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NOTES ON RHODE ISLAND ORNITHOLOGY

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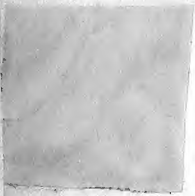
REGINALD HEBER HOWE, JR.

VOLUME I

BRISTOL, RHODE ISLAND

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VOL. I

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VOL. I.

JANUARY.

No. 1.

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NOTES ON RHODE ISLAND ORNITHOLOGY, a quarterly publication for the purpose of furthering interest in ornithology in the State of Rhode Island. Published and edited by Reginald Heber Howe, Jr. Address, Longwood, Brookline, Massachusetts.

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All material for publication, advertisements, and books for review should be sent to the Editor.

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It has been thought best for the convenience of bibliographers to change the title first proposed for the present publication, "Random Notes on Ornithology," to "NOTES ON RHODE ISLAND ORNITHOLOGY."

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The news of the death of Dr. Elliott Coues on Christmas day is received with deep regret. Perhaps the greatest tribute that can be paid him, is to say, that by the merit and usefulness of his many works, so widely has his reputation extended, that to-day his name, even to the most casual and humble student of birds, has become that of a friend.

---

'THE JOURNAL OF WILLIAM JEFFERAY,  
GENTLEMAN.'

FROM the reviews of a book lately published 'The Journal of William Jefferay, Gentleman,' we were led to look forward to a work containing matter of ornithological interest, at least of a bibliographic nature, to Rhode Island ornithologists. The volume, however, now examined, appears in a new light, and unless carefully read might perhaps be misleading.

'The Journal of William Jefferay, Gentleman' is but the title of a book, spoken of as edited, but really written by John Osborne Austin. For some reason or other, the author has seen fit to write this delightful volume of fiction in the form of a journal; 'A DIARY THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN' as he calls it. It is supposed to be the Journal of one, William Jefferay, a true character, but not a diarist, who lived in Rhode Island from 1650 to 1675.

To turn to the portion of the work of interest to the ornithologist we find the casual mention of the commoner birds from time to time and a few pages entirely devoted to birds, under the title of 'The Bird Excursion,' or a supposed walk in the neighborhood of Newport, on May 29, 1658. These particular pages mention some thirty-two birds, all well known inhabitants of Rhode Island, and the recording of them must be looked upon only as of the year 1899, and not of the last half of the seventeenth century.

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### LETTERS.

#### Remarks on the Autumn Water Bird Migration at Sakonnet.

GRANT, FLA., Dec. 18, 1899.

To the Editor of NOTES ON RHODE ISLAND ORNITHOLOGY:—

All my notes about the fall shooting with dates etc. are at Sakonnet, so I cannot be very exact in details.

I have never known so poor a flight of the various shore birds as occurred this past summer and fall in Rhode Island, at least so far as my observations go.

The locality is not a good one for shore bird shooting. The marsh there does not lay well in the line of flight, and a large percentage of the birds go by off-shore. It is also overrun most of the time by crabbers and that curse and nuisance to all decent sportsmen, the "Peep Shooter."

To illustrate this off-shore flight, I was a witness some years ago of a very interesting sight. It was about the third week in August, and had rained heavily in the night with some wind from the southeast. At daylight it was quite foggy and the wind died out almost to a calm. Flock after flock of the large Yellow Legs (*Totanus melanoleucus*) came in from over the sea, made the land near West Island, flew *east* about a mile, and went off to sea again. This continued until about 11 A. M.; then the weather cleared, and I saw no more of them; they flew high and none were killed. There were more birds in that morning flight than I have ever seen in this locality all put together. It would have

been very interesting to find out if these were all old birds, as the July, August, and September birds usually are.

I noted a great scarcity of Pectoral Sandpipers (*Tringa maculata*) the past fall, these are usually very abundant on our marshes in October, the late flight consists of young birds small and poor, and not worth shooting, this year what few there were were old birds. There was also a small flight of Stilt Sandpipers (*Microphalama himantopus*) in October, which is late for them, All together it was an off year in Rhode Island for shore birds. and I, personally, took nothing of special interest.

Yours very truly,

NEWTON DEXTER.

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#### GENERAL NOTES.

**Notes from Newport.**— Compared with former years, few sea birds have been seen along the coast near Newport this fall. There have, however, been great flocks of Scoters (*Oidemia*) and a large number of Black Ducks (*Anas obscura*) on Narragansett Bay. On the ocean, Loons (*Gavia imber*), Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) and Old Squaws (*Herelda hyemalis*) have been observed, but not in their usual numbers. This is no doubt due to the warm weather that has prevailed up to now (December 14th) the shallow waters of Narragansett Bay have not become too cold for the comfort of the Scoters and Black Ducks, so they have not been forced to seek the deeper and warmer water of the ocean. The high temperature also accounts for the scarcity of the hardier ocean birds, such as the Horned Grebes (*Colymbus auritus*), Loons, Cormorants, Old Squaws, and Eider Ducks (*Somateria dresseri*) which have not yet felt the necessity of coming south.

