

A NEW BIRD FOR OKLAHOMA: BARROW'S GOLDENEYE

BY RANDY C. RUSHING AND JACK D. TYLER

At 0740 on 14 January 1984, as Randy C. Rushing and Bob T. Coleman hunted ducks from their blind on the east shore of Lake Ellsworth 3 miles west and 1¼ north of Elgin in Comanche County, Oklahoma, Rushing shot two drake goldeneyes as they banked in to the decoys. The day was overcast and bitterly cold: northeast winds had altered the actual temperature of 23°F (-5°C) to a windchill near 0°F (-18°C) and the lake, except for a few small openings, was solidly frozen over. It was in one of these open pockets near shore that the



*BARROW'S GOLDENEYE AND COMMON GOLDENEYE DRAKES*

*Note whiter secondaries and upper secondary coverts of Common Goldeneye at top. Differences between shape of bills (stouter basally in Barrow's) and white facial patches are also evident. In life, head sheen of Barrow's is deep blue-black, of Common, emerald green. Top specimen is Univ. Oklahoma Mus. Zool. No. 2273, bottom specimen is Cameron Univ. Mus. Zool. No. 902. Photo by John S. Shackford.*

decoys were set. The water here was approximately four feet deep and very turbid. While waiting for more waterfowl to decoy, Rushing casually glanced at the two drakes lying side-by-side in the blind; something about them, though not obvious at first, was nonetheless genuinely different. For one thing, the iridescence of one bird's head shone deep blue-black instead of dark green when the light struck it at just the right angle. Rushing knew from years of hunting experience that the other bird, whose head *did* glisten emerald green, was most certainly a Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*). Upon closer inspection of the unusual drake, he could see that in place of a round white spot in front of and below its eye (a diagnostic character of *B. clangula*), a white crescent extended from the base of its bill upward past eye-level. Before him was a duck with which he was familiar only from pictures in sporting magazines. It was a Barrow's Goldeneye (*B. islandica*), a species rarely seen in Oklahoma.

According to Bellrose (1976, *The ducks, geese and swans of North America*, 2nd ed., Stackpole Books, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, p. 423), Barrow's Goldeneye spends the winter primarily along the northwest Pacific Coast from the Aleutian Islands to San Francisco Bay, although small numbers winter on the Atlantic Coast from Long Island to Newfoundland. The A.O.U. Check-list of North American birds (6th ed., 1983, American Ornithologists' Union, Allen Press Inc., Lawrence, Kansas, p. 93) considers it to be "casual" during winter southward from southern Canada through the interior of the continent to southern New Mexico, Texas, and Kansas.

Jack D. Tyler prepared the specimen for the Cameron University Museum of Zoology (CUMZ 902) in Lawton, Oklahoma. It weighed 1045.6 grams and standard measurements were: total length 460, tail 84, wing 235, tarsus 50, and culmen 32 mm. The skull was fully pneumatized, subcutaneous fat moderate. Interspersed among the white of the upper breast and along the sides were a few black feathers, and several gular feathers were dull brown.

Sebastian T. Patti has thrice reported drake Barrow's Goldeneyes from Lake Carl Etling in Cimarron County, at the far end of the Oklahoma Panhandle. These were identified by Patti and other participants of the annual National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count based at Kenton. One drake they observed on 31 December 1979, two on 1 January 1983 (*Am. Birds* 34:572, 1980; *Am. Birds* 37:665, 1983; Patti, S. T., 1983, *Bull. Oklahoma Orn. Soc.* 16:29-30), and another on 1 January 1984 (*Am. Birds*, in press). The four other Oklahoma sightings on record are: two adult drakes with three female-plumaged birds in Tulsa, Tulsa County, observed 22 November 1956 (Baumgartner, F. M., 1957, *Aud. Field Notes* 11:36); "several" on Hulah Reservoir, Osage County, on 28 January 1961 (Baumgartner, F. M., 1961, *Aud. Field Notes* 15:341); drake seen near Lake Humphrey, Stephens County, in February 1964; and a drake at Altus City Lake, Jackson County, on 2 February 1972 (*G. M. Sutton Summary of Bird Records, Stovall Mus. Sci. & Hist., Univ. Oklahoma*). The specimen reported herein is the first for the state and firmly establishes the Barrow's Goldeneye as a new species for Oklahoma.

