

As the nest had evidently been deserted some time I knew of no way of *positively* identifying them, but I believe them to be *lecontei*, especially as they tally well with Mr. Holterhoff's description of the nest and eggs of *H. lecontei*, taken by him at Flowing Well, farther east on this same desert. The nest was built among the branches of the cholla, nearly in the centre of its mass. From its situation it took an oblong shape. It measured  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches inside in diameter by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches in depth. Outside it was about  $8 \times 12$  inches. The eggs were bedded in fine sand that had been blown in by the fierce desert winds, and over them lay several twigs similar to those of the outer part of the nest, and were probably once a part of it. The nest may have been abandoned some weeks, as the contents of the eggs were somewhat decomposed but not dried. One contained an embryo of considerable size.

I have given my experience with the Leconte's Thrashers with much detail; perhaps too much; but I desired to give as good an idea as I could of the little known habits of this rare bird. It is probable that in this locality the species is at least as abundant as in any other the species frequents.

The species must have a very long breeding season, as the finding of a young bird already out of the nest in March, added to the date of Mr. Holterhoff's set, which was in July, if my memory serves me right, makes at least five months' range of nesting. Coupling the long breeding season with the rarity and wariness of the birds, makes the chances for finding eggs of this species exceedingly small; so few collectors are likely to ever include eggs of *Harporhynchus lecontei* in their collections.

My note book contains a list of about fifty species noted on this desert during the four days mentioned. The migration was at least a week farther advanced than on the coast side of mountains.

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## ANALECTA ORNITHOLOGICA.

### *Third Series.*

BY LEONHARD STEJNEGER.

#### XI. NOTES ON ARCTIC *Lari*.

MR. E. W. NELSON, in his 'Birds of Bering Sea,' p. 106, advances the opinion that *Rissa brevirostris* "undoubtedly occurs about the shores of Okhotsk Sea." I have been unable to find

any direct record of its occurrence there, or any data upon which to base such a conclusion. Von Schrenck even, when conjecturing what birds may possibly occur in that sea, omits it. Pallas did not know it, nor did Steller, Merck, or any of the older travellers meet with it. Middendorf collected on the shores of the Okhotsk Sea, as did likewise v. Schrenck, but without finding it. Dybowski also visited these parts of that distant region, and Taczanowski did not even include it in his Critical Reviews of the 'Ornithological Fauna of Eastern Siberia.' Nor has it been obtained by any of the ardent ornithologists who have been residing in Japan of late, and who also have had collectors in the Kurile Islands. That most successful collector, Wossnessenski, spent a long time on the latter islands, but it is not known that he collected this species there. I even doubt whether there is any authentic record of its ever having been obtained on the eastern coast of the mainland of Kamtschatka, the only places, in the Old World, where, to my knowledge, this species occurs being Bering and Copper Islands.

Such conjectures as to distribution are always dangerous. The next step is, that an uncritical author takes up Nelson's statement as an undoubted fact, the assertion goes into other works, and future writers will have the greatest difficulty in tracing it back to its original source. There is no need of extending the geographical range of a species before actual facts are at hand.

I should also like to make a few remarks on the bird which Mr. Nelson gives as *Larus affinis* Reinh. This is a species the history and distribution of which are still involved in great uncertainty. The National Museum has no specimen, and I doubt whether any American museum is the fortunate owner of a genuine *affinis*. The identification of this species requires comparison of specimens, or access to a rather scattered literature. It would seem that Mr. Nelson did not procure any specimen of this very difficult species; nevertheless it is identified without hesitation. If the species was only determined on seeing the flying bird, the statement of the occurrence of *affinis* as common in Plover Bay is simply valueless. If birds were killed, but not preserved, and notes taken, including measurements and colors of the naked parts, especially the feet, and a very accurate determination of the shade of the mantle, then the birds may be determinable, but until these be published, I am unable to say to which species Nelson's *affinis* should be referred.

The group of the *Lari* is so extremely difficult a one that observations, not based upon the most careful identification, are worse than none.

