

not recall ever having seen the two species in the same flock in making the flight, yet I have often watched them with my glasses, at a distance of two hundred yards or more, feeding together, and at such times there could be no question about the accuracy of the identification of this easily recognized bird.

During the years immediately following 1908 I was so intensively engaged in my fish work that I made few bird notes and cannot be so positive that I observed them.

However, on May 24, 1923, one of these big Curlews, which had just been shot, was brought to me on my houseboat at Cape Lookout. It had a wing-spread of 39 inches and a length of bill of seven inches (dried). Owing to the breaking and loss of my bottle of arsenic I lost the skin of this bird, but I have presented its wings and bill to Mr. John Treadwell Nichols, of the American Museum of Natural History staff, who now has them.—RUSSELL J. COLES, *Danville, Va.*

A Note on the Food of the Passenger Pigeon.—The New York State Museum has recently acquired the dried skins of a pair of Passenger Pigeons taken many years ago, probably in the vicinity of Glens Falls, N. Y. When the skins were relaxed, they were found to contain not only most of the bones and flesh but in the female, the crop full of food. Where the flesh had been removed from the breast and thighs, the skin had been filled with sawdust. The food consisted of twenty-five well preserved seeds of the sugar maple, *Acer saccharum*, Marshall, Close to the base of each fruit, the wing had been sheared off and discarded.—S. C. BISHOP, *State Museum, Albany, N. Y.*

Habits of the Osprey.—I am indebted to Mrs. Harry E. Holmes of Malden for information of a rather notable Osprey's nest near her summer home at South Thomaston, Me. The nest is located in a quarry and is placed seemingly precariously on top of a very tall pole of a derrick. It has been occupied for a long time by the Ospreys. The huge structure is in some way interwoven with the wire guys of the derrick which, together with the small top of the pole, seem to furnish at best but an indifferent support. The quarry lay idle for several years but work began there again last summer. Nothing deterred by the noise the Ospreys nested as usual, and Mrs. Holmes saw as late as Labor Day two young in the nest.

Audubon says in his 'Ornithological Biography' that he was never able to corroborate the oft-told tale of the Osprey catching a fish too large to be lifted from the water, with the result that the too-hungry bird, being unable to withdraw its claws, drowned miserably, the fish also perishing. But Nuttall states this to be a fact; and the occurrence is well known. One such case came to my attention two years ago in Quebec. Mr. Felix Davis of *Anse Aux Cousins*, Gaspé, said that while fishing on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River, he and other fishermen noticed an Osprey acting as if about to drop down and seize a large salmon. They saw the

fin of the salmon and knew that it was a fish of some size. One of the fishermen remarked that the "hawk" would hardly tackle so big a fish. But the bird did drop down and strike the salmon. It fastened its claws into the fish which dragged the bird along at speed, say 50 yards. For this distance the Osprey was more or less submerged although a good deal out of water. But then the salmon dived, for the Osprey disappeared entirely and was seen no more. Two or three days later Mr. Davis found the dead salmon with the drowned Osprey still attached to it by its claws which were sticking deeply in the fish's back.—J. A. FARLEY, 52 Cedar St., Malden, Mass.

Richardson's Owl in Vermont in Summer.—On a recent trip to the Northern Green Mountains, the writers discovered a Richardson's Owl near the summit of Gen. Stark Mountain (3585 ft.) between the towns of Lincoln and Warren, Vt.

We had just broken camp early in the morning of July 18, 1923, on the fourth day of hiking northward on the Monroe Skyline section of the Long Trail, and proceeded to within half a mile of the summit of Gen. Stark Mountain, when we flushed an Owl among the spruces, perhaps a hundred feet from the trail.

We pursued the bird at once, and after cautious manoeuvring obtained very close views in good light,—one of us at a distance of about fifteen feet and the other at thirty feet. Not having a gun, we were unable to collect the bird, but we made a careful description on the spot which proves that it was *Cryptoglaux funerea richardsoni*. It had no ear tufts, and possessed the various other characteristics of *Cryptoglaux*; whereas the clearly yellowish bill pointed to Richardson's Owl rather than the Saw-whet, although the latter was to be expected as the more common. To one of us the saliently noticeable feature of the bird was the strikingly marked facial mask, which was sharply defined by black arcs over the eyes, a diagram of which was made on the spot. Not having seen the bird before, we did not observe distinctly the markings on the forehead which are said to distinguish it from *C. acadica*.

It watched us with great interest and excitement, puffing out its feathers and craning its neck, and with a very fierce look in its eye.

The general color was gray-brown, while the back of its head showed twin streaks of buff or white, one running down the neck on either side, and its back was uniformly gray-brown spotted with white.

The yellow bill brings up a point which raises an interesting question. All skins examined show that the bill of the Richardson's Owl is yellow and that of the Saw-whet is black; but this fact is not mentioned in much of the literature on the subject, nor is the distinct black mark given as a fieldmark. Chapman's 'Handbook' makes no reference to bills, but his 'Color Key' describes the Richardson's as yellow and the Saw-whet's as black. Minot's 'Landbirds and Game Birds of New England' makes the same distinction, as do Stearns and Coues; but in other works, such as