## GENERAL NOTES

**A Glaucous Gull in Bryan County, Oklahoma, and Grayson County, Texas.**—On 18 December 1982, during a field trip led by Ken Stegman and organized by the Heard Natural Science Museum in McKinney, Texas, a single Glaucous Gull (*Larus hyperboreus*) was observed in the bed of Red River just below Lake Texoma's Denison Dam in Bryan County, Oklahoma. The identification was verified on the same day by Allen Valentine. This conspicuously all-white gull was next seen on 21 December at the same location by Karl Haller and carefully compared with smaller Herring Gulls (*L. argentatus*), Ring-billed Gulls (*L. delawarensis*), and Franklin's Gulls (*L. pipixcan*) nearby. Its bill was dark-tipped, toward the base becoming pinkish-flesh, and the legs were definitely pink. The over-all whiteness of the bird's primaries was accentuated by their pure white tips. At times we watched the gull fly south of the river into Grayson County, Texas.

Many observers from the Texoma Outdoor Club in Sherman, Texas, were privileged to see this rare gull on 22 and 24 December. The next day it was photographed by James H. Beach III, and again on 12 January 1983 by John A. Crosthwaite. Both times, the bird was loitering on a sand bar in the river bed below the dam, where Haller and others continued to see it during the following week (on 13, 15, and 18 January).

On 24 January, Jim Williams, manager of the Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge in Grayson County, Texas, found a dead Glaucous Gull on the refuge. American Crows had punctured the back and cleaned out the lung cavity, but the specimen was otherwise in good condition except for being very muddy. Prior to skinning, it was washed thoroughly in Ivory Soap. It was then prepared as a study skin by Haller (KWH 3361). Upon dissection, he noted that the gull was extremely emaciated. Its chest muscles were shrivelled and those of leg and wing had partially wasted away. A large hollow tumor (55x75 mm) found under the left rib cage was probably the ultimate cause of death. The bird is a male (left testis 6.5x32 mm) with the following measurements in millimeters: total length 720, tail 91.5, wing 475, tarsus 73, bill (from forward tip to feathers) 56.5, and total weight (minus lungs) 1420 gms. The plumage closely resembles that of a bird in second-winter feather as described by P. J. Grant (1982, Gulls, a guide to identification, T. & A. D. Poyser, Calton, England, p. 136).

The specimen was sent to Richard C. Banks at the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C., for subspecific determination. In sorting material at the museum while attempting to classify this bird, Banks became convinced that four subspecies of *Larus hyperboreus* should be recognized rather than three. The population in eastern Canada and Greenland seems to be distinguishable from that of Europe and would be the race applicable to the Grayson County specimen (letter to Haller of 3 August, 1983).

The Glaucous Gull has been seen in Oklahoma from 7 November to 12 March, chiefly in the Oklahoma City area, but records also exist for Delaware, Nowata, Wagoner, Alfalfa, Comanche, and Custer counties (Sutton, G. M., 1974, A check-list of Oklahoma birds, Stovall Mus. Sci. & Hist., Univ. Oklahoma, Norman, pp. 17-18). A subadult male was collected on 17 December 1880 by A.

Hall in the streambed of Red River, which at that time belonged to Texas, but which today is considered a part of Oklahoma (see Sutton, G. M., 1967, Oklahoma birds, Univ. Oklahoma Press, Norman, p. 216). Our photographs represent the first record for Bryan County, Oklahoma; one of them (CUMZ 954) is on file at the Cameron University Museum of Zoology in Lawton, Oklahoma.

H. C. Oberholser (1974, *The bird life of Texas*, Univ. Texas Press, Austin, pp. 378-379) lists records for the Texas coast and from large reservoirs in northern portions of the state that span the period from 8 December to mid-May. He recorded three specimens for Texas, but one, the 1880 specimen mentioned above, is now an Oklahoma record. Another of these, mentioned by G. H. Ragsdale, is a winter specimen (date unrecorded, probably late 1800's) taken at Gainesville in Cooke County, just 40 miles southwest of Denison Dam. The Grayson County specimen reported herein is apparently only the third for Texas.—Karl W. Haller, *Department of Biology, Austin College, and James H. Beach III, 107 W. Texas St., Sherman, Texas 75090, 3 October 1983.*

**A correction and a caution regarding historical geographical localities.** — In 1959 John S. Tomer published a useful note, "An Oklahoma Record of the Yellow Rail" (*Auk* 76:94-95). In it he showed that *Coturnicops noveboracensis* had unquestionably been found in Oklahoma in 1842. He corrected an error in previous records, which gave the impression that the 1842 specimen had been taken in Arkansas.