There is further confusion among the Gulls of Nelson's 'Birds of Bering Sea,' to which 'the Erratum Leaf' gives no clue whatever. No. 149 (page 106) is headed "*Larus leucopterus* Faber. Glaucus Winged Gull." Of this he says: "This species was found with the preceding [*L. glaucus*], and perhaps outnumbering the Glaucus Gull upon the Aleutian Islands, in the spring of 1877." The heading is evidently a mix-up of *Larus leucopterus* and *L. glaucescens*, the Latin name belonging to the former, the English appellation to the latter. In fact, the text refers mostly, if not exclusively, to *L. glaucescens*, one of the most common species of the region, the name *glaucescens*, however, appearing nowhere in his book. But what does the concluding paragraph — "it may usually be distinguished when in company with the latter [*glaucus*] by its smaller size" — mean? If *leucopterus*, it is correct. If *glaucescens*, it has hardly any sense, for when *glaucus* and *glaucescens* are together they may be easily distinguished by the color alone, while I will defy anybody to tell the living birds of these two species apart by the size. I would add, however, that I would not accept the identification even of *glaucus* and *leucopterus*, if only based upon observation of the flying bird.

I abstain from any remark upon the statement "None were seen at Point Barrow, although they undoubtedly occur there," as I do not know whether it relates to *leucopterus* proper, or is only a case similar to the 'undoubted' occurrence of *Rissa brevirostris* in the Okhotsk Sea.

## XII. *Chrysomitris* OR *Spinus*?

The generic term *Spinus* Koch has been rejected for several reasons. Some authors, following Gray, refuse to accept it because preoccupied in 1752 by Möhring for a genus having *Emberiza miliaria* Linn. for type; but as we do not recognize the genera of Möhring, as given prior to 1758, its previous use by him does not prejudice its employment in the Linnæan nomenclature. The other reason for excluding the name, given by Koch, is, that the type of his genus was considered to be

*Fringilla carduelis*, the principal reason for this assumption being that Koch mentions *carduelis* before *spinus*. This method of ascertaining the type, however, has been long ago given up, but some few remains of its employment in earlier days still linger, as, for instance, in the present case.

Looking wholly apart from the probability that Koch, if going to specify the type of his genus *Spinus* in the same way as we do at the present time, most likely would have chosen *Fringilla spinus*, the question may be solved satisfactorily by the 'method of elimination.'

Both *carduelis* and *spinus*, originally included by Linnæus in the genus *Fringilla* (1758), were moved into the genus *Carduelis* by Brisson (1760), and afterwards by Schäffer (1789) (cf. 'The Auk,' 1884, p. 145). Neither of them indicated a type, although it may be safe to assume that *F. carduelis* would have been the type of Brisson's *Carduelis*. In 1816 Koch applied the name *Spinus* to the same two species plus *Acanthis linaria*; as already remarked he did not indicate a type either. Consequently the next author who might choose a type for them was justified in so doing, *linaria* being out of question as the type of Bechstein's *Acanthis*. That was done by Boie, who, in 1822, separated the two, designating *carduelis* as the type of the restricted genus *Carduelis*, while in 1826 the same author made *F. tristis* ('u. a.' = und andere—and others—evidently among these including *F. spinus*) the type of the restricted genus *Spinus*. The two genera, therefore, will stand as *Carduelis* Brisson, restricted and provided with type by Boie, and *Spinus* Koch, also restricted and provided with type by Boie.

The synonymy of the genus *Spinus* may be tabulated thus :

#### Genus *Spinus*\* KOCH.

- <1760.—*Carduelis* BRISSON, Orn. III, p. 53 (type *Fr. carduelis* LIN.)  
 <1803.—*Acanthis* BECHSTEIN, Orn. Tash. Deutschl. p. 125 (type *F. linaria* LIN.)  
 <1816.—*Spinus* KOCH, Bayr. Zool. (p. 233) (type *Fr. spinus* LIN.)  
 [=1826.—*Spinus* BOIE, Isis, 1826, p. 974.]  
 =1828.—*Chrysomitris* BOIE, Isis, 1828, p. 322. (Same type.)  
 <1851.—*Astragalinus* CABANIS, Mus. Hein. I, p. 159 (type *F. tristis* LIN.)

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\* *Σπίτινος*, ὄ. the name of a small bird, as given by Aristophanes.

