

Brandenburg in Meade County. Since this bird was of very light coloration we sent it to Dr. Josselyn Van Tyne of the University of Michigan, who returned it with the notation "*krideri*" (the quotations are Dr. Van Tyne's). Without entering the discussion as to the validity of *B. b. krideri*, we wish to record this specimen as the first example of this *type* of Red-tailed Hawk collected in Kentucky, so far as we have been able to ascertain.—BURT L. MONROE, *Anchorage, Kentucky*, and ROBERT M. MENGEL, *Cornell University, Ithaca, New York*.

Clark's Nutcracker in northwestern Michigan.—On October 4, 1942, I saw a Clark's Nutcracker (*Nucifraga columbiana*) in Gogebic County, Michigan, in the woods on the shore of Bass Lake near Mamie Lake. It was in characteristic woodpecker-like flight, less than 100 feet away; the white patches on the black wings were sharply visible as well as the whitish-gray head and neck. I am familiar with this bird, having seen it many times in the Rockies in different years. Dr. Van Tyne informs me that it has not heretofore been reported in Michigan. Roberts's 'Birds of Minnesota' includes it on the basis of five examples collected in that state.—WALTER T. FISHER, *949 Fisher Lane, Winnetka, Ill.*

Hoary and Greater Redpolls in Vermont.—On April 2, 1942, a Hoary Redpoll (*Acanthis hornemanni exilipes*) and a Greater Redpoll (*Acanthis linaria rostrata*) were taken at the banding station of Mrs. Elaine M. Drew in Barre, Vermont. The birds were sent to the author of this note who had them made into study skins. They were sent to Mr. James L. Peters of the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, Cambridge, Massachusetts, who kindly confirmed the identification, and they are now in the Museum's collection. These specimens seem to be the first collected in Vermont although I banded a Hoary Redpoll on March 6, 1926, at Wells River. Perhaps Mrs. Drew's observations on the ratios of *exilipes* and *rostrata* to *linaria* may be of interest. During the period of February 24 to April 18, 402 Redpolls were banded, of which only two were *exilipes* and eleven *rostrata*.—WENDELL P. SMITH, *Wells River, Vermont*.

European Teal in Maine.—A collector of rubbish lately brought to me a small case containing seven stuffed birds which he had taken to dump. A glance showed that the case contained an adult male European Teal (*Nettion crecca*) still in good condition. I therefore took the lot, though no information as to the source of collection was to be had. Later examination of the birds indicated quite clearly that it was the work of Alexander C. Urquhart, the only local taxidermist, so far as I know, who used sawdust in stuffing; examination of the back of the case confirmed that conclusion as "Urquhart taxidermist" was painted thereon.

Urquhart's name appears in the Portland directories from 1868 to 1898 as a painter and grainer; from 1879 to 1882 as painter and taxidermist; after 1882 the "taxidermist" was dropped, though in 1898 the "painter" was dropped and "taxidermist" taken up again. Since his name disappears the next year, I surmise that, with failing health, he gave up his work as a painter and tried taxidermy as a less confining occupation. In any event the work is clearly that of Urquhart and apparently the collection was prepared during his vigorous years, or presumably the period of the late 1870's or early 1880's. The other birds in the lot are all species common to the region and there seems no reason to doubt that this teal, which appears to have been mounted from a fresh skin, was also of local origin.

The status of the bird in Maine is based on an adult male, taken "in Casco Bay," April 6, 1903 (Brock, *Auk*, 24: 94, 1907); an adult male taken a day or two prior

to March 26, 1910, in Scarborough, Maine (Norton, Auk, 28: 255, 1911). These are both in the Brock collection, now in the museum of the Portland Society of Natural History.—ARTHUR H. NORTON, *Portland Society of Natural History, Portland, Maine.*

Yellow-billed Tropic-bird in Maine.—A few days after the destructive hurricane of September 21, 1938, a specimen of *Phaethon lepturus catesbyi* was found at East Winn, Penobscot County, Maine, about seventy miles inland. This specimen, which has been acquired by the Portland Society of Natural History through the estate of the late Walter J. Clayton, is an adult bird (sex unnoted), apparently in good health, though molt of its flight feathers was in progress. Counting from without, primaries 9 and 7 in the right wing are less than four inches long, while in the left wing, primaries 10 and 8 are about four inches long, and the third primary is about a fourth of the full length of that feather. It would seem that loss of these feathers had reduced the bird's powers of flight on that critical occasion, causing it to be driven before the gale to its doom.

This appears to be the first instance in which this bird has been noted in Maine.—ARTHUR H. NORTON, *Portland Society of Natural History, Portland, Maine.*

A method of remaking old bird skins.—Probably few of us who began making bird skins thirty or forty years ago, have what may be referred to as an artistically flawless collection. Certainly my own was liberally sprinkled with eyesores—the harvest of early, misguided efforts. So far as remembered now in respect to study skins, not a single pamphlet or book on taxidermy possessed in those days, stressed the prime necessity for using body-length neck sticks which fitted firmly into either the throat or the brain cavity. As a result of this, scores of my youthful specimens, with only a cotton filling, eventually developed broken necks, or the heads became twisted about and permanently set at violent angles. The bodies, too, through lack of support, often became distorted into unsightly caricatures. Another early and frequent fault was over-stuffing of the breast; this in conjunction with a lean neck imparted a grotesque appearance that unflinching jarred upon one's sensibilities at every contact.

At long last I determined, to the best of my ability, to remake these offending skins so that they would more nearly conform to the superior product of today. Considerable experimentation was carried out at various times involving specimens ranging from warblers to the larger waders, etc. At first the faulty skins were immersed in water for relaxation and dried in warm sawdust; this orthodox method was certainly effective enough in softening the skins, but as anyone knows who has tried it, an excessive amount of time and labor is exacted for drying and fluffing the feathers. The following much simpler method was finally developed. It is to be understood that only smaller skins up to about medium-sized hawks have been so manipulated.

The first step is to sever the abdominal stitches with surgeon's scissors. By very careful use of the forceps all, or most, of the cotton filling can be removed without tearing the dry but somewhat flexible skin. With a long-nozzled syringe a small quantity of warm water is injected into the neck and skull through the ventral opening. Next, the body skin is gently swabbed inside with wet cotton and a quantity of this moist material placed there to carry on the work of relaxation. If the feathers are held out of the way with the left hand while this is being done they remain dry about the incision. It will be noted, in fact, that the feathers