Hamel, P.B. 1977. The Wood Stork in South Carolina, a review. Chat 41:24-27.
Meyers, J. 1984. Wood Storks of the Birdsville colony and swamps of the Savannah River Plant. Savannah River Ecology Laboratory Report, Aiken, S.C. SREL-15/UC-66e.
Murphey, E.E. 1937. Observations on the bird life of the middle Savannah River Valley, 1890-1937. Contrib. from the Charleston Mus. IX.
Norris, R.A. 1963. Birds of the AEC Savannah River Plant Area. Contrib. from the Charleston Mus. XIV.
Ogden, J.C. 1978. Recent population trends of colonial birds on the Atlantic and Gulf coastal plains. Pages 137-153 in Wading Birds, A. Sprunt IV, J.C. Ogden, and S. Winckler, editors. National Audubon Society, Research Report No. 7, New York.
_____, and S.A. Nesbitt. 1979. Recent Wood Stork population trends in the United States. Wilson Bull. 91:512-523.
Palmer, R.S. 1962. Handbook of North American Birds, Vol. I. Loons through Flamingos. Yale Univ. Press, New Haven.
Smith, M.H., R.R. Sharitz, and J.B. Gladden. 1982. An evaluation of the Steel Creek ecosystem in relation to the proposed restart of the L-reactor. Savannah River Ecology Laboratory Report, Aiken, S.C. SREL-12/UC-66e.
_____, _____, and _____. 1983. An evaluation of the Steel Creek ecosystem in relation to the proposed restart of the L-reactor: interim report. Savannah River Ecology Laboratory Report, Aiken, S.C. SREL-14/UC-66e.
Tate, A.L., and R.L. Humphries. 1980. Wood Storks nesting in Jenkins County, Georgia. Oriole 45:34-35.

Piping Plovers Nesting at Cape Hatteras, N.C., in 1985

WM. WALKER GOLDER
Department of Biological Sciences
University of North Carolina at Wilmington
Wilmington, N.C. 28407

The status of Piping Plovers (*Charadrius melodus*) in North America has been a subject of increasing concern in recent years. Piping Plovers were Blue Listed in *American Birds* in 1982 (Tate and Tate 1983) and are a proposed candidate for the Endangered Species List (Sidle 1984). Piping Plovers are primarily winter residents in North Carolina, though they nest sparingly along barrier beaches from Pea Island to Morehead City (Potter et al. 1980). An isolated breeding site was discovered at Sunset Beach, N.C., in 1983 (LeGrand 1984), which is apparently the southernmost nesting site in North America. Early nesting records indicated Piping Plovers were nesting at Pea Island in 1901 and 1902 (Pearson et al. 1959). In recent years nesting sites have been discovered at Ocracoke Island (Hespenheide 1961), Shackleford Banks (Quay et al. 1970), Core Banks (LeGrand 1977), Portsmouth Island (LeGrand 1983), Sunset Beach (LeGrand 1984), and Cape Hatteras (Golder 1985). Nineteen pairs were located at Portsmouth Island during the 1983 breeding season (LeGrand 1983). This would be the largest concentration of breeding Piping Plovers ever reported in North Carolina.

Nine pairs of Piping Plovers were observed during the summer of 1985 while I was monitoring colonial waterbird colonies on the Cape Hatteras National Seashore. Pairs were located at Cape Point, the southern end of Hatteras Island, the northern end of Ocracoke Island, and the southern end of Ocracoke Island. Nests were found for three of these pairs, and one pair was observed with a brood of four chicks.

The first nest was located on sandy flats at the northern end of Ocracoke Island on 4 June 1985. This nest, containing three eggs, was on a small sandy lump measuring approximately 1.5 x 2.5 m. *Panicum amarum* was the only plant species present at the nest site. The nest itself had no lining and was approximately 0.3 m from the closest stand of *P. amarum.* On a second visit to the site, no nest or young could be found.

The second nest, containing three eggs, was located on 9 July 1985 at the southern end of Hatteras Island. This nest was at the base of a dune approximately 3.0 in height. *Uniola paniculata* was the dominant plant species present on the dune. The unlined nest was approximately 0.1 m from the nearest stand of *U. paniculata.* All three eggs had hatched by 14 July 1985. Adults and young remained in the area for 10 days after hatching.

The third nest, containing two eggs and one newly hatched chick, was located on the sandy flats of Cape Point on 21 July 1985. Small, light-colored shell chips lined the nest, which was in a protected tern colony. No vegetation was present in the immediate area of the nest. All three eggs had hatched by 22 July, and chicks were seen in the area for 8 days after hatching.

