

and central tail-feathers moderately lengthened, hair-brown, darkest on the rump; rest of tail white.

HABITAT. Java, Borneo and Philippines (Oates). Formosa (Swinhoe). Java (Diard). Borneo (Salvadori). Ceylon (Legge). — India, as far as Scinde and Cashmere, Ceylon, China, Cochin-China, Malay Peninsula (Oates).

This state of plumage is frequently regarded as that of the immature bird; but these differ, according to Legge, by having a ferruginous stripe over the eye, front neck fulvous, the golden neck stripe paler, and a less developed chest band. The breeding plumage appears to be assumed by the feathers changing color, and not by a moult. In Chinese examples sometimes the hind neck golden patch is very large and the black border very broad. According to Hume, this is a shy species, running with wonderful facility over the floating weeds, lotus leaves, etc., and when alarmed, concealing itself by lying close to the plants, with its head and neck stretched out on a level with the body; sometimes, when possible, it will sink half of its body in the water. It is also an expert diver. It breeds from June to about the middle of September, according to locality. The nest, nearly two feet in diameter, is made of weeds and roughly put together, sometimes placed on the surface of the water, or on an island close to the water. The eggs, four in number, vary in color from pale brown to a deep rufous, and are covered with tangled lines of blackish, or reddish brown. The shell has a very lustrous appearance.

A NEW FORM OF CLAPPER RAIL.

BY GEORGE B. SENNETT.

***Rallus longirostris scottii*, subsp. nov. SCOTT'S RAIL.**

The darkest of all the large Rails. Prevailing color on back very dark brown or black. This color prevails to such an extent that in most adults little notice would be taken of the olive gray edgings. Underparts also darker and with much less cinnamon than others of the genus. Flanks

more distinctly barred dark brown and white. Full grown young of the year dark brown, but not so nearly black as adults.

Types, ♂ ad. Collector's No. 4123, Dec. 27, 1886; ♀ ad. Collector's No. 4127, Jan. 8, 1887.

HABITAT: West Coast of Florida.

Types in American Museum of Natural History, New York. Collected by W. E. D. Scott, Tarpon Springs, Fla. Immature birds in National Museum, Washington, taken at Charlotte Harbor, Florida.

I had intended for this number of 'The Auk,' in connection with this short description of the new form, a paper on the entire group of large Rails. Although I have had large series at my command for study, yet the promise of still many more from various localities, leads me to defer the article for a future number, when it can be more satisfactory.

RECENT LITERATURE.

Palmén's Contributions to the Knowledge of the Bird Fauna of the Siberian Coasts of the Arctic Sea.*—The celebrated author of the 'Zugstrassen der Vögel' has given us in the work before us one of the most important and comprehensive, not to say *the* most important and comprehensive treatise on Arctic birds ever written. The public has been impatiently awaiting the publication of the ornithological results of Nordenskiöld's famous expedition (1878-1879), and though long delayed, it is nevertheless highly welcome to the students of northern ornithology.

The working up of the material could not have fallen into better hands, and we are thankful that the author has not only treated of the species collected, but that he also included those found by others, and particularly that he has given us a special chapter on the distribution of the species within the entire Arctic province, accompanied by a comprehensive bibliography.

Hitherto we have had no exact knowledge of the birds occurring along the Arctic coasts of Siberia, except a few scattered notes as to the birds inhabiting the extreme west or the extreme east of the territory, and Mid-

* Bidrag till kännedomen om Sibiriska Ishafskustens fogelfauna enligt Vega-expeditionens iakttagelser och samlingar bearbetade af J. A. Palmén. < Vega-Exped. Vetensk. Iakttag, V, pp. 241-511. (Stockholm, 1887).