

and fibers, with scattered hair, a few lichens, feathers, and thread. The nest has the appearance of having been well used, indicating that a brood of young was successfully reared.—W. R. DEGARMO AND WILLIAM F. STRUNK, *Conservation Commission of West Virginia, Charleston, W. Va.*

**An unusual bird fatality** (*Plate 3, left fig.*).—About November 15, 1944, the cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus* subsp.?), shown in the accompanying photograph, met an unusual death. The bird was first pointed out to me by Mr. C. Hoyt Mills of McClellanville, South Carolina, while we were on boat patrol of the Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge, Charleston County, S. C. Although dead when examined, the cormorant apparently had attempted to alight on the top of a slender, split pole, had slipped downward, and had been garroted when its neck lodged in the narrowing crack. The pole, formerly supporting a flag marker, was nailed to an engineering survey sign possessing the usual row of close-set nails placed to prevent bird roosting and its results. If the sign had not been so armed the bird might not have attempted to land on such a slender pole as that above the sign. The split at the top of the pole was 2½ inches wide, narrowing down gradually for about three feet. It was first thought that someone in a jesting mood had placed the bird in position but examination discounted this theory. The spot was a good distance away from the Intracoastal Canal, the sign had been established many months or even years previously, the isolated post was difficult to approach over the very boggy salt marsh, and the bird was ten feet above the level of the marsh muck. During five years' residence at the refuge, this has been the only example of this type of bird death the writer has witnessed.—WILLIAM P. BALDWIN, *Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge, McClellanville, South Carolina.*

**Brewster's Booby in Arizona** (*Plate 3, upper right fig.*).—An immature *Sula leucogaster brewsteri* was observed in the Bill Williams arm of Havasu Lake, Havasu Lake National Wildlife Refuge, in Mohave and Yuma counties, Arizona, on August 13 and 14, 1943. As usual with boobies, it was an unwary bird and permitted sufficiently close approach to allow me to study all details and even secure a satisfactory photograph of the bird resting on the water. The record is noteworthy not alone because it is the first record of any booby for the State of Arizona, but very probably the first record for the United States of the subspecies *Sula leucogaster brewsteri* (Peters, Check-list of Birds of the World).

Characters apparent in the photograph, as well as from my field description of the bird, are diagnostic enough to permit positive identification as to species. Its straight, sharp, wedge-shaped beak was of the same color—a light bluish-gray, mostly on the gray side—as the naked area about the eye, of which it seemed to be a continuation. The bird's general color was a darkish brown, a little rusty, with some vermiculations, especially on the breast. When resting on the water, its wing tips projected beyond the tail. When it flew, long and narrow wings were immediately noticeable, as well as its pale yellowish feet, the whitish strip on the under side of the wing, and the rather short and rounded tail.

My thanks are due to Dr. Alden H. Miller of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, who examined the photograph and supplied me with various taxonomic information.—GALE MONSON, *Fish and Wildlife Service, Needles, Calif.*

**Laughing Gull robs Brown Pelican** (*Plate 3, lower right fig.*).—A recent conversation with Mr. Jack DuPre of McClellanville, South Carolina, in which he told



(Left), BALDWIN—AN UNUSUAL BIRD FATALITY. (Upper right), MONSON—  
BREWSTER'S BOOBY IN ARIZONA. (Lower right), BALDWIN—LAUGHING GULL ROBS  
BROWN PELICAN.

of seeing gulls alight on the heads of fishing pelicans in Panamanian waters and rob the latter of their catch of fish, reminded the writer of similar behavior observed at the Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge, Charleston County, South Carolina, in the summers of 1939 and 1940. A picture of the act was secured with an inexpensive telephoto lens from quite a distance and, although not particularly clear, the photograph is thought to be of sufficient interest to warrant publication.

This refuge has what is probably the northernmost Atlantic Coast nesting colony of the Eastern Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis occidentalis*), and during the breeding season the birds fly over extensive areas of salt creeks, bays, and ocean in search of food for their young. Approximately 95 per cent of the food they bring in is menhaden. Their method of diving from the air for fish is too well known to be described here. In the early summer it is not unusual to see Laughing Gulls (*Larus atricilla*), in both breeding and non-breeding plumage, following the pelicans, with as many as five gulls often harassing a single pelican. Just after the pelican has completed the plunge and before it can swallow the fish protruding from its bill, a gull may flutter in, alight on the water or even on the pelican's head and seize the fish. A pelican has never been observed to show anything but stoic calm during this procedure.—WILLIAM P. BALDWIN, *Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge, McClellanville, South Carolina.*

**Great Blue Heron swallows large snake.**—On October 28, 1944, as Donald J. Nicholson, Wray Nicholson, Joseph C. Howell, Jr., B. F. McCamey and I were driving eastward along the road between Titusville and Titusville Beach, across the peninsula just north of Merritt Island in Brevard County, Florida, we chanced to see an adult Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*), with head hanging awkwardly forward, standing several rods north of the highway at the edge of a salt-water marsh. When we stopped the car, the bird lifted its head and we saw that it had half swallowed a thick-bodied snake about three and a half feet long. With convulsive movements of its neck and body, the heron succeeded in swallowing several more inches of the snake, then flew laboriously to another arm of the marsh fifty yards away. I believe the heron had killed the snake; but it might have found the reptile dead along the highway and carried it to one side to finish swallowing it. The snake was dark above and white, or almost white, below. It almost certainly was a water snake (*Natrix*) rather than a moccasin (*Agkistrodon*), since the latter is more or less heavily mottled with gray below.—GEORGE MIKSCHE SUTTON, *ADT Branch, AAF Center, Orlando, Florida.*

**Some Louisiana observations.**—While stationed at the Army Air Field near Lake Charles, Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana, from January 1 to mid-June, 1943, the writer had several opportunities to observe the bird life of the vicinity, and through the courtesy of several members of the Fish and Wildlife Service personnel in that Gulf Coast area, notably Mr. John J. Lynch, was enabled to visit the Lacassine and Sabine refuges of the Service in Cameron Parish. After comparison of roll calls and journal entries for this period with H. C. Oberholser's 'The Bird Life of Louisiana' (1938), the following observations seem worthy of record:

**WHITE-FACED GLOSSY IBIS, *Plegadis mexicana.***—On April 27, scores of individuals among some four hundred ibises present on the Lacassine Refuge marshes were satisfactorily identified as of this species. I stalked the first group patiently, through mud and stubble, in order to check facial markings but subsequently had several small groups fly close enough to be readily identified. None of the ibises observed at sufficiently close range lacked this specific field characteristic.