Nests of Piping Plovers varied in their placement and appearance. Nests along the National Seashore in 1984 were all on open, sandy flats with no vegetation present near the nest (Golder 1985). In 1985 one nest was on open, sandy flats, but two nests were on dune slopes or sandy lumps with vegetation present within 0.3 m of the nests. The amount of nest lining also varied with the location of the nest. Nests found on dune slopes or sandy lumps with vegetation nearby had no lining, whereas nests on sand flats were lined with small, light-colored shell chips. Cairns (1982) found that Piping Plover nests on beaches with broken shells present were usually lined with small shell chips, while nests on bare sand had no lining.

The nesting population of Piping Plovers at Cape Hatteras was apparently stable between 1984 and 1985. Four nests and one brood of two chicks were found on the Cape Hatteras National Seashore in 1984 (Golder 1985). Three nests and one brood were present in 1985. With the exception of one found on Ocracoke Island in 1985, nests were in the same general areas in both years.

LITERATURE CITED

Cairns, W.E. 1982. Biology and behavior of breeding Piping Plovers. Wilson Bull. 94:531-545.

Golder, W.W. 1985. Piping Plovers nesting at Cape Hatteras, N.C. Chat 49:69-70

Hespenheide, H.A. 1960. Colony nesters and high tides at Ocracoke, North Carolina. Chat 25:16-17.

LeGrand, H.E., Jr. 1977. Briefs for the Files. Chat 42:15-19.

_____. 1983. South Atlantic Coast Region. American Birds. 37:978-980.

_____. 1984. Briefs for the Files. Chat 48:76-84.

Pearson, T.G., C.S. Brimley, and H.H. Brimley. 1959. Birds of North Carolina. Revised by D.L. Wray and H.T. Davis. N.C. Dept. Agric., Raleigh.
Potter, E.F., J.F. Parnell, and R.P. Teulings. 1980. Birds of the Carolinas. Univ. North Carolina Press. Chapel Hill.
Quay, T.L., F.L. Chapman, and J.O. Fussell III. 1970. Breeding record of a Piping Plover on Shackleford Banks in North Carolina. Chat 35:108-109.
Sidle, J.G. 1984. Endangered and threatened wildlife and plants; Piping Plover proposed as an endangered and threatened species. Dept. Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Serv. Federal Register 49(218):44712-44715.
Tate, J., Jr., and D.J. Tate. 1982. The Blue List for 1982. Amer. Birds 36:126-135.

First South Carolina Record of Sabine's Gull

CLAY C. SUTTON
PATRICIA TAYLOR SUTTON
129 Buck Avenue
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210

DENNIS ALLEN
WENDY BEARD ALLEN
Box 4, Belle Baruch Marine Lab
Georgetown, SC 29440

At 1130 EDT on 7 September 1985, we saw an adult winter-plumaged Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*) approximately 0.8 km off the mouth of North Inlet, Georgetown County, S.C. This sighting was made by four observers, none of whom had previously seen Sabine's Gull, but all of whom agreed in the identification. Numerous photographs were taken with a 135-mm lens. Although there are about five records of Sabine's Gull for North Carolina, to our knowledge this is the first occurrence of the species in South Carolina.

The bird was watched for about one-half hour as it followed a pod of Bottlenose Dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) that were feeding on large schools of menhaden (*Brevoortia* sp.). The bird circled over the surfacing dolphins as if waiting for feeding opportunities. At times it rested on the water and fell well behind the school. It then would fly to catch up to the school, and again circle the area of dolphin activity. The bird stayed with the dolphins the entire time it was under observation. It fed at times with a scattered flock of about 40 Royal Terns (*Sterna maxima*). The bird came from far off to circle our boat, at times as close as 6 m.

On 6 September 1985 in the same area, we saw a large dark tern, which was probably an immature Sooty Tern (*Sterna fuscata*). The occurrence of these two birds in inshore waters was not related to a storm, and 7 September was bright and sunny, cloudless with no wind. The ocean surface was glassy. The preceding few days had moderate westerly winds. A cold front had passed on 2 September 1985, but there had been no tropical depressions or easterly winds that might have pushed either of these pelagic migrants to shore.

The Sabine's Gull was an adult in full winter plumage. The yellow-tipped bill, forked tail, and wing pattern, including the black leading edge (outer primaries) and white triangular wing patch, were all clearly and repeatedly seen. Of interest is that instead of the oft-discussed wing pattern, it was the bright yellow-tipped bill that first drew our attention