The man who took the bird in 1842 was a Lieutenant Eustis, who deposited his specimen in the National Institute, a predecessor of the Smithsonian Institution. It was later moved to the U.S. National Museum (USNM) where it was cataloged in 1858, and has recently been moved to the University of Oklahoma where it is UOMZ No. 5361. The specimen was labeled as having been found at "Fort Wayne, Arkansas." Tomer pointed out that Fort Wayne was located in the western part of Arkansas Territory, an area now in the state of Oklahoma. Earlier ornithologists, unaware of changes in the boundaries of territories and states in the nineteenth century, incorrectly assumed that Eustis' specimen had been taken within the bounds of the present state of Arkansas, not the area that would later be known as Oklahoma. In fact, by 1842, present-day Oklahoma was no longer even in Arkansas Territory, Arkansas having been admitted to statehood in 1836.

The USNM staff informed Tomer that the collector of the rail, shown in the catalog, had been "Lt. Henry L. Eustis of the First Dragoons". This is no doubt an error. In 1842 Lieutenant Henry L. Eustis, of the Corps of Engineers, was on duty at Boston Harbor, but Lieutenant William Eustis, of the First Dragoons, was stationed at Fort Wayne that year (see Cullum, G. W., 1868, *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U.S. Military Academy* . . . 1:377 and 2:38). Apparently the two were brothers, both being designated as sons of General Abram Eustis. From this information, Tomer also referenced Lieutenant Henry L. Eustis instead of William Eustis in a later historical citation (1974, *Bull. Oklahoma Orn. Soc.* 7:19).

This is a minor correction and should not detract from the importance of Tomer's note. In fact, the note points up a troublesome matter in American ornithological literature. Not only is Oklahoma likely to be confused with

Arkansas, if one is using nineteenth century documents, it is likely also, for example, that Arizona could be confused with New Mexico, Oregon with the state of Washington, Nevada with Utah, and North and South Dakota, Wyoming and Montana with Nebraska. Of course the most conspicuous example of all is "Louisiana," a term that once referred to all the Louisiana Purchase. Putting the matter simply, ornithologists and other students of natural history should exercise care in using earlier materials. A quick look at a historical atlas can often prevent embarrassment and confusion.—Michael J. Brodhead, *Department of History, University of Nevada Reno, Nevada 89557-0037, 15 August 1984.*

**The Least Bittern in southwestern Oklahoma.**—The Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*), a species almost never found away from marshy places, has been seen on but eight occasions in southwestern Oklahoma, a part of the state that does not have much marshland. On 14 July 1960, Arthur F. Halloran *et al.* discovered a nest holding two chicks and three eggs "among reeds" at Rush Lake in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge about 6½ miles northeast of Cache, Comanche County (Halloran, A. F., 1962, *Southwest. Nat.* 7:262-263). On 6 May 1972, George M. Sutton collected one (adult male, UOMZ 7281) along a narrow strip of cattail marsh along the Red River 2 miles south of Davidson, Tillman County (1973, *Bull. Oklahoma Orn. Soc.* 6:14). It is deposited in the University of Oklahoma Museum of Zoology. On 28 June 1973, my students and I flushed one from cattails at a small marsh 2½ miles southwest of Cache; four days later (2 July), I collected either it or another Least Bittern at the same place. The specimen (CUMZ 442) has the coloration of an adult male (Tyler, J. D., 1979, *Birds of southwestern Oklahoma*, Stovall Mus. Sci. & Hist., Univ. Oklahoma, Norman, pp. 11-12). On 5 May 1974, William O. Talbert found an adult bird (sex undetermined, CUMZ 507) dead in Cement, southwestern Caddo County. This bird probably had been struck by a car, and its bill had been mostly torn away (Tyler, *loc. cit.*). Both specimens are in the Cameron University Museum of Zoology. Dale Mills, a former biology major at Cameron University, saw one at a marshy farm pond located 2½ miles south and 2 miles east of Snyder in Kiowa County on 23 May 1978. Between 0100 and 0200 on 2 June 1983, wildlife technician Jon M. Andrew caught by hand and released an adult bird at Indian Pond, 3½ miles northeast of the main post office at Fort Sill, Comanche County. On 30 May 1984, Jack D. Tyler and Mike N. Granger flushed one twice from dense stands of smartweed (*Polygonum* sp.) in shallow water at the north end of Lake Lawtonka, 2½ miles east of Meers, also in Comanche County.

