

had been requested by the Department to seek evidence of afflicted birds.

At the State Park near the north parking lot, a single dead Common Loon (*Gavia immer*) was spotted on the beach above the high tide mark. Simultaneously, we noted lying nearby a smaller bird which proved to be a fairly well-preserved Razorbill (*Alca torda*). This bird was heavily oiled, its wing tips, tail, and feet being so oil-soaked that they were matted together. Bara took photographs of the bird at the spot where we found it, and I later took a number of additional photographs of the specimen at my home.

Another Razorbill was found on the beach at Pawleys Island, about 0.4 mile S of the South Causeway. It was found and reported to me on 1 May 1976 by Bobby DesPortes of Route 2, Hopkins, S.C. This bird also had been heavily oiled, and its body was badly decayed and dessicated. Apparently it had been in the same oil slick that destroyed the Huntington Beach bird. The Pawleys Island specimen will be given to the Charleston Museum.

Three of the five previous records of the Razorbill in South Carolina summarized by Sprunt and Chamberlain (*South Carolina Bird Life*, 1970, p. 284 and 609) are based on oil-soaked birds. One found 12 January 1948, on the beach at Pawleys Island is now a specimen in the collection of the Charleston Museum. Another found 9 March 1958, on the beach at Sullivans Island (*Audubon Field Notes* 12:270) was examined but not retained. A third was found 15 February 1963, on Bulls Island (*Chat* 28:51). Of the remaining records, a single bird was observed 12 March 1964, about 30 nautical miles off Charleston (*Chat* 30:26), and a flock of 12 was observed 19 December 1964, 7 miles E of Tybee Island, Georgia (*Oriole* 33:1). One additional, unpublished record of an oil-soaked bird is available, a specimen found at Edisto Beach by Roger Lambert on 17 January 1970 (*Lesser Squawk*, Charleston Natural History Society Newsletter, Vol. 21, No. 2). Burton (Supplement, *South Carolina Bird Life*, 1970, p. 609) states that Razor-billed Auks venture close to shore only if oil-soaked or ill.

Most field guides and other standard sources give Long Island, N.Y. as the southern limit of the Razorbill's winter range. A few give North Carolina as the southern limit. That this species frequently winters offshore in South Carolina waters is evidenced clearly by the records summarized in this report.

Black Guillemot on South Carolina Coast in Spring: A Second Sight Record for the State

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While birding on the north beach at Huntington Beach State Park, Georgetown County, S.C., on 17 April 1975, five observers saw what can only be described as a Black Guillemot (*Cepphus grylle*). Evelyn Dabbs, Charlotte Waggett, John Waggett, Phillip Waggett, and I noticed a bird, at first thought to be a Common Loon (*Gavia immer*), swimming about 500-600 feet offshore parallel to the beach. Soon realizing that the bird definitely was not a loon or a scoter, we studied it carefully with binoculars and with a zoom Balscope adjusted to the best power (40X). The ocean was relatively calm, yet there is always wave action some distance from the beach. The bird, swimming leisurely from right to left of the observers, alternately rose on the crest of the swells and disappeared in the trough of the waves. We watched the bird from about 1400 to 1430, during which time we moved from the beach to a dune to get a better view. The day was clear, and light conditions were excellent with the sun shining brightly behind us.

Being generally familiar with loons, scoters, and other oceanic birds that sit upon the water in the manner of the bird before us, we gave the unusual individual the closest

scrutiny, carefully checking our observations against the diagnostic characters noted in the field guides. Each birder was impressed with the relative smallness of the bird, which was smaller than a loon or scoter. The bill was pointed and without any bulge or bluntness as in that of a scoter. In coloration the bird was over-all dark gray to black with no white showing except in the wing. At one time the bird rose in the water and shook both wings, thus revealing not only the grayish color of the entire upper wing surface but also the almost pure white wing patches on the fore part of the wings. We agreed without question that the bird was a Black Guillemot. Unfortunately, the bird was too far offshore to permit documenting the record with a recognizable photograph.

The appearance of the Black Guillemot at Huntington Beach corresponds with the normal mid-April northward movement of birds wintering off the Massachusetts coast (Bent, *Life Histories of North American Diving Birds*, 1919, p. 161). A severe storm system that occurred in the New England states shortly before the date of the local sighting may have displaced a migrant southward.

A Black Guillemot has been recorded once previously in South Carolina. The sighting took place on 21 September 1958 and was reported by Alexander Sprunt Jr. in a letter that appeared in J. Douglas Donehue's "Woods and Waters" column in the *Charleston News and Courier* dated 24 September 1958. Sprunt's letter reads in part: "Mr. Alex Mikell, while walking the beach on Morris Island saw, on the jetties which intrude upon the sands there, a bird unknown to him. He approached to such close quarters that he actually touched it, after studying it for several minutes. His very clear description leaves no room for any doubt that it was a Black Guillemot. It was described as about a foot long; black, with some white edging on some feathers; large white shoulder patches and brilliant red feet. It sat quietly on one of the rocks and seemed somewhat weak but, when touched by Mr. Mikell it took off and flew seaward. As far as the writer knows, this is the first time the species has ever been observed in the state." The Black Guillemot is included in the 1970 Revised Edition of *South Carolina Bird Life* (Sprunt and Chamberlain 1949), appearing in E. Milby Burton's Hypothetical List (p. 641) on the basis of the newspaper article quoted above.

Monk Parakeets in South Carolina

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On 10 April 1976, I was informed by Gurdon Tarbox, Director of Brookgreen Gardens, Georgetown County, S.C., that Monk Parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*) had been seen by Preston Pearson on Sandy Island Road (SR 362) west of the Gardens area. Mr. Tarbox also saw the birds the evening of 9 April 1976, in about the same location.

I visited the site (300-400 yards NW of US 17; 33° 30' N, 79° 07' W) at about 0930 on 10 April 1976 and saw seven Monk Parakeets fly from the roadside into a stand of small willows bordering the road. After some milling around, all of the birds landed in the same tree. Some promptly went to sleep, while the others preened. One of several color photographs (slides) shows three of the birds asleep on a branch.

I was unable to locate the birds on 11 April 1976, but on 12 April 1976, my wife Renée and I saw them at a site not far from the original location. I have not seen them since, although some of the boys in the "village" report seeing about five each day. Four or five birds were seen on 19 April by Mr. and Mrs. Tromater of Richmond, Virginia, on US 17 about 2 miles N of the original site. The birds apparently roam over a wide area which encompasses both the road and the village. How long the birds have been in the area is uncertain. One man reported that they were first seen about the middle of March, while others reported seeing them about 2 weeks later.