

Shearwater (*Puffinus griseus*) at Gray's Harbor, near Freeport, on the coast of Washington. There is a long breakwater extending about two and one-half miles out into the ocean at this point, and the birds were flying south just beyond its end.

For an hour, during the walk out to the end of the rocky breakwater, we had seen enormous flocks of shearwaters, and, when we reached the end, we watched them for an hour or more. We attempted to estimate the number of birds by counting the number passing a point about one hundred yards distant in a given time period. In this way, it was believed that about 100,000 birds an hour were going by. Most of them flew close to the surface, but individual birds regularly wheeled up to a height of about 50 feet from time to time, staying here for about twenty seconds, and then rejoining the main flock. We were told by some fishermen that the flock had been passing steadily for about three days, so that an estimated count of several million birds does not seem to be excessive.

At one time, toward evening, the leaders of the flock turned east into Gray's Harbor, and thousands of birds followed them, circling about and finally settling on the water in a dense, compact mass which covered several acres of water surface. In this flock was one bird, noticeably larger than the Sooty Shearwaters, with clear white under parts—probably the Pink-footed Shearwater (*Puffinus creatopus*). On the way back we picked up one dead Sooty Shearwater which had been killed by a car.—DR. LOCKE L. MACKENZIE, *New York City*.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull in New York harbor.**—On the evening of March 28, 1945, while the boat on which I had crossed the Atlantic from England was lying off Staten Island, I saw a Lesser Black-backed Gull among the crowds of Herring Gulls. The bird flew past me, and rather below me, at a distance of a few yards. Not only could I see that its size was the same as that of the Herring Gulls, but I also saw the yellow legs, while the mantle was not by any means as dark as that of the Greater Black-backs that were also flying up and down the Hudson River that afternoon. In terms of the subspecies to be seen on the eastern side of the Atlantic, I should have supposed it was *Larus fuscus graellsii* rather than *L. f. fuscus*, but there are probably other possible subspecies that should be taken into account as possible visitors to New York. On the following morning (26th) before we weighed anchor, the bird once again flew past our boat, but I did not see it so well as on the previous evening.—H. G. ALEXANDER, *144 Oak Tree Lane, Birmingham 29, England*.

**Rare Utah birds.**—In going over my collection recently with Dr. A. M. Woodbury of the University of Utah, we came upon a swift that I have for years been holding for comparative data. The University had comparative skins, and it has been finally identified as the Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*), taken by me at Kaysville, Utah, May 7, 1912. This is a new record for Utah, and the specimen has been donated to the collection of the University of Utah.

I have also given to the University of Utah the Roseate Spoonbill (*Ajaia ajaja*) recorded by me from Wendover, Utah, July 2, 1919 (Auk, 36: 565, 1919), as it seems to be too rare a bird to be left in a private collection.

On May 27, 1944, on Farmington Bay, Utah, Louise Atkinson and I sat within seventy-five feet of a Brown Pelican for half an hour and were able to record every detail of its plumage. Shooting was not allowed. I have submitted the detailed description to various ornithologists and, although its size indicated *Pelecanus occidentalis occidentalis*, we have concluded to call it just "Brown Pelican." Dr. A. M. Woodbury has one sight record for *P. o. californicus* for Utah (Condor, 39: 225, 1937), but as far as I know these two comprise all the records of the occurrence of the

Brown Pelican in Utah.—CLAUDE T. BARNES, 359 Tenth Avenue, Salt Lake City, Utah.

**Roseate Spoonbill nesting on the Sabine Refuge, Louisiana.**—The Sabine National Wildlife Refuge, lying between Calcasieu and Sabine lakes in Cameron Parish, Louisiana, was acquired primarily as a water-fowl refuge to protect the huge flocks of Blue and Snow Geese wintering in that locality. In addition to fulfilling its original purpose, this 142,000-acre refuge shelters many other forms of wild life, among them the rare Roseate Spoonbill (*Ajaia ajaja*).

The earliest records of the Roseate Spoonbill on the Refuge date from 1938, the year the area was placed under management. Field reports indicate that small numbers occurred during the summer, with a few being seen in the spring and fall months. For many years the spoonbill had maintained a relatively permanent rookery on Bird Island in the Black Bayou area, Cameron Parish, a few miles north of the Sabine Refuge boundary (R. P. Allen, Nat. Aud. Soc. Research Report, No. 2, 1942). E. L. Atwood, a former manager of the Sabine Refuge, made an inspection of Bird Island in 1942, but found no evidence of nesting. The serious implication of this finding is obvious when it is remembered that the Bird Island rookery then was the only known nesting colony of this species in Louisiana and one of a very few remaining in the United States.

In the spring of 1943, Refuge Manager V. L. Childs found spoonbills congregating on Bird Island and it appeared that they were preparing to nest; later a marsh fire burned over the island and caused the birds to leave; in early May they made their appearance on the Refuge at Shell Island, a small man-made mound of less than an acre in extent, covered by small trees and shrubs, lying approximately 15 miles southeast of the old rookery on Bird Island. On May 25, John Lynch and Roland C. Clement visited Shell Island and counted 73 adult birds. By the end of May nesting was in full swing and it was estimated that 35 pairs were using the new location. A severe thunderstorm on May 24 damaged many nests and not more than 18 young birds matured.

Some 400 adult egrets, herons, spoonbills, and cormorants used this small nesting site in 1943. The limited tree and shrub growth was completely utilized, but the variations in nesting periods and heights tended to relieve the competition for nest sites. When incubation by the American and Snowy Egrets was well advanced, and the cormorant and Ward's Heron rookeries were breaking up, the spoonbills were just beginning to build nests. The Ward's Heron placed its nests at a higher level than the other species, using the tops of the trees and even the 20-foot lookout tower; the tallest trees present are estimated to be not more than 40 feet high. The cormorants nested from eight feet above the ground to the tops of the smaller trees, while the American Egret's nests were found at levels between four and ten feet. The spoonbill nests were rather uniformly placed at approximately seven feet above the ground, and the Snowy Egret did not appear to have any height preference, building its nests from almost level ground to 35 feet.

No spoonbills were observed from the last of August, 1943, until April 25, 1944, when Mr. Childs saw 14 adults. By the end of May, 20 pairs were present on Shell Island and the population continued to increase until July 11 when this same observer counted 200 adults; in addition, 75 were seen along the boat channel en route to the island. A complete census was not attempted because it would have caused undesirable disturbance, but it was ascertained by a cursory examination that no fewer than 60 spoonbill nests were located in the rookery, which again was shared with cormorants, egrets, and herons. A late visit on August 19, 1944, disclosed that 11 adults