

single eggs each, and a number ready for sets. No eggs had yet hatched. On two islands close together not less than 75 pairs were nesting, and among them were a few nests and eggs of the Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum antillarum*), and Black-necked Stilts.

This is the first fresh-water breeding record for this rare tern in Florida, and there is but one other fresh-water breeding record, that of Texas. Elsewhere in Florida this tern has been reported breeding in but two localities—Mosquito Lagoon by R. L. Longstreet and near Pensacola by F. Weston; and at both places few nests were found. These constitute the only actual nesting records for the Gull-billed Tern in the state. Elsewhere in the state I saw one of these terns near Narcoosee on a canal in April, 1945, and a dozen birds several different times flying over the brackish marshes seven miles west of Indian River City, Brevard County, and on the Indian River at Titusville, in May and June of 1944 and 1945.

Two specimens of breeding Gull-billed Terns found at Lake Okeechobee were presented to the U. S. National Museum, and were identified by Dr. Alexander Wetmore.—DONALD JOHN NICHOLSON, *Orlando, Florida*.

**Wintering of the Gray Kingbird in Florida.**—On January 30, 1945, a Gray Kingbird (*Tyrannus dominicensis dominicensis*) was seen silently feeding on a small farm at Lakeport, Glades County, Florida, which village is located on the western border of Lake Okeechobee. The bird was watched for some time by Wray H. Nicholson and Donald J. Nicholson. When finally it was shot, a skin was made of this unusual specimen, which later was presented to the U. S. National Museum. The bird was silent during the time it was observed. In Bent's 'Life Histories of North American Flycatchers, Larks, Swallows, and their Allies,' on page 49, Mr. Alexander Sprunt, Jr., is quoted: "It is by no means impossible that it may appear in the future, but the probability is that any bird seen after December 1 is a belated migrant and not a wintering specimen." It is difficult to imagine that the bird found as late as January 30 and apparently well-established miles from salt water could be classified as anything but a wintering bird, especially since the species appears each spring in April—a period of about two months later. Therefore it should be considered, under the circumstances, as our first authentic specimen of a wintering bird. It is odd that it should be found 40 to 50 miles inland on fresh water.

According to Sprunt, Dr. H. C. Burgess saw a Gray Kingbird at Royal Palm Park, December 26 to 28, 1917, indicating that the species does occasionally winter in southern Florida. With these two definite winter records, further debate regarding a wintering status is superfluous.—DONALD JOHN NICHOLSON, *Orlando, Florida*.

**Curlew Sandpiper on Galveston Island**—On April 13, 1947, when Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Hamilton, my son Stephen, and I were driving along the beach of Galveston Island, we noticed, among a flock of Sanderlings feeding on the beach, a Greater Yellowlegs and a strange, dark-appearing bird. The Yellowlegs flew away at our approach, but the Sanderlings and the other bird remained. When frightened by our coming too near, this bird would fly off with the Sanderlings and settle with them a few yards down the beach. We examined it repeatedly during about 40 minutes with 18× Zeiss binoculars, as well as 8× Bausch & Lomb binoculars, from a distance of about 50 yards. It was a tall, rangy bird (much taller than the Sanderlings) that reminded one of a Stilt Sandpiper. The head, neck, and breast were red with a grayish tint; the back and wings were grayish brown, so that the bird looked quite dark; the brown of the back (plainly visible every time the bird flew away)

faded into what looked like a light, grayish tan above the tail; the tail was grayish brown; the region under the tail and behind the legs was visible every time this tall bird tipped over to pick up food, and was pure white; a white wing-stripe was visible when the bird flew.

I am very familiar with the ordinary shore-birds of the Gulf Coast, and I know well the short-legged Red-backed Sandpiper, the chunky Knot, and the long-billed Dowitcher. This bird could not possibly have been any of these three. It was certainly a Curlew Sandpiper.

A few remarks on the appearance of this bird in comparison with some familiar illustrations in various ornithological texts may help other observers identify the species more frequently than in the past. The bill looked precisely like that in Audubon's picture of the species; the more pronounced curvature shown in Ridgway, Peterson, and Taverner's Birds of Canada was not apparent in this bird. (Is it possible that the bill shrinks into a different form in dried specimens?) The legs were much darker than Audubon has them, and were longer than those of his bird in breeding plumage; the legs of his bird in winter plumage seem to have about the right proportions. The bird was more slender (like a Lesser Yellowlegs or a Stilt Sandpiper) than Peterson's drawing suggests; and the light area above the tail seemed neither so white nor so sharply defined as in Peterson's figure. In the living bird this area seemed merely to have a dirty, cream-colored wash. The red of the fore parts had a more smoky look than in Audubon's picture. These inconsistencies of coloration may have been seasonal since, at that time of year, a change from winter to summer plumage was doubtless occurring. The incomplete wing-stripe of this bird is perfectly depicted in Peterson.

The Curlew Sandpiper is a Eurasian species that was recorded with some frequency along our northeastern coasts during the market-hunting days of the nineteenth century; and it has been recorded in the Lesser Antilles and in Patagonia. Bent (1927) gives 1904 as the last date for the United States. I believe that it has not been reported hitherto from our Gulf Coast.—GEORGE G. WILLIAMS, *The Rice Institute, Houston, Texas.*

**Hooded Merganser nesting in Massachusetts.**—Last spring (on May 14, 1946), I saw a Hooded Merganser with seven tiny young swimming close to the shore on the Quabbin Reservoir in Dana, Massachusetts. (Dana is now a ghost town, since its area has been claimed by the town of Petersham. The Quabbin Reservoir, the largest domestic supply reservoir in the United States, is in Dana and six or eight other real and ghost towns in central Massachusetts.) The young had the markings of downy young Hooded Mergansers and were not foster young of some other species of duck. I made other trips out there, but the only two times that I saw any of them after that was on July 4, when I saw all eight—the young then almost the size of their mother, and July 17, when, in company with John J. Monahan of Spencer, a photographer, and Oscar L. Cregan of Spencer, a game warden, I saw just one. All of these were seen in Dana on the Quabbin Reservoir. I had heard somewhere of people putting out houses for the American Merganser and had put out two houses for them the previous fall. On the ground at the foot of one of the houses was a very small amount of excrement, but there was nothing inside either of the houses. I do not feel sure that the ducks nested in one of these houses, but since the young were only about a day old the first day I saw them and since the Quabbin Reservoir is entirely in Massachusetts, I feel sure that they nested in Massachusetts. Upon inquiry, I heard of two other nestings of the Hooded Merganser in Massachusetts in the last twenty years, one also in Dana and the other in Harvard on the Nashua