

question. A reply has been received from Mr. Nicholson, who states that, for some years, he did not receive the Auk, and was therefore "unaware of any previous breeding records of this tern for Okeechobee Lake." He followed this statement by saying that, at this time, he was not at all well, and while he regretted exceedingly his precipitancy in making the claim, he requested that this writer make the necessary correction as soon as possible. Hence this item.—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., *National Audubon Society, Charleston 50, South Carolina.*

The Louisiana Heron in Connecticut.—On June 14, 1947, I found an adult Louisiana Heron (*Hydranassa tricolor*) feeding near the mouth of a small stream that forms the boundary line between the towns of Westport and Fairfield, Connecticut. I sat in my car and observed the bird for about five minutes, using a 10 × prism monocular. Later I paced the distance between the position of my car and that of the bird and found it to be about 120 feet.

A Black-crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) in adult plumage was near by and gave me opportunity for comparisons of size and build. The slightly smaller size and much more slender build of the Louisiana Heron was very apparent. The bluish-gray upper parts, purplish brown neck and breast, and the abrupt line between the latter and the pure white under parts were all made out clearly. There were, however, no nuptial plumes.

It was a cloudy day, and raining lightly during part of the time that I was observing the bird, but my glass has a coated objective lens which helps greatly under such conditions. Had the day been sunny I should probably not have seen the details so well, for it was morning, and I was looking from west to east. I should have liked to observe the bird for a longer time, but a pedestrian came along the road, and the bird flew off and took refuge in some tall grass.

There have been reports of sight identifications of this bird in Massachusetts (Bulletin of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, 1 [no. 9]: 149, 1917; and 2 [no. 9]: 123, 1918) and it may be that this species is gradually extending its range northward much as the Yellow-crowned Night Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*) has done.—ARREAS A. SAUNDERS, *Fairfield, Connecticut.*

Wilson's Phalarope in the District of Columbia and Virginia.—Mud-flats created on Columbia Island, D. C., during operations incident to the construction of the Memorial Bridge and the Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway, attracted numerous species of shore-birds. Among those observed was the Wilson's Phalarope (*Steganopus tricolor*), first seen by Mr. and Mrs. William J. Whiting in September, 1930. Three individuals were seen by the Whitings at the same place, September 27. Mr. and Mrs. Leo D. Miner, Mr. and Mrs. Whiting and I saw three on Columbia Island, September 30. At the same place October 2, 1930, in company with Mrs. T. M. Knappen, I collected an immature female. The Whitings saw one at Alexander Island, near Gravelly Point, Va., October 5. While with M. T. Donoho, I secured an immature male at Alexander Island, October 9, 1930. Both of these specimens are in the collection of the U. S. National Museum. These are believed to be the first examples of this species taken in the District of Columbia and Virginia.—W. H. BALL, *4311 W. Knox Road, College Park, Maryland.*

Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Cape Henry, Virginia.—On May 22, 1944, a flock of about fifty of these sparrows was found in a small salt marsh on Little Creek, some six miles up Chesapeake Bay from Cape Henry. Hoping to secure a specimen which would prove the birds to be breeding in that locality, I collected two birds and sent the skins to Alexander Wetmore for identification.

One of them, a male, proved to be the Acadian Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammospiza caudacuta subvirgata*) which had not formerly been reported from Virginia, although it probably is a regular transient. The other bird, also a male, was identified as the recently-described James Bay Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammospiza caudacuta altera*). This is the second record of its appearance in Virginia; Wetmore lists a specimen in the U. S. National Museum taken September 18, 1893, at Four Mile Run, near Alexandria (Auk 61: 132, 1944).

Wetmore comments that the late date for these migrants is interesting, but not unusual, as their breeding grounds in the north were hardly yet open to them.—JOHN H. GREY, JR., 422 Second St., Charlottesville, Virginia.

A note on the Western Swamp Sparrow (*Melospiza georgiana ericrypta* Oberholser).—Peters and Burleigh (Auk, 62: 567, 1945) claimed that a series of 12 specimens collected by them showed that Newfoundland Swamp Sparrows were *ericrypta*, rather than intermediate between this subspecies and *georgiana*, as believed by Aldrich and Nutt. The C. F. Batchelder Collection in the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy possesses a series of 16 adults and eight juvenals from various localities in western and central Newfoundland. Of the adults, three birds could be lost in a series of typical "western" *ericrypta*, five resemble the lightest extreme of typical *georgiana*, and the balance are at least two-thirds *ericrypta*. While I do not recall any discussion of the juvenal plumage, and this museum possesses no topotypical juvenal *ericrypta*, the eight juvenals from Newfoundland are as distinct from *georgiana* in the same plumage as are the three extreme adults. There is, then, no question but what the Newfoundland population must be referred to *ericrypta*. I agree with Wetmore (Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., 88: 573, 1940) that *ericrypta* is a subspecies with well-marked characters; it is indeed surprising that it escaped detection so long.

The nineteenth supplement to the A. O. U. Check-List (Auk, 61: 464, 1944) reports *ericrypta* from Florida, apparently the only Atlantic Coast state of record as yet, but common sense suggests that it will prove to occur in every single one, when collections are examined. In the exceedingly mild and open winter of 1946-1947, Mr. Alan Morgan found two Swamp Sparrows wintering in a little ravine at Wayland, Massachusetts, where a brook, open for a few yards, produced a few square yards of sedgy spring-hole. Aware that Swamp Sparrows did not breed here, and occurred only on migration, I visited this spot on February 3, 1947, and found a Swamp Sparrow which could be approached to eight feet. Struck by its paler coloration and conspicuous white striping above, I had to retire a bit before collecting it with No. 44 dust shot. It proved to resemble those Newfoundland birds which are about two-thirds *ericrypta*. In the M. C. Z. collections I find two similar specimens, collected in Cambridge, April 26, 1889, and Concord, Massachusetts, May 10, 1886. A fourth specimen collected in Cambridge, April 18, 1888, is unequivocal *ericrypta*. All presumably represent the Newfoundland breeding population.—LUDLOW GRISCOM, Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Smooth-billed Ani in Florida.—Early in 1943, I left Clewiston, Florida to enter military service. At that time, I had neither seen nor heard of the ani as a resident of this area. Upon my return in June, 1946, it was one of the first birds to attract my attention. I have taken no specimens but on several occasions have carefully observed the birds at short range with 7× binoculars and a 20× telescope. The ani's habit of turning its head at various angles while perched affords an excellent opportunity to study the bill in detail. No grooves could be seen and I assume it was the Smooth-billed species, *Crotophaga ani*.