*Ixobrychus exilis* is to be looked for wherever there is rank aquatic vegetation. The stands of cattail at Hall's Lake near Hollis, Harmon County, should furnish the species a good summer home.—Jack D. Tyler, *Department of Biological Sciences, Cameron University, Lawton, Oklahoma 73505, 15 October 1984.*

**Great Egret in Muskogee County, Oklahoma, in winter.**—On 29 January 1983 (weather cloudy, air temperature 40°F, no wind) I was driving eastward from Muskogee across the Arkansas River bridge on U.S. Highway 62 in Muskogee County, east-central Oklahoma, when I noticed a large, slow-flying white bird among the many Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*) milling over the river. From its general size and shape, and because its long legs trailed

behind it in flight, I reasoned that the bird was an egret, but I also knew that no wading bird that is white in any plumage winters in Oklahoma. The bird soon descended to the far shore of a nearby pond, whereupon I rushed to my home in nearby Fort Gibson for binoculars. Fortunately, the bird was still loitering around the pond when I returned less than 30 minutes later. Close study through binoculars convinced me that it was a Great Egret (*Casmerodius albus*), especially after it flew directly in front of me, allowing a close look at its long black legs and yellowish bill.

*Casmerodius albus* is a summer resident in central and eastern Oklahoma and heretofore there had been no mid-winter record. The earliest recorded arrival date in spring and the latest date of departure in fall are 10 March and 31 October, respectively, but two birds were seen in Alfalfa County, northwestern Oklahoma, on 3 December 1973 (Sutton, G. M., 1974, A check-list of Oklahoma birds, Stovall Mus. Sci. & Hist., Univ. Oklahoma, Norman, p. 4). More recently, three birds were reported on 18 December 1982 at the Tishomingo National Wildlife Refuge in Johnston County, south-central Oklahoma, during the National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count (Van Riper, S., 1983, Am. Birds 37:668).—Jeri McMahon, Rt. 1, Box 50, Fort Gibson, Oklahoma 74434, 31 January 1983.

**American Swallow-tailed Kite in Caddo County, Oklahoma.**—At 1700 on 24 August 1984, as I drove westward through southern Caddo County, Oklahoma, I happened to see an unfamiliar soaring hawk. The temperature was 90°F, the sky overcast. This medium-sized raptor was circling leisurely above an 80-acre bermuda grass pasture ½ mile south and 1 mile east of Fort Cobb. The pasture, surrounded by trees, primarily blackjack oaks (*Quercus marilandica*), post oaks (*Q. stellata*), and walnuts (*Juglans* sp.), was bordered on its north side by the Washita River.

My first inclination was to call the bird a Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) because of its flight behavior, but I quickly decided that it could not be that species because of its unusual shape. With binoculars, I noted its overall color pattern, pure white below and jet black above. I could see that the head was entirely white. The most striking feature was its black, deeply cleft tail with forks widely spread. Flying in elliptical patterns that encompassed 10 or 15 acres, and occasionally varying its altitude, the bird kept to the south of the river. Its effortless, graceful flight was interrupted only by an occasional wingbeat or two. When I consulted my field guide, one kite on the plate stood out from the others because of its long, forked tail, and was identical to the bird I was watching: a Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*). I continued to observe the kite for about 15 minutes before it finally drifted from sight. Though I returned to this area three times during the succeeding five weeks, I failed to find the kite again.