Off shore, the Kittiwakes (*Rissa tridactyla*) follow about the cod fishermen, feeding on the scraps of bait cast overboard. So accustomed have they become to finding food in the vicinity of boats, and so little have they been disturbed by man, that while rowing off shore on the 30th of November, five at different times came up from the horizon straight to my boat and hovered about within a few feet. On this same day two Razor-billed Auks (*Alca torda*) flew past, and I secured another on November 29th off Sachuest Point. No less unexpected was the appearance of three Harlequin Ducks (*Histrionicus histrionicus*) on November 28th which were discovered in the vicinity of Cormorant Rock, and appeared quite tame. The flock consisted of a male and two females, of which I shot the male and one of the females. So far, this fall, the

Cormorant Rock colony of Cormorants is much smaller than last year. At present it consists of no more than twenty-five birds, all of which are the Common Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) no double-crested (*Phalacrocorax dilophus*) having been noted. The Cormorants here are particularly fond of lighting on the tops of spar buoys, and the one south of the rock is seldom unoccupied. I have never seen a Cormorant contest the privilege of sitting there if another approached with the evident intention of alighting. The occupant always flies away just in time for the new comer to alight.

On shore a later date for Sora (*Porzana carolina*) was established, when one was taken by Mr. H. W. H. Powel at Almy's Pond on November 10th. Mr. Powel also took one on the day previous, the 9th, at Wilbur's Swamp.

A flock of about fifty Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) passed over Providence going south on December 24, 1899.

Mr. H. W. H. Powel says that the Shoveller Duck (*Spatula clypeata*) was not at all uncommon in "old times" in the southwest corner of Easton's Pond, Newport, where there used to be a bar in the reeds on which they would be found feeding. He has taken at least nine at this spot, but has never seen them in other parts of the Pond, except in company with flocks of Teal or Ruddy Ducks. Allen's Restaurant now stands where this bar made out into the Pond.

Newport, December 24, 1899.

EDWARD STURTEVANT.

**An Error.**—The Long-tailed Chickadee (*Parus septentrionalis*) mentioned in the Hypothetical List in "The Birds of Rhode Island," p. 90, Mr. J. M. Southwick has kindly forwarded to me for identification. After careful examination and comparison of the specimen, I find the bird to be our common Chickadee (*Parus atricapillus*). EDITOR.

**Cepphus grylle Inland:** A Mr. Lannigan shot a male Black Guillemot on the Taunton River, Mass., on November 19, 1899, and is now in my possession. The capture being near the Rhode Island line is no doubt of interest to Rhode Island observers.

Fall River, Dec. 12, 1899.

OWEN DUFFEE.

**A New Bird for Rhode Island.**—I have to record the first record for the Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*) for the State. A young bird taken at Narragansett Bay in February 1891. The specimen is now in the Charles H. Smith collection at Roger Williams Park, Providence.

South Auburn, December 19, 1899.

HARRY S. HATHAWAY.

**Odd Notes.**—Brünnich's Murres (*Uria lomvia*) have several times been reported this winter, and I have seen six which have recently been taken in our waters. The first was captured November 26th, at Point Judith.

The first Snowy Owl (*Nyctea nyctea*) of the winter, a female, was killed within a short distance of my house in South Auburn, on the Warwick side of the Pawtuxet River, on November 30th. The bird has been placed in the Charles H. Smith collection at Roger Williams Park, Providence. On December 10th four were seen on the beach at Point Judith. On Nov. 19, 1899, at Point Judith a single Long-billed Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus palustris*) was seen. Possibly the bird is wintering.

An unusually large flock of American Coot (*Fulica americana*) have been feeding in Point Judith pond this fall, and were still there on December 10th. They are locally called "Sea Crows."

On the 11th of December a Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) was seen flying across Point Judith pond, and two large flocks of Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) were seen flying southward.

A Dovekie (*Alle alle*) was killed on December 14th at Point Judith. And a male Brant (*Branta bernicla*) was taken at Block Island on December 16th, 1899.

South Auburn, December 19, 1899.

HARRY S. HATHAWAY.

**Another 1886 R. I. Record for *Puffinus borealis*.**— I lately found a female, Cory's Shearwater, taken off Brenton's Reef, Newport, in October, 1886, in the possession of Mr. William Hodgkinson of Bristol Longwood.

EDITOR.



FOR

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AND

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### GENERAL NOTES.

**Odd Notes of Interest.** — On September 13, 1899, a Dowitcher (*Macrorhamphus*) was taken at Middletown which Mr. William Brewster has kindly examined and pronounced to be intermediate between *griseus* and *scolopaceus*.

