

it was found that the ground was a mixture of gravel and penguin guano to a great depth — the residue of centuries of penguin habitation."

I wonder if another station site could have been found. I wonder whether it was necessary to land during the breeding season. Maybe so. But I really wonder how much thought the Navy gave to these questions.

I suppose one could argue that it doesn't matter too much. After all, there are plenty of Penguins. If their numbers should drop to a few hundred, then that's the time to worry. There was a time, however, when we didn't have to worry about the Passenger Pigeons.

In fact, there was a time when our wilderness and wildlife existed in such great abundance that we never had to worry. Game was shot relentlessly — either for food or sport. And trees were hacked down ruthlessly — either to clear the land or to stoke the fires of the coming civilization. Yet there was always more. Our ancestors didn't worry — as a result we have to worry.

Now we see our precious few resources challenged at every turn — for fishing, for mining, for lumbering, for building, for hunting, for playing. Even when we think we have won a fight to save an area or a species, we find it threatened again.

Two years ago the people of New York State turned back a bid to amend the "Forever Wild" provision of the state constitution. Under this provision the 2,500,000 acre preserve must be maintained in its natural state. Yet on March 18, 1957 the Joint Legislative Committee on Winter Tourists recommended a study of the feasibility of private development of ski facilities on state forest preserve lands. This would mean another battle to change the constitution — a battle which could destroy the "forever wild" principle.

While, once more, this provision is being challenged, a bill has been introduced in Congress which would, in effect, apply to the nation the "forever wild" principle of the New York constitution. The bill would establish a National Wilderness Preservation System under which most of the lands now owned by the government would be preserved in their natural state.

How do you explain our longing to hold on to our wilderness and its resources? Maybe it can't be explained in practical terms. Perhaps the primeval thoughts of Jim Casy in "Grapes of Wrath" best express our deeper sentiments: "There was the hills, an' there was me, an' we wasn't separate no more. We was one thing. An' that one thing was holy."

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NOTES

Least Tern in Central New York State. — Hurricane "Connie", which came inland through the Carolinas and crossed Central New York on August 13, 1955, was responsible for what appears to be the first record of the Least Tern (*Sterna Albifrons*) in the central part of the state. See 1956 Kingbird V (4): 103.

The day following the storm I observed an adult bird in summer plumage flying along a gravel bar at the Branchport end of Keuka Lake. For at least a half hour

I watched this tern with binoculars and Balscope as it fished over shallow water about two hundred yards from shore. Occasionally it came to rest on a wooden pile protruding from the water, and at one time I was able to approach by boat to within twenty feet of the bird. At this distance I used a 135 mm. lens to obtain two 35 mm. color shots which showed the black crown and white forehead and the yellow legs and bill.

The tern remained in the area throughout that day, but the following morning it was gone and was not reported again.—Albert W. Fudge, 326 Larchmont Road, Elmira.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in Rensselaer County. — The Schenectady Bird Club periodically schedules field trips to Tomhannock Reservoir, a few miles northeast of Troy, because often quite a few waterfowl are present there. Such a trip was conducted on November 4, 1956. Some 15 observers including the writer, in five cars, were driving slowly along a road on the eastern edge of the reservoir when suddenly the lead car stopped. A long slim land bird was seen flying across the road, and it was immediately obvious that this was something out of the ordinary. The bird lit atop a small tree about 20 yards from the road, and identification of a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was simultaneously made by several observers, one of whom had previously seen the species in Texas. The bird soon darted behind a large grove of pine trees and attempts to relocate it were in vain.

While the bird was perched, facing us, the elongated tail feathers were, of course, immediately apparent. The underparts were largely whitish, but the bay sides were noted as the bird flew off. The dark streak through the eye was also clearly noted. The bird was completely silent during the period in which it was under observation.

The Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, for no apparent reason, turns up from time to time in the northeast. The last previous record of which I know was of an individual present in Quebec for about two weeks in the spring of 1955 (Audubon Field Notes 9 (4): 320.) Not unexpectedly, this is Region 8's first record of the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher.—J. K. Meritt, 16 Ellen Lane, Scotia, 2

Wood Duck diving for fish. — At Baldwinsville, Onondaga County, the Seneca River is dammed for power production and water reserve for the Barge Canal. The stretch of water below this dam is one of swift currents and relatively shallow water (25 to 10 feet). The rapid current usually keeps this shallow area open through the winter and consequently this spot is a good area to check for wintering dabbling ducks. On 8 Jan. 1956, while checking over the Mallards and Black Ducks on an island some distance from shore, Mr. David Griffin and I noticed a small, dark duck clumsily dive in the north channel of the river, a section of the river about 6 or 7 feet deep and about 30 yards away from us. It surfaced and proved to be a female Wood Duck holding a small, blackish fish in its bill; it quickly maneuvered the fish into position and swallowed it head first. It then again dove, surfacing quite close to us (about 20 yards away from the shore on which we were standing). In its bill the bird held what appeared to be a small yellow perch, judging by the orange ventral fins and the dark green-barred sides, features easily visible through the binoculars. After some head shaking, the duck positioned this fish and swallowed it. It dove three more times but was not seen to catch any fish in these attempts. A nearby male Wood Duck, resting on an ice shelf on the bank of the river and heretofore unnoticed, was seen pummeling a small fish. After vigorous picking and pounding, he readied the fish and swallowed it head first. The male was not seen to dive for the fish but may very well have obtained it in the same fashion that the female had.—Fritz Scheider, 151 Seventh North Street, Syracuse 8

A Long Island nesting of the Mockingbird. — In 1844 Giraud, writing in "The Birds of Long Island" (p. 82), reported the Mockingbird as nesting occasionally on Long Island. No further definite breeding records for the island were obtained until