

3. Our surprising failure to obtain any information regarding the fall migration. There seems to be little doubt that the Yellow-billed Loon does not leave its supposed breeding ground in the fall through the region we visited, which is evidently the highway only in the spring.

4. There seems reason to believe, from evidence as cited above, that the coast of southeastern Alaska may still be profitably scrutinized to yield information regarding the migratory movements of the yellow-billed Loon.

NOTES ON SOME MAINE BIRDS.

BY ARTHUR H. NORTON.

THE following notes refer to species of more or less unusual occurrence within the boundaries of the state of Maine together with records of two species new to the State list. One of the latter not having been previously recorded in the United States.

Stercorarius pomarinus. POMARINE JAEGER.—While not venturing to criticise the general statement, that the present species is probably the rarest of the three jaegers,¹ from local experience the statement comes as a surprise. On this coast, between Saco Bay and West Quoddy Head, the Pomarine Jaeger has been the only species found at all commonly. Of course jaegers are not common compared with gulls of the common species, yet almost any day in summer, spent at sea three or more miles beyond the bays, will usually show one or more Pomarine Jaegers, while the other species are seldom seen.

It frequently enters the broad bays, and is often to be found in the vicinity of the large tern colonies harrying the terns. The birds are well known to all fishermen and distinguished by an obscene name.

On the Maine coast they occur throughout the summer.

My extreme records are May 29 (1914) and September 22 (1913).

In late August and early September there are usually evidences of a migratory movement, as an increase of birds is noticed for a week or more.

¹ 1915. Cooke, Bull. 292, U. S. Dept. Agric., p. 7.

Larus hyperboreus. GLAUCOUS GULL.—The latest previous spring record of this Gull on the Maine coast appears to have been April 27, 1883,¹ a specimen taken at Peak's Island.

On June 3, 1915, a specimen in nearly adult winter plumage, with moult to summer plumage conspicuous, was taken near Richmond's Island, Me. The bird was with a flock of Herring Gulls.

With the latter, it came for fish dressings and in feeding seemed far more savage or voracious. While the Herring Gulls merely paused in their flight and snatched the floating matter from the surface, and continued on the wing, the Glaucous Gull mentioned pounced heavily down, into the water, seizing the food, and with wings raised in a belligerent manner, facing its companions, gulped the matter on the water, and then rose to seek more.

It was a barren bird and would probably have spent much of the season well south of its breeding range.

Larus leucopterus. ICELAND GULL.—On May 20, 1915, at the same place where the last species was taken, a female of the present species was taken. The bird which was not fully adult was slowly moulting from winter to summer plumage.

My earliest fall record is November 12 (1904) at Portland Harbor.

Larus minutus. LITTLE GULL.—A specimen of the Little Gull was taken about a mile southeast of Mosquito Island, St. George, Me., August 12, 1904. It is an adult male, in nuptial plumage, with slight traces of post nuptial moult showing in the head; primaries much worn.

The chagrin of having overlooked this bird's identity, and forgetting, through the inconvenience of moving, to examine it, is somewhat offset by the satisfaction of having personally taken so rare a specimen in my native town. This furnishes two records for the State.²

The bird was alone, hovering over a raft of decomposing seaweed that had lain some weeks on a shore and become filled with maggots (no doubt of the beach fly, *Calopa frigida*) and then floated away. The bird had maggots in its stomach.

Sterna dougalli. ROSEATE TERN.—To the list of Maine specimens summarized in 1913,³ may be added one more record. Mr. Everett Smith and I were at Bluff Island May 29, 1914, and saw and watched for some time three Roseate Terns. They were constantly chasing each other, high in the air, most of the time over the island, but occasionally flying out over the water considerably lower than when over the land. It was too early to have had eggs, as but one tern's egg was seen on the island on this day.

Hydrochelidon nigra surinamensis. BLACK TERN.—Though the

¹1883. Brown, Bull. Nutt. Orn. Cl., VIII, 186. This is loosely credited to Knight in the recent Bull. 292, U. S. Dept. Agri., 24.