In September, 1895, a Crested Cardinal (*Parioria cuculata*) an inhabitant of South America, was taken on Brenton's Pt., Newport. It was undoubtedly an escaped cage bird.

On Jan. 9, 1900, I had the opportunity of securing alive a Bonaparte's Gull (*Larus philadelphia*) on Narragansett Bay. As the bird had only been slightly injured I resolved to see if it would live in captivity. The experiment has since proved entirely successful and the bird has become extremely tame and does not seem to mind its lack of freedom.

Newport, R. I., March 1, 1900.

LEROY KING.

**Cuckoos at Block Island.** — While at Block Island during the first ten days of August, 1899, I noticed a number of Cuckoos (*Coccyzus*) whether Yellow-billed (*americana*) or Black-billed (*erythrophthalmus*) I did not make sure. Their occurrence on the Island seemed of interest on account of the lack of trees.

Boston, February 6, 1900.

OUTRAM BANGS.

**Winter Notes from Middletown.** — I spent from January 23 to 28, 1900, at Middletown, with Mr. Reginald Heber Howe, Jr. During our stay we observed the following birds of interest:

**Red-throated Loon** (*Gavia lumme*). — Two were seen off Easton's Beach on the 25th and 27th.

**Brünnich's Murre** (*Uria lomvia*). — One was taken on the 24th off Easton's Point.

**Bonaparte's Gull** (*Larus philadelphia*). — A flock of about fifty birds,

out of which two were taken, were seen on the 24th and 27th along Easton's Beach.

**Marsh Hawk** (*Circus hudsonius*).—A single bird was seen on the Third Beach marshes on the 26th and 27th.

**Horned Lark** (*Otocoris alpestris*).—A large flock of over one hundred birds were seen on the uplands of Sachuest Point on the 24th, 26th, and 27th. A male taken measured Lth. 7.00, Wg. 4.28, T. 2.81, Tar. .98, B. cul. .50 or almost as small as *O. a. praticola*.

**Savannah Sparrow** (*Ammodramus sandwichensis savanna*).—One bird was taken on the 24th on the Third Beach marshes, and another bird was seen on the 26th perhaps of the same species. The only other record to my knowledge of the wintering of this species in New England, this being the first for Rhode Island, is the recording of two birds at Sandwich, Cape Cod, Mass., in December, 1894 (see Auk, Vol. XII, p. 188).

**Song Sparrow** (*Melospiza fasciata*).—A flock of fifteen birds were seen along an old stone wall on the exposed uplands of Sachuest Point on the 24th. Both the place, and the number of birds seems very unusual.

On the afternoon of the 24th with Mr. Edward Sturtevant we attempted to reach Cormorant Rock, but owing to increasing wind, darkness, and rough water we were unable to land. We, however, started from the rock the wintering colony of Common Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) and a flock of over one hundred Black Duck (*Anas obscura*).  
Boston, Mass., Feb. 1, 1900. GEORGE C. SHATTUCK.

**Bluebirds in January.**—On January 5, 1900, I went by train from Providence to Wickford Junction, and saw between those points Bluebirds, once surely and on two other occasions, I believe. After the first two flocks, I got a seat on the other side of the car where the sun was behind me and then I got the bright blue. The others were identified by size, shape and flight. Perhaps half a dozen in all.  
Belmont, Feb. 28, 1900. RALPH HOFFMANN.

**White-winged Crossbills, Pine Grosbeaks, and other Winter Birds Observed.**—On the morning of the 14th of January, 1900, I noted the following birds at Neutaconkanut Hill, Johnston, Pine Grosbeaks (*Pinicola enucleator canadensis*) White-winged Crossbills (*Loxia leucoptera*), Pine Siskins (*Pinus spinus*) Purple Finches (*Carpodacus purpureus*) Redpolls (*Acanthis linaria*) and American Goldfinches (*Astragalinus tristis*) and I think Red Crossbills (*Loxia c. minor*.) They were feeding on birch buds and were very tame, allowing me to approach within a few feet. I returned in the afternoon and secured a fine male White-winged Crossbill which I believe to be the first authentic record for the State.

On January 30 I shot a female White-winged Crossbill at the same locality, and on February 1st and 2nd at the Country Club below Paw-

tucket, they were equally common with the Red Crossbills. A male, female, and young male from those shot at the Country Club are to be placed in the Charles H. Smith Collection at Roger Williams Park. I also saw a White-winged Crossbill on February 1st in Roger Williams Park.

Providence, March 10th, 1900.

EDWARD H. ARMSTRONG.

**A Late Siskin in R. I.**—During a heavy, chilly fog, on May 31, 1897, I saw a Siskin hopping about on the branches of one of the ornamental evergreens on the lawn of Mr. Grosvenor's house at Newport.

West Point, N. Y., Feb. 15th, 1900.

