouts and earlier history of this first recorded New York State specimen of Sooty Tern will be of interest, at least to eastern ornithologists. On August 22, 1940, the same Dwight D. Stone, now of Coolidge, Arizona, and 82 years old but alert and active for one of his age, visited me at the State Museum in Albany. At that time he not only furnished me with further data concerning the Oswego specimen but offered to donate it to the Museum. The generous offer was gladly accepted and the tern was received from him on August 29, 1940.

Concerning this specimen Mr. Stone furnished the following historical background. As a youngster he lived in Oswego, New York, where, on account of his collecting proclivities and his penchant for mounting birds and other animals, he was known as the local 'boy taxidermist.' Mr. Stone cannot be more specific than "about 1875" regarding the date of discovery of the tern in question. However, he reports that following a severe storm the bird was picked up dead on the roof of the 'Doolittle House' by the janitor of that hostelry. This building was located on the bank of the Oswego River and occupied the site of the present 'Pontiac Hotel.' It was apparent that the tern had met death not long before it was

found when it flew against a vertical skylight on the roof of the hotel. The discoverer of the dead tern carried it to the manager of a local gun store who in turn transmitted it to Mr. Stone. It was then mounted by him and during the following years reposed in his private collection in Oswego.

The bird is in typical adult plumage, the few white feathers on the loreal region indicating that the postnuptial molt had occurred. Measurements: wing (extreme terminal portion of outer primaries missing), 11.8 inches; tail (extreme terminal portion of both outer tail-feathers missing), 5.8 inches; bill (exposed culmen), 1.6 inches; tarsus, 0.82 inch; middle toe with claw, 0.95 inch. This specimen has been renovated and remounted and is in a good state of preservation. It now reposes in the zoological exhibit collections of the New York State Museum bearing catalogue number 6170.

So far as I am aware, the Sooty Tern has been recorded from New York State but three times since the publication of Eaton's memoir. Two records are from Long Island, September 21 and December 24, 1928 (Auk, 46: 101, and 247, 1929); one record is for Staten Island, September 23, 1928 (Auk, 46: 102, 1929). All the birds were found dead.—DAYTON STONER, *New York State Museum, Albany, New York*.

**Noddy and Sooty Terns nesting on bare ground.**—In the latter part of June 1936, as a member of the Florida Audubon Society Expedition to the Dry Tortugas, Florida, I noticed what I believe to be an unusual nesting habit for the Noddy Tern, *Anous stolidus stolidus*. On the extreme east end of Bush Key approximately fifty birds (pairs) were observed to be nesting on the bare coral reefs. No nesting material had been gathered. J. B. Watson in 'Papers from the Tortugas Laboratory of the Carnegie Institution of Washington,' vol. 2, 1908, reports that "the statement has been made that the Noddy sometimes lays its eggs directly upon the ground, but this is not quite true for Noddies on Bird Key. Very often the nest has the appearance of being constructed upon the ground, but a closer examination usually shows that it has been built upon a tuft of grass or upon the stem of a bush, the branches of which have been broken off close to the ground." He also states that at no time did he find that eggs had been laid on the bare ground. It is possible that this deviation from the normal nesting habit was due to crowding in the rest of the colony. In subsequent trips to the Tortugas in 1937 and 1938 the Noddies were not observed nesting on bare ground and it was noticed that the population of the Noddy colony had decreased.

In 1937 and 1938 the Sooty Terns, *Sterna fuscata fuscata*, were observed nesting on the bare wood and iron-work of the abandoned coaling docks. The eggs were deposited on the bare surfaces with absolutely no nest material around them.—J. C. DICKINSON, JR., *University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida*.

**Bridled Tern in Florida Bay.**—On the morning of October 2, 1940, the writer, in company with Edward M. Moore, Audubon representative in the Florida Keys, was patrolling a portion of Florida Bay, Monroe County. While very near Stake (sometimes known as Big Low) Key about six miles northwest of Tavernier, a tern swung in and alighted on the skiff which was towing behind the patrol launch. It sat unconcerned and allowed its picture to be taken from two or three angles. We pulled up the skiff to the launch and one picture was secured at a range of about five feet.

At first glance both of us took it to be a Sooty Tern in the immature plumage but neither of us ever having seen that species in such plumage, we made careful