²1910. Norton, Auk, XXVII: 447-450.

³1913. Norton, Auk, XXX: 574.

Black Tern is probably a nearly regular fall migrant, it is seldom seen in numbers.

A remarkable flight was observed off Casco Bay, Cape Elizabeth and Saco Bay September 5, 1913. The boatman with whom I took passage this day, was a man very familiar with the appearance of sea birds, and he was positive that he had seen them two days earlier.

On the date above mentioned a large number of scattering individuals were seen on the ground known as West Cod Ledge, and from here to Bluff Island, a distance of fifteen miles. Besides these, one group of twelve and more were counted off Richmond's Island. Six and more were hovering over the surf on the north side of Bluff Island, and a flock of eleven were seen flying to sea as we entered Portland harbor on the return home, late in the afternoon.

The birds were usually congregated over the drifting rafts of decaying seaweed, floated from the shores, and at Bluff Island, they hovered feeding, where the surf was washing the edge of a bank of this seaweed stranded on the beach.

Several specimens collected at sea, had maggots in their stomachs, probably *Calopa frigida*, which breeds on the beaches in the stranded and rotting seaweed.

A noteworthy feature of this flight was that it was offshore, few or none of the birds being observed at the ponds by the sea where they usually are seen.

Oceanites oceanicus. WILSON'S PETREL.—Wilson's Petrel has usually been cited as rare on this coast.

My experience indicates that it is common at least from May 28 to September 9, five or six miles offshore. During frequent excursions of five to twelve miles offshore the past fifteen years, this is the only species I have seen by day. It is a common occurrence to attract twenty to fifty of these birds about a boat at anchor or slowly drifting, in an hour's time.

If there is any breeze the birds are found flying to windward, and when they find it desirable to work over a small space, after once passing over it, they swing away in a large circle, and again come up from the leeward. Birds showing peculiar conditions of moult, can thus be recognized, and I have watched them for long periods of time, returning again and again in the same manner. Thus a flock is composed of birds, constantly going and coming, and while fifty are in sight, probably nearly as many more are at hand, preparing to return. On these occasions they are rather silent, never noisy, but a low peeping note is often given, very similar to the note of a contented young tame duckling (*Anas platyrhynchos domestica*). Rarely I have heard them chattering, gutturally in a weak voice, audible but a very short distance, in fact, neither note is audible (to me) for more than a hundred feet in calm weather.

One of the birds which I examined alive and unhurt, was unable to stand upon its still-like legs, but rested on the tips of its toes and heel, *i. e.* tibio-tarsal joint. I have several times seen them dive to the depth of about a foot for sinking food.

Pelecanus occidentalis. BROWN PELICAN.—In 1901 Homer R. Dill reported “A *Brown Pelican*”¹ (italics mine) captured alive at Bar Harbor in the Autumn of 1900.

Dill's photograph which appears as a cover design of the same number of the journal, is all that can be desired in showing the gular pouch extending about half way down the neck, and the lower jaw entirely bare.

This paper was followed by a statement that the bird “Was originally brought from South America on board a ship and escaped from Castine.”²

The matter rested there until 1908³ when Knight said, “The Brown Pelican recorded by Dill in J. M. O. S. proves on investigation not to be a Brown Pelican at all.

It is a South American species of Pelican being one of three kept as pets by a resident of Castine. As such it has no right to be called a bird of Maine.”

He further says under the caption *Pelecanus occidentalis* “neither is it entitled to the name there given to it.”⁴

The only name used by Dill was “Brown Pelican”!

The bird was mounted, and is in the state museum at Augusta, where the curator, Mr. Thomas A. James, gave me opportunity to examine it, though we had no specimens for comparison. The primaries had been clipped near the tips giving support to the theory of its confinement, though rendering the wing measurement useless. The culmen measures 275 mm. (about 10.84 inches). The coloring is, above obscure brownish, below dirty whitish, the pouch showing no trace of reddish, the neck plain brownish.

