

most is very slight; and its value is further diminished by the fact of Guatemalan specimens having a slight yellowish tinge on the lores, breaking down the chief point of distinction between Mr. Ridgway's races" (*op. cit.*, p. 135). It is just such intergradations as these which prevent the recognition of these forms as "species" but not as "races," for races are supposed to intergrade, while species are not. It is just this difference that we seek to recognize by the third term in the trinomial system of nomenclature. Races, in their extreme phases, are as certainly recognizable as species, and often present wider differences of coloration and size than frequently occurs among closely allied species; but whereas in the latter we know no connecting links, we expect them to occur between races at points geographically intermediate to the regions where they respectively present their greatest degree of differentiation, and to find at such intermediate points more or less difficulty in deciding whether the form there occurring is to be referred to the one phase rather than the other. In respect to the commingling of certain races in Mexico, and the argument based thereon, it is necessary to consider the season of capture of the specimens in question before concluding that because two supposed races have occurred at the same localities they are not, after all, geographically distinct in their breeding habitats.

Hitherto we have had no general treatise on the birds of the region to which the present work relates, the abundant literature of the subject being widely scattered in special papers or more general works, usually not easy of access, and often inaccessible, to the general student. The importance and usefulness of the present work cannot therefore be easily overestimated. A similar work for South America would be a great boon to even the specialist, but it seems almost too much to hope for at present. The execution of the "Biologia," as regards typography and illustrations, is almost needless to say is excellent, for nothing less would be expected at the hands of its accomplished and enterprising authors.—J. A. A.

General Notes.

NEST AND EGGS OF THE PAINTED FLYCATCHER (*Setophaga picta*).—For my knowledge of the nidification of this species, and for the nest and eggs in my collection, I am indebted to Mr. Herbert Brown, who became familiar with the birds while in Arizona. From Mr. Brown's observations it appears that they differ somewhat in their habits from *Setophaga ruticilla*, as they seldom or never catch insects on the wing, but pick them from the leaves and branches of the trees; one specimen was seen feeding her young with what appeared to be moths and long-legged flies. The nesting-site was on a hillside in a slight depression in the ground. A nest, now before me, was taken from a hole in a road bank, in the Santa Rita Mountains, by Mr. Brown, June 6, 1880. It is loosely constructed of

dry gray grasses and fine shreds of vegetable bark, and lined with black and white horse hairs; it measures exactly 4 inches in diameter by $1\frac{3}{4}$ high, and internally 2 inches in diameter by $1\frac{1}{4}$ in depth. It contained four incubated eggs, of a light pearl white, thickly dotted with brownish red and traces of lilac on the larger end. They measure .57 x .48; .60 x .50; .64 x .50; .58 x .49.

Another set of four was laid in a similar nest built in a depression beneath a small bush on the lower side of a mountain trail. The eggs of this set are somewhat larger and spotted over the entire egg, the markings clustering about the larger end. The measurements of three of them are .69 x .52; .65 x .51; .66 x .50; the fourth was unfortunately broken.

I have compared both sets with three differently marked eggs of *S. rutililla* and find scarcely a similarity. The first set mentioned resembles three eggs I have of *Myiodiactes pusillus pileolatus* so closely that it is almost impossible to distinguish between them.—W. E. BRYANT, San Francisco, Cal.

BREEDING OF THE HORNED LARK IN EASTERN NEW YORK.—On April 22, 1881, Edward Root, of Green Island, N. Y., brought to me two young Horned Larks (*Eremophila alpestris*), about three-fourths grown and able to fly. On April 29 of the same year he brought to me an adult pair of the same species. Mr. Root informed me that he took the young and the old all at the same place, on Green Island, which is at the junction of the Mohawk River with the Hudson, about thirty feet above tide-water level, and at latitude $42^{\circ} 45'$.—AUSTIN F. PARK, Troy, N. Y.