WIRT ROBINSON.

**A Scoter on Land and Other Notes.**—At eight o'clock on the morning of October 11, 1898, my attention was called to a Duck on the tennis court in front of St. George's School. The school is situated about two hundred yards from the ocean exposed cliffs of Newport, and the tennis court is less than forty yards from the piazza. The bird, an adult Surf Scoter (*Oidemia perspicillata*) was walking about, and apparently paying no attention to a group of boys on the piazza.

The bird was shot as it flew off and proved to be a fine specimen in perfect health. Why it lit so near houses I am unable to say. It could not have walked up the steep cliffs. There were no tame ducks in the neighborhood to attract it. Probably it became exhausted while flying, and was obliged to alight.

A Brünnich's Murre (*Uria lomvia*) was found on February 22, 1900, on Easton's Beach. Master Austin Sands tells me that on March 11, 1900, he saw two male Red-headed Woodpeckers (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) in his yard at Newport. I have every reason to believe his identification correct.

Two Barred Owls (*Syrnium nebulosum*) have wintered in Newport not far from Bellevue Avenue. One of these was taken on March 12, 1900.

Newport, March 13, 1900.

EDWARD STURTEVANT.

**Sea Fowl Notes.**—On February 24th, 1900, I saw several flocks of Ducks on the wing which must have numbered over a thousand. The Providence River has been frozen over as far as Gaspee Pt., and the air holes are full of Ducks, mostly Greater Scaup (*Aythya marila*), Whistlers (*Clangula c. americana*), Buffleheads (*Charitonetta albeola*) and Scoters (*Oidemia*).

Providence, March 2nd, 1900.

EDWARD H. ARMSTRONG.

**Wintering Robins and Bluebirds.**—Bluebirds (*Sialia sialis*) and Robins (*Merula migratoria*) have been seen in different parts of the State in numbers all winter. Five Bluebirds have passed the last three months in

a group of pines, a short distance from my home at South Auburn, so it is impossible to state when the first arrivals from the south reached here. South Auburn, March 15, 1900. H. S. HATHAWAY.

#### SPRING ARRIVAL NOTES 1900.

- Killdeers (*Ægialitis vocifera*).  
March 7, Pawtuxket, F. E. Newbury.
- Killdeers (*Ægialitis vocifera*).  
Two, March 19, Newport, Le Roy King.
- Red-winged Blackbirds (*Agelaius phœniceus*).  
Seven, March 17, Portsmouth, E. Sturtevant.
- Phœbe (*Sayornis phœbe*).  
One, March 8, South Auburn, H. S. Hathaway.
- Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phœniceus*).  
One, March 8, South Auburn, H. S. Hathaway.
- Grackles (*Quiscalus quiscula* or *æneus*?).  
Large flock, March 12, Auburn, H. S. Hathaway.
- Grackles (*Quiscalus quiscula* or *æneus*?).  
Fifteen, March 7, Bristol Ferry, H. S. Hathaway.
- Song Sparrows (*Melospiza fasciata*).  
Common, March 9, Newport, E. Sturtevant.
- Robins (*Merula migratoria*).  
A few arrivals, March 11, Newport, Austin Sands.

#### REVIEWS.

The Birds of Eastern North America, by Charles B. Cory, Field Columbian Museum, Chicago, 1899.

This is another of Mr. Cory's Keys. It suggests a sort of "Gray's Botany" of birds, which though giving the most ignorant the power to identify our birds, is so brief in text, and so mechanical in makeup, that its skeleton nature is rather unpleasant to the ornithologists who love birds for their personality. The work is profusely illustrated, and will no doubt prove of great assistance to many whose main desire is to name the birds they see or that fall into their hands.

#### PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- Bird-Lore, Vol. II, No. 1, Feb., 1900.
- Nature Study Leaflet. Our Common Birds, by C. F. Hodge, Ph.D. Bio. Series No. 2 Worcester, Mass., 1899.
- The Condor, Vol. II, No. 1, Jan., Feb., 1900.
- The Journal of the Maine Ornithological Society, Vol. II, No. 1, Jan., 1900.
- The Osprey, Vol. IV, No. 5, Jan., 1900.
- The Western Ornithologist, Second Series, Vol. V. No. 1, Jan. and Feb., 1900.

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J. A. ALLEN,

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### SPRING MIGRATION AT SOUTH AUBURN.

BY HARRY S. HATHAWAY.

