

our warm appreciation of the sympathetic assistance afforded by the men at the stations, particularly by Mr. Johnny Jonasson. Berens Island was chosen mainly because of the possibility that White Pelicans would be found breeding on Pelican Island which lies some four or five miles west of Berens Island.

Pelican Island lies approximately in longitude  $95\frac{1}{2}$  and latitude  $52\frac{1}{2}$  and is a typical, rocky lake island, some ten to fifteen acres in extent. Between Pelican Island and the northern shore of the lake, there are no islands and so its north coast meets the full force of the waves raised by the winds sweeping across this 100 miles of open water. Lake Winnipeg with its area of over 8,000 square miles, is very dangerous owing to its quick changes from calm to storm and fishermen familiar with the whole lake, declare this region between Pelican and Berens Islands to be the worst. The shores of Pelican Island are extremely rocky—there are no sand beaches—and a landing from a rowboat requires cautious management even in calm weather. The island is partly wooded with birch, ash, etc., but inland the ground is depressed in a basin-like central hollow, overgrown with marsh vegetation. A barren tongue of land juts out from the east side of the island forming a shingle spit.

#### THE TERNERY.

The first time the authors approached the island in a skiff, flocks of birds were observed resting on the eastern point, while with prism binoculars, Herring Gulls and Terns could be distinguished everywhere along the shingle spit and adjacent shore. Two young Herring Gulls, still in natal down, ran down the beach to the water as the boat reached land. One of these was captured. The uproar among the birds caused by the landing increased when the shingle spit was reached. Numerous deserted Herring Gulls' nests, substantially built of vegetable debris, lined the edge of the grass zone or were scattered over the bare pebbles and everywhere were the remains of pellets disgorged by the gulls. No eggs were found until the zone of vegetation had ended, when, passing out onto the bare eastern spit, a densely populated ternery was discovered. Over this space were between 200 and 300 occupied nests, frequently almost touching, each containing one or two eggs. After a brief survey of the ternery, a low hiding blind was erected and left for the birds to return to the colony.

On returning later, the whole colony was seen to be still on the wing, shrieking and screaming above the breeding ground. The cause was soon revealed. In the midst of the colony was a fisherman methodically gathering the eggs from the nests. The old fellow could scarcely understand English and after much difficulty, it was explained that some of the

nests were to remain undisturbed. The birds were now so thoroughly alarmed that an hour spent in the hiding-tent in the hope of photographing them proved vain and the remaining hour or so of light was expended in examining and photographing the nests and eggs. An adult Caspian Tern was collected together with some clutches of eggs. A fair portion of the colony had not been disturbed. It was hoped that the next visit would find the owners of these nests back at the task of incubation and so the hiding-tent was left in position, as carefully concealed as possible.

On July 13, Pelican Island was re-visited. The birds were observed as before, resting on the rocks and along the shore. On approaching the breeding ground, the usual alarm of the parent birds was not in evidence and closer examination showed that every remaining egg had been destroyed—evidently by crows (*vide infra*) and on the whole spot not a single occupied nest remained. A specimen of Parasitic Jaeger and two still occupied Herring Gull nests were also discovered during this visit.

Reference to the published records of Manitoban birds yielded only an isolated record of the Caspian Tern. It is not mentioned by Bell (3) nor by E. Thompson Seton (11 and 12) and is recorded only by Nutting (6) whose record is cited by Preble (7). Nutting collected a single Caspian Tern on Lake Winnipeg at the mouth of the Saskatchewan river in 1892. The A.O.U. Check List (1) says of the Caspian Tern: "Range nearly cosmopolitan" but gives few North American breeding records, viz: "Great Slave Lake, Klamath Lake, Oregon, on islands of northern Lake Michigan, on coast of Southern Labrador, and also on coasts of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and (formerly) Virginia". The discovery of such a colony in Lake Winnipeg is, therefore, of unusual interest.

Although there are no published records of the species breeding in Manitoba, we have reason to believe that it was previously recognized by Mr. Eric Dunlop, since killed in action in France, a naturalist who in 1914 and 1915 collected in northern Lake Winnipeg for the Carlisle Museum, Carlisle, England. Dunlop is said to have found the Caspian Tern breeding on the west coast of Reindeer Island, but, unfortunately, his records are not available. While in the north, the authors met with Dunlop's chief guide, Capt. Goodman, who through his work with Dunlop had become acquainted with many of the birds. Capt. Goodman stated that in 1914 the Caspian Terns were found breeding only on the west shore of Reindeer Island and had not been noted anywhere else although numerous islands, including Pelican Island, were then visited.