This species has been recorded within the present boundaries of Oklahoma in the summers of 1849, 1867, 1876, 1902, and 1910, and during the springs of 1884 and 1885 (G. M. Sutton Summary of Bird Records, Stovall Museum, Univ. Oklahoma, Norman). More recently, one was observed at Lake Hefner in Oklahoma County by John G. Newell and Nelson Hall on 6 September 1970 (Newell, J. G., 1971, Bull. Oklahoma Orn. Soc. 4:15-16).—Jim Bob Wilson, Box 567, Washington, Oklahoma 73093, 4 October, 1984.

**Wintering White-throated Swifts in the Texas Panhandle**—At about 1245 on 19 December 1982 (temperature around 50°F), during the Christmas Bird Count at Amarillo, Texas, Fern Cain, James Montgomery, Mary Moyer and I noticed two swifts flying above Palo Duro Canyon State Park in east-central Randall County. At the time, we were within sight of the bridge spanning the Prairie Dog Town Fork of Red River near the mouth of Timbercreek Canyon. There was no doubt in our minds that the birds were swifts because of their small cigar-shaped bodies and narrow, stiffly-held wings that beat rapidly between glides. The forked tails of both swifts were also well defined. At times, they swooped so low that we could discern the contrast between their white undersides and dark upperparts without the aid of binoculars, convincing us that they were White-throated Swifts (*Aeronautes saxatalis*). This twosome we watched for approximately 30 minutes and, even as we left the area, they were still hawking insects.

On 11 January 1983, F. Kingston Smith saw a single White-throated Swift flying above his home at the head of Sunday Canyon on the western rim of Palo Duro Canyon, 4 miles to the southwest. On the 28th of January, 1983, as George and Rena Ross hiked down the canyon in the vicinity of the aforementioned bridge, three swifts in one group and several others at intervals wheeled above them. The Rosses were sure that these, too, were White-throateds. All of these observations were made on relatively warm days during the afternoon; morning trips to the area were unproductive.

The White-throated Swift winters from central California, central Arizona, and rarely, southern New Mexico (casually farther north) south to the limits of the breeding range in Middle America (American Ornithologists' Union, 1983, Check-list of North American birds, 6th ed., p. 324). There are only five records for the Texas Panhandle prior to those reported here: Joe Browder saw the species in Amarillo, Potter County, on 21 May 1953; one was seen at Friona in Parmer County on 17 April 1963 (Baumgartner, F. M., 1963, Aud. Field Notes 17:414); Peggy Acord observed the bird in Randall County on 7 May 1967; six were seen in Palo Duro Canyon State Park on 23 November 1971 by Peggy Acord and Rita Kinney (Williams, F., 1972, Am. Birds 26:82); and 38 were accidentally trapped on the 11th floor of a downtown Amarillo office building (20 miles north of Palo Duro Canyon) during the storm-ridden night of 21 October 1970, and later released (Williams, F., 1971, Am. Birds 25:76) by James Jokerst. There are four valid records between 1946 and 1963 for Oklahoma, all in spring (Sutton, G. M., 1974, A check-list of Oklahoma birds, Stovall Mus. Sci. & Hist., Univ. Oklahoma, Norman, p. 22).—Kenneth D. Seyffert, 2206 S. Lipscomb, Amarillo, Texas 79109, 22 October 1983.

**Lewis' Woodpecker in Comanche County, Oklahoma.**—The Lewis' Woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*) is accidental in southwestern Oklahoma. It was observed in Caddo County on 22 November 1956 (Sutton, G. M., 1974, A check-list of Oklahoma birds, Stovall Mus. Sci. & Hist., Univ. Oklahoma, Norman, p. 24) and repeatedly seen in Stephens County between 15 December 1973 and 31 March 1974 (Neeld, F., 1975, Bull. Oklahoma Orn. Soc. 8:37).

A Lewis' Woodpecker was discovered by Larry Adams and David Morris on 14 November 1981 in trees along Post Oak Creek 3½ miles north of Indianoma

in Area N-2 on Fort Sill's West Range in Comanche County. Several other people, including Janet McGee, Jack Tyler, Lloyd Payne, Mark Porter, Kevin Mason and Mike England, saw it again on 20 and 22 November. The bird was last seen during the Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge Christmas Bird Count on 27 December 1981 by Kevin Mason. Lloyd Payne attempted to locate it again from 18 to 20 January 1982, without success. A photograph taken by Mason on 22 November is on file at the Cameron University Museum of Zoology (CUMZ 893) in Lawton.

