

## GENERAL NOTES.

**The American Egret (*Herodias egretta*) in the Catskill Mountains.**— On July 18, 1906, I saw at East Windham, New York, three of these birds on the topmost branches of a tree near a hemlock swamp and secured one of them, and another on the following day. Both birds were young females, and undoubtedly, according to a peculiar habit of the family to wander northward during the latter part of the summer, were erratic visitors in this locality. Upon inquiry among several inhabitants, I was informed that this species had never been seen by them in this locality before, nor had they bred there, and that the flock consisted of six birds on July 16, two days before my arrival.— J. A. WEBER, *New York City*.

**A Second Yellow-crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax violaceus*) at Portland, Maine.**— A female of this species was shot at Thompsons Point, Portland, Me., April 11, 1906. It passed into the hands of Mr. Thomas James, foreman of the W. D. Hinds taxidermy establishment, and was obtained from him by Mr. Walter Rich, who very kindly gave it to the writer. The other specimen, also a female, was taken April 13, 1901, and recorded by Dr. H. H. Brock who now has it (Brock, *Auk*, XIX, p. 285).— ARTHUR H. NORTON, *Museum of Natural History, Portland, Me.*

**A Late Spring Record for the Yellow Rail (*Porzana noveboracensis*) in Massachusetts, with Remarks on the 'Ornithological Mystery.'**— On May 26, 1906, Mr. John J. Haley had the good fortune to secure a female Yellow Rail, which was found and retrieved alive by his dog while working over a fresh water meadow in Dedham. The bird was given to Mr. G. E. Browne, an experienced taxidermist, and he tells me that he found an egg started in the oviduct of the bird which he believed would have been laid in three or four days.

This instance, though not a positive breeding record, is of additional interest inasmuch as it may throw some light on the 'Ornithological Mystery' or 'Kicker' (Brewster, *Auk*, XVIII, Oct., 1901, pages 321 to 328). I had always supposed that the identity of the 'Kicker' was disclosed by Mr. J. H. Ames, *Auk*, XIX, Jan. 1902, page 94, where he describes the notes of a Yellow Rail, which he had in captivity, as identical with those of the 'Kicker' which Mr. Brewster had heard in Massachusetts, but Dr. Charles W. Townsend, in his 'Birds of Essex County,' published in 1905, refers to the 'Ornithological Mystery' as the Little Black Rail, after talking with Mr. Brewster about a bird that he heard in July, 1903.

To anyone not familiar with the 'Kicker' and acquainted only with the material published on the subject, this non-acceptance of Mr. Ames's solution seems to require some explanation. Mr. Brewster tells me that