

Against this background and over an area of some five square kilometers, a colony of *Larus modestus* was in the initial stages of nidification. Here and there, at irregular intervals, sometimes singly and sometimes in small groups but always in the immediate proximity of one or more small stones, a large number of rounded, cup-shaped excavations were to be observed in the loose surface of the yellowish-brown desert earth. Most of these cup-shaped hollows were still empty, but every now and again we came across one containing eggs; altogether five nests with two eggs and four with only one egg were found, all of them perfectly fresh (see Plate 21). In addition there were a number of mummified fledglings, evidently casualties from previous years' nesting operations.

As we walked about the nesting area a few Garumas flew past us in slow and desultory fashion, alighting from time to time on the ground only to fly up again as we approached. Altogether we must have seen about 50 Garumas and one solitary Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura jota*)—between them the only living things in all that immense solitude, otherwise so utterly devoid of life that not a single plant can live there nor an insect disturb the vast silence of its desolate wastes.

The eggs of the Garuma are very different from the usual gull type, and doubtless represent an adaptation to the very special conditions of strong light, heat and glare which characterize the environment in which they are laid. The ground-color is very light, varying from white with faint pearl-gray suffusions, to pale ochraceous salmon (Ridgway); over this are to be found a few clearly defined though smallish spots in varying tones of chestnut brown and others, so faint as to be scarcely discernible without a magnifying glass, of light violet gray. The measurements of 14 eggs give a length of 58.3 ± 0.57 mm. and a width of 41.3 ± 0.28 mm.

The fact that the scrape in the ground which does duty as a nest is almost always placed alongside a stone is curious and would seem to indicate that the birds recognize the need to provide the nestling with some degree of shade and protection from the sun and wind during their daily absences from the colony in search of food. Similarly the need to cover the eggs or young during the chilly nights no doubt accounts for the flocking from the sea coast at sunset.

That these colonies sometimes assume very large proportions is proven by the fact, established personally by a friend of ours, that the year previous to our visit, five men with baskets and a truck brought away from this same colony and sold in the port of Tocopilla no less than 30,000 eggs. Such vandalism would, of course, soon exterminate the species, but fortunately opportunities are few and far between as the vast stretches of seemingly limitless, all-but-uninhabited desert which form the hinterland of this gull's range both in Chile and Peru, provide the widest possible choice of nesting sites and every facility for changing to another location in the event of molestation. That these sites are sometimes as much as 100 kilometers inland is proven by the discovery of a nesting colony or 'Garumal' in the Aguas Blancas section of the nitrate pampas of Antofagasta.

Why this bird, essentially an inhabitant of the sea-coast, should have chosen such an extraordinarily un-gull-like environment for its nesting activities and how and when this ultraspecialized habitat became standard practice for the species are questions for which we offer no explanation. We can only leave on record what this standard practice is and leave it at that.—J. D. GOODALL, R. A. PHILIPPI B., AND A. W. JOHNSON, *Santiago, Chile*.

Longevity record of Black-cheeked Weaver.—Longevity records are always of interest to the ornithologist. If an individual has been in captivity for a known period, or has been tagged in some manner so that its identity can be recognized, the

authenticity of the record is established. In 1926, the Smithsonian-Chrysler Expedition to Africa collected a number of Black-cheeked Weavers (*Ploceus intermedius*). This form inhabits East Africa from Abyssinia to Tanganyika. Of the group collected, three are still living in the National Zoological Park, Washington, D. C. These birds have been in captivity for some nineteen years, which is, I believe, a record.—MALCOLM DAVIS, *The National Zoological Park, Washington, D. C.*

An unusual note of the White-crowned Sparrow.—A persistent note, uttered with the regularity of a cricket's chirp, came from our back yard on numerous evenings in the fall of 1943. My curiosity was aroused, but for some days I could not identify the bird which was usually in the heart of our arrowwood (*Viburnum dentatum*) where it must have spent the night. It was so dark by the time the call commenced that only the form of a bird, if anything, could be discerned. Before I finally identified the maker of the strange call, I heard it in two other places—one a mile from our house, and the other a mile and a half in another direction. Finally, on October 9, I was able to get a good view of the bird through my binoculars as it called from a neighbor's yard. It was a White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys leucophrys*).

The call was always given as the bird sat almost motionless, usually concealed in the center of some shrub or vine. It seemed almost an alarm note in quality, resembling the *peep* (not the Goldfinch-like) call of a canary. Being loud and uttered in rapid succession, it was so properly timed that it was distinctive. The call was nearly always heard quite late in the evening, apparently just before the bird retired. On several occasions several birds called at once.

I listened during the fall of 1944 for this performance but did not hear it once. Ordinarily I do not list the White-crown in the fall migration, and this call is my only clue to its probably greater abundance in the 1943 migration. I suggest that others listen for this note if it is not a regular call of the White-crowned Sparrow.—ROBERT E. BALL, 2622 Tuscarawas St. W., Canton 6, Ohio.

John Bartram on the Passenger Pigeon in Florida.—Bartram was at Lake George, Florida, on January 24 and 25, 1766. On the 24th he explored the stream connecting Lake George with Lake Kerr in Marion County, and camped for the night on Bryan's (Drayton's) Island at the north end of Lake George. The entry in his journal for the 25th reads in part: ". . . saw several flocks of pigeons flying about yesterday and to-day" (William Stork. A description of East-Florida with a journal kept by John Bartram of Philadelphia, 25: 1769, London). This is in approximate latitude 29° 20' N. and appears to be the southernmost record for the Passenger Pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*) in Florida.

It is stated by A. H. Howell (Florida Bird Life, 280: 1932) that the species occurred formerly at least south to Alachua County. He cites Stork's statement but overlooks Bartram's entry.—A. W. SCHORGER, 168 N. Prospect Avenue, Madison, Wisconsin.

The food of the Red-shouldered Hawk in New York State.—From 1939 to 1942, a study of the food taken by the Red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus lineatus*) in central New York was conducted by the writer, in addition to a bird-of-prey banding program in effect at the time. During those four years, periodic observations were made each spring on the food captured by four nesting pairs within twenty miles of the city of Syracuse, New York.

Principal methods of study were to observe from strategically located blinds the food brought to the immature birds by the adults, as well as the food that was often