

an additional and easily noticeable character in life, namely that the underparts are more or less buffy or even fawn color.—LUDLOW GRISCOM, *Museum of Comparative Zoölogy*.

The Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) in Barbados.—On October 12, 1934, a single shore-bird alighted on a pond on the west coast of Barbados and was promptly shot. As I was not acquainted with it I sent the wings, legs, etc. to Dr. Witmer Stone of the Academy of Natural Sciences for identification. He reports it to be a Ruff in winter plumage. While there are one or two previous records of the species for the Island the occurrence of this Old World bird so far from home is interesting.—FRED P. PETERKIN, *Kendall St. John, Barbados, B. W. I.*

Avocet recorded for North Carolina.—A single Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*) was observed on December 15, 1934, at Pea Island, Manteo, North Carolina. It alighted among a flock of Mallard decoys and fed in between them. The Mallards attacked the Avocet every time it came too close to one of them, but it took little notice of these assaults. After about ten minutes, it got up and flew a little way to a flock of Goose decoys; it fed in the shallow water near them for five or ten minutes until it was collected. The bird was very fat, although the bay was frozen over and it was feeding in ice holes. It is an adult female just completing its molt, with a few worn feathers in the scapular region. The specimen is now in the Leonard C. Sanford Collection under the number 16.382.

This is apparently the first definite record of this species in North Carolina. Pearson and Brimley (*Birds of North Carolina*, page 122) say: "A flock seen by Coues near Fort Macon, September 12, 1869, is our only record for North Carolina." In South Carolina the species has apparently been found only recently since Bachman's time (*Wayne's Birds of South Carolina*, page 43; *Auk*, 1930, page 577, and *Auk*, 1931, page 280). For Virginia see *Auk* 1925, page 580.—ERNST MAYR, *American Museum of Natural History, New York*.

Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus graellsii*) in Bronx County, New York City.—On December 9, 1934, while visiting a very favorable locality for Gulls, at the mouth of Westchester Creek in the east Bronx, we noticed a strange Gull resting on a mud-flat with several hundred Herring Gulls. It was in this area during the previous winter that white-winged Gulls occurred regularly in numbers.

At first glance, the bird appeared to be a Black-backed Gull but on closer observation, we realized that it was slightly smaller than the average Herring Gull, the back was a very deep slate gray, not black as in *L. marinus* and the legs and feet were a decided yellow color. The bird was fully adult as was evidenced by the color of the bill, a straw yellow with a conspicuous vermilion red mark about the terminal half of the lower mandible. When the Gulls took flight, our bird followed them to the nearby ash dump to feed upon the garbage and refuse. Incidentally, the Greater Black-backed Gull has never been observed on the dump; it apparently does not feed upon garbage as the do Herring, Iceland and Glaucous Gulls.

We found, after a thorough examination of skins and literature at the American Museum that there are two species of Gulls which fit the description of our bird. The Lesser Black Gull of Europe (*Larus fuscus graellsii*) and the southern yellow-footed form of the Western Gull (*Larus occidentalis livens*). There is apparently no field mark by which these two birds can be distinguished.

However, as the Southern Yellow-footed Gull inhabits the Gulf of California, we feel that the time of year during which we saw our bird would exclude the possibility of this form. Furthermore, we are given to understand that land—in this case an

entire continent—is a more formidable barrier to birds than water or even oceans. The Little Gull, for instance, has turned up quite a few times around New York in recent years.

We, therefore, feel justified in calling this Gull *Larus fuscus graellsii*. We give it the name *graellsii*, for our bird had a deep slate-gray back rather than the slaty back of the northern or Scandinavian race of the European Lesser Black-back (*Larus fuscus fuscus*).—JOHN AND RICHARD KUERZI, *New York City*.

Iceland Gull (*Larus leucopterus*) in Rhode Island.—The writer first saw a bird of this species, in what appeared to be the second year plumage, on the Blackstone River above Lonsdale on January 9, 1934, seven miles from the headwaters of Narragansett Bay. The bird was with a small flock of Herring Gulls (*Larus argentatus smithsonianus*). Although the locality was visited often by myself and occasionally by others, the bird was not seen again until nearly three months later, when on April 4, I again found it with Herring Gulls. On this occasion, a very fine view of the bird was obtained as he walked back and forth on a log forcing the Herring Gulls off into the water. Just after sunrise on April 15, I again saw him on the river with Herring and the newly arrived Laughing Gulls (*Larus atricilla*). This was his last known visit to the locality.—ALFRED E. EYNON, *Lonsdale, R. I.*

"Kumlien's Gull" at Brigantine—A Correction.—After sending the note on the supposed occurrence of Kumlien's Gull on the New Jersey coast (Auk, 1934, p. 375) I sent the skull of the bird to Dr. Alexander Wetmore who declares it to be the Iceland Gull (*Larus leucopterus*) so I desire to cancel the record of *L. kumlieni* to which species from its larger measurements I supposed the specimen to belong.—W. STUART CRAMER, *216 Woodbine St., Harrisburg, Pa.*

The Type Specimen of Newton's Owl.—Newton's Owl, *Gymnasio nudipes newtoni* of St. Croix, Virgin Islands, was named by Lawrence¹ from a plate published by the Newtons in 'The Ibis' for 1859.² The figure, by J. Wolf, shows an adult bird resting on a large limb with the head and forepart of the body of another individual, obviously immature, showing beyond. While Lawrence in his discussion of the St. Croix bird refers to "figures" it is obvious from his remarks that his considerations are based on the characters of the adult individual since the immature bird is so young as to be in juvenile plumage without the definite markings of the adult.

In June, 1934, during a visit to the Norwich Castle Museum in Norwich, England, to examine the famous Gurney collection I was able to study the specimens of this Owl collected by the Newtons, these being the first of this race taken on St. Croix that I have seen.

The material included four specimens, two being adults, one a male labelled as follows "No. 4488, *Strix nudipes*, Gt. Fountain. St. X, W. I. G. S. Ewing, 11. 5. 58. ♂" and the other marked "No. 4489 ♀ (?) Great Fountain, St. Croix, W. I. 1-2 June 1857, Jos. Robson." The other two are immature.

On study of the adult birds it was evident that the plate in question was based on the male (No. 4488) since the other adult specimen is distinctly paler and less distinctly marked below with less crossbarring on the sides. Further the feathers beneath the eyes are missing, evidently from decomposition before preparation as a skin. The differences in color and marking are such that they would inevitably have influenced the artist in his composition of the plate. It appears therefore that the male

¹ *Gymnoglaux Newtoni* Lawrence, Ann. Lyc. Nat. Hist. New York, vol. 7, May, 1860, p. 258.

² *Gymnoglaux nudipes* Ibis, 1859, pp. 64-66, plate.