The bird is evidently immature. If not of the present species, it must belong to an unknown one, as it is well within the dimensions of *P. occidentalis*, and below those of *P. californicus*, or *P. Molinae*, the only others known from South America, nor does it agree with either of the other eight pelicans characterized by Dubois.⁵

[After the above was written an article has appeared in ‘Bird-Lore’⁶ by Mr. John B. May, with a photograph of two Brown Pelicans taken at Castine. The birds, he states, were brought from Florida and released. Ed.]

Chaulelasmus streperus. GADWALL.—So far the Gadwall has proved to be one of the rarest Ducks known to visit Maine.

Mr. N. C. Brown, recorded two taken at Scarborough, April 29, 1879.⁷ The late Alpheus G. Rogers⁸ of Portland wrote in his shooting journal

¹ 1901. Dill, Journ. Me. Orn. Soc., III: 15.

² 1901. [Swain], *ibid.*, p. 18.

³ 1908. Knight, *Birds of Maine*, 76, footnote.

⁴ 1908. Knight, *Birds of Maine*, 647-648.

⁵ 1907. Dubois, *Genera Avium*, pt. 7.

⁶ *Bird-Lore*, July-August, 1916, p. 247.

⁷ 1882. Brown, *Abstr. Proc. Portland Soc. N. H.*, II., 2.

⁸ 1903. Rogers, *Third Shooting Journal*.

in the fall of 1903, that three were shot at Cape Elizabeth, a few years ago, which he saw. In the fall of 1903 one was shot at Falmouth by James (not John) Whitney.¹

In the fall of 1904 a remarkable visitation of this species to Maine took place. At Merrymeeting Bay, Frank T. Noble shot a female October 27. He stated, "On the 28th and 29th they came in fairly good-sized flocks, fifteen or more being repeatedly seen together."²

Seven were shot in Scarborough, about the same time or early in November. Two of the seven, two adult males, were taken by E. B. Pillsbury, November 4. One of the seven was plucked, but the others were mounted and scattered. November 7, a male was shot in Windham, on the Presumpscot River, and is preserved in the writer's collection.

Marila americana. REDHEAD.—The Redhead, though of frequent occurrence and formerly breeding, has seldom been observed in spring. It is therefore worthy of note that a pair of these birds were shot at Scarborough March 27, 1905.

Marila valisineria. CANVAS-BACK.—The Canvas-back has been considered one of the rarest of Maine ducks; the recent increase of unpublished records would seem to indicate that it has visited the state with greater frequency the past dozen years. Yet the bird is sufficiently rare to make the citation of records desirable, especially so, since the last summary³ is incomplete and leaves an erroneous impression.

E. A. Samuels wrote, "I once killed one in Lake Umbagog."⁴

Mr. N. C. Brown recorded the fact that two were killed near the mouth of Portland harbor in the fall of 1874,⁵ and that he heard of three more.

Of this same occurrence "Roamer" [Everett Smith] reported "one, October, 1874,"⁶ thus losing sight of one specimen. The latter communication has been taken as the source of the 1874 record by Knight in both of his works.

In his 'Birds of Maine' Mr. Smith reported a pair, male and female, taken at Great Pond, Cape Elizabeth, November, 1880.⁷ Curiously, in citing this record Dr. Knight omitted one of these, recording but one.

Four were taken at Nahumkeag Pond, Pittston, "about the eighth of October, 1896."⁸ by Charles Thurber, two of which were preserved.

These are the same birds reported in 'Bulletin 3, University of Maine', page 158, as taken in 1895. Since I have a vivid impression that Dr. Knight told me he had been wrongly informed of the date as given in that

¹ 1908. Knight, *Birds of Maine*, 85.

² 1905. Noble, *Journ. Me. Orn. Soc.*, XII, 12.

³ 1908. Knight, *Birds of Maine*, 97.

⁴ 1870. Samuels, *Bds. N. Eng.*, 508. Earlier editions?