The North American species should stand thus :

- 181.\* *Spinus tristis* (Linn.).
- 182. *Spinus psaltria* (Say).
- 182a. *Spinus psaltria arizonæ* (Coues).
- 182b. *Spinus psaltria mexicanus* (Sw.).
- 183. *Spinus lawrencii* (Cass.).
- 184. *Spinus notatus* (Dubus).
- 185. *Spinus pinus* (Wils.).

### XIII. ON THE SYSTEMATIC NAME OF THE AMERICAN HAWK OWL.

The aim of the present article is to show that the name *Strix funerea* Lin. is untenable for the American Hawk Owl, belonging properly to its continental European representative. Taking Linnæus's 10th edition (1768) of his 'Systema Naturalis' for our nomenclatural starting point we find on p. 93 of that work (Vol. I) :

"*Strix funerea.*

7. S. capite lævi, corpore fusco, iridibus flavis. *Fn. svæc.* 51 [1st ed. 1746].

*Ulula flammeata* Frisch. *av. t.* 98? *Habitat in Europa.*"

This quotation needs no further comment in order to point out that the name belongs to the European bird and not to the American subspecies, and does not even include the latter. But not even those authors starting from the 12th edition (1766) are justified in applying this term to the American bird.

Two years after the publication of the 10th edition, Mr. Brisson, in his most admirable 'Ornithologia' (I, p. 518, 1760) described the latter as *Strix canadensis*. From his clear description Linnæus at once perceived that *Strix canadensis* was conspecific with his *funerea*. In the 12th edition, published six years after Brisson's work, the text was therefore altered accordingly, and reads thus :

"*Strix funerea.*

S. capite lævi, corpore fusco, iridibus flavis. *Fn. svæc.* 75 [2d ed. 1761].  
*Strix canadensis* *Briss. av.* I, p., 518, t. 37, f. 2.

*Habitat in Europa et America septentrionali.*"

That Linnæus erroneously considered the American form absolutely identical with the one he had originally described as

\* Ridgway's 'Nomenclature.'

occurring in Europe only, does not make the name applied first to the latter, and subsequently to both, available for the former only, and *funerea* can, therefore, by no means be employed for the American Hawk Owl, neither by the advocates of the 10th edition nor by those favoring that of 1766.

It might from the above appear as if we were compelled then to use *funerea* for the European bird, but this is not necessarily the case. Linnæus in both editions, on the same page, described the same species under another name, viz., *Strix ulula*, and there is every reason for retaining this name, which has been in general use of late by both the 10th and the 12th edition parties, and is especially commendable for the European bird, since Linnæus himself never mixed it up with its relative on the other side of the Atlantic.

The first binomial name for the American Hawk Owl will be found to be P. St. Müller's *Strix caparoch*\* (not *caparacoch* as quoted by some authors), published in 1779, consequently being nine years older than Gmelin's *Strix hudsonia*. Both these names are based upon pl. 62 of Edward's 'Natural History,' and consequently equally pertinent, and Buffon's Caparacoch, quoted by both of them, is also founded upon the same plate and description.

The immediate source of Müller's account is Boddaert's 'Kortbegrip' (p. 112, 1772), and the lapsus of the latter in writing "Caparoch" in place of 'Caparacoch,' and giving the habitat as Europe instead of North America, reappear in Müller's transcription.

The Hawk Owls of Mr. Ridgway's 'Nomenclature' (p. 37) should, therefore, stand as :

- 407a. *Surnia ulula* (Linn). *Bp.* EUROPEAN HAWK OWL.  
 407. *Surnia ulula caparoch* (Müll.). AMERICAN HAWK  
 OWL.

The name of the latter is atrociously barbarous, but, however, in that respect is not worse than many others; and it will be found quite convenient, when we first have got used to it. It certainly is much more distinctive than *funerea*, and its sound is just as suggestive of the American habitat of its owner as would be

\* *Strix caparoch* P. St. Müller, Suppl. S. N. p. 69 (1779).

Brisson's *canadensis* or Gmelin's *hudsonia*. It is an (accidental?) abbreviation of the original 'Caparacoch,' said to be the name of the bird among the natives of the Hudson's Bay Territory, but not even the most furious purist is expected to request its emendation into 'classical' Indian.

#### XIV. ON *Sterna nilotica* OF HASSELQUIST.

In the third volume of his 'Hand-list of Birds' (1871), p. 119, G. R. Gray enumerates the Gull-billed Tern as *Sterna (Gelichelidon) nilotica* Hasselq.,† giving Montagu's *anglica* as a synonym only.