BEHAVIOR OF LEUCOSTICTE TEPHROCOTIS IN CONFINEMENT.—While stationed at Fort Fetterman, Wyoming, in the spring of 1880, I captured eight Gray-crowned Finches, all apparently in perfect health and feather. After the capture I decided, as well as I could from the diagnostic points of size and plumage, that I had the sexes about equally represented. Two of the birds, most undoubtedly males, wore the characteristic plumage of *Leucosticte campestris*; the gray of the crown extending well below the eye. As these birds were very plenty about my quarters, and anticipating the care of my pets, I had already constructed a large double cage for them, consisting essentially of a lower or breeding cage, $3 \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ feet, with a large side door, and admitting the light from in front and upper half through a rather coarse net-work. This part of their home was intended to represent and take the place of their outdoor existence. The floor was covered with two or three inches of earth and sodded; the grass growing well. Various styles of perches were introduced, miniature clumps of dry grasses, and odds and ends of building materials. Above and easy of access there was another cage, $2 \times 2 \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ feet, with its floor also spread with earth, well lighted, and containing a large bath-tub and a shelf intended to represent the eaves of a house, a style of perch the Gray-crowned Finch is particularly fond of. The capture was effected on the 10th of March, and the little fellows were introduced to their home for the summer. I

had two objects in view: first, to observe their style of plumage during the summer months, and, secondly, if possible, to induce them to breed and rear their young. Imagine my delight, when I found that in a few days they not only became accustomed to their narrow quarters, but apparently thoroughly satisfied and happy. Flocks of their companions passing over were certain to be called down, to alight on the fences, the ground, and in fact everything in the neighborhood of the cage, to even the cage itself. Their plumage at this time of year seemed to be almost in a perfect state, all the colorings being very dark. My captives were fed upon canary seed, flax seed, finely cracked wheat, and, later in the year, lettuce, and other tender leaves. As the sods at the bottom of the cage were often entirely removed, they no doubt obtained also many insects. Every morning as I approached the cage, a general and impatient chattering commenced for their breakfast and bath, and they immediately availed themselves of both in my presence; and often I deluged the entire thing, birds and all, with a large watering-pot, they enjoying this sprinkling immensely. Later in the spring this part of the programme was followed by their mounting to the upper cage, pluming themselves in the sun, chattering among themselves, and the males giving utterance to a low, subdued, and plaintive sort of a song, being different from the shrill whistle they gave to attract the attention of their passing fellows outside.

By the middle of May, all the birds of this species had entirely left the country; the spring migration was thoroughly inaugurated, and the weather was becoming very warm. Swallows were breeding and many other birds were evidently thinking of doing likewise. I now made their home as attractive as possible, by every means that my imagination could invent. Nests of birds of about their own size that built on the ground were introduced into the secluded nooks of their breeding cage, but these they invariably pulled to pieces the very day I placed them there. In short, by the middle of June I had abandoned all hope of their breeding and during their entire confinement there never seemed any evidence of their pairing, or having the least desire, like sensible birds, of resorting to the business of the season.

By the first of July, they were as gentle as any cage birds I ever saw; they would pick seed out of one's hand, and alight on your finger, if you quietly introduced it between the bars; in fact, they were all that any one could desire in the way of cage pets. On the 10th of July, I opened the doors of their little prison and allowed them all to escape, as they had suffered intensely from the heat for several days; the sudden exercise was rather too much for one or two of them, and they were readily retaken but only to be kept until the cool of the evening. The brilliancy of their plumage seemed to be at its acme in the early part of May; at the time of their release it was in all of them many shades paler. On several occasions during the summer they were seen about the post, usually one at a time, so I am quite confident they never made the attempt to either breed that season or to follow their companions to the northward.—R. W. SHUFELDT, 1st Lt. Med. Dept. U. S. Army, Fort Fetterman, Wyoming.

HESPERIPHONA VESPERTINA IN CENTRAL ILLINOIS.—The Evening Grosbeak has for its habitat the region extending from the Plains to the Pacific Ocean, and from Mexico into British America. Toward the north it ranges further to the east; so that, while it appears to be not uncommon about Lake Superior, it has been reported as occurring in Ohio, New York, and Canada. In Illinois it was observed at Freeport during the winter of 1870-71; and at Waukegan during January 1873 (Hist. N. A. Birds by Baird, Brewer, and Ridgway). Mr. Robt. Ridgway, in his recently issued "Catalogue of the Birds of Illinois," states that it is "a winter visitant to the extreme northern counties" of the State.

