

Blue Geese Alighting in Northern Ohio.—On October 25, 1922, a very windy day, a flock of 25 Blue Geese stopped on a stretch of sandy beach at Lake Erie and before they could get under way again two hunters secured five of them. Later the writer took a photograph of the head and wings of a fine adult that had been nailed to a barn door. These birds seldom stop on their journey from the Hudson Bay district to their winter home in Louisiana, but according to a Cleveland newspaper, both the Blue and Snow Geese stopped this fall, near Sandusky also, and several were shot in that locality.—E. O. DOOLITTLE, *Painesville, Ohio.*

Subdivisions of the Little Black Rail (*Creciscus jamaicensis jamaicensis*).—In the January, 1923, 'Auk' pages 88–90 Mr. Henry K. Coale has described the bird from eastern North America as a distinct subspecies and named it *Creciscus jamaicensis stoddardi*, based on shorter and more slender bill and with shorter middle toe and claw, while the white markings on the upper parts are larger than in the bird from Jamaica described by Gmelin. Mr. Coale has examined three specimens from Jamaica none of which are quite perfect.

As soon as I looked at the plate of the three birds represented by Mr. Coale I knew I had in my collection a specimen taken by me on this plantation on September 13, 1899, that would match the Jamaica bird perfectly. I hastily unpacked the box in which the specimen had been placed for nearly 24 years and made a careful comparison with the following result: Culmen 16 mm.; middle toe with claw 29 mm. The white markings on the back are very small, in fact minute. This bird is an adult male in fine fresh unworn plumage, and is furthermore the most magnificent specimen I have ever seen or taken. While I have never seen a specimen from Jamaica this bird taken on Sept. 13, 1899, matches the plate of the bird from Jamaica minutely as regards the size and shape of the bill, while the measurements of the middle toe and claw fall short by just one mm. which is a microscopic difference. There can be little if any doubt that the Jamaica bird is the same as the bird found and known to breed in eastern North America. Mr. Coale does not mention the size of the bill of the sexes, but in the male the bill is larger than in the female. I have taken in the past six Black Rails on this plantation, only one of which I now have. But if anyone is interested in a critical study of this bird I will be glad to give further information of the five remaining birds. The description of the nest and eggs of the Black Rail was published by me in 'The Warbler' in 1905, not 1915 as stated by Mr. Coale in his article.—ARTHUR T. WAYNE, *Mount Pleasant, S. C.*

Some Wisconsin Shore-bird Records. *Phalaropus fulicarius*.
RED PHALAROPE.—A single specimen of this species was collected by the writer at the mouth of Bar Creek, a sluggish stream flowing into Lake Michigan opposite Cedar Grove, Sheboygan County, on October 8, 1921. This specimen, now No. 13299 of the Milwaukee Public Museum's col-

lection, is a male nearly changed to winter dress. The lake was very rough at the time, which may have caused the bird to seek shelter in this lagoon-like stream. It was very restless although not shy. While under observation it swam gracefully on the water, frequently making short flights out over the lake as well.

Although generally classed as a rare migrant in the Great Lakes region, extended work well off shore might prove it otherwise, for comparatively little work seems to have been done in this difficult field.

Lobipes lobatus. NORTHERN PHALAROPE.—Occasionally in August and September of past years large flocks of small shore-birds have been seen a long way off shore in the sand dune region of southern Lake Michigan, circling and wheeling, flashing alternately snow white breasts and darker backs. Long range examination with binoculars showed rather prominent whitish wing bars, but the identity of the birds was never satisfactorily determined until the afternoon of August 28, 1921, when the writer was camping at the mouth of the above mentioned Bar Creek, in Sheboygan County, Wisconsin.