This bird was an adult, as its red face and pink underparts attested. It showed a tenacious preference for horizontal perches on a lone pecan tree near the creek. Frequently, it would fly to oak woodlands as much as a quarter mile away and return with acorn in bill, which it wedged into bark fissures on its favorite tree. It would, on occasion, hammer one of the acorns open, showering the ground below with shell fragments. Several times we heard it emit loud, sharp, alarm calls of one syllable as it rested between acorn gathering forays. This rather tame bird did not interrupt its activity, even while we watched it from beneath the pecan tree.—Kevin Mason, 7218 N. Lawton Ave., Lawton, Oklahoma 73505, 9 May 1983.

**Snake predation of Pileated Woodpecker nestlings.**—Much of the 80-acre "Nature Preserve" established by Sam Muzny and his wife Patricia near Byars, McClain County, central Oklahoma, is heavily wooded, creating a habitat in which Broad-winged Hawks (*Buteo platypterus*), Barred Owls (*Strix varia*), Chuck-will's-widows (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*), and Pileated Woodpeckers (*Dryocopus pileatus*) have nested year after year. In the spring of 1982 the big woodpeckers nested in a partly dead cottonwood among other mature cottonwoods close to a spring-fed stream that rarely dries up. The nest was about 30 feet up near the top of a stub.

Many observers knew where the nest-cavity was and that it was "active", for they saw the old birds flying to and from it and heard them cackling from time to time. On the morning of 28 May, Maxine Kastl was distressed when she saw the head of a large snake sticking out of the nest-hole. Whether it had eaten one or more of the young woodpeckers she had no way of knowing. The parent birds were not close by, but she could hear the calls of Pileated Woodpeckers off in the woods.

The following day (29 May), in a large cottonwood not far from the nest-tree, I saw one chick about 30 feet up and climbing higher. The fact that its parents were not close by, though I could hear what I took to be their cackling off in the woods, led me to believe that one of the brood had gotten to a tree at some distance from the nest-tree where it was being fed by the old birds. The calls of almost-fledged Pileateds are quite indistinguishable from those of their parents so I could not be sure whether I was hearing parent birds or one or more of the young ones. It seems reasonable to assume that when the snake went to the nest on the 28th it caught and swallowed one of the two or three (possibly four) almost fledged young woodpeckers; that while it was swallowing the one bird the others got out the nest-cavity and — despite their not being able to fly — managed to get into other trees.

Even as I watched the young bird making its way upward (and calling

from time to time), my companion, Shirley McFarland, saw a huge snake slipping swiftly upward in the same tree. Hanging over a branch about 35 feet from the ground, directly above the young woodpecker, this snake suddenly grasped the unfortunate bird by the bill and started swallowing it. The woodpecker flapped its wings frantically, but to no avail; the snake's inexorable jaws closed over its head, and within about two minutes it ceased struggling. For a short time I could see the red of the crest as it disappeared. To my utter amazement the snake went on swallowing its prey, which moved *upward* into its dangling captor's digestive tract. Presently the head and neck had been ingested, then the wings, finally the feet and tail. Ingestion required about 20 minutes. I continued to wonder why the parent woodpeckers did not attempt to drive the snake off while I was watching.

The snake was fully six feet long. I could see no lump in its body aside from that caused by the prey it had just swallowed. Conceivably it was the same snake that Mrs. Kastl had seen on the 28th, for on that date it may have failed to capture one of the brood before they bolted from the nest, but I believe that it was a different individual. The snake was probably a Black Rat Snake (*Elaphe obsoleta*), a species found widely in wooded parts of Oklahoma and a well-known predator of woodpecker nestlings (see Gress, R. J., and G. J. Wiens, 1983, *Kansas Orn. Soc. Bull.* 34:27-28; Jackson, J. A., 1970, *Wilson Bull.* 82:329-330 and 1978, *Bird-Banding* 49:187-188).—Samuel T. Moore, 7305 Nichols Road, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73120, 29 June 1982.