It will, therefore, be a matter of interest to ornithologists to learn that this exquisite bird is sometimes found further south and at a less advanced season of the year. About the year 1872, while hunting during the fine autumn weather in the woods about Eureka, Illinois, I fell in with a flock of these Grosbeaks and succeeded in killing six of their number. They were feeding in the treetops on the seeds of the sugar maple, just then ripening, and were excessively fat. They were very unsuspecting, and for a long time appeared to be incapable of realizing the havoc that I was making in their ranks, as they tarried in the neighboring boughs and uttered their call-notes to summon their missing companions. As the skins of these birds afterward passed out of my hands, I can not now give with certainty the year of their capture. Eureka is in Woodford County and one hundred and twenty miles nearly due south of Freeport. It is about the same distance south of Waukegan.—O. P. HAY, *Butler University, Irvington, Ind.*

HABITS OF THE SWAMP SPARROW IN CONFINEMENT.—*Dr. Elliott Coues: My dear Sir:*—You may recall a conversation on the subject of my aviary which took place at the "Wentworth" last summer. As you then appeared somewhat interested in my experiments with native birds I venture to send you some new facts. In the early part of November I visited a New York bird store, and there found a cage of our native birds, freshly caught, and very wild. The trapper who had just brought them in was present. But as he was a German, speaking very little English, and was moreover more than a little intoxicated; as he also while talking held a short pipe in his mouth from which he puffed the smoke of villainous tobacco into my face, our interview was not wholly satisfactory. Still I succeeded in obtaining some scraps of information. He had a Song Sparrow, a "Chippy," a White-throated Sparrow, two Purple Finches (in different stages of plumage), a Snow-bird (*Junco hyemalis*), a Snow Bunting (*Plectrophanes nivalis*), and one small bird I did not know. On questioning its captor as to this last stranger he gave me to understand that it was "Kleiner wasser bird—live in vet place, vere never could go the lady—she vet her foots." I bought the whole lot, and, when at home, studied up my unknown friend. He proved to be the Swamp Sparrow (*Melospiza palustris*), and his habits are so curious I want you to know of them. I placed him in a large cage, already containing some fifty birds,

native and foreign, and in a few days he became quite at home, and seemed quiet and friendly,—much more so than any of the other new arrivals. I soon noticed that his mode of feeding was peculiar. Instead of eating from the seed dishes or cup of soft food, like the others, he proceeded in this way: Perching upon the edge of the bath tub (a large shallow dish of earthenware filled with water), he balanced himself skilfully upon one foot, and with the other, scratched or dabbled in the water. This stirred up the seed, and bits of green stuff, scattered by the other birds, and as it rose to the surface he secured it, picking it up, bit by bit, with his bill and eating it. This he did constantly, very rarely taking food in any other way. Sometimes he scratched in the gravel, strown upon the floor of the cage, and moistened by spray from the birds' ablutions, and picked up the seeds he thus found.

The constant use of his little right foot, and the strain of reaching so far when the water was low, finally lamed Swampy (my birds have each his own pet name, used only in "the family"), and he was forced to hop about drearily on his left foot. I then scattered seed and Mocking Bird food carefully upon the surface of the water, and he at once accepted the situation and without scratching. He is quite well again now. He has never sung or uttered the faintest chirp, but may begin with the approach of spring. I will not weary you with a longer story, but trust the items concerning *M. palustris*, a bird not often caged, will prove of some interest. Very sincerely, ANNIE TRUMBULL SLOSSON, *Hartford, Conn.*

THE SNOWBIRD (*Junco hyemalis*) IN SOUTHERN ILLINOIS IN JUNE.—While on a recent trip to Southern Illinois, I astonished myself by shooting, June 9, one mile from the Ohio River, near Elizabethtown, in Hardin County, an adult specimen of the common Snowbird (*Junco hyemalis*.) I killed the bird from a tree in the edge of a wood. I neither heard nor saw another of the species there.—S. A. FORBES, *Normal, Ill.*

A SINGULAR CAGE PLUMAGE OF THE ROSE-BREADED GROSBEEK.—In a Boston bird-store I lately saw a Rose-breasted Grosbeak in very remarkable plumage. The whole under-parts, from the throat to the crissum, including the sides, were uniform deep rose, nearly as vivid as is the normal breast-patch. The rump also was rose-tinted and there was a wash of the same color along the superciliary stripe. The bird was evidently a male and apparently an adult, for the wings and tail were clear black.