The original edition of Hasselquist's 'Iter' was published in 1757, the name thus antedating both the 10th and the 12th editions of Linnæi 'Systema Naturalis.' In 1762, however, a German version was issued, and the names occurring in this edition are, of course, available to ornithologists favoring the 10th edition (1758) of Linnæus as the nomenclatural starting point. As the name is also incorporated in Gmelin's 'Systema' it is moreover acceptable to those author's rejecting names given earlier than 1766.

It will thus be seen that there is no escape from the name *nilotica* for either 'school,' provided the description is pertinent. It is true that Mr. Howard Saunders (P. Z. S., 1876, p. 645) says, that "there is nothing in his [Hasselquist's] description to prove that this was the bird referred to"; but an examination of the literature has convinced me of quite the reverse.

Having at hand only Latham's and Gmelin's versions of Hasselquist's original description, I shall not go further into detail, but will only ask persons interested in the question to select of their series a specimen of the Gull-billed Tern in winter plumage, in which the black spots on the nape and on the sides of the head are very pronounced, and compare it with the following description as given by Latham (Synops. Birds, III, pt. ii, 1785, p. 356):

"8. EGYPTIAN T. *Sterna Nilotica*, *Hasselq. It.* p. 273, No. 41.

DESCRIPTION. Size of a *Pigeon*. Bill black: head and upper part of the neck ash-colour, marked with small blackish spots: round the eyes black,

† It is a question whether the correct quotation should not be "Linn. in Hasselquist's 'Iter,'" as Linnæus in the preface (German edition, 1762) says that he has himself determined every specimen "according to its kind, adding the names of the animals and plants."

dotted with white: back, wings, and tail, ash-colour: the outer quills deep ash-colour: all the under parts white: legs flesh-colour: claws black.

"PLACE. Inhabits *Egypt*: found in flocks in *January*, especially about *Cairo*."

This description fits better than the average descriptions of that time. The only discrepancy of any account is that the feet are said to be 'flesh-colour,' while in the living bird in winter they are decidedly brown. The color in the dried skin, however, is such as to easily induce the describer to believe that they were flesh-colored in life. On the other hand the mistake of the author is not worse than the errors of Linnæus in describing the feet of *Sterna nigra* as 'rubri,' those of *fissipes* as 'rubicundi,' and those of *nævia* as 'virescentes'; in fact the descriptions of the old authors are so defective, as far as the colors of the naked parts are concerned, that little stress can be laid upon them except in cases where they are known not to change when the specimens become dry. Gmelin's description (*Syst. Nat.*, I, 2, 1788, p. 606), is essentially the same as that given above.

Of course the statement concerning the locality is not diagnostic *per se*; but it has to be taken into account. If the description is diagnostic at the time of its publication, that is all that is required; and if the species described is said to have been common in Egypt at the time of its discovery it would not imperil the pertinency of the name if afterwards a species was discovered in a distant locality, to which the first diagnosis might equally well apply. And in the present instance the habitat assigned to the *nilotica* corroborates the opinion here advocated, that it is the same bird which many years after (1813) was called *anglica*. In confirmation I extract the following from Dresser's *Birds of Europe*, concerning the geographical distribution of *Sterna anglica*: "Throughout Southern Europe . . . and North Africa, eastward to Southern Siberia and the China Seas down to Australia. . . . In Great Britain it is a rare straggler. . . . Captain Shelley says that he found it most plentiful in Lower Egypt and the Fayoon, and frequently met with it as far up the Nile as Sioot; and von Heuglin states that it is a resident, and breeds in the lagoons of Lower Egypt, and is by no means rare on the Nile, where it ranges southward to the Blue and White Nile."

I think the above is sufficient to show that Hasselquist's name is the proper appellation for the Gull-billed Tern, which I contend should stand as

679. [Ridgw. Nomencl.] **Gelochelidon nilotica** (*Hasselq.*).—GULL-BILLED TERN,

thinking the structural characters to be of sufficient value to justify the generic separation of the species.

