

GENERAL NOTES

Longevity records for Ring-billed Gulls.—I recently analyzed the band recovery data provided by the Bird Banding Laboratory (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) for the Great Lakes Region Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*) population. The 15,054 recoveries on file for the period ending 31 August 1970 included four records for gulls that ranged in age between 20 years 11 months and 31 years 9 months. These records are noteworthy because I have captured no Ring-billed Gulls older than 14 years during 10 years of cannon-netting nesting Ring-billed Gulls in Michigan colonies. Rapid band wear has been well documented for this species and undoubtedly accounts for the small number of records for old individuals. I have no explanation to offer as to why these four bands were retained for so long.

For purposes of analysis a gull moved into the next year class on 1 June, the approximate peak of hatching in Lake Huron colonies. The Bird Banding Laboratory was asked to check on the authenticity of these records and they indicated no corrections.

Each of the four gulls was banded in an Ontario breeding colony when it was too young to fly. Three of the four were found at the same site where banded while the fourth was recovered in Florida. All were found dead by the person reporting the band. Information for each of the birds is as follows: No. 36-65526; banded 28 June 1932 at 44° 10' N, 76° 20' W; found dead unrecorded date in May 1953 (20 years 11 months). No. 40-671584; banded 19 June 1940 at 44° 00' N, 76° 30' W; found dead 2 January 1969 (28 years 7 months). No. 38-667422; banded 23 June 1938 at 44° 10' N, 76° 30' W; found dead 4 September 1967 (29 years 3 months). No. 47-712068; banded 20 June 1917 at 44° 40' N, 80° 00' W; found dead unknown day in March 1949 at an unreported site in Florida (31 years 9 months).—WILLIAM E. SOUTHERN, *Department of Biological Sciences, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois 60115*. Accepted 1 Mar. 74.

Abnormal *Anous stolidus* from Christmas Island, Pacific Ocean.—Abnormalities in birds have recently received renewed attention because of their possible relationships to various man-made chemical pollutants (Hays and Risebrough 1972, *Auk* 89: 19). Gochfeld (1972, *Amer. Birds* 26: 705) noted the importance of reporting incidents and distribution of abnormalities as necessary to document their causes. Feather loss was one of the commonest abnormalities Hays and Risebrough found in the Great Gull Island tern colony at the eastern end of Long Island Sound. They also included reports of feather loss for other colonies along the east coast and for the Dry Tortugas. I herein report on the lack of feathers in a juvenal Brown Noddy (*Anous stolidus*) from one of the world's most isolated land areas, Christmas Island, central Pacific Ocean (2° N 157° W).

I watched this bird for almost an hour on 28 August 1967 on Big Islet, Isles Lagoon, where some 15 noddy pulli were present (Schreiber and Ashmole 1970, *Ibis* 112: 363) before I collected it. The complete absence of coverts and flight feathers incapacitated this individual considerably. His companions exhibited no unusual behavior toward him and he behaved apparently normally, flapping his wings, running, preening, and occasionally calling. No interactions with adults were noted.

The specimen weighed 152 g, the culmen measures 40 mm, the tarsus 25 mm, but the wing only 75 mm, indicating the complete absence of flight feathers. The

other measurements are within the normal range of the species on Christmas Island (Ashmole and Ashmole 1967, Yale Mus. Bull. No. 24). The bill, legs, feet, and nails appear normal, and my trouble catching him suggested his eyesight and leg musculature were normally developed, and I noted no tremors or instability.

Down feathers appear to be of normal length but are sparsely distributed. Those present are concentrated on the trailing edge of the wings, around the uropygeal gland, and in the scapular region. The primary, secondary, rectrix, and primary and secondary greater covert feathers are less than 5 mm long and appear to have stopped growing at that stage, rather than having been lost. This specimen is strikingly similar to the *Sterna dougalli* and *S. hirundo* shown in Fig. 1 and Fig. 7 by Hays and Risebrough (op. cit.)

Chemical analyses of this individual were not performed. Christmas Island was occupied by large numbers of British and American military and civilian personnel during World War II and nuclear bombs were tested there in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Thus the island was subjected to both chemical contamination and nuclear irradiation. Whether this bird's lack of feathers was caused by man's pollution or is a genetic or developmental aberration remains moot. Its occurrence in another Sterninae genus is most interesting.

On Christmas Island in 1967 I handled approximately 1000 nestling *Anous stolidus*. In previous years N. P. Ashmole and personnel of the Pacific Ocean Biological Survey Program collectively examined approximately 2000 individuals on the island; POBSP personnel banded 27,000 noddies on various other islands in the central Pacific. This is the only abnormal noddy reported.

Michael Gochfeld, James J. Dinsmore, Helen Hays, and O. L. Austin, Jr. improved the manuscript with their comments. Roger B. Clapp provided data on POBSP banding. My thanks to these persons and to R. L. Pyle for allowing my studies on Christmas Island. This is paper No. 151 of the Pacific Ocean Biological Survey Program, Smithsonian Institution.—RALPH W. SCHREIBER, *Department of Biology, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida 33620*. Accepted 1 Mar. 74.

***Agapornis fischeri* Reichenow in Kenya?**—When I wrote my note on the presence of escaped cage birds now living a feral existence and breeding (1969), I was unaware of the note by Zimmerman (1967) in which he reports "several recently secured bird specimens represent additions to the known avifauna of Kenya." Included was a specimen of *Agapornis fischeri* taken near Isiolo in Kenya's Northern Frontier District, north of Mount Kenia, and said to be one of 8 or 10 birds in "lush acacia woodland."

Moreau (1948) clearly shows the natural distribution of *A. fischeri* and *A. personata*, which is limited, and the two species do not overlap. They range into the Northern Province of Tanzania but do not cross into Kenya. What factors regulate or inhibit the spread of these birds has not been established. Many escapes of birds kept at Namanga, on the border, have apparently not been able to establish themselves in that environment.

Reports of escapes and feral populations are now available (Forbes-Watson 1972) and for coastal Kenya (Mann and Britton 1972). Cage birds have been kept and specimens doubtless have escaped from many aviaries. Live collections were kept at Nanyuki and Meru not far distant from Isiolo. I have lost birds from Nairobi. *A. personata* was seen recently at Mwea-Tebere, western Kenya-