

other than are the former to the Auks; in fact, so far as the skeleton goes, the Loons are ten times more nearly related to the Grebes than they are to any other group. Dr. Shufeldt would arrange the Grebes, Loons, and Auks in two 'suborders,' as follows: (1) Pygopodes, with two superfamilies — (a) Podicipedes, containing the Grebes, and (b) Cepphi, for the Loons; (2) Alcæ, with the following four families — Fraterculidæ, Phalaridæ, Alcidæ, and Allidæ. *Uria* is the Alcadine form most nearly allied to the Gulls.

The Sheathbills (*Chionis*) are considered as forming one of the links between the Gulls and Plovers, having, however, their nearest living allies in *Hæmatopus* and *Glareola*, though also retaining characters remotely allying them with the Columbo-gallinaceous group. — J. A. A.

Shufeldt on the Osteology and Classification of the North American Pigeons, Woodpeckers, and Kites. — In recent papers Dr. Shufeldt has discussed the classification of Pigeons, Kites, and Woodpeckers, from the standpoint of their osteological structure. The North American Pigeons* he considers as constituting two subfamilies, Columbinae, containing all of the genera except *Starnænas*, and Starnænadinae, consisting of the single genus *Starnænas*.

The North American Kites † he refers to a family Milvidæ, with four subfamilies — Ictiniinae, Elanoidinae, Elaninae, and Rostrhaminae, the latter adopted provisionally, the osteology of this form not having been examined. Our Kites are found to differ "most markedly among themselves" in their osteological characters. *Elanoides* is found to share important skeletal characters with so distantly related a form as *Pandion*.

The Woodpeckers ‡ are considered primarily in reference to their alleged saurognathism, of which he finds little evidence, to which is added a 'Summary of the Chief Osteological Characters of the North American Pici.' The Woodpeckers are held, in accordance with the views of most recent writers, to be a group coördinate in value with the Pigeons or the Parrots, and that they are more nearly allied to the Passeres "than to any other existing suborder of birds." — J. A. A.

Ridgway on New or Little-known Central American and South American Birds. — Mr. Ridgway has recently described a new Whippoorwill from Costa Rica§ under the name *Antrostomus rufomaculatus*, resembling *A. vociferus* in size and proportions, but more similar in coloration to

*On the Comparative Osteology of the United States Columbidae. Proc. Zool. Soc. 1891, pp. 194-196. (2) Notes on the Classification of the Pigeons. Am. Nat., Feb. 1891, pp. 157, 158.

†Some Comparative Osteological Notes on the North American Kites. The Ibis April, 1891, pp. 228-232.

‡On the Question of Saurognathism of the Pici, and other Osteological Notes upon that Group. Proc. Zool. Soc., 1891, pp. 122-129.

§Description of a New Species of Whippoorwill from Costa Rica. By R. Ridgway. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., XIV, 1891, pp. 465, 466.

A. sericeocaudatus. It is based on a specimen from Volcan de Irazir, collected by Señor Anastacio Alfaro, director of the Costa Rica National Museum.

In a short notice of a collection of birds from the interior of Honduras,* Mr. Ridgway has described two new subspecies (*Platyptaris aglaia hypophæus* and *Pithys bicolor olivaceus*), and the female and young male of *Gymnocichla chiroleuca* Scl. and Salv., and a young male of *Grallaria guatemalensis* Prév., previously undescribed. He also records 13 other species as of interest on account of the locality. He has also described as new *Thamnophilus albicrissus* and *T. trinitatis* from Trinidad,† and published remarks on *Xiphocolaptes procurvus* Cab., and *X. albicollis* Licht.,‡ and on *Pachyrhamphus albinucha* Burm.,§ which he makes the type of a new genus *Xenopsaris*. In a paper on Costa Rican birds.|| he has given notes on 10 species, including two described as new (*Platyptaris aglaia obscurus* and *Scytalopus argentifrons*). *Picolaptes gracilis* Ridgw. is thought to have been based on a young example of *P. compressus*.

He has also reviewed the genus *Sittasomus*,¶ of which he recognizes seven species, two of which (*S. chapadensis* and *S. æquatorialis*) are described as new. This is an addition of four to the three recently admitted by Dr. Sclater (Cat. Bds. Brit. Mus., Vol. XV, 1890). Mr. Ridgway's review is based on a series of 44 specimens, including the types of *S. olivaceus* Wied and *S. amazonus* Lafr.

Two other recent papers by the same author relate to North American birds, one of them treating of *Porzana jamaicensis coturniculus* Baird,** which he finds is closely related to *P. spilonota* of the Galapagos Islands. He proposes to recognize it provisionally as a distinct species, under the name *Porzana coturniculus*. The original type of the species remains unique. (Cf. Auk, IX, p. 108.) The other paper describes a new Sharp-tailed Sparrow from California,†† under the name *Ammodramus caudatus becki*, based on a single specimen from Santa Clara County. (Cf. Auk, IX, p. 108.)—J. A. A.

Ridgway and Bendire's Directions for Collecting and Preparing Birds and their Eggs and Nests.—In twenty-seven pages of Bulletin No. 39 of

*Notes on Some Birds from the Interior of Honduras. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., XIV, pp. 467-471.

† Description of Two Supposed New Forms of *Thamnophilus*. *Ibid.*, p. 481.

‡ Further Notes on the Genus *Xiphocolaptes* of Lesson. *Ibid.*, XIII, pp. 47, 48.

§ Note on *Pachyrhamphus albinucha*, Burmeister. *Ibid.*, XIV, pp. 479, 480.

|| Notes on Some Costa Rican Birds. *Ibid.*, XIV, pp. 473-478.

¶ Notes on the Genus *Sittasomus* of Swainson. *Ibid.*, pp. 507-510.

** Observations on the Farallon Rail (*Porzana jamaicensis coturniculus* Baird). *Ibid.*, XIII, pp. 309-311.

†† Description of a New Sharp-tailed Sparrow from California. *Ibid.*, XIV, pp. 483, 484.