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GENERAL NOTES.

The Present Status of Forster's Tern as a Bird of New England.—In an article on the Terns of the New England Coast published some ten years ago* I spoke of *Sterna forsteri* as a species which "though rare, is of perhaps too regular occurrence to be classed among the accidentals, for one or two specimens are reported nearly every season, usually during the month of September." Since the appearance of this article, however, I have heard of the capture of but a single additional specimen, a young bird in autumnal plumage taken Oct. 2, 1888, by Mr. J. C. Cahoon

* Bull. N. O. C. IV, 1879, p. 14.

at Monomoy Island, near Chatham, Massachusetts, and now in my collection. It would seem, therefore, either that Forster's Tern has ceased to visit the New England coast at all regularly or frequently, or that its occurrence in small numbers during several successive seasons prior to 1879, was purely fortuitous. The former is perhaps the more probable hypothesis, for nearly all our water birds have decreased in numbers during the past decade, and none among them more considerably than the Terns—the chosen victims of the millinery collectors.—WILLIAM BREWSTER, *Cambridge, Mass.*

Notes on Brewster's and the Blue-footed Gannet.—Early in October, 1888, Mr. E. J. Reed of Guaymas, Mexico, did me the very great kindness of capturing alive, and presenting me with a specimen each of the above-named birds (*Sula brewsteri* and *S. gossi*). They were taken at San Pedro Martir Isle of the Gulf of California, and expressed to Fort Wingate, New Mexico, where they arrived on the 16th of the month, the Blue-footed one having died on the passage, while Brewster's was as lively as if he had just been taken.

In comparing them with Colonel Goss's admirable description of these two new species, published in 'The Auk' for July, 1888, I found them to correspond very closely. Points of the most interest were the dark brown irides in *S. brewsteri*, with their limiting circle of white, the strongly pectinated mid-anterior claws, and the beautiful shade of purplish ultra-marine blue of the feet of *S. gossi*.

After its fast of certainly four or five days I expected to see the surviving Gannet drink a quantity of water, and perhaps eat anything that was offered to it; but, no, upon being placed in a large bath tub of fresh water, it started to vigorously splash and preen itself, as a duck will do under similar circumstances, and then suddenly ceased without apparently drinking a drop, disgusted I imagine at its being *fresh*. I had to force it to eat a few ounces of venison, not having a fish at hand to give it; indeed, I myself have not seen a fresh fish for over four years. The bird was placed next out in the sun, where it seemed to enjoy itself, and arranged with its beak its wetted and rumpled plumage. If one attempted to handle it, however, it struck out vigorously with its sharp-pointed bill, and could inflict quite an ugly wound, as one of my hands will still testify. Next morning my Gannet was more cheerful than ever, but circumstances induced me to kill it with chloroform, and I removed the skins from both specimens and forwarded them to Mr. Robert Ridgway for identification. Upon dissection they proved to be females, and a casual examination of the viscera in each satisfied me that Macgillivray's account of this part of their anatomy, as given in *Audubon*, is a fairly accurate one for *Sula*, though I saw enough besides to satisfy me that a far more thorough description of the structure of these birds is demanded.—R. W. SHUFELDT, *Fort Wingate, New Mexico.*

Histrionicus histrionicus on Long Island, New York.—I wish to record the capture of a specimen of *Histrionicus histrionicus* taken on Long



Brewster, William. 1889. "The Present Status of Forster's Tern as a Bird of New England." *The Auk* 6, 66–67. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4067446>.

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