I was told that it had been kept in a cage for about six months; when first captured it was of the usual color, but shortly afterwards it moulted and the present plumage was assumed. The owner had never seen a similar case although he has had many of these Grosbeaks in confinement.—WILLIAM BREWSTER. *Cambridge, Mass.*

CARNIVOROUS PROPENSITIES OF THE CROW BLACKBIRD.—One sultry afternoon a few summers since I was writing at an open window when my attention was attracted—or rather distracted—by the clamor of a number

of English Sparrows which were quarreling among the foliage immediately below me. Happening to want a specimen, I selected an adult male and shot it. Scarcely had it struck the ground when a Crow Blackbird (*Quiscalus purpureus æneus*) pounced upon it from a linden above, and with a few well-directed strokes of its bill put an end to its struggles. At this juncture a Robin interfered but soon retreated before the Grackle's menacing front. The latter next seized the Sparrow in its bill and flew off with it to the lawn, a few paces distant. Here it deliberately went to work to eat its victim. Holding it between one, or sometimes both, its feet, exactly as a Hawk would do, it broke open the skull and feasted on the brains. I was near enough so see that its bill was reeking with blood. After watching it awhile I walked directly towards it when it again took up its prize and tried to carry it into the tree above, but its strength proved insufficient and it was obliged to drop it. Upon examining the Sparrow I found that its brains had been cleanly scooped out and the eyes as well as the throat devoured. Meanwhile the Grackle scolded me most emphatically for thus interfering and the moment my back was turned again descended and resumed its feast.

Many of our native birds seem to have a standing grudge against this Blackbird and rarely let pass an opportunity to pursue and harass it. It would seem that this hatred is not without just cause.—WILLIAM BREWSTER, *Cambridge, Mass.*

ICTERUS BALTIMOREI AND POPULUS TREMULOIDES.—Two specimens of the American aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) stand in my garden which I transplanted from the woods in the spring of 1876. During the latter part of May, 1878, I noticed that the trees were being denuded very rapidly of their leaves and I could not detect the presence of worm or fly by the use of a glass of twenty diameters. The leaves did not appear to have been eaten by insects but torn away piecemeal, leaving ragged edges, and not infrequently the leaf-stalks broken off or hanging loosely to the branch. About three-fourths of the leaves disappeared in this manner in the space of fifteen or twenty days from one tree and nearly all from the other. A second set of leaves was produced in June and the trees made a strong and healthy growth during the remainder of the season. In 1879 the denudation was again commenced in like manner at the same season of the year. I could not charge it to the wind because other trees in the garden were not so affected and my meteorological record forbade any such cause. Upon careful watching while at work in the garden I detected a Baltimore Oriole eating the leaves with evident relish. The bird stood on a branch and picked at and tore off the leaves, eating them with as much apparent enjoyment as our domestic fowls eat the leaves of the plantain.

I watched him closely for a while and upon going towards the tree he flew away, uttering his rattle in such a tone that it required no stretch of the imagination to think that he was somewhat irritated at being molested in his gastronomic proclivities. He soon returned, however, accompanied by a female, and the pair continued to eat for several minutes, interlarding

the feast with various acts of courtship, and then flew off, each with a leaf or part of one in the beak. The same act was repeated during the day and on succeeding days until the trees were nearly as bare of leaves as in winter. As in the former year, a second set of leaves appeared and though the trees received a check in their growth, they recovered, increased in size and ripened their wood in due season. A similar destruction of leaves was performed by the same species of bird—probably the same pair—in 1880, and the trees recovered their wonted vigor by repeating the process of preceding years. The second set of leaves were not eaten by the birds in either year, though they were in the garden more or less every day during the summer and frequently alighted in the trees, separately, together, and with their young.

I had formerly considered the *Icterus baltimorei* essentially insectivorous and frugivorous; I am now aware that some of them at least are decidedly vegetarian once in the year.—ELISHA SLADE, *Somerset, Mass.*

A PECULIAR NEST OF THE BALTIMORE ORIOLE.—When the leaves fell in the autumn of 1876, I discovered a bird's nest suspended from a slender limb of a cotton-wood that stands, with others, on the outskirts of Charles City, (Iowa). This nest immediately attracted my attention, and I made several attempts to secure it, but was unsuccessful, as it hung near the end of a limb too slender to bear my weight.

It hung there throughout the following winter, but in the spring of 1877 a young friend of lighter weight than myself obtained it and gave it to me. It is, unmistakably, the nest of a Baltimore Oriole,—the material used in its construction and the manner in which it is woven plainly show this; but it differs very materially in shape from any other nest of the species that I have ever seen.

