

Washington ornithologists set a twenty-mile limit for local records. Dickerson is farther than that, which leaves the present record as the first one for this bird in the District of Columbia.—EDWIN M. HASBROUCK, *Washington, D. C.*

Gadwall breeding on Long Island, New York.—The status of the Gadwall (*Anas streperus*) up to the year 1946 is well defined by Cruickshank (*Birds Around New York City, 1942*): "To-day the Gadwall is an uncommon but regular transient and winter visitant on Long Island, being confined chiefly to a few favored fresh-water localities, such as Dean's Sanctuary on the Carmen River at South Haven . . . away from Long Island it is a much rarer bird . . . One may well go for an entire year without seeing the bird locally."

During August and September of 1946, two Gadwalls were present at Jones Beach, Long Island. This occurrence is not at variance with the records, however. From November, 1946, until the end of January, 1947, Gadwalls were seen at two other localities on eastern Long Island, in small numbers. A visit to Dean's Sanctuary on December 29, 1946, revealed that a fair number of Gadwalls were wintering in central Long Island, while their wintering on eastern Long Island was a new aspect in the distribution of the species.

In late March, Gadwalls appeared at Jones Beach sanctuary pond, and in May a few birds were noted at Oak Island, ten miles to the east. To get a clear picture of the distribution of the Gadwall, the authors' notes were tabulated.

1946

Oct.	6— 2, Jones Beach
Oct.	20— 2, Jones Beach
Nov.	7— 7, Valley Stream and Rosedale
Nov.	24— 7, Valley Stream and Rosedale
Dec.	1— 7, Valley Stream and Rosedale
Dec.	8— 8, Valley Stream and Rosedale
Dec.	29—30, Dean's Sanctuary

1947

Jan.	1— 6, Valley Stream
Jan.	19— 5, Valley Stream
March	30— 4, Jones Beach
April	12— 2, Jones Beach (a pair)
April	26— 6, Jones Beach
May	4— 7, Jones Beach; 2, Oak Island
May	11— 8 including an albino female, Jones Beach
May	17— 2, Jones Beach
May	25— 9, Jones Beach
June	1— 8 (pairs performing), Jones Beach
June	15— 8 (pairs performing), Jones Beach
June	22—12 (with 13 young), Jones Beach
July	13—15 (40 young), Jones Beach
July	20—18 (52 young), Jones Beach
July	27— 9 (54 young), Jones Beach
August	3— 8 (50 young), Jones Beach

Discussion

The strength of numbers that built up at Jones Beach from April on, indicates that there was a definite attraction to the area, and that it was no isolated instance of a

haphazard or accidental population. Though we carefully counted the adult birds during May, we never saw as many birds present as when, during June and July, there were great numbers of young on the pond. Perhaps the breeding birds came from their secretive nests, and swelled the population. The albino bird, a female, was of the palest 'cafe-au-lait' color, though the speculum was apparent and white, when the bird flew. This bird raised a brood of young, none of which showed the least differences from other near-by broods of young Gadwalls. In early June, the pairs were going through some of the mating phases, as the males were seen chasing females the length of the pond, landing and splashing about. It was, therefore, a great surprise when we noted, a few days afterward, young birds on the pond. In May and June, suspecting that the Gadwalls might be breeding, the authors combed the shores of the pond in likely areas but with no luck, outside of frightening a female from the grassy edge of the pond. To ascertain that the ducklings were the young of the Gadwall, we watched the protecting female bird, but as the females were very wary and quiet, it took many hours of careful watching to see the bird finally raise its wings and show the white speculums. The first brood had a male and female in attendance, but as we wanted to be sure that the male Gadwall was not cross-breeding with a female Mallard, the time spent was considered well worth while. Except for the first pair, none of the males were seen near the females or young. The males were usually flushed up in a part of the pond that had neither females nor ducklings. When the young were in large numbers, it was found that they were left to be shepherded with a few females. On several occasions, a female Gadwall flew from her young and landed quite close to the observers, where it would try to divert us by flapping on the water, splashing and quacking, while following our movements up and down the edge of the pond. On July 13, 1947, while leaving the pond, we saw three or four very young ducks trying to cross the concrete road in the direction of the pond. The ducklings were coming from the ocean side of the road and were about 50 yards from the ocean, while over 150 yards from the pond. There was no water present on the ocean side of the road other than the ocean. Kortright (*The Ducks, Geese and Swans of North America*, 1942) has this to say about the nesting habits of the Gadwall: ". . . always on dry ground and never near water." Possibly the mystery of the hidden nests was partially solved. We should have looked just back of the dunes on the beach for the nests, and not on the rim of the pond. The young hatched out through two weeks, and the size differences were apparent when we were counting the young. Females and young judiciously stayed in the middle of the pond and were rarely seen near any of the shores while we watched.