THE arrival of birds near and around my home this spring has been on about an average with previous years, although a few species were a few days late on account of the cold and windy month of May. [This is interesting in the light of the remarkably large and varied migration in Eastern Massachusetts. Ed.] We have none of the waves that are noted at other places, the "fly lines" being north of Providence, extending from the Connecticut River valley to Boston. The birds that we have come direct to their former breeding grounds, and what few northern residents that do pass through are well scattered and not in the "troops" that are seen in other places. Several Robins and Bluebirds wintered near here, and the date of their arrival from the south was uncertain. Redwing Blackbirds were first seen on March 8, Bronzed Grackles (*Quiscalus quiscula cæneus*?) in a flock of one hundred, came on the 12th, and on the 27th the first Cowbird was seen. By the first of April the above species were abundant. The first four Tree Swallows, a Vesper, and several Field Sparrows were seen April 8th, and on the 15th the rattle of the Kingfisher was heard along the Pawtuxet River. Easter Sunday, the 15th, the first Chipping Sparrow, and two White-throated Sparrows arrived, while Juncos, Field and Vesper Sparrows, Yellow-rumped Warblers in summer plumage, and Tree Swal-

lows were abundant. The first Night Heron was noted on the 16th and two Crossbills (species?) were seen flying over. The 17th a Hermit Thrush was seen feeding in the woods across the river. On April 20th the first Yellow-palm Warbler, and two Ruby-crowned Kinglets appeared in my orchard, and the sweet song of the latter was heard for three days. Two Chewinks, and the last Crossbills (species?) were heard on the 21st, while on the 22nd the first Brown Thrashers, and the most of the Chipping Sparrows arrived. A Great Blue Heron flew over my yard, and the first Barn Swallows came on the 23rd. On the 26th three male Black and White Warblers and a flock of twenty Chimney Swifts arrived despite the hard northerly winds of the week previous, it being late for the former. On the 27th Bob-whites commenced whistling across the river. The warm wave of April 29th brought the first Least Flycatchers (2), and three Yellow Warblers. The first of May, Ovenbirds in numbers, Kingbirds and Spotted Sandpipers arrived.

When I opened my door on the morning of May 2nd, I was greeted by the song of the first Scarlet Tanager, and a Yellow-throated Vireo in company with his mate, in the trees in my yard, while the first Maryland Yellow-throats, and three Rusty Blackbirds were singing across the river.

I heard the first male Redstart, and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak singing on the 4th, and the last Yellow-rump Warbler had departed May 5th. The first Catbird, Wood Thrush, and a Warbling Vireo arrived on the 6th. On the 8th there was quite a well marked wave, which brought along the first four Chestnut-sided, a Black-throated Green, and several Prairie Warblers, two Wilson's Thrushes, and Baltimore Orioles. A White-eye Vireo arrived on the 9th.

Despite the cold frosty morning of the 10th, three Red-eyed Vireos, and a Crested Flycatcher were heard for the first time. May 14th, first Indigo Bird, and two Small-billed Water Thrushes were heard, and on the 15th several Black-poll Warblers, and a Wood Pewee were seen. The Yellow-throated Vireos have their nest started 40 feet up in a chestnut tree not 15 feet from my house and some 10 feet from their home of last year. The first Cuckoo (species?) and a Yellow-breasted Chat were heard on

the 16th, and a Blackburnian Warbler was singing in my tree tops on the morning of the 17th. Two Wilson's Warblers, and a Canadian Warbler were noted on the 18th, a Black-throated Blue Warbler was seen the 21st, and the three Small-billed Water Thrushes which have been resting along my brook, moved along to their breeding grounds. May 22nd I saw the first two Magnolia Warblers, and on the 28th a Ruby-throated Hummingbird had laid in her nest her two eggs.

On the 31st the last Black-poll Warbler was seen, which ended the migration.

No new species were seen, and on the whole the migration was very regular, and of no unusual interest.

#### GENERAL NOTES.

The Bonaparte's Gull which was noted by my brother, Le Roy King, in the April number of this magazine is still living and in very good health. It is now taking on the summer plumage — the black head — without apparently moulting, for no trace of feathers can be found in its cage.

On May 15, 1900, I saw a pair of Orchard Orioles (*Icterus spurius*) on Brenton's Point, and on May 27th I saw another pair which I have every reason to believe were not the first.

Newport, June 1, 1900.

FREDERICK R. KING.

A Lesser Snow Goose (*Chen hyperborea*) was captured at Easton's Pond, Newport, by Mr. F. P. Sands early in the fall of 1876. It was the only one seen at the time, and is at present in my collection.

Newport, June 5, 1900.

AUSTIN L. SANDS.

Notes from Newport. — A new colony of Bank Swallows (*Clivicola riparia*) was discovered at Brenton's Point this spring by Masters Frederick R. King and Austin L. Sands. It consists of forty-five burrows in the ocean exposed bank at the end of the point. During the cold northeast storm of May 19, I saw a flock of twenty-three Cliff Swallows (*Petrochelidon lunifrons*) on the second Beach. They were taking shelter in the lee of the dunes. I have never before seen so many here.

On May 18 I saw a Slate-colored Junco (*Junco hyemalis*). This is a late date for them.

