tion, I am happy that several reliable witnesses can be named. At the time of the occurrence I corresponded with Dr. T. S. Roberts, under whom I had studied. Since then, he has reprimanded me each time I have visited him for never having written the story for publication. That is why, after three and one-half years, I have finally written the account, although it should have been done sooner.—JAMES W. KIMBALL, *Senior Biologist, Nebraska Game, Forestation, and Parks Commission, Pierce, Nebraska.*

Are the seasons changing?—It is often said that the seasons are changing, but here is a bit of evidence to the contrary. At Williams College, situated in Williamstown, Massachusetts, there are official weather reports from 1816 to date. The early ones were made by Prof. Chester Dewey and, along with weather data, he noted other happenings including dates of arriving spring birds. These make interesting comparisons with my own records of birds made one hundred years later in the same place. In the first volume of records from 1816 to 1838, the average date of the first Robin was March 15 and my records from 1916–1938 give exactly the same average date. The dates of the first Robin ranged from March 3 to April 2 a century ago, and from March 1 to March 30 in the latter group of years. For the Bluebird, the early records averaged March 14 for the first one seen, and mine average March 18, with a range in those previous twenty-three years of March 5 to April 1 and in the corresponding years of this century it was March 7 to April 14.—WM. J. CARTWRIGHT, *Williamstown, Massachusetts.*

***Cractes* vs. *Perisoreus*.**—Ridgway (Bull. U. S. Nat. Mus., 50, pt. 3: 750, 1904) proposed the use of *Cractes* Billberg (Synop. Faun. Scand., 1, pt. 2: 14, 1928) as an earlier valid name for *Perisoreus* Bonaparte (Giorn. Acadico, 49: 42, 1831), and cited *Corvus infaustus* Linnaeus as type species. The A. O. U. Committee on Nomenclature rejected this proposal on the grounds that *Cractes* was simply a substitute name for *Garrulus* Brisson (*see* Auk, 25: 394, 1908), but Sharpe (Hand-L. Gen. Spec. Birds, 5: 614, 1909) adopted Ridgway's arrangement as did Hartert (Vög. Pal. Fauna, Ergänzsb.: 22, 1932). More recently, Amadon (Amer. Mus. Novitates, no. 1251: 5, 1944) has reopened the discussion by similar use of *Cractes* instead of *Perisoreus*.

In order to examine the case at first hand, and lacking a copy of Billberg's exceedingly rare work, I wrote to Dr. W. H. Thorpe of the University of Cambridge, England, where a copy is preserved. Dr. Thorpe most kindly sent me a transcript of the original account of *Cractes* which deserves reprinting here in order to make the evidence accessible to interested workers. The original description is contained in a footnote to which reference is made in the generic heading, as follows:

"G. 6 CRACTES*), *Sv.* Skrika.

. . . . . .

"*) Hab. Gener. *fere* Corvi; *sed capite proportionaliter majore et multo minore; pennis capitis longis pro lubitu erigentibus.—Sine omni dubio hoc Genus distinctum; sed nomen genericum* Garrulus Brissonis *speciebus pluribus avium ut triviale attributum, ineptum est, unde* Cractes, *e voce* Κράκτης (clamator), *adoptavimus.*"

From this paragraph it is clear that Billberg was simply proposing *Cractes* as a substitute for *Garrulus* to which he took exception. He designated no type for his genus. Consequently the type first to be established for either generic name

became automatically the type of the other (*see* International Rules of Zoological Nomenclature, Art. 30, II, f). Gray (Cat. Gen. Subgen. Birds: 37, 1840) selected "*Garrulus glandarius* (L.)" as the type of *Garrulus*, antedating Ridgway by many years. Both *infaustus* and *glandarius* were discussed by Billberg but even their omission would not have altered the situation since the manner of proposal of the generic name *Cractes* placed it at once in the synonymy of *Garrulus* Brisson.—JOHN T. ZIMMER, *American Museum of Natural History, New York, N. Y.*

Nesting notes on the Arctic Tern.—On July 27, 1943, I visited a colony of Arctic Terns (*Sterna paradisaea*) that were nesting on an unnamed island a few miles off the Frederikshaab Glacier on the southwest coast of Greenland in latitude 62° 09′ N., longitude 50° 21′ W. In area, it is 300 yards by 100 yards—one of the largest of a group—and has an elevation of about 100 feet. At high tide, approximately 75 per cent of the island is covered by a grass which is up to ten inches in height. In the center of the island there is a small freshwater lake measuring 60 by 15 feet and with a depth of several feet. The island appeared to be the only one in that immediate vicinity where the terns were nesting.

To determine the approximate number of nests, our party of three Greenlanders (Eskimos) and two Americans took a census. Nest positions, cover, and predation were noted. Walking abreast and at 20-foot intervals, we counted the nests over the length of the island. The nests consisted simply of grass which had been packed down. Practically all of them were entirely exposed, and all were placed on the grass. In many cases, however, they were on narrow grass ridges in rock crevices. We counted 279 nests, and it was felt that this represented over 90 per cent of the total. There were 181 nests with two eggs each; 95 had one egg each; and three contained three each. No hatched eggs were seen.

Predatory birds were not observed near the island, although several Snowy Owl pellets were found near the nests. These contained bones and small white feathers. Two pairs of tern wings also were found. Bird predators probably are a negligible factor here in nest losses. Human beings appear to be a much greater predatory factor.

Previous to our decision to make the nest count, three of the Greenlanders in our party had gone to the island and collected 146 eggs. This represented the rifling of about 92 nests. Eggs are something of a delicacy in Greenland, and the collection was made for food. Inasmuch as this island is on a moderately traveled route for small native boats, food-hunting natives probably account for a considerable loss of eggs. Examination of most of the collected eggs showed some of them to be fresh and others in all stages of incubation. However, the freshness or the developmental stage of the embryo apparently did not influence the Greenlanders. All the eggs were boiled and eaten with relish.

Some of the eggs which occurred singly in the nests were fresh and some were incubated. This was the case also with clutches of more than one egg. The Greenlanders claim that the terns nest twice every season. Two or three eggs were reported as being the usual number for the first nesting and one egg for the second nesting. However, the destruction or disturbance of the first nest may have occasioned the building of a second.—CARL R. EKLUND, *Capt. Air Forces, Arctic Section, ADTIC, 25 Broad Street, New York City.*

Breeding records of the Prairie Horned Lark in Kentucky.—The Prairie Horned Lark (*Otocoris alpestris praticola*) probably did not breed in Kentucky until very recently. As late as 1931, Pickwell in his monograph (Trans. Acad. Sci., St. Louis,