#### XV. *Habia* AGAINST *Zamelodia*.

In creating the new generic name *Zamelodia* Dr. Coues says as follows (Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club, V, 1880, p. 98): "The genus *Hedymeles*, Cab., 1851, was based upon this species [*Goniophæa ludoviciana*], but cannot be used for it because of *Hedymela*, Sundev. (Öfv. Vet. Akad., 1846, 223) for another genus of birds, the difference being merely dialectic. Cabanis seems to have proposed it simply because '*Habia* Reich. 1850' was not classically correct. But *Habia* or *Abia* is said to be antedated by *Habia*, Lesson, 1831, and therefore untenable."

It is Agassiz (Nomcl. Zool., Aves, p. 34 (1843)) who first quotes "*Habia* Less. Tr. d'Ornith. 1831,"—afterwards (Index Univers., p. 1 (1846)) 'correcting' it into *Abia*; but an inspection of Lesson's 'Traité,' etc., will show that *Habia*, as used by him, is only the French vernacular name applied to the birds of the genus *Saltator* Vieill., and Agassiz might just as well have cited "*Habia* Vieill., Analyse 1816," for that is the place where Vieillot himself applies the name as the vernacular equivalent of the systematic name *Saltator* proposed simultaneously, as the following quotation from p. 32 of his 'Analyse' shows:

"66. **HABIA**, de Azara, *Saltator*."

The following year he repeated the same in the 14th volume of the 'Nouvelle Dictionnaire,' thus (p. 102):

"**HABIA**, *Saltator*, Vieill.;"

Lesson simply follows Vieillot, reducing the name to a subgeneric term, however (Tr. d'Orn., p. 464):

"V<sup>e</sup> Sous-genre. **HABIA**; *Saltator*, Vieill."

All the 'French' names are printed in 'heavy face,' while the 'Latin' names are in 'italics' the whole book through.

It will thus be seen, that *Habia* was not used by Lesson or Vieillot as a systematic generic term, and Reichenbach was, therefore, fully justified in applying it as he did, viz., as the name of the genus having the Black-headed Grosbeak for type. Cabanis gave a new name because *Habia* was 'barbaric'; but as that is not an objection to be considered, we will have to accept it.

The synonymy of the genus stands thus :

Genus **Habia**\* REICHB.

1850.—*Habia* REICHENBACH, Avium Syst. Natur. pl. lxxviii ("June 1, 1850"); (type *G. melanocephala* Sw.).

1851.—*Hedymeles* CABANIS, Mus. Hein. I, p. 152 ("June, 1851"); (type *L. ludoviciana* L.; nec *Hedymela* SUNDEV., 1846).

1880.—*Zamelodia* COUES, Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club, V, p. 98 ("April 1880"); (same type).

The species, according to Ridgway's 'Nomenclature,' will stand as :

244 **Habia ludoviciana** (LINN.) ROSE-BREADED GROSB-EAK.

245. **Habia melanocephala** (SWAINS). BLACK-HEADED GROSB-EAK.

XVI.—ON THE OLDEST AVAILABLE NAME OF  
WILSON'S PHALAROPE.

The genus *Steganopus* of Vieillot is usually quoted as having been established by that author in 1823 (Enc. Méth., p. 1106). It is, however, to be found as early as 1819 in the 'Nouveau Dictionnaire d'Histoire Naturelle,' vol. XXXII, where it is properly characterized on p. 136.

An inspection of the same article shows also that the name *Steganopus tricolor* is there applied to Wilson's Phalarope for the first time, consequently four years earlier than Sabine described the same bird as *Phalaropus wilsoni*, as the latter name dates only from the year 1823.

The species, therefore, should stand as

**Lobipes tricolor** (VIEILL.). WILSON'S PHALAROPE.

A NOTE ON THE GENUS *PROGNE*.

BY R. BOWDLER SHARPE, FOR. MEMB. A. O. U.

HAVING received on loan from the authorities of the U. S. National Museum the types of some of the Purple Martins,

\* Le nom *Habia* est celui qu' quatre espèces de cette division [*Saltator*] portent au Paraguay, et que M. de Azara leur a imposé particulièrement.' (Vieill., N. Dict. d'Hist. Nat., XIV, p. 102.)—*Abia*, as emended by Agassiz, would seem to be derived from ἀβιος, in the meaning of "poor, without food," but has no connection with the original *habia*.