The length of the nest is eleven inches; greatest diameter, four inches. Body of nest, an upright cone about eight inches in height, with a rounded base. It is composed of the ordinary material: "natural strings of the flax of the silk-weed," horse-hair, etc. At its apex, several pieces of twine are woven into the fabric, and, about three inches above, are securely fastened to a horizontal twig, all at the same point, forming the sole support of the nest. The opening for entrance is in the side of the nest, at the point of its greatest diameter, about three inches from the base. It is perfectly circular and about one inch in diameter.—HENRY S. WILLIAMS, *Charles City, Floyd Co., Ia.*

THE THREE-TOED WOODPECKER (*Picoides articus*) IN MASSACHUSETTS.—Records of the occurrence of the Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker in Massachusetts have multiplied so slowly that the following additional one may be considered of interest: An adult male shot Dec. 17, 1880, at Plymouth, Massachusetts. I saw the specimen at Goodale's when it was being mounted for Mr. John A. Joyce, the person by whom it was killed. WILLIAM BREWSTER, *Cambridge, Mass.*

A SECOND MASSACHUSETTS SPECIMEN OF THE RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER (*Centurus carolinus*).—At the establishment of Pertia W. Aldrich, the well-known taxidermist, I have lately seen a freshly-made skin of a Red-bellied Woodpecker which Mr. Aldrich tells me was shot at Cohasset, May 28, 1881, by a young son of Matthew Luce, Esq., of Boston. The bird is an adult male in fine plumage. It is the second known Massachusetts specimen, the first having been recorded in the last (April) number of the Bulletin, by Gordon Plummer, Esq.—WILLIAM BREWSTER, Cambridge, Mass.

[Although the two specimens alluded to above are doubtless the only ones thus far known to have been *actually taken* in Massachusetts it may be well to call attention to two earlier records. In my "Catalogue of Birds found at Springfield, Mass.," etc., published in 1864 (Proc. Essex Institute, Vol. IV, pp. 48-98), I gave the species as a "Summer Visitant. Accidental"; and add: "Saw one May 13th 1863" (l. c., p. 53). I also cite Peabody (Rep. on the Birds of Mass.) as stating that Professor Emmons had found it breeding in Western Massachusetts. Whatever may be the weight of the testimony last cited, I will take this opportunity of stating more fully the instance I give on my own authority. The specimen was shot and fell, but just as it reached the ground scaled off a few feet into a pile of brush thickly overgrown with bushes, and a prolonged search, repeatedly renewed on subsequent days, failed to discover the bird. Nothing in my ornithological experience ever made so deep an impression on my memory, or gave me keener dissatisfaction, for I knew what a prize I had lost. The species was then well known to me, and was as distinctly recognized as it could have been had I had it actually in hand. A specimen of this species has since been taken by Mr. E. I. Shores within five miles (at Suffield, Conn. (see Merriam's Birds of Conn., p. 65), of the locality where my example was shot.—J. A. ALLEN.]

A CURIOUS COLAPTUS.—The most remarkable case of *C. mexicanus* + *auratus* which has come under my observation is that of a specimen taken here February 20, 1881. The bird is *mexicanus*, excepting the 1st, 2d, 3d, and 5th tail feathers of the left side, which are *auratus*—the golden-yellow in striking contrast with the orange-red of the rest of the tail. The specimen also illustrates the rare anomaly of bilateral asymmetry in coloration. It is deposited in the National Museum.—ELLIOTT COUES, Fort Whipple, Arizona.

A VERNACULAR SYNONYMY.—The compiling of a list of the names of our birds in use among the people to whom they are popularly known has always seemed to me a matter both of interest and value; and I have for some years been making notes for such a Vernacular Synonymy, as it might be termed. There is more in it than the mere grouping of this class of information, since opportunities for philological study exist in plenty, and other general facts of interest are likely to be brought out. As an unimportant example of what I mean, take the case of the Golden-winged Woodpecker (*Colaptes auratus*) which is variously known as follows:

Colaptes auratus.

