

mately seventy-two hours from the time of the first pipping of the shell, while two others required about twelve hours more. The fourth chick, which had been enlarging the opening in its shell for about forty-eight hours when the parents deserted, had made this opening nearly large enough to permit it to emerge. Upon closer examination, the embryo proved to be infested with maggots. Removal of more of the shell showed that the yolk sac was still of considerable size and that the embryo was still living. Whether this seeming lack of coordination between the assimilation of the yolk sac and the opening of the shell by the chick would have rendered it susceptible to infestation by maggots if the parents had not deserted, is open to question. Nevertheless, it presents an interesting aspect of the Hudsonian Curlew's hatching. The fact that the parent birds deserted a living embryo and that several days were required for the chicks to emerge from their shells also seems worth recording.

On June 30, some Churchill children found the nest of a sandpiper that they could not identify, near the townsite slough. It proved to be that of a Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*). Another nesting record (1938) of this bird near Churchill is given by Taverner and Sutton (*op. cit.*), in which they state that it appears from data collected that "this species may slowly be establishing itself at the mouth of the Churchill River." This 1941 record tends to substantiate their statement.—OSCAR HAWKLEY, *The Principia College, Elsau, Illinois*.

International Swallows.—The Saint Lawrence River is over a mile wide between Ogdensburg, New York, U. S. A. and Prescott, Ontario, Canada, yet whole colonies of Tree Swallows nest each year on the ferryboats which ply between the two ports. Though the boats are frequently docked at different piers no bird ever seems at a loss as to the whereabouts of its homesite.

The nests are tucked into any available aperture even down inside the upright, hollow iron pipes from which the drawbridges swing. Nesting materials—feathers, dried leaves, grasses—and later food for the young, are gathered indiscriminately from either shore. The birds show no fear of passengers and deckhands nor of freight-moving operations.—MINNA ANTHONY COMMON, *Watertown, New York*.

Nesting of Mallard, Pintail and Black Duck at Washington, D. C.—The reports of Mr. Paul Hodge, formerly caretaker at the Roaches Run Waterfowl Sanctuary, a small municipal refuge located largely in the District of Columbia along the Virginia shore of the Potomac at Washington, provide records of Mallards, Pintails and Black Ducks breeding within the refuge during the years 1934–1939. So far as the author has been able to determine, no previous nesting records for these species in the Washington, D. C. region have been published. Although an undetermined but appreciable number of wing-clipped birds were released there during that period, Mr. Hodge, a competent observer, states verbally that only Wood Ducks nested in a pinioned condition (ramps were built to their boxes) and that all Mallards, Pintails and Black Ducks that bred within the sanctuary were capable of flight. Presumably, the presence of the nesting birds in this region was influenced by the attendance of the wing-clipped individuals.

The exact location of the District of Columbia-Virginia boundary line is now in dispute, being originally designated as the high-water mark of the Potomac on January 24, 1791. It is possible that some nests were located in Virginia but it is impossible to determine this definitely.

Although Mallard and Black Duck nests were seen by the author and, presum-

ably, nests of all three species by Mr. Hodge, surviving records disclose only the numbers of young produced each year. The numbers of pairs listed indicate the quantity of birds that spent each summer on the refuge. The number that actually nested is not known. The date given is that of the last report of the young for each year.

MALLARD—

1935	18 pairs	80 young	August 31
1936	30 pairs	221 young	September 27
1937	60 pairs	80 young	September 26
1938	25 pairs	45 young	September 25
1939	15 pairs	42 young	May 28

PINTAIL—

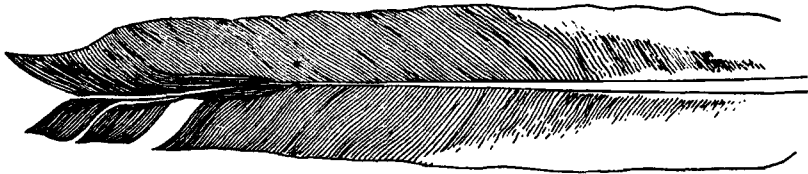
1935	12 pairs	10 young	August 31
1936	10 pairs	28 young	September 27
1937	12 pairs	20 young	September 26

BLACK DUCK—

1935		"several nests"	June 30
1936	30? pairs	45 young	September 27
1937	75? pairs	60 young	July 26

—GEORGE A. PETRIDES, *National Park Service, Washington, D. C.*

Abnormal primary of Ring-billed Gull.—Sutton and Arnold (*Auk*, 55: 281, 1938) record the collecting of a Blue Jay with an abnormally developed primary. Specimen No. 33,620,373 in the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology, Toronto, is a Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*) which exhibits a similarly deformed primary (Text-fig. 1). The bird was taken by the late C. W. Nash at



TEXT-FIG. 1.—Abnormal primary of Ring-billed Gull.

Toronto on April 12, 1897. In this case the abnormal feather is the outer primary of the left wing. The outer web of this feather is, in color, pattern and width, an almost exact replica of the normally developed inner web of the feather. The shaft, for most of its length, is narrower than usual and is badly split and distorted near its tip. As a result of this distortion the feather is some 70 mm. shorter than the corresponding primary of the right wing and no trace of the white "mirror" spot is visible. The two webs meet at the shaft at an angle of about 150°, this angle being that of the upper surface of the feather. The bird is a fully adult male and there is nothing to indicate that it had been handicapped by its duplicate web.—T. M. SHORTT, *Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology, Toronto, Ontario.*