

On July 15 we left the St. James Harbor and went to the south of Garden Island, passing just north of High Island, where King Ben has his colony, to Gull Island. We found very few birds upon the shore, but on the west side of the island there seemed to be a large open field that was filled with small hazel brush, wild gooseberries and high bush cranberries. Here the gulls were not able to take to the water and swim, so they ran under the bushes to hide. We were successful in banding 166 Herring Gulls and 1 Spotted Sandpiper. We were much surprised to see large bunches of hairy puccoon in blossom, also quantities of bluebells, daisies, and lilies. There were nettles, poison ivy, and thistles, as usual, and during all of our stay in the Beaver Islands we found millions of biting flies, emphasizing the necessity of bird banders being entirely immune to high water and bug bites, poison ivy, nettles, thistles, and hardships. On the way back we passed Trout Island, on which a house had been built, which explained the absence of gulls. We landed at Whiskey Island but the birds took to the water as soon as they saw us coming, and we banded only eight birds. We were able to land the large boat close to the beach so it was very easy to get out. Right at this point there was a very unusual gull's nest about three feet wide and close to two feet high, containing one egg. On this island, besides a million flies, there were several legions of extra large mosquitoes and we did not stay very long. On the way home we passed by Squaw Island where the lighthouse is, and no birds were in sight, so we returned to St. James. For dinner we were given a rare treat to whitefish livers, and that evening, after writing the day's events and doing a little packing, we took in the local dance.

July 16. This morning we packed, took an auto ride about Beaver Island and caught the steamer to Charlevoix, from whence we ran to Manistee by auto that night. We had hoped to go as far as Ludington, but on account of the heavy storm we had to stop at Manistee. The next morning, July 17, we started early and completed the trip back to Waukegan in safety.

The numbers of birds banded were as follows: 2057 Herring Gulls, 350 Ring-billed Gulls, 659 Caspian Terns, 34 Common Terns, 3 Red-breasted Mergansers, 6 Black Ducks, 11 Great Blue Herons, 12 Spotted Sandpipers, 1 Killdeer, 17 Red-winged Blackbirds, 4 Bronzed Grackles. Total, 3154.

WAUKEGAN, ILLINOIS.

TERN BANDING ON LAKE ERIE

BY EDWARD S. THOMAS

We devoted four days from July 21 to 23, during the past summer to the study and the banding of Common Terns on Lake Erie. The expedition, sponsored by the Ohio State Museum, of Columbus, Ohio, was headed by James S. Hine, Curator of Natural History, and consisted also of R. W. Franks, John Thomas and the writer. Charles F. Walker joined us on July 23.

As on the previous year, practically the entire time was spent on Starve Island, but the last day was devoted to a tour of various other islands.

Everywhere, we found that practically all of the young were flying and that there were comparatively few eggs and nestlings. At the same time on the preceding year there had been plenty of downy young and eggs. Because of these conditions, the prospects looked very poor for banding any considerable number of birds. The young flyers were entirely too clever to permit our cap-

turing them, although we tried long-handled nets and other means to accomplish this purpose.

We spent one night on Starve Island, as we had done in the preceding year. On the last occasion there had been a bright, full moon, and we found that the birds were extremely active, flying and screaming throughout the night. Spotlights had been useless for capturing them, the birds flying at thirty feet, and seeming not in the least dazzled by the lights.

This year, however, there was no moon and the sky was heavily overcast. In addition, it began to rain by about ten o'clock. We waited until it was perfectly dark, and were delighted to find that the young, which had been scattered all over the island, were now massed in a milling, densely crowded flock on one end of the island. We were further delighted to discover that the young flyers which had hitherto been so wary, were very stupid in the glare of the lights, and could be captured with the greatest ease. In fact, we were able at times to scoop them five and six at a time into bags of mosquito netting which we had brought for that purpose.

We worked energetically from nine o'clock until after twelve. Franks and John Thomas captured the young, while Professor Hine and the writer banded them. We were able to band 650 young flyers in about three and a half hours, and we later estimated that we had secured nearly ninety per cent of the young birds on the island.

No adults were seen at any time. In spite of the fact that it was raining steadily none of the brooding birds were seen on their eggs. Furthermore, none were brooding at six o'clock the next morning. Several newly hatched nestlings were drenched to the skin, indicating that the parents had not brooded them during the night. As the sun became hotter, however, the birds began to come back to their nests, and by noon there was little evidence that there had been a storm on the preceding night.

It is known that the Herring Gulls customarily roost out on the water, but it seems inconceivable that the birds brooding on eggs would do so. Is it possible that the Common Tern customarily deserts its eggs and tender young during the night, covering them only to protect them from the burning sun? It would be impossible to make any positive deductions from this one experience, but the evidence seems to point to this conclusion.

We succeeded in trapping twenty-two adult birds at their nests, and in securing one return from last year. In addition, we saw one other banded adult. The results do not indicate the amount of effort expended in this direction. Franks and John Thomas spent a large part of three days in attempting to trap the birds. The traps were made of wire loops and bags of mosquito netting placed at the nests and operated by a pull string. Many of the birds were trap-shy, however, and would not return to the nest while the trap was beside it.

We saw none of the nine-hundred-odd young which we had banded in the preceding year, which lends support to the opinion expressed by Mr. F. C. Lincoln that the young of the Common Tern do not breed their second year, or even return to the site of their birth.

In all 1090 birds were banded, including 150 on Middle Island, Ontario.

Our rather hasty survey of the islands of Lake Erie during the past two seasons has resulted in the following data: the largest colony of terns is on Big

Chicken Island, where we estimated the population at about 3000 birds. Starve Island, Little Chicken, and Middle Island each have about 2000 birds and Chick Island (a small reef north of Big Chicken), about 1500. In 1926 there were several hundred birds about the "Rattle" of Rattlesnake Island, but, although we found signs of nesting, we found practically no eggs or young. Several pairs of grackles nesting on the rock may be responsible for this condition. In addition to the foregoing, we have found a few scattered pairs nesting on the rocks which border Green Island and on Lost Ballast, a reef just south of Ballast Island.

COLUMBUS, OHIO.

[Editor's Note. Attention is called to the dates of banding the Common Terns. On July 12 there were but twenty-four birds large enough to band in a colony of three or four hundred nests in upper Lake Huron. On July 21 in Lake Erie nearly all of the young birds were flying. Apparently, there must have been a severe storm through upper Lake Michigan and Lake Huron which destroyed the first nests of the Common Terns].

THE FOX SNAKE FEEDS ON THE EGGS OF THE COMMON TERN.—Roland Williams, Winnetka, Illinois, reports that while at Camp Greenwood, Ellison Bay, Wisconsin, he in company with other members of the camp made three visits to Sister Islands. On the second visit they noted that eggs of the Common Terns on the end of Little Sister Island had diminished in numbers. On the third trip, the colony seemed about destroyed. In searching for Sandpiper's nests he turned over an old rotten rowboat and out came a Fox snake, which was killed and taken back to camp. It was dissected by a member of the party, and found to contain eleven Common Tern's eggs.

Results of the banding on Sister Islands were 28 Herring Gulls, 2 Common Terns, 1 Red-breasted Merganser, 4 Spotted Sandpipers, 16 Red-winged Blackbirds. About 40 other birds were banded about the camp.—W. I. L.

E. A. Doolittle, Plainsville, Ohio, reports that, on July 1, he banded two Robins that were perfectly snow white albinos with pink eyes, and that they were both in the same nest.