- Golden-winged Woodpecker.* (General.)
Yellow-shafted Woodpecker. (General.)
Flicker, or Yellow-shafted Flicker. (General.)
Yellowhammer. (General.)
High-hole or High-holder. (General.)
Pigeon Woodpecker. (New York and New England.)
English Woodpecker. (Long Island; Newfoundland.)
Yücker. (Western New York.)
Yáwup. (New York; Pennsylvania.)
Clape. (New York.)
Wákeup or Wacup. (Massachusetts; Long Island.)
Shad-spirit. (New England coast.)
Hittock, or Hittuck. (Canada.)
Fiddler. (Cape Cod.)
Yellow Jay. (Wisconsin.)
Piúte, or Pee-út. (New England.)
Pique-bois jaune. (Louisiana.)
Yaffle. (Connecticut.)
Sapsucker, or Sucker. (Florida.)
Gel Spēcht; Spēcht. (Pennsylvania, German.)

Examining this list, one sees how several of the names might arise. The expressions "golden-winged," "yellow-shafted," the French "pique-bois jaune," and the Pennsylvania German name (pronounced *gail speycht*), refer of course to the color of the wing quills, which are very conspicuous. "Yellow-hammer" was among the very first names given by the colonists to this bird, and, like "Yellow Jay," alludes to the color utterly irrespective of likeness of form to the namesake in each case. "English Woodpecker," perhaps, belongs to the same category. The word "Flicker" undoubtedly designates its well-known wavering manner of flight, to which the alternate appearance and disappearance of the yellow quills gives a twinkling, *flickering* look. As for "Pigeon Woodpecker," I think it arises from the peculiar Pigeon-like attitude of this species, which perches *across* the branch, instead of lengthways along it as do other more genuine Woodpeckers. "Highhole," "Highholder" and "Woodwall" (of which I have a note, but no location for) describe the bird's home, of course; and Sapsucker states the popular idea that that is what all Woodpeckers are doing when they move about tree-trunks in search of insect-food. What "Yaffle" and "Fiddler" signify I have no idea. Dr. DeKay remarks concerning "Clape": "some provincial word introduced by the early English colonists." "Hittock," though now a Canadian term, appears to have been handed down from the Delaware Indians, since Heckwelder says that *hittuck* was the Lin-Lenape word for tree; and also that the Swedes who colonized the lower Delaware Valley in the seventeenth century gave the name "Tree-pecker" to this whole race of birds. In the name "Shad-spirit" is embodied a half-superstitious idea of the New England fishermen of former days (and it may be until now) that this bird came up from the South

and ascended the rivers just ahead of the vernal migration of shad, in order to inform them of the approach of the fish; it is the noting of a coincidence, in other words.

There remain several terms, "Yarrup," "Wakeup," "Pi-ute," and "Yucker," which evidently represent the harsh well-known cry of this species; that is, they were at first intended to be imitations of one or another phase of the bird's voice, but have become changed and corrupted until, perhaps, they no longer answer well to any of its notes. Nuttall has a pertinent note on this head in the second edition of his "Manual of Ornithology," which I append: "They have also a sort of complaining call from which they have probably derived their cry of *pee üt, pee üt*; and at times a plaintive *quéh quéh*. Occasionally they also utter in a squalling tone, when surprised, or engaged in amusing rivalry with their fellows, *we-cögh we-cögh we-cögh, or wecüp wecüp wecüp*."

This is far from a complete example of what such a study may be in this case or in some others of still greater interest. If any readers of the Bulletin should take the trouble to send me names used in his district, no matter how well-known they may seem to be, or any suggestions as to the "why or wherefore" of this and that term being applied, I should highly appreciate the assistance thus afforded.—ERNEST INGERSOLL. *Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.*

NESTING OF KENNICOTT'S OWL.—I have this season (1881) found here two sets of the eggs of Kennicott's Owl (*Scops asio kennicotti*). The first set of four eggs, taken April 7, measure as follows: 1.47×1.28, 1.43×1.29, 1.45×1.30, 1.46×1.30. The nest was in a hole in a cotton-wood tree, about 25 feet from the ground. The eggs rested on the decayed wood and a few dead leaves. The second set, consisting of five eggs, was taken April 11. The eggs measure 1.53×1.31, 1.50×1.27, 1.47×1.32, 1.50×1.32, 1.49×1.30. This nest was also in a hollow of a cottonwood, about 40 feet from the ground. The eggs rested on the rubbish at the bottom of the hole, there being neither feathers nor leaves. The parents in both instances remained in the hole while the eggs were being removed.—CHARLES BENDIRE, *Fort Walla Walla, Wash. Terr.*

