

probably near death from starvation. Gull II, an adult female, was taken on 20 July 1961, at the Santa Barbara City Dump. When it was examined we found that the tongue protruded from under the bill through a round hole in the inter-ramal region, or the skin area between the fork of the lower bill (Figure). The hole is surrounded by thickened scar tissue and is an orifice through which the tongue probably moved back and forth to a limited extent when the bird used its bill. However, the distal half of the tongue is hard and dried from prolonged exposure, indicating that the gull probably could not withdraw its tongue into the mouth cavity, even though we were able to bend the tongue enough to move it back into the mouth and out again through the hole. There are no feathers around the opening. In spite of the externalized tongue the gull was in good body condition and also showed recent molt. From our examination of the specimen we believe that the external position of the tongue was not due to an abnormality in development, but the result of an old healed injury, perhaps a fish hook incident similar to that of Gull I. Gull III (Figure), an adult female, taken the same day and place as Gull II is a normal specimen for comparison.—JODI BENNETT AND MARY M. ERICKSON, *Department of Biological Sciences, University of California, Santa Barbara, California, 21 October 1961.*

**A nesting of Amazonian terns and skimmers.**—Once in about five years or so the River Amazon drops in the dry season (August to November) to abnormally low levels: 1961 was such a year. The Solimoes, or Upper Amazon above Manaus, carries a vast load of sand, silt, and mud, which is dropped on the bottom wherever the water is slack, and ultimately rises to water level. The river rises and falls some 40 feet, and in early September 1961 was already  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet below normal minimum and was falling at the rate of three inches a day. The M.V. *Venimos* went aground on a submerged bank at 8:30 AM 9 September, at the western end of Ilha Piranhas, the Island of "Cannibal Fish," about 500 land miles upstream from Manaus. A mile farther west an extensive sand bar had formed and was now above water level. A sizable colony of Large-billed Terns (*Phaetusa simplex*) and Black Skimmers (*Rynchops nigra*) had taken possession of it, and were beginning to nest there. Probably there were around 100 pairs of each species. Their "scrapes" were 3" to 4" deep and 8" to 10" in diameter. Indian women from a hut on the north bank, across the main channel of the Solimoes, took notice, and every morning at the streak of dawn were out on the island gathering the new-laid eggs. On 14 September they had gathered about 70 eggs of which 8 were skimmers' (*Cortaguas* or Cutwaters) and the rest terns' (*Gaivotas*, literally "gulls"). From this it seems probable that the skimmers were not yet in full production, and are normally behind the terns, a situation similar to that at Stone Harbor, New Jersey.

It would seem that, since the Amazon is virtually on the Equator, and the Ilha Piranhas is at Lat  $2\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  S, Long  $65\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  W, there is nothing to determine the nesting season except the behavior of the River. The birds nest while the River is falling, the sandbanks emerging and the time for rising water so far off that there is time to lay and incubate the eggs and to raise the young to the flying stage.

River pilots said this particular sand bar was not normally above water level and so far as they knew had never been seen before. The local Indians confirmed this. Thus the colony of skimmers and terns is a new one, and the birds had adopted it very promptly.

On 11 September, very early in the morning, four birds came aboard the stranded *Venimos*, and found the forecabin quiet and deserted. A large coil of rope covered with a tarpaulin seemed to them an acceptable substitute for the sand bar, from which pre-

sumably the women had disturbed them, and there they laid one egg each, three terns and one skimmer. The bosun saw the birds and he later collected the eggs, which he brought to me. Obviously the birds were not intending to nest, four to a square yard of tarpaulin, and they did not return on subsequent days.

Birds have often been observed on ships, and in fact several spine-tails and perhaps other birds came aboard the *Venimos* and stayed many hours; but the casual or emergency laying of eggs on shipboard must be a rather rare event.—F. W. PRESTON, *Box 149, Butler, Pennsylvania, 11 September 1961.*

**Lesser Nighthawk in Oklahoma.**—On 22–23 April 1961, I visited Cimarron County at the western end of the Oklahoma Panhandle. While driving in a residential area of Boise City on 23 April, I observed a caprimulgid perched on a horizontal tree branch which impressed me as being too small to be a Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*). When the bird flew I was able to note the presence and position of white wing marks indicative of the Lesser Nighthawk (*Chordeiles acutipennis*). The bird was lost from view soon after taking flight; however, when I returned one hour later with John P. O'Neill and Odis A. Cook, it was found again in the same vicinity and was viewed both perched and in flight. It did not call during the time of observation. I collected the bird and it proved to be a very fat male weighing 65.1 grams, and with testes measuring about  $3.0 \times 3.5$  mm. The identification was confirmed by Dr. George M. Sutton, and the specimen is No. 4794 in the University of Oklahoma Museum of Zoology. There is no previous specimen, and to my knowledge no previous sighting of this species in Oklahoma. The Lesser Nighthawk has not been recorded from Kansas or from the Texas Panhandle, however, the Fifth A.O.U. Check-list mentions a casual occurrence at Trinidad, Colorado, about 110 miles northwest of Boise City. The A.O.U. Check-list and Wolfe (1956. "Check-list of the Birds of Texas") indicate that the limits of its breeding range in west Texas lie about 360 miles south to 385 miles southeast of Boise City.

Ligon (1961. "New Mexico Birds") comments that the Lesser Nighthawk is among the latest spring migrants to arrive and gives usual dates as 6 to 10 May in southern and southeastern New Mexico. The earliness of the 23 April 1961 date in Cimarron County, Oklahoma, is thus rather striking. No Common Nighthawk was seen by us on 22–23 April 1961 in Cimarron County, and judging from other areas of Oklahoma it would not be expected to arrive until a week or more later.

A second unusual species on 23 April in Boise City was a warbler that was almost certainly a female of the genus *Parula*. John O'Neill and I observed it briefly but clearly at close range and in bright light but were not able to collect the bird. We both noted the small size, yellow throat and breast, white wing-bars, and bluish upperparts with a greenish patch on the back. A breast band was very indistinct or perhaps completely absent. We cannot state for certain that an eye-ring was present. Therefore, we cannot exclude positively the Olive-backed Warbler (*Parula pityayumi*). Except for the presence of the Lesser Nighthawk, another Rio Grande Valley inhabitant, we would hesitate to suggest the possibility of such an accidental occurrence. Certainly the greater likelihood is that the bird was a Parula Warbler (*Parula americana*). Since the Parula Warbler has not been found previously in Oklahoma west of the central portion of the state, even its occurrence in Cimarron County probably would be classified as casual.

The finding of both the nighthawk and the warbler on the same date displaced from their normal ranges or migratory paths might be related to a common factor. An analysis of weather relative to the 1961 spring migration has been presented by Bagg and Baird (1961. *Aud. Field Notes*, 15:380–389). Their discussion emphasizes a strong, sustained