Newport, June 4, 1900.

EDWARD STURTEVANT.

Notes from Newport. — Ringed-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*). — In April, 1899, several Gulls probably of this species though not positively identified were observed. From November 5 to 21, 1899, about twenty

were seen and positively identified, though none were shot; both young and adults were feeding with the Herring Gulls near the place where garbage is dumped into Narragansett Bay, at Fort Adams, R. I.

**American Merganser** (*Merganser americanus*).— Common on Narragansett Bay from February 20 to April 25, 1899.

**Hooded Merganser** (*Lophodytes cucullatus*).— A female and a young male, mounted by Mr. Charles B. Clark of Newport, were shot on the marshes near Second Beach, in October, 1899. The young male was purchased by Mr. Harry S. Hathaway, of Providence, for the Smith collection.

**King Eider** (*Somateria spectabilis*).— A male was taken off Conanicut Island during the winter of 1898-'99. Seen mounted in a store in Jamestown.

**Hudsonian Godwit** (*Limosa hæmastica*).— One flew close to our house, at Fort Adams, August 7, 1899.

**Killdeer** (*Ægialitis vocifera*).— A Killdeer was seen on the extreme south end of the Island of Rhode Island, March 4, 1900, and one on the neighboring golf fields March 28.

**American Long-eared Owl** (*Asio wilsonianus*).— One was shot in a thicket near Fort Adams, February 20, 1900.

**Great Horned Owl** (*Bubo virginianus*).— On November 20, 1899, Mr. Isaac Clark lay concealed beside a small pond on Conanicut Island, watching a muskrat that he was trying to shoot. Intent on killing the muskrat that had given trouble by injuring the dam, Mr. Clark as surprised to see the animal suddenly dive. Looking up, the cause was discovered. A Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) was flying overhead, also intent on capturing the muskrat. A pair wintered at the stone-crusher in the quarry near the Bonaparte house, south of Newport, during the winter of 1899-1900. I heard that one of them was shot in February or March. They also fed on muskrats, as indicated by skulls found about their feeding ground. A Great Horned Owl was seen by Mr. Philip Peckham, at Middletown, in May, 1900.

**Orchard Oriole** (*Icterus spurius*).— June 18, 1899, a young male of the second year was singing in an apple orchard near Fort Adams, where a nest was subsequently seen. Two were found in the same orchard May 27, 1900.

**Snow Bunting** (*Plectrophenax nivalis*).— My father collected an adult (No. 11,895 collection of Edgar A. Mearns), November 10, 1899, which was moulting; all rectrices and some wing quills were just sprouting. This bird was alone on the rocky shore at Fort Adams. Another was seen there two days later.

**Tree Sparrow** (*Spizella monticola*).— Arrived November 7, 1899, on which date not less than 100 were seen and a specimen collected.

**Yellow-breasted Chat** (*Icteria virens*).— Chats bred in a swampy thicket near Fort Adams, in June, 1899. They disappeared before the end of summer. They returned to the same locality May 23, 1900. Several pairs were found in thickets along streams in the vicinity of Hanging Rock, Middletown, R. I., June 2, 1900.

**Grey-cheeked Thrush** (*Hylocichla aliciaë*).—Two were observed in our yard at Fort Adams, October 7, 1899; one seen near Fort Adams, R. I., May 20, 1900.

Fort Adams, Newport, R. I.

LOUIS DI ZEREGA MEARNS.

**A Large-billed Water Thrush's Nest** taken in R. I.—On May 20th while on a collecting trip with Mr. H. S. Hathaway we stopped on a bridge over a small stream in Kent County and heard the song of a Louisiana Water Thrush (*Seiurus motacilla*), and went into the nearby woods in an endeavor to locate a nest. We worked our way up the stream, examining the roots of every upturned tree and every location it seemed possible for these birds to breed in, and finally gave it up in disgust and started back to the road, and in passing along the foot of a steep bank near the stream, I saw a good looking situation and going nearer to examine it more closely a female Water Thrush flew almost into my face disclosing her nest and fine eggs. The nest was a bulky affair composed of leaves and coarse grass, lined with finer grass and a few hairs and was placed in a depression in bank underneath the exposed roots of a tree growing on top of bank, and was well hidden. The eggs were somewhat incubated, and the nest was only a few feet from the running stream. I know of no record of the eggs of this species having been taken, although several have reported seeing young birds.

Providence, May 22, 1900.

F. E. NEWBURY.

**First Record of the Greater Redpoll** (*Acanthus linaria rostrata*) in R. I.—On the afternoon of March 14, 1896, at East Providence from a flock of about twenty Redpolls, which were feeding in white birches, I shot six specimens, two of which have since been identified as Greater Redpolls, (*Acanthus linaria rostrata*). They were ♂'s all in the immature plumage. South Auburn.

