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## GENERAL NOTES.

A singular specimen of the **Black-and-white Creeper**.—The Essex County Collection (mounted) of the Peabody Academy of Science at Salem, Mass., contains a peculiar Black-and-white Creeper which Mr. Robinson, Curator of the Academy, has kindly allowed me to examine and describe.

According to the accompanying data the bird is a male, taken at about the beginning of the breeding season (Ipswich, Mass., May 15, 1883, by E. C. Greenwood). It differs from the normal condition of the adult male as follows: The forehead, crown, occiput, and nape are dull black, with a rectangular spot of brownish white on the nape, but with no trace of the usual median stripe on the top of the head, even at the roots of the feathers. The opposite sides of the head are *differently marked*. On the left side there is a distinct superciliary stripe of brownish or ochraceous-ash, which begins above the anterior corner of the eye and is continued backward nearly to the occiput, merging posteriorly into a tract of similar color on the auriculars, but separated from it immediately behind the eye by a conspicuous post-ocular spot of black.

On the right side the black descends uninterruptedly to the auriculars, and there is no apparent trace of a superciliary stripe, although the right eye, like the left, is encircled by a narrow whitish ring. Both lores are black, with a slight tipping of brownish on some of the feathers, and both sides of the head and neck, below the line of the eye, are uniform brownish-ochraceous, with a few obscure dusky shaft-streaks on the auriculars.

The exposed surface of the throat, jugulum, and breast is plain brownish-ash, without decided markings of any kind, save well back on the sides of the breast, where there are a few black streaks. Upon disarranging the plumage, however, concealed black is everywhere revealed, each feather having a sub-terminal black bar extending squarely across both webs and separating the light brownish-ashy space at the tip from the somewhat broader, pure ashly one at the bases. The back is colored and marked like that of the autumnal female of *Mniotilta*; the flanks and crissum similarly washed with fulvous. The wings and tail offer nothing peculiar, although they have rather less than the usual amount of white.

In a more general way, this bird may be characterized as a Black-and-white Creeper with the crown of a Black-poll Warbler and a throat and breast which recall (although they will not actually bear comparison with) those of the Connecticut Warbler in autumn. Nearly every one who has seen the specimen has been inclined, at first, to consider it a hybrid, but although the *Mniotilta* element is obvious enough, it is difficult to supply the other parent. Assuming it to have been *Dendroica striata*, the obliteration of the median crown-stripe of *Mniotilta* is accounted for, but a cross with this—or indeed with any other *black-crowned* Warbler of my acquaintance, would hardly give the peculiar coloration of the breast and throat. Moreover, the generic characters of *Mniotilta*—especially its only really important ones, viz., the peculiar shape and proportion of bill and feet—are in no wise modified as would be certainly the case were the bird an offspring of a cross with a species of another genus. In view of these considerations it is most natural to assume that it is an aberrant—perhaps melanistic—example of the common Black-and-white Creeper. The case finds a fairly close parallel in that of the notorious *Spiza townsendi*, which can be scarcely maintained as a bona-fide species, while it is equally difficult to show successfully that it had a hybrid origin. The

occurrence of such strangely abnormal specimens should be a warning to those who would impugn certain 'lost' species which, it has been claimed, have existed only in the imagination of their describers.—WILLIAM BREWSTER, *Cambridge, Mass.*

**Breeding of the Mockingbird near Boston, Mass.**—On August 15, 1883, my brother, Mr. W. J. Townsend, shot two nearly full-grown Mockingbirds (*Mimus polyglottus*) at Arlington, Mass. He found them in a small thicket near a meadow, in company with an old one and two other young ones, which, however, he was unable to secure. The two he obtained were young birds, quite well feathered, their wings fully grown, but their tails decidedly shorter than in the adult. Later I made frequent excursions to the same and neighboring places, but did not succeed in discovering the rest of the family. On inquiry I learned that a farmer of the place, who had lived down in the South and was familiar with the Mockingbird, had seen one several times during the early part of the summer near his house, and heard him sing.

There seems, therefore, no reason to doubt that a pair of these birds bred at Arlington. Mr. William Brewster tells me there are no records of the breeding of the Mockingbird in Eastern Massachusetts, but the fact of their breeding several times near Springfield, Mass., is well known.—CHARLES W. TOWNSEND, *Boston, Mass.*

**Dendrocæa coronata in Southern New Hampshire in Summer.**—On June 25, 1883, I shot an adult male of this bird in Hollis, N. H. It was in company with several broods of *D. virens*, etc.—WILLIAM H. FOX, *Washington, D. C.*

**Nest and Habits of the Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*).**—A few miles south of Carberry, Manitoba, is a large spruce bush, and in the middle of it is a wide tamarack swamp. This latter is a gray mossy bog, luxuriant only with pitcher plants and Droseræ. At regular distances, as though planted by the hand of man, grow the slim straight tamaracks, grizzled with moss, but not dense, nor at all crowded; their light leafage casts no shade. They always look as though they were just about to end, though the swamp really continues for miles—the same dank, gray waste.

At times the Great-crested Flycatcher was heard uttering his whistling croak. Besides this the only noticeable sound was the clear song of a Warbler. It may be suggested by the syllables, *beechee-beechee-beechee-beechee-beechee-beechee*. It is like the song of the Golden-crowned Thrush, but differs in being in the same pitch throughout, instead of beginning in a whisper and increasing the emphasis and strength with each pair of notes to the last. Guided by the sound, I found the bird high in the tamaracks. It was not shy like the Wood Warblers, so it was easily secured. It proved to be a male Connecticut Warbler.

As I went on, a small bird suddenly sprang from one of the grave-like moss-mounds. It seemed distressed, and ran along with its wings held