⁵ 1874? Brown, *Am. Sportsman*. [Mr. Brown's letter was written in December, 1874, I cannot cite exact date of publication.]

⁶ 1874. Roamer [Everett Smith], *Forest & Stream*, III: 324.

⁷ 1883. Smith, *Forest & Stream*, XX: 184.

⁸ 1913. Thurber, in *Epist.*, April 21 (1913).

work, I have no hesitancy in substituting the date given me by Mr. Thurber.

In 1902 six were shot from a flock of eight at Cape Elizabeth and of these Knight records two.¹ Thus Knight has summarized eight² Canvas-backs instead of fifteen.

In 1907 one was shot October 21, one October 25, one October 26, and one October 31 (or four in all) at Cape Elizabeth.

In 1912 one was taken October 30, and two November 2, at Cape Elizabeth. In 1913, seven were shot at the same place October 14.

In 1914 an adult male was taken in Falmouth, October 31, now in the collection of the Portland Society of Natural History, and in 1915 another adult male was shot at the same place November 14, and is in the collection of W. H. Rich.

Chen hyperboreus hyperboreus. SNOW GOOSE.—Of the SNOW Geese shot in Maine and identified, all of the fall specimens, eight³ in number, have been of the present form.

To this number should now be added five specimens, shot at Bowery Beach, Cape Elizabeth, Me., October 2, 1915, by F. H. Darling, who said the birds were very tame.

Five wings, probably representing three individuals, were secured, showing the birds to have been of this form. Mr. Darling said the wings saved were those of the ganders, indicating that they were the larger ones. The wings are preserved in the collection of the Portland Society of Natural History.

Macrorhamphus griseus scolopaceus.⁴ LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER.—A specimen was taken in Scarborough, September, 1913, a female in fresh winter plumage.

Charadrius dominicus fulvus. PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER.—September 11, 1911, Mr. E. B. Pillsbury shot at Scarborough an adult female Pacific Plover. I am indebted once more to Mr. Pillsbury's keenness in the observations of birds, and detection of unusual characteristics. The bird had about half completed the postnuptial moult. Mr. Pillsbury observed that its note differed from that of the Golden Plover. The specimen has been examined by Dr. Jonathan Dwight, who concurs in my identification.

Catharista uburu. BLACK VULTURE.—On July 11, 1915, my brother, Mr. Ralph Norton, observed in Scarborough, Me., a very large and very dark bird resting motionless on a pole by a roadside: as he passed by it, it thrust up a dark bare head. This description which he gave me leaves little if any doubt of the bird's identity. This, so far as I am aware, is the first Black Vulture to be detected in the vicinity of Portland.

This seems an opportune time to undertake the task of revising the confused Maine records of this bird.

¹ 1908. Knight, *Birds of Maine*, 97.

² 1908. Knight, l. c.

³ 1913. Norton, *Auk*, XXX, 575.

⁴ 1913. Norton, *Auk*, XXX: 576.

It was apparently first recorded by Mr. Geo. A. Boardman in 1869,¹ a specimen taken near Calais. Though mentioned as the first to come to his notice the exact date is not given.

In 1875² another was recorded by Mr. Boardman at Calais (original record not seen).

In 1893,³ Mr. Wm. Dutcher (on the statement of Mr. Boardman) recorded a third from Calais. Mr. Dutcher quoted Boardman as writing that it was the sixth he had known from the vicinity. Since Mr. Boardman included the "St. Croix Valley," Grand Manan, and adjacent islands in his vicinity, there can be little or no doubt that the six included the Campobello, Grand Manan and other New Brunswick records.⁴

September 25, 1897,⁵ Wm. L. Powers shot an adult male in Whitefield, On August 26, 1904,⁶ an adult male was shot at Lubec, and secured by Clarence H. Clark.

August 20, 1901,⁷ a specimen was taken alive near Dover, and one⁸ has been recorded as shot at Eliot (date not given).