H. S. HATHAWAY.

**Another Cape May Warbler Record.**—Mrs. Julia M. Hill writes me that on May 20, 1900, with her son, she observed a Warbler, which from her careful description leaves no doubt as to its identity as a male *Dendroica tigrina*, in a snowball bush at Chepachet. Later in the day she saw it again, or possible another individual, in an apple tree.

EDITOR.

**Birds Observed at Sakonnet Point and Vicinity.**—In a brief visit to Sakonnet Point from June 2 to June 6, 1900, the following birds, mainly residents, were observed. The country under observation extended about a mile north from the point and four miles east to Tunipus Pond, while a visit was made to Cormorant Rock which lies offshore about three miles west of Sakonnet. The point and the land along shore is for half a mile inland bare of trees, except three small islands in the marsh north of Warren's Point which are covered with a tall growth of oaks and on each

there are a few cedar trees, and thus the birds seen are those species which nest on the ground or in the "cat-tails" of Long Pond.

**Common Tern** (*Sterna hirundo*).—The first bird which attracts your attention on the approach of the boat to Sakonnet is this species, which is seen resting on the posts which support the nets of the fish pounds in the Sakonnet River. On Cormorant Rock there were between forty and fifty birds noted sitting on their eggs or on the rocks, while there were as many more flying to and fro across Sakonnet Point and up the river feeding. The day we visited the rock, June 5, there were five nests (if such they may be called, being composed entirely of fish bones) which contained three eggs, three nests of two, and four with only one egg.

**Greater Shearwater** (*Puffinus gravis*).—Intermingled with the Terns on Cormorant Rock were about twenty-five birds of this species, and occasionally three or four were seen along shore.

**Sooty Shearwater** (*Puffinus fuliginosus*).—In company with the preceding species on Cormorant Rock were four birds of this species. None were noted around the point, although doubtless they were there at times.

**Leach's Petrel** (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*).—Five individuals were seen skimming the surface of the ocean on our way to Cormorant Rock. Not observed close in shore anywhere.

**Surf Scoter** (*Oidemia perspicillata*).—Several dead birds were seen on the beach, and a flock of about a hundred were feeding in the cove east of Warren's point.

**Carolina Rail** (*Porzana carolina*).—Two were seen darting amongst the "cat-tails" on the shore of Long Pond, but no nests were found.

**Florida Gallinule** (*Gallinula galeata*).—Three birds were heard in the "cat-tails" of Long Pond and I flushed one which was feeding on the shore, while three nests were found but no eggs.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper** (*Ereuntes pusillus*).—A flock of about twenty were seen June 4 feeding in the Warren's Point marsh.

**Greater Yellow-legs** (*Totanus melanoleucus*).—Three birds were heard whistling and answered our whistle several times in the Warren's Point marsh.

**Spotted Sandpiper** (*Actitis macularia*).—Everywhere abundant along shore, especially on Sakonnet Point, where several sets of eggs were found in the grass back from the beach, and four young were found just hatched on June 5, one of them not being dried off. They were all in the nest, but the next day on passing here, we found they had left and from the anxious cries of the old birds we judged they were some fifty feet away.

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird** (*Trochilus colubris*).—Two nests of this species were found with their complement of two eggs nearly fresh, one in a swamp north of Sakonnet Point, and the other in a cedar tree on one of the islands in the Warren's Point marsh.

**Wood Pewee** (*Contopus virens*).—A male was seen on one of the islands in the Warren's Point marsh.



**Red-winged Blackbird** (*Agelaius phœniceus*).—Very abundant breeding in the "cat-tails" of Long Pond, and a small pond near the point. Newly hatched young and birds just out of the nest and on the wing were observed.

**Baltimore Oriole** (*Icterus galbula*).—A pair were nesting in an orchard about half a mile north of Sakonnet.

**Grackles** (*Quiscalus, quiscula (æneus?)*).—A few pairs were breeding in company with the Redwings in the "cat-tails" of Long Pond.

**Savanna Sparrow** (*Ammodramus sandwichensis*).—The most abundant sparrow at Sakonnet. Several nests were found with young just hatched and a few on the wing.

**Sharp-tailed Sparrow** (*Ammodramus caudacutus*).—Several were seen in the salt grass of the Warren Point, marsh and one nest with four eggs was found.

**Song Sparrow** (*Melospiza fasciata*).—Nearly as abundant as the Savanna and nests were found with young in all stages of growth.

**Bank Swallow** (*Clivicola riparia*).—The most abundant of the Swallows, there being several colonies along shore, the largest having over a hundred nests in close proximity. Eggs and young were found in all stages, and one nest had a youngster a week old in which the eggs must have been laid by May 13, which is very early.