BREEDING OF THE ACADIAN OWL IN EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS.—On June 4, 1880, I found a nest of the Acadian Owl (*Nyctale acadica*), containing five nearly fledged young, in a cedar tree, in the midst of a dense swamp in Braintree. The nest was an old nest of a Night Heron, repaired with a few leaves and feathers. From the size of the young birds it is evident that the eggs must have been laid about the end of April or very early in May. The young birds were clad in a mottled plumage—gray intermixed with a sprinkling of red. Close to this nest of the Acadian Owl was found the nest of a Long-eared Owl. I have never heard before of Owls of different species nesting so near each other.—N. A. FRANCIS, *Brookline, Mass.*

EARLY ARRIVAL IN NEW ENGLAND OF THE LEAST BITTERN.—On March 1 of the present year while at Providence, Rhode Island, I saw a freshly-killed Least Bittern at the natural history store of Messrs. Southwick and Jencks. It was brought in by a boy who said that he shot it on the shore of the bay near the city. It was an adult male; thin in flesh even for the shadowy pattern of its race, but in very perfect plumage.—
WILLIAM BREWSTER, *Cambridge, Mass.*

THE LEAST BITTERN IN NORTHWESTERN MINNESOTA.—It is said in Dr. Coues's "Birds of the Northwest" that the Least Bittern (*Ardetta exilis*) "does not appear to be anywhere abundant." In this vicinity is a small lake or pond, covering thirty or forty acres, whose very reedy shores furnished last summer nesting room for eighteen or twenty pairs of these birds. The other ponds near here, some dozen in number, each had their complement. So that I think I am fairly entitled to regard it as abundant. The nests were all placed on floating bog, a few feet from open water, and the eggs average larger than the measurements given in the above-mentioned work, specimens 1.30 inches by 1.00 inch being not uncommon. The habits of this bird have been compared to those of the Rails, but to my mind it more frequently calls up the Marsh Wren. As it laboriously fixes itself on the stem of a long reed, one foot above the other, in the position taken with such airy lightness by the Wren, one is reminded of the lapdog and the donkey. It climbs awkwardly and with much effort, foot over foot, up two neighboring reeds, until at a convenient height, it stands with legs wide apart, or, after a squawk or two, launches into the air. My first acquaintance with the bird was at Ripon, Wisc., where it was rare and shy. Here, on the contrary, it is quite tame. It arrived this year May 10, making the eighty-sixth on my list of spring arrivals.—W. W. COOKE, *White Earth, Minn.*

OCCURRENCE OF THE PURPLE AND FLORIDA GALLINULES NEAR ST. JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK.—M. Chamberlain, Esq., of St. John, New Brunswick, has very kindly furnished me with the following notes for publication in the Bulletin.

On April 6, 1881, a Purple Gallinule (*Porphyrio martinica*) was shot at Irishtown, a few miles west of St. John. It was taken in a meadow a short distance from the shore of the Bay of Fundy. A Florida Gallinule (*Gallinula galeata*) was also captured by Henry Ketchum, Esq., at Dick's Lake, in September, 1880.

There is a record (*Jones, Am. Nat.*, IV, 253) of the occurrence of the Purple Gallinule at Halifax, Nova Scotia, January 30, 1870, but I cannot learn that the Florida Gallinule has previously been detected so far to the eastward as St. John.—WILLIAM BREWSTER, *Cambridge, Mass.*

THE YELLOW RAIL (*Porzana noveboracensis*) IN MASSACHUSETTS.—Mr. Charles I. Goodale, the Boston taxidermist, tells me that he once found Yellow Rails actually abundant at Plymouth, Massachusetts. In

company with a friend he killed ten specimens in a few hours. They were flushed from tall sedge on a salt marsh and many more were seen at the same time. They, however, have never since been found in the same locality.

Mr. Goodale also kills one or two specimens every season at Wakefield, Massachusetts. He finds them, both spring and fall, when shooting Snipe on fresh-water meadows.—WILLIAM BREWSTER, *Cambridge, Mass.*

EXCEPTIONAL ABUNDANCE OF THE SHOVELLER AT PORTLAND, ME.—The Shoveller (*Spatula clypeata*) is so rare a bird in Maine that I was not a little surprised to find five handsome males hanging in one of our city markets on April 18 of this year. Suspecting that the unusually bleak weather of the season might have driven others to the vicinity, I watched the markets closely for several days subsequent, and was rewarded by detecting two more birds, one of them a female. Four other specimens were received by Mr. A. Nelson, taxidermist, making a total of eleven birds taken between April 18 and 23. All of these, with the exception of one female, which was killed in a pond on Cape Elizabeth, were said to have been shot in Casco Bay.

