

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.¹ This term was proposed as a substitute for *Heteroscelus* Baird,² 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 attention³ to the desirability of using *Heteroscelus*, but other authors seem generally

¹ 'The Auk,' I, No. 3, July, 1884, p. 236.

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

³ Birds of Australia, III, part 3, 1913, p. 206.

to have overlooked the matter. In view of the facts in this case it will apparently now be necessary to reinstate Baird's name *Heteroscelus* as as the generic designation of the Wandering Tattler. The two species of the genus will therefore stand as follows:

Heteroscelus brevipes (Vieillot).

Heteroscelus incanus (Gmelin).

HARRY C. OBERHOLSER, *Washington, D. C.*

The Status of *Charadrius rubricollis* Gmelin.—A good service has been performed by Mr. G. M. Mathews in the identification of *Charadrius rubricollis* Gmelin. Unfortunately, however, he neglects to employ this name for the species to which he has shown that it belongs (Birds of Australia, III, pt. 2, May 2, 1913, pp. 130-132). It was originally based by Gmelin (Syst. Nat., I, pt. 2, 1789, p. 687) on the "Red-necked Plover" of Latham, from Adventure Bay, Tasmania. As Mr. Mathews has proved, Latham's description (Syn. Birds, III, pt. 1, p. 212, No. 19) was taken from the Ellis drawings in the British Museum, and is found to fit the species currently called *Charadrius cucullatus* Vieillot, except for the statement that there is "on each side of the neck a large square chestnut spot, the size of a silver penny, almost meeting together at the back part," and "a little mixture of white about the bastard wing," which two characters evidently were taken by mistake from the drawing of *Steganopus tricolor*. This is, therefore, a case of two species confused under the same name; or of a species described with partly erroneous characters; or, in fact, of both, according to the point of view. If we consider only that the characters given have been taken from two species, the name *Charadrius rubricollis* must be used for one of the species involved if the name can be identified, and that it can, Mr. Mathews has shown. Such adoption is sanctioned by both the International and A. O. U. Codes of Nomenclature, and by common usage as well. The name, therefore, should apply to the species to which the greater or most pertinent part of the description refers, which in this case is, of course, *Charadrius cucullatus*. If, however, we take the view that it is erroneously described, neither current usage nor the commonly accepted codes of nomenclature allow its rejection because of indefinite or even erroneous characters, if the description can be positively determined as pertaining to a certain species. Thus, in any case, we should call the species ordinarily known as *Charadrius cucullatus* Vieillot by the name *Charadrius rubricollis* Gmelin. Its two forms will, therefore, stand as *Charadrius rubricollis rubricollis* Gmelin and *Charadrius rubricollis tregellasi* Mathews.—HARRY C. OBERHOLSER, *Washington, D. C.*

A Self-tamed Ruffed Grouse.—The following is an account of a tame Ruffed Grouse: the first statement is by Miss Torrey. In the spring of 1914, probably in April, as I was driving back and forth to the village to High School, I first noticed a rustling in the leaves and bushes by the