

**An Albino Surf Duck** (*Edemia perspicillata*).—Some time since Mr. Alfred J. Leavitt, keeper of the Boon Island (Maine) light-house, sent me drawings of a 'curious Duck' which was shot at that place October 13, 1884, by Mr. H. Z. Ellis. After some correspondence Mr. Ellis has kindly sent me the specimen for examination. It proves to be an Albino Surf Duck (*Edemia perspicillata*). Mr. Ellis writes me that it "headed a flock of Coots," and that its eyes were "jet black." The bird is not pure white. The throat, under parts, sides of head and neck, and part of the wing-coverts and tail are soiled white. The top of the head, a line down the back of the neck, and the wings are pale bleached brown. The markings are symmetrical.—C. HART MERRIAM, *Locust Grove, N. Y.*

**On the Alleged Occurrence of the Pacific Eider in Labrador.**—Mr. W. A. Stearns, in a paper entitled 'Notes on the Natural History of Labrador,' published in the 'Proceedings of the U. S. National Museum,' Vol. VI, 1883, says (p. 121) that the *Somateria v-nigra*, the Pacific Eider, is "abundant in large flocks in spring," and that he himself "obtained specimens that had the decided 'V-shaped black mark' on the chin." The statement has been doubted, and critics have considered it a mild expression when saying that it "seems to require confirmation." It is not my intention to defend Mr. Stearns's identification, but having found a notice which seems to point in the same direction, I think it safer to postpone a final decision in the matter. The notice to which I allude is found in Degland and Gerbe's 'Ornithologie Européenne' (Paris, 1867), II, p. 557, where, under the head of *Somateria mollissima*, Mr. Gerbe writes: "Three or four specimens received from Newfoundland had under the throat two black lines similar to those of *Somateria spectabilis*, but of a color less deep. May they not be mules between the latter and the female Eider?"

"Mr. de Sélys-Longchamps, in his second note on the hybrids of the Anatidæ,\* in quoting this example, remarks that Prince Ch. Bonaparte and Mr. W. Jardine consider these specimens as a distinct species, which they name *Somateria v-nigrum*, but that there is occasion to wait for new observations before deciding."—LEONHARD STEJNEGER, *Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.*

**A New Petrel for North America.**—On the 2d of September, 1885, there was captured on board the U. S. Fish Commission Steamer 'Albatross' (Capt. Z. L. Tanner, Commander), in latitude 40° 34' 18" N., 66° 09' W., a specimen of the White-faced Stormy Petrel, *Pelagodroma marina* (Lath.). Mr. James E. Benedict, resident naturalist of the 'Albatross,' writes me that it was "taken on the ship late in the evening of the 2d proximo," and that "it was in all probability attracted by the light and fell on the deck, from which it seemed unable to rise." He adds that no more of the same species were seen during the cruise, though Petrels of other kinds were numerous around the ship.

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\* Bull. Acad. Bruxelles, 1856, XXIII C; Naumannia, 1856, p. 397.—L. S.

The capture of this specimen makes the second record, so far as the writer is aware, for the Atlantic Ocean, the species belonging properly to the 'South Seas,' especially in the neighborhood of Australia and New Zealand. The two other Atlantic records are the Canary Islands (*vide* Webb and Berthelot), and near the mouth of the Rio de la Plata. The latter refers to the specimen upon which the species (*Procellaria marina* Lath.) was originally based, while the former is the basis of *Procellaria hypoleuca* Webb and Berth.—ROBERT RIDGWAY, *Washington, D. C.*

**Probable Occurrence of *Diomedea exulans* in Florida.**—Mr. B. H. Barrett, writing from Jacksonville, Fla., under date of September 14, 1885, says: "Sometime during the month of May a great Wandering Albatross was seen at the mouth of the St. John's River twenty miles below this city. Knowing it to be a very rare occurrence, I questioned several who saw the bird, and from their description I have no doubt of its authenticity." A later letter from Mr. Barrett relating to this occurrence is accompanied by a letter from Mr. Alfred Ames Howlett, one of the fortunate observers of the bird, from which I quote the following: "In reply to your request for a statement regarding an Albatross that I told you I had seen at the mouth of the St. John's River this year, I would say that I was in the pilot-house of my tug, the 'J. E. Stevens,' talking with Captain N. Broward, when I discovered a large bird hovering near the surface of the water in the channel near 'Ward's Bank,' and on coming nearer the bird arose and circled within seventy-five yards of the tug, and I *positively identified* it as an Albatross; and on the return of the tug I carried my gun with me and, although seen again I was unable to get within shot. The last seen of the bird it was winging its way seaward. . . . I am positive of the bird's identity from mounted specimens I have seen and from ornithological works I have read."—ELLIOTT COUES, *Washington, D. C.*

**The Bill of the Horned Puffin (*Ceratorhina monocerata*).**—While at Santa Barbara and San Diego, Cal., in November and December, I had the opportunity to examine a number of specimens of this species, probably not fewer than twenty, old and young. Considering the abundance of the bird off the California coast, and even in the harbors, its rarity in collections is somewhat surprising. These Puffins are tame enough, as a rule, to be approached and shot without difficulty, and even when they dive they do not remain under long, and may be followed by observing their course and obtained with very little trouble. Enough specimens may, however, be secured (or could in December, 1884) by a walk along the beach of San Diego Bay, or anywhere on the coast, after a storm, when considerable numbers are cast up by the waves in a state of perfect preservation—apparently drowned, for they show no signs of violence, either externally or internally.

It was interesting to observe that the curious upright horn-like appendage of the bill, which writers appear to consider more or less peculiar to the breeding season, was present in all specimens examined, in shape of