

GENERAL NOTES

Caspian Tern breeds in Florida.—On 13 June 1962, about one mile (1.6 km) east of Pass-a-Grille Beach, Pinellas County, Florida, Misses Deborah Warner and Deborah Sieber found a nest, in a colony of Black Skimmers (*Rynchops nigra*), containing an egg noticeably larger than those of the skimmers. Dr. Robert A. Warner, and later the authors, were shown the nest, which proved to be that of a Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*).

The southern limits of the breeding range of the Caspian Tern in eastern United States have been considered to be South Carolina, along the Atlantic seaboard, and coastal Texas and Louisiana, on the Gulf Coast (A.O.U. *Check-list of North American birds*, 5th edition, 1957). Although the species summers regularly in Florida (Abramson, *A guide to finding birds in south Florida*, Univ. Miami Press, 1961; Stevenson, *Aud. Field Notes*, 15: 463, 1961), and the behavior of two birds seen along the Howard Frankland Causeway, Old Tampa Bay, Pinellas County, suggested nesting (Woolfenden, *vide* Stevenson, *loc. cit.*), apparently no previous breeding has been recorded, notwithstanding the note by Boardman (*Bull. Nuttall Ornith. Club*, 5: 64, 1880).

The Black Skimmer colony and the Caspian Tern nest were located on a man-made sand fill, part of the new Bayway. Nests of the skimmers were located about 20 feet from that of the tern. When skimmers flew too close, the adult terns threatened them with gaping bills and strongly erected crests. This non-insular nesting of a single pair in the colony of another species, with vigorous interspecific nest defense, as seen by us, agrees closely with the observations of O. S. Pettingill, Jr., and William Southern in Michigan (Pettingill, *Jack-Pine Warbler*, 36: 183-184, 1958). During

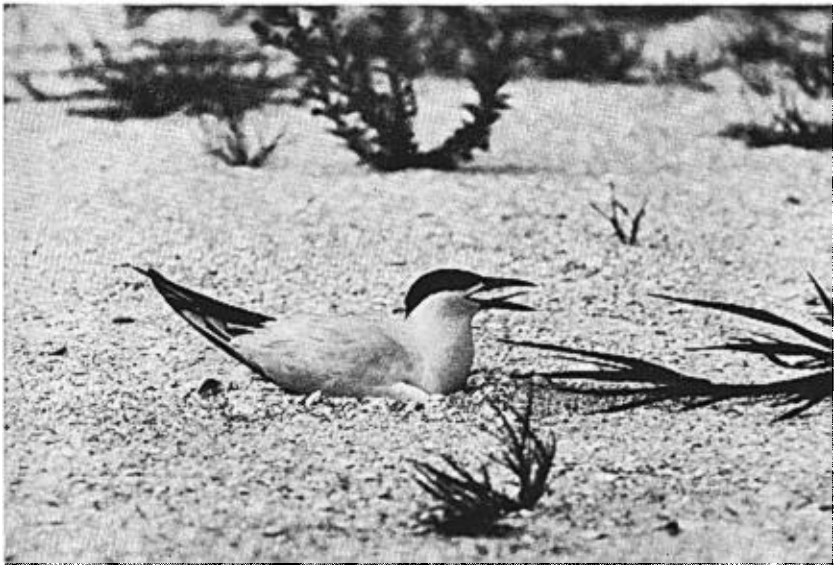


Figure 1. Caspian Tern incubating in Pinellas County, Florida, 8 July 1962. Photograph by A. J. Meyerriecks.

the observation period we found no evidence of additional eggs. Figure 1 shows one of the parents incubating; we saw nest relief repeatedly during the incubation period. The egg hatched some time between the afternoons of 8 and 11 July; hence, the minimum number of days between discovery and hatching of the egg was 25 days. Bent (*Life histories of North American gulls and terns*, Dodd, Mead & Co., 1947, p. 206) gives the incubation period as about 20 days. The chick was photographed and banded (505-82827) on 15 July, when the egg tooth was still present. When captured, the young tern regurgitated a striped mullet (*Mugil cephalus*) about 120 mm long. Dried remains of a pinfish (*Lagodon rhomboides*) and another striped mullet were found at the nest.

When we arrived on 15 July the chick and one parent were standing quietly on the shore about 15 yards from the nest. Moments later the other parent, carrying a single fish (*Mugil cephalus* ?) crosswise in its bill, landed in the water near the parent in attendance. At once the incoming bird waded toward its mate and passed it the fish without any obvious ceremony. The chick walked toward the parent now holding the fish and pecked a few times at its bill. Soon the chick managed to grasp the food but dropped it into the water after an unsuccessful attempt to swallow it. The original parent in attendance retrieved the fish as it floated away, faced the chick, and then the sequence of the chick pecking, grasping, and dropping the prey was repeated four times. The other parent engaged in none of these activities. Finally the chick managed to swallow the fish; moments later the original parent in attendance flew off in the direction of what appeared to be the regular foraging area.

The last observation was made on 1 September when the young tern, fully capable of flight, and one of the adults were seen. We should like to thank Dr. C. Richard Robins for identifying the fish.—GLEN E. WOOLFENDEN AND ANDREW J. MEYERRIECKS, *Department of Zoology, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida.*

Albinism in a Canada Goose.—Richard E. Marquardt (*Auk*, 78: 99-100, 1961) describes incomplete albinism in a specimen of *Branta canadensis* (tentatively identified as *B. c. hutchinsii*), and cites other examples of imperfect and partial albinism in the various smaller races of *Branta canadensis*.

To this I would add a specimen, probably representing *B. c. canadensis* or *B. c. interior*, as an example of imperfect albinism as defined by O. S. Pettingill, Jr. (*A laboratory and field manual of ornithology*. Minneapolis, Burgess, 3rd edition, 1961. See p. 143.).

The specimen, a female, was taken in Jackson County, Alabama, on North Sauty Refuge, seven miles west of Scottsboro on 23 December 1958, and is now no. B-587 in the State Conservation Department collection. It weighed 8 pounds, 2 ounces (about 3,685 g), with measurements as follows: wing (chord), 442 mm; culmen, 47 mm; tarsus, 74 mm. The head, neck, and rectrices, normally black, are medium to light brown; the cheek patch is about normal; the primaries are cream to tan; the secondaries and scapulars are whitish with some light tan in the scapulars; the upper and under tail coverts are white; the rump is about the color of the neck; and the middle of back is a light cream. The breast and belly are white with a faint creamy tinge. The bill, tarsus, and feet were light brown instead of black, and the iris was dark. The age of this bird is unknown.—ROBERT W. SKINNER, *State Conservation Department, Game and Fish Division, Montgomery, Alabama.*