

"Connie" had passed New Jersey to the west, I saw eight adult-plumaged Sooty Terns and one Bridled Tern (*Sterna anaethetus*) flying over Barnegat Bay near Lavallette, Ocean County. The birds were making little headway against the strong southerly winds and some of them rested several times on an island approximately 60 yards from me; thus I had time to study and compare the two species. With the aid of H. Lyman Sindle, I reached this island and secured a female Sooty Tern (K.U. 33036), which had an ovary that measured 11 x 5 mm. The bird weighed 150.1 gm. and had two small grasshoppers in its throat, and the remains of others in its stomach. Fables (*op. cit.*:40) lists four records of the Sooty Tern from New Jersey: one sight record, two decomposed birds, and a specimen which was in a private collection (Huber, 1917. *Auk*, 34:206). Therefore it seems my specimen may be one of the few that has been preserved for future examination. The Bridled Tern has been recorded once from New Jersey (Fables, *loc. cit.*). This record is of a dead bird found at Island Beach, Ocean County, on February 24, 1951, by E. and Q. Kramer. Concerning this specimen, which is number 167592 in the collection of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, James Bond (letter, Oct. 15, 1956) wrote, "It is in immature plumage, and in such bad condition that I have no doubt it had been lying on the beach for many days. Indeed, it may have drifted in from far out to sea!" My sight record is the first time the species has been recorded alive in the state.—GLEN E. WOOLFENDEN, *Department of Biology, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, September 22, 1956.*

Ring-billed Gull steals food from Coot.—During March, 1956, at the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge in Cambria, Williamson County, Illinois, I saw Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*) stealing food from Coots (*Fulica americana*) on four different days. The pattern of their actions was essentially the same on each day.

On March 5, as I was watching Redwings (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) settle into their roosting area, I caught a glimpse of two gulls hovering over a Coot on the shore close to the edge of the water. The Coot made jabs at the gulls with its bill, but the gulls managed to keep out of reach. Then the Coot apparently was lured away from a morsel of food it had been guarding, for suddenly one of the gulls swooped in, picked up something, and made off with it. The second gull flew off in a wide circle. About 15 minutes later I saw another Coot eating something as it rested on the water about two feet from shore. A gull swooped toward this Coot which dropped its food and darted aside, thus leaving an easily obtained bit of food for the gull. The latter picked it up while on the wing, carried it about 150 yards, and settled on the water to eat it.

In neither instance could I determine the nature of the food with certainty. However, on one occasion it appeared as a stringy, dark-colored material, something like a pondweed might look. On another occasion the food looked white, compact, resembling a small dead fish.

On another day, just as a Coot surfaced after its dive, a gull dived at the Coot. The Coot immediately submerged again, apparently to escape attack. In this instance no food was involved in the attack.

I wrote to Mr. Gordon Gullion to find out whether this relationship between gull and Coot was a common one. He replied that, "To my knowledge there are no other records of gulls taking food away from Coots, however, the robbing of Coots by Baldpate, scaup and Canvasbacks has been recorded and I believe is of fairly common occurrence." He also pointed out to me that Bent (1926. *U.S. Nat. Mus. Bull.* no. 135:366) records Coots taking food from Canvasbacks and Redheads.—L. M. BARTLETT, *Department of Zoology, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts, November 27, 1956.*