

first-year specimen of Lava Gull; the remarkable similarity of our bird to the Lava Gull was perceived by all who compared them; and the Oklahoma bird was pronounced *Larus heermanni*. The specimen's wing measured 324 mm., the tail 129, the culmen 39. The bill colors of the freshly shot bird were close to those shown in Dwight's classic work on the gulls of the world (Dwight, 1925, Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist. 52, Plate 13, Fig. 3).

Heermann's Gull breeds along the Pacific coast south of the United States on "islands of the Gulf of California . . . and of the coast of Mexico . . . migrating northward after the breeding season to California and . . . southern British Columbia" (Dwight, *op. cit.*, p. 147). It winters along the coast "from Oregon to Guatemala (San José, Chiapam)" (AOU Check-list, 1957, p. 229). For almost a century after its discovery (in 1832 by Cassin), it was unreported from the continental interior, but on 20 March 1919 an adult male "in breeding plumage" was found dead on Pinos Altos Mountain near Silver City, southwestern New Mexico (Bailey, Birds of New Mexico, New Mexico Dep. Game & Fish, Albuquerque, p. 293); on 13 November 1955, one was seen along the Colorado River "about 30 miles above Yuma," in southwestern Arizona (Phillips, Marshall, & Monson, 1964, The birds of Arizona, Univ. Arizona Press, Tucson, p. 39); on 7 and 27 November 1970, the species was seen near Tucson, southern Arizona (Huber, 1971, Auk 88: 929); and within recent years there have been many scattered sightings from inland areas far from the Pacific coast. Into Arizona, where the species has been sighted "more than a dozen" times, "a few now wander . . . each year" (Witzeman, Hubbard, & Kaufman, 1977, Amer. Birds 31: 359; 1978, Amer. Birds 32: 241). In Nevada there have been at least three sightings (Kingery, 1977, Amer. Birds 31: 205), in Texas one sighting (Williams, 1976, Amer. Birds 30: 736); in Michigan one sighting (Maley, 1980, Amer. Birds 34: 343), in Ohio one sighting (Kleen, 1980, Amer. Birds 34: 278).

Are all of these extralimital records merely a result of increased attention and better reporting, or has Heermann's Gull — for reasons beyond our understanding — been obliged recently to seek food and shelter away from the Pacific Ocean?

5911 EAST 46TH ST., TULSA, OKLAHOMA 74135, 14 FEBRUARY 1981.

## AN IMPORTANT MARSHY POND IN KINGFISHER COUNTY, OKLAHOMA

By JOHN S. SHACKFORD

About 4 miles southeast of Dover, Kingfisher County, central Oklahoma, and not far from the Cimarron River, is an extensive low-lying area that has held enough water during the past two or three summers to permit the growth of a good stand of bulrushes and cattails. On 25 May 1980, I waded around this marshy area, finding two nests of the Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*), one with 10 eggs, the other with 1, and four nests of the American Coot (*Fulica americana*) containing 2, 6, 9 and 9 eggs. A colony of Great-tailed Grackles (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) had established itself

among the bulrushes and cattails and in a willow close by. Of the 15-20 grackle nests, a few in the bulrushes and cattails appeared to have been deserted, presumably because of recent heavy rains and high water. To my surprise I flushed a Purple Gallinule (*Porphyryla martinica*), whose yellow legs, purplish blue head, and shiny green back I saw clearly.

On 16 June I visited the area again, this time accompanied by Warren D. Harden. We found 24 coot nests (containing 1 to 10 eggs, some of them pipping) and a brood of five very young coots; four Pied-billed Grebe nests holding 1, 5, 6, and 10 eggs, and two grebe broods, each of several small chicks; a nest of the Common Gallinule (*Gallinula chloropus*) holding 8 eggs, from which we flushed an adult bird; and a nest of the Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*) with 2 eggs. In the bulrushes and cattails, which were sturdier than they had been on 25 May, there seemed to be several grackle nests that I had not seen before. We did not flush the Purple Gallinule again.

We saw no evidence that a population of predators had moved into the area. We saw no snakes, turtles, or fishes, and found no owl pellets. The only falconiform birds that we saw were two Mississippi Kites (*Ictinia mississippiensis*).

On 10 July 1 I returned to the marsh with Wayne Easley. We found only two occupied coot nests (5 and 6 eggs) and a brood of 7 young coots, though judging from coot noises coming from the vegetation we decided that there were other young in the vicinity; one Pied-billed Grebe nest (5 eggs, possibly abandoned) and a brood of at least two chicks; 5 young in the Least Bittern nest that Harden and I had found on 16 June, and a second Least Bittern nest with 4 eggs; and 40-50 Great-tailed Grackle nests (eggs to nearly fledged young). We saw 15-20 Little Blue Herons (*Florida caerulea*), a few Black-crowned Night Herons (*Nycticorax nycticorax*), and one small turtle.

On 12 July Ernest E. Wilson visited the area, noting that the young Great-tailed Grackles, particularly those in poorly shaded nests, were suffering from the heat (100°F.).

ROUTE 1, BOX 125, OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA 73111, JANUARY 7, 1981.

### GENERAL NOTES

**Louisiana (Tricolored) Heron in northeastern Oklahoma.**—On 26 May 1981, Phyllis Chapman, Goldie Scheeler, and Jerry Smith joined me in a drive to the new Copan Reservoir in the northern part of Washington County, northeastern Oklahoma. Up to that time the low-lying area above the dam had held only small, scattered ponds, but heavy rains upstream along the Caney River had caused the reservoir to fill to a depth of several feet. A heron that flew over not far from the dam was dark on the head, neck and chest, but very light on the belly. Having noted just where the bird went down, we found it perched on a stake in a marshy spot along the reservoir's edge. We observed the purplish gray of the long, thin neck and