**Singing of female Northern Cardinal in winter.**—A little before sunrise on 27 January 1976, at the corner of West Brooks and Lahoma streets in Norman, Cleveland County, central Oklahoma, I several times heard two Northern Cardinals (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) singing in duet. One bird, a male, was clearly visible on a telephone wire, but the other was hidden in a fairly large juniper a few yards away. One song started a little in advance of the other, but both ended at almost exactly the same time, and the songs were much alike. I suspected that the short song was that of a female bird, but I did not see the singer. The following morning I heard the same duetting at the same place and hour, and this time saw the female, who was partly hidden. A little later that same morning (at about 1800, 28 January), on the University of Oklahoma campus, I heard more duetting and clearly saw both birds, the male in a leafless tree about 20 feet up and, 15 yards away, the female about 12 feet up and also in a leafless tree. Weather had been remarkably mild most of the month and there had been very little snow. It occurs to me that female Northern Cardinals may sing all winter if the weather is mild. The winter of 1972, during which I did not see a female Northern Cardinal singing before 16 March (see Sutton, G. M., 1975, *Bull. Oklahoma Orn. Soc.* 8:7-8) was comparatively severe.—George M. Sutton (deceased), 818 W. Brooks St., Norman, Oklahoma 73069, 2 February 1976.

**Summer records for Pine Siskin in Washington and Delaware counties, Oklahoma.**—At 2015 on the evening of 18 July 1984, a small dark finch came to the thistle feeder in my back yard in Bartlesville, Washington County, northeastern Oklahoma. Not having binoculars with me, I cautiously approached the bird to try and identify it. After I had closed the distance to about

15 feet, I could tell that this finch was not an American Goldfinch (*Carduelis tristis*), a species that recently had been frequenting the feeder. Although the bird was goldfinch size, its bill was slightly smaller and it had a streaked, rather than an unmarked, breast. It was a Pine Siskin (*Carduelis pinus*), a species we commonly see in winter. As I came closer to it, the bird flew before I could detect other field marks. My wife Janet saw a siskin the next day and I saw one on 21 July. This time, I saw that the wing bars and the bases of the tail feathers were yellow. It is likely that we saw the same bird each date.

I learned that a siskin had lingered until 15 June at the residence of Paul and Iris Hefty in Bartlesville, sporadically visiting their feeders with several Northern Cardinals (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) and Tufted Titmice (*Parus bicolor*). Because these locations are barely 3 miles apart, and since the date is so unseasonal, it could well be that we were seeing the same individual.

In Delaware County, 75 miles southeast of Bartlesville, a single siskin visited a feeder in the Murray L. Looney yard 5 miles north of Colcord during mid-morning on 7 and 8 July, 1984. It was seen by Looney, his wife Mary, and Fred and Marguerite Baumgartner on both days.

*Carduelis pinus* is a transient and winter visitor statewide that has been recorded from 28 September (from 1 September in Cimarron County) to as late as 2 June (Sutton, G. M., 1974, A check-list of Oklahoma birds, Stovall Mus. Sci. & Hist., Univ. Oklahoma, Norman, p. 43). There is only one breeding record for Oklahoma: a nest containing three eggs was found in a pinyon pine (*Pinus edulis*) near Kenton, Cimarron County, at the western end of the Panhandle on 5 June 1911 (Tate, R. C., 1923, Proc. Oklahoma Acad. Sci. 3:47).—Randall A. Porter, 5307 Ranch Rd., Bartlesville, Oklahoma 74006, 17 September 1984.

FROM THE EDITOR.—John G. Newell, who wrote the lead paper in the September 1984 issue, is to be thanked for his financial contribution to the Oklahoma Ornithological Society to defray expenses incurred in reproducing the three color photographs of the Lesser Black-backed Gull that accompanied the paper. A personal note of gratitude is also extended Joseph Grzybowski of Norman, who helped with reading the last page proofs and who checked the final color separations for accuracy in the same issue.

Dr. Richard C. Banks of the U.S. National Museum critically examined the Glaucous Gull specimen discussed by Haller and Beach in this issue. For his invaluable assistance we are grateful.

And last but not least, thanks to Karen Butler for typing the manuscripts.—  
Jack D. Tyler

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