

The fact that these nests were forty-one, ninety-four, and one hundred and five inches from the ground (eighty inches average height) may be attributed to the fact that no ground cover was available. As there was abundant food supply, the birds utilized the only cover at hand and the nests were thus necessarily close together and some distance from the ground.—ROBERT G. LANNING, 56 *Chatsworth Drive, Toronto*.

Chimney Swifts (?) at Manaus,¹ Brazil.—At dusk on March 28, 29, and 30, 1943, a cloud of thousands of swifts, resembling in every visible detail our North American Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*), was seen hanging over a large, abandoned, red chimney in the town of Manaus, situated on the Rio Negro about a thousand miles up the Amazon valley. The chimney in question is about sixty feet in height and stands near the southeastern limits of the city where a deep, finger-like inlet of the Negro leads inland from its mouth on the northern bank of the great river. This body of water, known as the Igarapé da Cachoeirinha, winds northeastward past a tiny island bearing the picturesque name of Ilha Mte. Cristo, and the chimney stands on the mainland but a short distance northwest of this island.

The circumstances under which these observations were made are worth reviewing because of the problem involved, for if this sight record can be later substantiated by specimens, it will be of the highest value in uncovering one of the last unknown winter ranges of a North American migrant bird, a range which has defied thorough collectors so completely for two centuries that we have no evidence beyond logical supposition that this species winters in South America. Our only records of the millions of Chimney Swifts that annually depart from these shores are of a few birds taken in Nicaragua and Panama, and certain reliable sight records of migrating flocks over the Caribbean area. In fact, one feels inclined to bow to old Olaus Magnus, Archduke of Upsala, and to ponder his ostensibly factual illustration showing fishermen seining torpid swifts and other such creatures from the bottom of the sea! However, since his time in the 16th century, we have become assured that birds are not among the varied forms of animal life which hibernate, and the old Archduke has fallen into disrepute.

Some among us have written that when the secret of our Chimney Swifts' migration is finally divulged, in all probability the key to the puzzle will be found somewhere in the vast valley of the Amazon. Whereas in eastern North America Chimney Swifts are the sole representatives of their family, in the Amazonian region they may have remained effectively hidden among many other forms of swifts, nearly all of which at any distance are quite similar in appearance—with the exception of the Palm Swifts of the genus *Reinarda*. Because of this similarity, exact records must, of necessity, be in the form of collected specimens, since most sight records, perhaps even as here recorded, are too uncertain. The chief purpose of this note, then, is to record an observation for the benefit of future investigators.

Our first view of the Manaus 'Chimney Swifts' took place just before dusk on Sunday, March 28, when, after a day of hunting, we were returning by launch with a party of six men including naturalist George A. Seaman. As the boat entered Igarapé da Cachoeirinha within the limits of the city, as evidenced by the hundreds of houses hugging its steep banks, I saw the flock and said: "Look! Chimney Swifts." A flock of these birds settling into a chimney is quite noticeable and so at that time and during the two succeeding evenings when we passed

¹ Spelled 'Manaus,' according to modern Brazilian orthography; formerly Manáos.

that way after working down river, the birds were plainly and simply "Chimney Swifts, migrants from the States." That first evening they were circling in a wide, spiral cone, and at the bottom of the cone a continuous stream of birds filtered into the chimney. Each of the two following evenings they were circling about the chimney more aimlessly, for we passed the spot somewhat too early to observe them entering it for the night.

On Sunday evening, April 4, I set out to obtain specimens, but to my intense disappointment the flock had vanished. Subsequent investigation here at the American Museum of Natural History indicates that I should not have wasted a moment in visiting the chimney, since New Jersey spring arrivals begin as early as April 3 (1926; Rushing), although the first migrants usually reach the New York area in late April and early May.

It is probable that George A. Seaman will still be with the Rubber Development Corporation at Manaus this coming autumn (1943) when the swifts return and, with this in mind, I have written him that the birds may arrive early in November, a deduction based on the following premises: Swifts usually have departed from the New York area by middle October and most have left in early September; autumn records based on specimens are: ♂ and ♀, Cocoplum, Boca del Toro, western Panama, October 28, 1927 (Chapman, Auk, 48: 119-121, 1931); Changuinola River, Panama, October 24, 1926 (Peters, Bull. Mus. Comp. Zoöl., 71: 314, 1921).

I have asked Seaman to try to examine the base of the chimney for feathers and other remains, and to question natives living in the vicinity about the "andorinas." Of course, the ideal solution would be to trap the entire flock, examine them for bands, and then mark them with distinctive bands or water-proof ink; there are a thousand bird observers in North America for every one in Brazil, and some recoveries would certainly be made. Probably no other North American species lends itself so readily to such a reversal of our usual system of banding and if, in time, this plan could be carried out, it is probable that our Chimney Swifts, which until now have kept their secret so well, might become one of our best-known migrants.

The flight characteristics of South American swifts are not too well known, but, having collected eight species and observed probably several more, I can say that none other that I have ever seen acted at all as these Manaus birds did. To me they were the same birds that I had previously seen so often in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, but especially in the last-named state. There during September, on numerous occasions with Mrs. Gilliard, I have paused when homeward bound to watch 'our' swifts funnel into the top of a low chimney, with each flier silhouetted against the golden Kittatinny sky in an ever-increasing band, gathering and waiting that magical instant when they would sail off, perhaps into the Amazon Valley to winter in that red brick chimney overlooking the Ilha Mte. Christo.—E. THOMAS GILLIARD, *American Museum of Natural History, New York City.*

Northward extension of the breeding range of the White Ibis.—Many observers have noted with interest and satisfaction the gradual but steady extension of the breeding ranges of certain of the herons up the Atlantic coast. It probably is not so well known that a parallel exists in the behavior of the White Ibis (*Guara alba*) in recent years. While it is true that the ibis has been even more gradual in its northward movements, the advance is none the less certain and the season of 1943 has seen another short penetration to the northward. A brief review of