

white. It was in good physical condition and apparently well able to join the majority of its species in the South had it so chosen.

Mr. Dorr considered this a rare bird for Maine, especially so in the fall. There are a number of fall and winter records for Massachusetts and Maine, but I consider the occurrence sufficiently unusual to be worth recording.—  
C. L. PHILLIPS, *Taunton, Mass.*

**The Proper Generic Name of the Ruff.**—The generic name now used for the European Ruff is *Machetes* Cuvier (Regne Animal, I, 1817, p. 490; type by monotypy, *Tringa pugnax* Linnæus). This name has been preferred over *Pavoncella* Leach (Syst. Cat. Indig. Mamm. and Birds Brit. Mus., 1816, p. 29), because the latter was supposed to be a nomen nudum. It was introduced by Leach, however, in combination with the specific term *pugnax*, which is, of course, readily identifiable and of undoubted application to the Ruff. The name is on exactly the same basis as *Spatula* Boie (Isis, X, 1822, col. 564) and several other names proposed by him and by other authors at various times. All these names have hitherto been accepted without question as entirely warranted by both the International and A. O. U. Codes of Nomenclature; and there is no more reason for rejecting *Pavoncella* than any of the other names.

The name *Pavoncella*, however, will not become the generic name of the Ruff, as Dr. C. W. Richmond has already shown (Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., LIII, August 16, 1917, p. 581), and Mr. G. M. Mathews emphasized (Austral Avian Record, III, No. 5, Dec. 28, 1917, p. 117). There is an earlier name, *Philomachus*, proposed by an anonymous reviewer of Bechstein's Ornithologische Taschenbuch (Allgem. Lit.-Zeitung, 1804, Vol. II, No. 168, June 8, 1804, col. 542), the type of which is, by monotypy, *Tringa pugnax* Linnæus. This name is proposed in a perfectly legitimate way with a diagnosis and citation of species, and is, of course, not to be rejected because anonymous. The name of the Ruff will, therefore, become *Philomachus pugnax* (Linnæus).—HARRY C. OBERHOLSER, *Washington, D. C.*

**Heteractitis versus Heteroscelus.**—The generic name now in use for the Wandering Tattler is *Heteractitis* Stejneger.<sup>1</sup> This term was proposed as a substitute for *Heteroscelus* Baird,<sup>2</sup> because the latter was considered invalid on account of the prior *Heteroscelis* Latreille, instituted in 1829 for a genus of Coleoptera. According to our present rules of nomenclature, however, *Heteroscelis* does not preoccupy *Heteroscelus*, since the two words differ not merely in grammatical termination, but have different classical endings. Mr. G. M. Mathews a few years ago called attention<sup>3</sup> to the desirability of using *Heteroscelus*, but other authors seem generally

<sup>1</sup> 'The Auk,' I, No. 3, July, 1884, p. 236.

<sup>2</sup> Rep. Expl. and Surv. R. R. Pac., IX, 1858, p. 734 (type by monotypy, *Totanus brevipes* Vieillot).

<sup>3</sup> Birds of Australia, III, part 3, 1913, p. 206.