Until this year, but three instances of the Shoveller's occurrence in this vicinity have come to my knowledge. In September, 1876, I examined two specimens which were taken on Scarborough marsh, and on April 14, 1879, I received a female from one of the littoral islands of the same township.—NATHAN CLIFFORD BROWN, *Portland, Me.*

THE VELVET SCOTER AT GREEN BAY, WISC.—A male specimen of the Velvet Scoter (*Edemia fusca*) was sent to me April 23, 1881, which was shot at Little Suamico, on Green Bay, Wisconsin. Its capture here is a little out of the usual order.—SAMUEL W. WILLARD, *West DeVere, Wisc.*

LARUS GLAUCUS IN TEXAS.—I procured a skin of a Gull shot by my friend Mr. A. Hall of Clay County, Texas, December 17, 1880. I have been unable to refer it to any other genus than *Larus* and species *glaucus*. The red spot on the under mandible was not discernible, the bird having been killed six weeks prior to its reception by myself. The length (skin measurement) is 28 inches; wing 18.25. The bill is yellowish at base and dark at tip; feet, flesh colored. Sex ♂. The bird was shot in Red River while feeding upon the carcass of a skunk. Mr. Hall has seen no other specimen like this in Clay County, Texas.—G. H. RAGSDALE, *Gainesville, Texas.*

[This specimen of *Larus glaucus* is now in the collection of the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, Cambridge. It is in immature plumage, verging on the adult phase. It seems not to have been previously recorded from south of Long Island, N. Y.—J. A. ALLEN.]

THE IVORY GULL (*Pagophila eburnea*) AT ST. JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK.—I am indebted to M. Chamberlain, Esq., for permission to announce the recent capture of an Ivory Gull at St. John, New Brunswick. The

bird, which was in immature plumage, was shot in the harbor near the city in November, 1880. The skin was afterwards forwarded to the Smithsonian Institution where it was identified.

In a hurried glance through the various New England lists I do not find the species anywhere mentioned, excepting by Herrick, who gives it (Bull. Essex Inst., Vol. V, 1873) as a "winter visitant" at Grand Menan. The occurrence of the present specimen so near our eastern border is therefore of no little interest.—WILLIAM BREWSTER, *Cambridge, Mass.*

A CORRECTION.—In this Bulletin, this Vol., p. 75, has not Dr. Sclater left a singular slip of the pen, in saying that the *Trogonidæ* are "the only form of the whole class of birds in which the fourth or outer digit is reversed instead of the second." For "fourth or outer" read "second or inner"; and for "second" read "fourth."—ELLIOTT COUES, *Ft. Whipple, Arizona.*

MIGRATION OF BIRDS AT NIGHT.—On the 16th of April last, at Princeton, Mr. J. A. Allen and myself made the following observations with the aid of the telescope. We noted in about three-quarters of an hour thirteen birds passing the field of the instrument. Nine were going from the south to the north, three in the opposite direction, *i. e.* from the north to the south, and a single bird was flying from the east to the west. Four of these birds we determined from their shape and flight to be Swallows, the others being small land birds which we could not decide on save in one case, where the bird was unquestionably some species of the genus *Turdus*. The moon was $2\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ to 10° in altitude during these observations and consequently the birds were flying comparatively low.—W. E. D. SCOTT, *Princeton, N. J.*

[I take this opportunity to correct a mistake inadvertently made in my note to Mr. Scott's paper on the "Migration of Birds" published in the last number of the Bulletin (Vol. VI, p. 100), where in line three of the second paragraph "four" should read two; *i. e.*, the birds seen may have ranged in elevation from one to two miles, instead of "one to four miles," as there stated.—J. A. ALLEN.]

BIRDS AND WINDOWS.—Reading in the April Bulletin the note by Mr. Lucas on "Birds and Windows" brings to mind that when in business in Hartford, Conn., in 1871 and 1872, I found in the spring the following birds that had been killed by flying against the Charter Oak Life Ins. Co.'s building—a very high building with "the windows opposite one another." *Myiodioces canadensis*, *Geothlypis trichas*, *Icterus baltimore*, *Chatura pelagica*, *Trochilus colubris* (6 specimens).—JOHN H. SAGE, *Portland, Conn.*