

Remarks.—The present species appears congeneric with *Suiriri suiriri* but has a decidedly larger bill. It combines the general appearance of *S. suiriri* with the coloration of *Sublegatus fasciatus* (Thunberg). It is also suggestive of *Suiriri affinis* from which it differs as outlined in the diagnosis. It is astonishing to find so distinct a species at such a well known locality as Tapia and for some time I have searched in literature for a name for it without success. Some doubt has attached to the identity of *Sublegatus frontalis* Salvadori,¹ but Dr. Hellmayr informs me that it is a synonym of *S. fasciatus*, and states further that he has not previously seen a bird like the type of *improvisa*.

Biological Survey, Washington, D. C.

GENERAL NOTES.

Apparent Nesting of the Hooded Merganser in Lancaster Co., Pa.

—On May 18, 1924, my dog surprised a male Hooded Merganser under an overhanging bank of Hammer Creek some six miles from Lititz, Pa. The bird splashed to mid-stream, floated there for a second and then seeing me twelve yards away, he flushed and whipped out of sight around the projecting bushes. Clifford Marburger and I while making our Christmas bird census last December had caught a glimpse of a distant duck which we thought was a Hooded Merganser and as the winter had been exceptionally open the thought arose that possibly this bird had remained to breed.

On the morning of May 25, I was again on the Hammer Creek meadow, with my dog "Barley." The location is in northern Lancaster County fifteen miles from the Susquehanna River, and throughout its quarter mile course in this meadow the stream presses against an embankment well covered with an old growth of sycamores, white elms, white oaks and red maples, the other side being fairly open pasture land, very boggy in places with scattered clumps of alder, wild rose and swamp willow.

We beat cautiously up stream and a hundred yards above the overhanging bank there was a flutter and splash and "Barley" had run into the female Merganser. He watched her unusual actions with apparent amazement. There she was on the water not twenty-five yards away, her little brown crest fairly bristling with excitement. Something had given this shy bird courage. Even as I came up with the dog she swam boldly back toward him. Fifteen yards from us she wheeled and splashed heavily away along the water uttering as she went a guttural cackle. Coming

¹ Boll. Mus. Zool. Anat. Comp. Torino, vol. 12, May 12, 1897, p. 14. (Caiza, Chaco Boliviano.)

quickly to float again she returned once more to approach us, almost as close as the first time, and once more to wheel and drag herself pitifully and noisily away. Now she edged reluctantly toward her mate who during the entire performance had been swimming nervously about in full view fifteen to twenty yards beyond her. The danger which made the female frantic and foolhardy had inspired the drake too, but never beyond the point of caution. Together the pair swam around a point of land, conveniently near and a few minutes later when I followed them—as they doubtless planned that I should—both birds were gone and though we hunted the ground thoroughly, as we thought, and, concealed in an alder clump, waited and watched for an hour, the rest of the day's record was a blank.

In reading E. A. Samuel's account of ways of the mother Merganser in Bent's 'Life Histories' the full humor of the situation dawned upon me and I realized that I and my dog, whose praises I am always ready to sing, had been out-witted by an old trick cleverly executed. For the purpose of a breeding record however, my evidence was just as convincing to me as if I had seen the downy balls swimming with their mother instead of being concealed under the stream bank as they undoubtedly were. Presumably the pair had nested in one of the large sycamores, showing many likely holes, which overhung the creek at the point where I first saw the female.

I visited the spot four times during the following three weeks and saw the male on May 29, while an interested farmer told me of seeing a pair of flying Ducks on June 13, and of observing a pair of "wild ducks" about the place in the summer of 1923.—HERBERT H. BECK, *Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pa.*

King Eider on Long Island in June.—The King Eider (*Somateria spectabilis*) is a regular winter visitor to the eastern end of Long Island,—usually rare, but occasionally fairly common,—the extreme migration dates being Nov. 1 to April 27. There are, however, only two definite records for it in the western and central parts of the island,—namely, Amityville, November 13, (Dutcher's Long Island Notes) and Mastic, early October, 1912, (specimen taken by W. S. Dana).

It was therefore with great interest that Mr. Ord Myers and the writer observed an immature male of this species at Long Beach, Nassau County, on June 1, 1924. The bird was swimming with a flock of about twenty White-winged and Surf Scoters (*Oidemia deglandi* and *O. perspicillata*) a short distance off-shore and was under observation through 8X and 16X glasses twice, for periods of about fifteen minutes each. We noted the size, which was slightly greater than that of the White-winged Scoters, the rounded head, which was distinctly gray on the crown and brownish on the sides, with a prolongation of the maxilla backward on each side toward the eye, the brownish upper neck, wings and lower back, the creamy white lower neck and breast, and the distinct, rounded, white patch on either side of the rump.