

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Northern Fulmar grounded on Long Island: Bull (1974, *Birds of New York State*, p. 58) cites three observations of the Northern Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*) off the shores of Long Island (1930, 1937 and 1961). In addition, the remains of a bird were found in Oswego Co. in 1971. Recently, however, several sightings have been made on pelagic trips, usually in the vicinity of Cox's Ledge some 30 miles off shore (Bull, 1976, *Suppl. Bds. N.Y. State*, pp. 3-4). Since this species so rarely comes close to shore in the Long Island area, I was surprised on the morning of 22 October 1976 when a fulmar turned up in the driveway of my home in Brookhaven, on the south shore of Long Island about three miles north of the outer beach.



Northern Fulmar—Brookhaven
October 1976 —Jonathan Cooley

The bird was very emaciated and weak, but not crippled or oiled. I can only assume that it had been blown ashore by the strong easterly gales that had prevailed during the previous week. When I picked it up it ejected from its tubular nostrils the thickly, oily saline liquid that is used defensively by many of the Procellariiformes. The bird was of the light gray morph, and was apparently immature, as the bill was dull, pale gray rather than yellow, although there was a slight yellowing of the hooked nail on the upper mandible. The tarsi were pale gray, the webs between the toes pinkish, and the irides black.

The bird was accommodated in a large outside pen, and was fed killifish (*Fundulus heteroclitus*) and squid. We gave it a large dishpan of salty bay water, and several times it took live killies from the pan. But in order to fatten it up, we generally force-fed it. Once the food was in its bill it swallowed readily, and took an average of 15 large killies or three squid a day. In walking, it shuffled and did not stand upright like a gull, and used its wings to aid its progress. After eight days the bird became more listless, and following a rain shower we noticed that the plumage had lost its water repellent property. We gave it cod liver oil and Vitamin B₁ (thiamine), but it continued to decline, and on 3 November began rejecting food. On 4 November it succumbed. I can only conclude that some vital but unknown ingredient of its natural diet was lacking. Several times we had noticed it pecking at soil and apparently eating it, perhaps in an attempt to remedy this deficiency.

Dennis Puleston, Meadow Lane, Brookhaven, N.Y. 11719

A possible New York State Dickcissel breeding colony: Dickcissels (*Spiza americana*) are presently rare as a breeding species in New York State. In western New York, Beardslee and Mitchell (1965, *Birds of the Niagara Frontier Region*, p. 604) noted the species as an "occasional rare visitant, recorded each season of the year." Bull (1974, *Birds of New York State*, p. 552) records breeding records for single pairs of Dickcissels at Meridian, Cayuga Co., in 1937 (reported by Benton, 1949) and at Victor, Ontario Co., in 1955 (Genesee Ornith. Soc.). This note reports on a Dickcissel colony in western New York. If breeding can be confirmed in the future, the colony would apparently represent the third breeding record during this century. The authors could find no records for a New York State colony, breeding or non-breeding, in the last one hundred years.

Dickcissels were first noted in the vicinity of our research area in the Town of Pomfret, Chautauqua Co., on June 2, 1975. From three to five males were noted during the first week of June. Only one male remained in the area for more than a few days. This bird began to display territorial behavior in a 4-year-old abandoned field which has been previously described (*American Birds* 29: 1138-1139, Dec., 1975). A female was seen on several occasions but no breeding was confirmed.

The first indication of possible breeding and the establishment of a colony occurred on June 14, 1976. In the open field where the 1975 male had been consistently found, a male Dickcissel was found singing at 0640 hours. By 1400 hours the same day, two males were singing and two or three females were also