About two o'clock in the afternoon a light fog drifted in, and soon after large numbers of small shorebirds, similar in actions and appearance to those mentioned, were sighted executing extraordinary manouvers close to the surface of the water about five hundred yards out. They circled and recircled, turned and twisted, some of the flocks finally alighting in some smooth streaks in the water, inshore of a long line of net stakes that extended about a mile out. Fully five hundred of the birds, now recognized as Phalaropes, were in sight. One specimen, a female in fall plumage was finally secured by tying the shotgun onto drift-wood pieces and swimming out among them. They were in no way disturbed at my presence until a shot was fired, and I fully satisfied myself that the bulk of the flock were of the same species as the one secured, Northern Phalaropes. Swimming high and lightly, with heads and tails well elevated and necks gracefully arched, they spun and twisted as only Phalaropes can, while they fed on minute surface animals of some kind. Scattered here and there among them, and creating the illusion of giants of their own kind, due to the very similar general coloration in their immature and fall plumages, and almost identical carriage, were a few dozen Bonaparte's Gulls. Another immature female Northern Phalarope was taken by the writer on September 23, 1922, also at the mouth of Bar Creek.

From these experiences it seems reasonable to conclude that these Phalaropes are of regular occurrence in considerable numbers on Lake Michigan in autumn. Due to their maritime habits at this season they are only occasionally observed under exceptional weather conditions inshore and on the smaller inland lakes, where they are very likely simply stragglers. Mr. Charles Brandler of Milwaukee recently informed me that he one morning observed a small flock of Phalaropes, supposedly of this species, swimming about near the end of the long Government pier at Milwaukee.

A very interesting record is that of an adult female Northern Pahlarope in almost perfect summer dress, taken June 5, 1922, by Mr. Owen Gromme of the Museum, on the shores of Lake Winnebago, at Fond du Lac Wis. It was in the company of a single Wilsons' Phalarope when shot.

Recurvirostra americana. AVOCET.—Kumlein and Hollister¹ list a number of records of the capture of this peculiar wader in the state, the latest in 1879, when they bred in Green Bay. As far as known none have been recorded since so that the following should be of interest. There is a male, No. 9061 of the Museum's collection, taken September 7, 1908, on Horicon Marsh, Dodge County, and presented by L. F. Crosby.

Another specimen, a beautiful male, was killed on Partridge Lake, Waupaca County, October 21, 1921, and presented to the Museum by Mr. H. J. Nunnemacher of Milwaukee. This specimen is now mounted.

The bird, which was mistaken for a Greater Yellow-legs, was seen to circle the lake a number of times, finally dropping in among some Canvas-back decoys, where it was swimming when shot.

Micropalama himantopus. STILT SANDPIPER.—A male was collected at the mouth of Bar Creek, near Cedar Grove, Sheboygan County, August 13, 1921. This bird was in the company of a Yellow-legs, which it followed here and there, always keeping slightly behind, where its actions and manner of feeding were noticeably different from those of its companion. This is the only Stilt Sandpiper so far observed by the writer on the Lake Michigan beaches.

Limosa haemastica. HUDSONIAN GODWIT.—There is a female specimen of this Godwit, No. 10032 of the Museum's collection, that was collected and presented by Mr. A. J. Schoenebeck. This bird was taken at Little Tail, Brown County, Wis., June 1, 1910. This is one of the many large waders that have almost disappeared from this region.

Numenius hudsonicus. HUDSONIAN CURLEW.—A fine female of this rare Wisconsin species was collected on the Lake Michigan shore a short distance south of Cedar Grove, Sheboygan County, September 23, 1922, by Mr. Owen Gromme and the writer. The bird was alone. There is a mounted specimen of this Curlew, No. 7034 of the Museum's collection, also an immature female, that was taken at Milwaukee on September 9, 1903, and presented to the Museum by Mr. John Kugler. H. L. STODDARD, *Public Museum, Milwaukee, Wis.*

Dr. Blagden on the Heath Hen.—The letters written from North America by Dr. Charles Blagden, a medical officer in the British Army then engaged in the task of bringing back the rebellious 13 colonies to their allegiance to the mother country, to Joseph Banks, his brother fellow of the Royal Society, are notable in many ways. There is much comment on the politics of the day; and it is evident that Blagden has little hope

¹ 'Birds of Wisconsin' by L. Kumlein and N. Hollister, *Bull. Wis. Nat. Hist. Soc.*, Vol. 2, Nos. 1, 2, and 3, 1903, p42.