

Several references to the ani's presence in Florida are contained in *The Auk*. John B. Semple noted it at Miami Beach, February 24, 1937. Alexander Sprunt, Jr., (*Auk*, 56: 335, 1939) reports its nesting in Miami during July, 1938.

Inquiries indicate that the ani has been present in the Clewiston area since the spring of 1944. Nests have been reported and on November 18, 1946, in Clewiston, I saw young being fed by adults. On June 29, 1947, I observed a nest and four well-fledged young at Moore Haven, a point eleven miles northwest of Clewiston. This nest was bulky and placed approximately twenty-five feet up in an avocado tree. During my stay, both parents made a number of trips carrying grasshoppers to the young. The young showed considerable attachment to the nest and repeatedly returned to it after being fed.

The anis, since coming to this area, have several times survived sub-freezing weather. The United States Sugar Corporation's records contain the following entries: December 14, 1944—28° F.; February 5, 1947—26° F.

It will be interesting in future years to note the progress this tropical bird can make in extending its range northward into colder areas.—WILLARD E. DILLEY, *Clewiston, Florida*.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher in Hampshire County, Massachusetts.**—If there be anything in the hypothesis which was published nearly ten years ago in 'Birds of the Connecticut Valley in Massachusetts,' by A. C. Bagg and me, that the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Poliophtila caerulea*) migrates regularly across southern New England to and from Nova Scotia, I have as yet had no confirmation whatever from that province. Fall migrants have continued to strike the coast of Massachusetts, especially Cape Cod and the tip of Cape Ann, in some numbers, and at Manomet, southeast of Plymouth, Mr. and Mrs. Roger Ernst have for nine years regularly seen them—sometimes three or four together—in late August or September. Spring records in the Boston region and Essex County have also been made in almost every recent year. But Hampshire County in the Connecticut Valley is well north of the hypothetical line of flight from New York City to Boston, and was totally without spring records until May 8, 1939, when a female in Northampton was pointed out to me by Mrs. Seth Wakeman. On April 12, 1941, a male at Arcadia Sanctuary (on the Northampton-Easthampton town-line) was closely studied by Mr. J. Elliott Bliss of Springfield; and on May 13, 1945, another one was seen there by Edwin A. Mason, Superintendent of the sanctuary, and C. Russell Mason, Secretary of the Massachusetts Audubon Society. In autumn, the Gnatcatcher flight seems to be much more scattered in both time and space, and this county has such sight-records as Oct. 16-17, 1930, and Oct. 21, 1934 (*vide* Bagg & Eliot, *op. cit.*: 458); Oct. 22-23, 1944, at Amherst (Mrs. F. C. Pray), and Oct. 14, 1946—a bird caught by Professor Seth Wakeman inside his office.

Then, on the chill, gray morning of April 9, 1947, while I happened to have my binoculars pointed skywards, across their field flew a tiny but long-tailed bird that fortunately alighted in the top of a tall elm. For a few minutes it restlessly fed there, calling four or five times, so that I could positively identify it, though not determine its sex. Then it flew out of sight eastward. The earliness of the date so astonished me, I looked up all the very early records in the Northeast that I could find. In 1929, I discovered, a Gnatcatcher was at Cruger's Island, Dutchess County, N. Y., on March 13 [? Not a misreading of May 13], and another was at Dyker Heights, Brooklyn, N. Y., on April 3. Older records were April 6, 1892, at Stratford, Connecticut, and April 7, 1910, in Prospect Park, Brooklyn, N. Y. Almost matching mine was April 10, 1945, at Leicester, Massachusetts—a bird thoroughly studied by

the late Mrs. Bertha W. Harrison, an experienced, competent observer—and this record was in some measure supported by reports in the Audubon Magazine's 'Season' of Gnatcatchers in Pennsylvania on April 4 and 8 that year. I shall be much interested to hear of any 1947 dates earlier than my April 9.

Astonishment returned to me when on April 17, in exactly the same tall elm (now in full bloom), I perceived another Gnatcatcher which presently descended and sat still long enough for me to see it was a female. I had been to that spot hardly at all in the intervening seven days, and I wonder whether this may not have been the same bird I saw on April 9, for it—*apparently* the same female—continued to be found there by me and by other observers on almost any *morning* visit through May 9! In the late afternoon of April 25 one was seen by Davis H. Crompton in an elm two-fifths of a mile farther east, which I suspect was the same. Then on April 30, very near the regular spot and even closer to where the 1939 bird had been, a *male* was discovered by Mrs. Seth Wakeman, and on May 5 she saw it or another male, while on May 6 I had both male and female under observation at once. To my great disappointment, they paid no attention to each other. The male was not once stimulated to sing. Is not this an additional bit of 'negative evidence' that breeding does *not* occur in Massachusetts but somewhere much farther northeast along this straight-ahead but as yet little recognized migration-route?

I presently learned that a flood of Gnatcatchers greater than any ever previously known was pouring through southern New England. As early as April 11, one was reported in Concord, Massachusetts. On April 17, one was at Rockport, the hypothetical jumping-off place. Here in Hampshire County, a male was in South Hadley on April 29—perhaps the same as one that had been seen in Springfield the day before and as Mrs. Wakeman saw here the *next* day. A female was in North Hadley May 7, a male in Easthampton May 16, and what seem to be three different birds (sex not reported) were observed in Amherst on May 4, 10, and 21—the latest date of which I have heard. South of this county, records were made in Longmeadow on May 11 and 18, and to the north of it a bird was seen in Greenfield on May 16.

If there ever was a summer when Nova Scotia *should* have been searched for nesters, this was it! Where else can the unprecedented multitudes have gone? But I, alas, could not journey thither and seek out corroboration of my hypothesis.—SAMUEL A. ELIOT, JR., *Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts.*

**Abnormally late occurrence of the Gannet in south Florida.**—On June 27, 1947, the writer was returning from the Dry Tortugas to Key West aboard the National Park Service boat 'Noddy.' While we were off Smith Shoal and between it and the Cottrell Key group, about 12 miles northwest of Key West, a large bird was seen on the water directly ahead. As the boat neared it, the bird rose and flew to starboard at a distance of perhaps fifty yards. It was an immature Gannet. Every detail of the plumage was sharp and distinct.

Arthur H. Howell (1932) gives the latest record for Florida as a specimen killed by an airplane near Jacksonville Beach, May 12, 1924. The occurrence of the species well over a month later, and about 500 miles farther south is, indeed, an anomaly. It gave no indication whatever of being injured as it flew strongly. Boobies of two species, Atlantic Blue-faced (*Sula d. dactylatra*) and Brown (*Sula l. leucogaster*) had been observed at the Tortugas for a week, and the conspicuously greater size of the Gannet in comparison was very noticeable.—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., *The Crescent, Charleston 59, South Carolina.*