

a month of mild and rainy weather. It appears probable, therefore, that this bird should be regarded as an early migrant rather than as a winter resident.

I have looked through the records in vain for specific notice of the Widgeon's occurrence in New England during winter. Dr. Coues, however, both in his 'List of New England Birds' and in 'New England Bird Life,' states, in general terms, that it is to be found at that season.—NATHAN CLIFFORD BROWN. *Portland, Me.*

Pelicans on the Move.—Mr. Wm. Smith, who resides at Burlington Beach, at the west end of Lake Ontario, and who is making observations for the Migration Committee of the A. O. U., reports his station being visited by five White Pelicans on March 13. The wind was blowing strong from the southeast, and the birds came up the lake before it, flying heavily, and passing his house alighted on the ice on the bay. They seemed very tired, and at once squatted flat, with the head and neck drawn in and resting between the shoulders, in which position they might readily have been mistaken for chunks of ice. Mr. Smith examined them closely with his glass at a distance of 300 to 400 yards and then tried to reach them with the rifle. When the ball landed among them they jumped straight up and moved 100 yards farther off. They were very unwilling to move, and gave opportunity for two more long but unsuccessful shots, and finally went off east down the lake again, flying low and hugging the shore for shelter from the wind. The last time this species visited the Bay was in the month of May, and they stayed fishing around the inlet for a day or two, and two of their number were shot by a fisherman; the other two then made off.—T. MCLWRAITH. *Hamilton, Ontario.*

Capture of *Megalestris skua* off the Coast of Cape Cod, Mass.—I shot a specimen of the Skua Gull, on Jaeger, September 10, 1884, about eight miles east of Polluck Rip, as I was on a return trip from the fishing grounds. I had been tolling the Shearwaters for some time with livers taken from our freshly caught codfish, in hopes to attract the attention of other birds, and at the time had at least forty of the Greater and Sooty Shearwaters following; but the day was too hot and still for the birds to be actively flying about, and this was the only new or different kind called in; but I felt more than paid for the trouble, and proud of the capture, which I have carefully mounted with a view to add it to my collection in the State House, Topeka, Kansas. I did not observe the bird until it was well astern, and for fear of loosing it did not wait to note its flight and actions but dropped it on sight.

The specimen was a female, and presents the following characters: Length, 22.00 in.; stretch of wing, 54.00; wing, 14.75; tail, 6.00; tarsus 2.40; middle toe and claw, 1.80; bill, 1.95; depth at base, .75; plate or cere, 1.03. Weight, 2 lbs. 11 oz. Color dark sooty plumbeous or slate, with pale chestnut markings on neck and back, which gives that portion a dull rusty look. Tail and remiges white at base, the white extend-

ing out on the latter from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ their length. (I cannot give the exact distances, as the quills are in moult and not full grown.) Shafts of both white to near tips. The two central tail-feathers are not longer than the other tail-feathers.—N. S. Goss, *Topeka, Kan.*

Brachyrhamphus hypoleucus off the Coast of Southern California.—On a return trip from the Coronados Isles to San Diego, California, May 20, 1884, when about five miles out to sea, and a little north of the Mexican boundary line, I shot a pair of Zantus's Guillemots. I have the birds in my collection. Notes from 'Catalogue and Register,' entered from memoranda taken at the time of killing:—

Sex.	Length.	Alar extent.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Bill.
♂	9.60	16.00	4.65		0.95	0.75
♀	10.10	16.35	4.75		0.95	0.80

Depth of bill at base, .23; width, .20; gape, ♂, 1.30, ♀, 1.40. Iris dark brown; bill black with sides of under mandible at base pale bluish; inside of legs, tops of feet and webs light blue; outside of legs, bottoms of feet and webs dusky; claws black; the testicles a little larger than swollen kernels of barley; no signs of the enlargement of any of the eggs in the ovary. On the way up I saw three others but was unable to approach near enough for a shot.

The birds closely resemble *B. marmoratus* in winter dress, and, like them, prefer to escape by diving and *flying* under the water, but when hard pressed more readily take wing. This I account for by their legs being longer, which enables them to spring at a bound clear of the water.—N. S. Goss, *Topeka, Kan.*

'Avifauna Columbiana'—a Protest.—Coues and Prentiss's late 'Avifauna Columbiana,'* while bearing the seal and token of its authorship in the clear and woodsy style of the notes, that so often give us bright glimpses of the life history of our birds, as well as in the arrangement of the scientific and technical matter, is yet disappointing in some regards, owing to the fact that the authors did not take pains enough to bring their work up to date, or to revise by recent observation the work of twenty-one years ago.

As it stands, the list is misleading in some of its statements, and does not thoroughly represent the recent progress of ornithology in the District of Columbia. In their preface the authors refer with justifiable pride to the first edition, prepared by them while yet in college, as standing "the test of time better than boys' work generally does." In their present edition "there has been found little to correct," "and not much to add. of the authors' own knowledge, because they have paid little attention to the subject during the intervening years. They have, however, *entirely recast*

* Avifauna Columbiana, by Drs. E. Coues and D. W. Prentiss, a revised edition of their 'List of the Birds of the District of Columbia,' published in the 'Smithsonian Report' for 1861.