

while the lores are plain buff and the chin itself is paler in all cases. The pili of the Mottled Ducks from Louisiana is more solid black and less streaked black than is the case with the Florida birds; if anything it is darker than in the Texas birds. On the upper surface of the Louisiana series and the Texas series the light edges of all the feathers (back, scapulars, rump and tail) are darker and richer brown, but especially is this so in the Louisiana birds. The speculum character noticed by Sennett does not seem to me to hold good. It was said to be more green and less purple in *fulvigula* than in *maculosa*.

To sum up, I should say that the only character which seems important in distinguishing *A. f. maculosa* and *A. f. fulvigula*, aside from the generally darker tone of the former, is the coarser and more consistently striped head and neck of *A. maculosa*. In all cases the feathers bordering the sides of the culmen, the lores, are dotted with black in *maculosa* and plain buff in *fulvigula*. I believe the richer and more ruddy ground color of the head and neck of *A. f. maculosa* from Louisiana is partly due to the color of the water and mud in the Vermilion Bay region. These Vermilion Bay ducks are certainly more highly colored than ducks from the Brownsville region of Texas. The form *A. fulvigula maculosa*, therefore, will probably remain as a valid race.—J. C. PHILLIPS, *Wenham, Mass.*

An Overlooked Specimen of the Trumpeter Swan.—When Mr. H. K. Coale was compiling the data on the Trumpeter Swan (*Olor buccinator*) for his paper in 'The Auk,' 1915, p. 82, I informed him that there were no specimens in the collection of the Philadelphia Academy. I recalled an old mounted specimen which was on exhibition when I first became connected with the museum but as no trace of it could be found I presumed that it had been wrongly identified. Recently, however, it has come to light having been boxed up with some other unmounted specimens. It is a typical adult specimen but unfortunately without data. The chances are, however, that it came from Delaware or Chesapeake Bays, as it bears evidence of having been mounted at the Academy.—WITMER STONE, *Acad. Nat. Sci., Philadelphia.*

Egrets (*Herodias egretta*) in Van Cortland Park, New York City.—Three individuals arrived on July 16 and have taken up their constant abode in the pond at Broadway and 242nd Street for the past week. They are attracting attention and admiration.

Great numbers of Kingfishers and Little Green Herons are also sharing the good fishing.—S. H. CHUBB, *American Museum Nat. Hist., N. Y. City.*

The Black Rail (*Creciscus jamaicensis*) at Chicago, Ill.—A fine male of this species was shot May 30, 1916, while collecting at Hyde Lake, South Chicago, Ill. The skin is in the Harris Extension collection. The specimen was first flushed in a small cattail growth, and flew rather strongly

and at a good height for five or six rods before dropping back into the scant vegetation, which here stood in a foot or so of water. On going to the spot the bird flushed again, nearly underfoot, and was secured. The flight of this individual was fully as strong as that of Sora and Virginia Rails seen a short time previously. Mr. Charles Brandler, of the Field Museum, tells me that he saw a specimen of this rail in a hunter's string of birds, early in September, 1898, that was taken in this same locality. The owner, however, refused to part with it on learning it was different from the others.

The only previous Illinois records of which I am aware are those of Mr. E. W. Nelson (*Birds of Northeastern Illinois*, Bulletin of the Essex Institute, Vol. VIII, 1876, p. 134) who says, "During the spring of 1875 I saw three specimens in the Calumet Marshes. The first was observed early in May," and proceeds to give a good description of a nest and ten eggs found the same season near the Calumet River.—H. L. STODDARD, *N. W. Harris Public School Extension of Field Museum, Chicago, Illinois*.

Early Flight of Wilson's Snipe in Massachusetts.—On the afternoon of August 27, 1916, I saw at least 25 Wilson's Snipe, *Gallinago delicata*, along the Ipswich River in Topsfield, Mass. Mr. F. W. Killam reported about "three dozen" there the next day. These snipe were very wild and restless, continually fighting about the meadows in small flocks. A flight of snipe was reported at other points in Mass. the same week. So far as I can find out this is the earliest autumn record for any considerable number of this species in Mass.—J. C. PHILLIPS, *Wenham, Mass.*

Eskimo Curlew in Massachusetts.—I am informed by Mr. E. H. Ives of Boston that a flock of about fifty Eskimo Curlew (*Numenius borealis*) was seen last spring (May 17, 1916) at Chub-Head Sands, near the mouth of the Rowley River between the towns of Ipswich and Rowley, Mass.

A letter to Mr. Ives from J. E. Short (not dated) says, "I should say there were fifty of them — they stayed around two days. Charles Bartlett saw them (also) and he said he had n't seen any for 15 years."

Both Short and Bartlett are "clammers" and have been experienced shore-bird gunners in the past. Mr. Ives has talked with both these men and others at Rowley and feels certain that there was no mistake in identification.—JOHN C. PHILLIPS, *Wenham, Mass.*

Note on the Nesting of the Valley Quail.—Mr. Fred M. Steele, of Los Angeles, Cal., sends me the following:—"Last spring a pair of California Valley Quail came down from the hills and were fed on our place for several days. They finally selected a flower box on my sleeping porch for a nesting site, and raised thirteen young, which are now (Aug. 23, 1916) full grown. Every morning about five o'clock they come to be fed on wheat which we put out for them, and we take great pleasure in feeding and watching them."—HENRY K. COALE, *Highland Park, Ill.*