This breeding record constitutes the first for this species in New York State. Dr. A. A. Allen of Cornell University states, in a letter to the authors dated August 2, 1947: "We have no breeding records for central New York." However, on consulting the literature of the year 1946, we were not too surprised about the Gadwalls breeding on Long Island, for in a note, "Nesting of Gadwall and Shoveler on the Middle Atlantic Coast" (*Auk*, 63: 436-438, 1946), R. E. Griffith and John Herholdt write of the Gadwall breeding at Pea Island Refuge, Dare Co., North Carolina, from 1939 until 1945, while it also nested at Bombay Hook Refuge, Kent Co., Delaware, during the same years.

The further extension of a species which, until recently, had never been known to breed east of the Mississippi, makes one wonder about this western waterfowl. Is it that the nesting areas are gone, and are being threatened, and that the pressures are so great that the species has spread out to find new nesting territories? Or (in a

purely suppositional frame of mind) are they coming back to nesting grounds that they held in pre-colonial or colonial days, where because of their resemblance to other commoner ducks, they were overlooked in the multiplicity of water fowl of that time? We cannot answer these questions presently, but the former postulation may be proven, in a sense, if more of the purely western species seek and find breeding grounds on the Atlantic coast.

In 1948, the Gadwalls are back again at Jones Beach, having been seen since the middle of March.—WALTER SEDWITZ, 24 West 76 Street, New York, City; IRWIN ALPERIN; AND DR. MALCOLM JACOBSON.

First Long Island breeding record of the Brown Creeper.—The Brown Creeper (*Certhia familiaris americana*) has been recorded nesting in northern New Jersey (Cruickshank, 'Birds Around New York City': 327-328, 1944). Up to the present time, however, there has been no confirmed record of its nesting on Long Island. The following observations on a pair nesting at Smithtown, Long Island, seem worth recording.

On April 14 and again on May 1, 1947, my eight-year-old nephew reported a pair of creepers nesting on a tree six feet from the edge of a much used driveway on the David Weld farm, Smithtown. On May 15 these reports were confirmed by the writer. The nest was located 53.5 inches above the ground on the southeast side of a large yellow locust (*Robinia pseudacacia*) beneath a large slab of loose bark. One bird was sitting on the nest. This bird was disturbed and shortly a pair appeared in the vicinity. They were completely silent. The nest contained five eggs. In conversation with the children, who had been subjecting the nest to frequent inspections, we deduced that these eggs were probably deposited about May 1.

On June 6 the nesting site was again inspected by the writer. It was empty. Conversation with the children indicated that the birds left the nest about May 23. At this time (June 6) the writer noted several (certainly three, possibly five) apparently young birds in the vicinity of the nest. They were exceedingly shy but apparently were being fed by at least one adult bird.

On June 8 a second creeper's nest was inspected (again in response to advices from the children). It was completely constructed, being just 53.5 inches above the ground on the southern side of a large yellow locust at the edge of the same driveway and about 100 feet to the south of the first nest. It contained no eggs. Two birds were in the immediate vicinity; both were silent.

On June 13 this second nest was inspected again; five eggs were noted. Two birds were seen in the vicinity, both silent and more shy than heretofore.

From June 13 to July 13 this nest was subjected to frequent inspections by the children and was once visited by a cat, the ultimate result being that it was empty and out of shape when last inspection was made by the writer on July 13. It appeared that the second brood was destroyed, though this can not be confirmed beyond a doubt.

In connection with the above it is also of interest to include observations of Dr. Ernst Mayr on probable breeding of the same species at Cold Spring Harbor, 15 miles west of Smithtown on the north shore of Long Island, during the same season. We quote the following from Dr. Mayr's letter concerning a singing male Brown Creeper, which he observed at Cold Spring Harbor on June 18, 1947:

"I had no doubt that the bird was breeding there. This is particularly true since the bird was on a locust tree which I had found in Germany to be a favorite nesting place of the genus. However, when I returned to Cold Spring Harbor on June 26 I saw no trace of the bird, neither did I see it during the rest of the summer,