

GENERAL NOTES

An unknown loon from the Miocene fossil beds of Maryland.—Among recent accessions in the fossil collections of the U. S. National Museum there is included the distal end of a right tibiotarsus of a loon (Cat. no. 16612) presented by Mr. Arlton Murray. The bone was found by the donor, March 6, 1941, on the shore of Chesapeake Bay about one mile south of Plum Point Wharf, Calvert County, Maryland, and comes from the Calvert formation of the Miocene.

It represents a species of the genus *Gavia* slightly smaller than modern *Gavia immer*, but differs somewhat in conformation from that species. As the bone has been considerably worn by beach wash, all projecting points have been cut away so that though it is unquestionably a species not at present recognized it does not seem desirable to give it a name from this imperfect specimen. It serves merely to record the family from the Miocene where loon remains have not been identified previously in North America.—ALEXANDER WETMORE, *U. S. National Museum, Washington, D. C.*

Double-crested Cormorant breeding in Massachusetts.—It is well known that the Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax a. auritus*) has been rapidly extending its breeding range along the New England coast during the decade and a half since E. H. Forbush wrote ('Birds of Massachusetts,' 1925): ". . . Black Horse Ledge near Isle au Haut—the southernmost known breeding-place on Atlantic coast and the only known breeding-place in Maine. . . ." It is now possible to report that this extension has reached the vicinity of Boston, Massachusetts, for on August 5, 1940, I went ashore on Shag Rocks, 800 yards east-northeast of Boston Light at the entrance of Boston Harbor, and found a good-sized colony.

These rocks had undergone a striking transformation since I last saw them five or six years before. I remembered them as gray and brown in color; now their upper slopes were chalky white in the afternoon sun as we approached from the west, while sitting in ordered ranks along the whole crest were not less than two hundred and fifty cormorants. The adults gradually took flight by scaling off the heights and flapping away to neighboring islets, but there remained nearly a hundred juveniles. We counted fifty-three nests in all, of which one contained three fresh eggs, two a pair each of the naked shiny-black young, and the rest were trampled flat by their grown occupants. There were also a few Herring Gulls' nests.

This colony is probably of several years' standing. The presence of cormorants during the summer and the increasing whitewashing of the rocks were noted by a number of people at least two years ago, and in 1939 this Department had several reports of the matter from the captains of its patrol boats. Mr. Francis H. Allen also had reports, including a circumstantial story of nests and eggs. Mr. Allen was much more active in checking these reports than anyone else, and I regret that continued bad weather during July and his absence from home in early August prevented his making the actual discovery. He has kindly put me in touch with Mr. Edward R. Snow of Winthrop, who is somewhat of an authority on the history of the islands in Boston Harbor, and who assures me the cormorants began nesting at Shag Rocks at least as early as 1937. Double-crested Cormorants are regularly summering at the present time on the whole of the Massachusetts coast. They are particularly common in Buzzard's Bay, where on June 16 and 17, 1941, I saw good-sized groups at Gull Island off Cuttyhunk, in Quick's Hole,