July 6, 1909,⁹ an adult male was taken at Monhegan Island, and passed into the possession of Judge Charles F. Jenney.

Tyrannus melancholicus satrapa. LICHTENSTEIN'S KINGBIRD.— On October 31, 1915, Mr. George Oliver observed this stranger near his house in Scarborough, and secured it for the collection of the Portland Society of Natural History. Mr. Oliver said that it was seen the day before it was taken, and was thought to have been a shrike. Upon reaching the identification given, it was sent to the United States National Museum, where it was confirmed by Mr. H. C. Oberholser, and Mr. Robert Ridgway. The bird was a young male, in very good condition. The digestive organs were sent to Mr. W. L. McAtee, of the U. S. Biological Survey, who gave the following report, with permission to use it in the present connection.

¹ 1869. Boardman, *Am. Nat.*, III, p. 498.

² 1875. Boardman, *Forest & Stream*, III: 375. See Bailey, 1881, *Forest & Stream*, Bird Notes, 30.

³ 1893. Dutcher, *Auk*, X: 82.

⁴ In 1897 (*Bull.* 3, Univ. Me., p. 58) Ora W. Knight attempted a compilation of the Maine records of the Vultures committing several serious errors. In the work cited, Mr. Smith's report of *Calhartes aura septentrionalis* (*Forest & Stream*, 1883, XX: 285) was transferred to the present species. In *Birds of Maine*, 1908, p. 213, the report is dropped, with the erroneous statement that Mr. Smith had reported the wrong species. (Cf. *Auk*, XXVIII, 263-264) and the Campobello, N. B., specimen of the present species, recorded by Boardman, 1879, *F. & S.*, XIII: 605, and Deane, 1880, *B. N. O. C.*, V: 63 and Smith, 1883, *F. & S.*, XX: 26, was reported as an Eastport specimen. This error also reappears in *Birds of Maine*, 1908, page 215.

⁵ 1897. [Powers], *Maine Sportsman*, Nov., 1897, 8.

⁶ 1905. Clark, *Journ. Me. Orn. Soc.*, VII: 23.

⁷ 1908. Knight, *Birds of Maine*, 215.

⁸ 1908. Knight, W. L. Fernald, *Birds of Maine*, 215.

⁹ 1909. Maynard, *Records of Walks and Talks, with Nature*, II: 116-122, also *Journal Me. Orn. Soc.*, XI: 121.

"Remains of at least 16 *Muscidæ*, part of them *Pallenia rudis*, and part of a metallic kind, probably *Phormia*, 96%; 1 *Scatophaga furcata* and 1 *Syrphus* sp. 4%; bits of unidentified vegetable matter tr. The intestines contained finely ground material of the same character."

This occurrence adds a new form to the North American catalogue, its range being "Western and Southern Mexico from states of Sinaloa and Southern Vera Cruz, southward through Central America, Colombia, Venezuela and Guiana to Trinidad, Tobago, and lower Amazon Valley."¹

It should be recalled in connection with this waif that two very intense tropical cyclones visited the United States, one in August, the other in September, 1915.²

Regulus calendula calendula. RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET.—On January 13, 1916, Mr. W. H. Rich brought me an adult male Ruby-crowned Kinglet which had been found dead in a greenhouse near his residence in Falmouth. As the winter had been very mild and the greenhouse frequently opened for ventilation, it could not have been confined during the winter, nor had it been seen by the owners, on their daily visits. The bird was slightly putrid, the eyes and feet much dried, yet it could not have been dead for more than a week.

This species migrates through this region in October, the latest instance of its occurrence that I have found being Phillips, October 25, 1911.³

¹ 1907. Ridgway, Bull. 50, U. S. N. M., pt. 4, 702.

² Cf. Mo. Weather Rev. Aug. 1915 and Sept. 1915: also Brooks, Science, N. S. XLIII: 214, 215. (Feb. 11, 1916).

³ 1915. Cooke, Bird-Lore, XVII: 124.