**White-eyed Vireo** (*Vireo noveboracensis*).—Two males were heard in the bush pasture north of the point.

**Northern Parula Warbler** (*Compsothlypis americana usneæ*).—Growing on the cedar trees on the islands in the Warren's Point marsh, was enough usnea for two pairs of this beautiful Warbler to build its nest in. Three fresh eggs were found in each. There were probably four or five pairs resident here.

**Ovenbird** (*Seiurus aurocapillus*).—A male was heard singing in the swamp north of the point.

**Maryland Yellow-throat** (*Geothlypis trichas*).—A solitary pair have settled down in the "cat-tails" of the little pond on the point. The song of this particular male is quite different from the resident birds of South Auburn, but is in keeping with the song of others of this species which I have observed in the southern part of the state. The northern residents have a decisive, loud and clear "brig-a-dier, brig-a-dier," "brig-a-dier," while the southern birds song is less decisive and more run together.

**Long-billed Marsh Wren** (*Cistothorus palustris*).—A solitary pair have built their usual quota of five or six nests in the Long Pond "cat-tails."

**Wilson's Thrush** (*Hylocichla fuscescens*).—A male heard singing in the swamp north of the point.

The following species were also noted during my stay : Black-crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax n. nævius*), Bob-white (*Colinus virginianus*), Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*), Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*), Crow (*Corvus americanus*), Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*), Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*), Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*), Vesper Spar-

rows (*Poocetes gramineus*), Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella socialis*), Cedar-bird (*Ampelis cedrorum*) Barn Swallow (*Hirundo erythrogastra*) Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*), Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica æstiva*), Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*), and American Robin (*Merula migratoria*).  
South Auburn, June 15, 1900. H. S. HATHAWAY.

### SPRING ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE NOTES 1900.

The notes here given are either earlier or later than those for the species given in 'The Birds of Rhode Island.'

Loon (*Gavia imber*). Twenty, May 28,  
 Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*). One, March 23,  
 Herring Gull (*Larus a. smithsonianus*). Thirty, May 22,  
 Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax dilophus*).  
 One, May 17,  
 Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*). Forty-five, May 3,  
 Brant (*Branta bernicla*). Eleven, April 28,  
 American Coot (*Fulica americana*). One, May 28,  
 Least Sandpiper (*Tringa minutilla*). Two, May 26,  
 Greater Yellow-legs (*Totanus melanoleucus*). Two,  
 May 26,  
 Pigeon Hawk (*Falco columbarius*). One, April 24,  
 Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus caudacutus*). One,  
 May 26,  
 Eave Swallow (*Petrochelidon lunifrons*). Two, April 28,  
 Myrtle Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*). One, May 10.  
 Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*). One, May 23  
 and 26,  
 Catbird (*Galeoscoptes carolinensis*). One, April 17,  
 Alice's Thrush (*Hylocichla alicie*). One, May 20,

Vicinity  
 of Newport,  
 Louis di Z.  
 Mearns.

### PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- Bird-Lore, Vol. II, No. 3, June, 1900.  
 The Auk, Vol. XVII, No. 2, Apr., 1900.  
 The Condor, Vol. II, Nos. 2, 3, Mar. and Apr., May and June, 1900.  
 The Hummer, Vol. I, No. 9, Mar. 28, 1900.  
 The Journal of the Maine Ornithological Society, Vol. II, No. 2, Mar., 1900.  
 The Osprey, Vol. IV, Nos. 6, 7, 8, Feb., Mar. and Apr., 1900.  
 The Western Ornithologist, Vol. V, Nos. 2, 3, Mar. and Apr., May and June, 1900.  
 The Wilson Bulletin, No. 30. Vol. VII, No. 1, Jan., 1900 and No. 31 Vol. VII, No. 2, April, 1900.

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Volume I of "Notes on Rhode Island Ornithology" is completed with the present number. It has been its purpose to put into ornithological literature records of Rhode Island birds that otherwise would perhaps have never been recorded, and the Editor believes that the paper can claim to have been of value and interest to many.

The Editor will assume that the present subscribers wish to continue as such unless they notify him **at once** to the contrary, and all subscription for the ensuing year must be in hand by **December 15, 1900**, as they simply cover the cost of publication and the "Notes" will not be continued with a less number of subscribers. It has been thought best this year to raise the subscription to one dollar, so that the magazine may be large enough to publish a greater part of the material sent in, which heretofore has had to be rejected.

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## GENERAL NOTES.

**First Record of the Blue Goose in Rhode Island, with Correction of Three Erroneous Records, and Other Notes.** — There has been recently added to the Charles H. Smith collection at Roger Williams Park, Providence, a young male of the Blue Goose which was shot at Noyes Beach, Westerly, on March 16, 1894, by Dr. E. R. Lewis. This is the first authentic record for this State, it being a rare bird in all New England.

There are, however, three erroneous records of this species in the "Birds of Rhode Island" by Howe and Sturtevant: one taken at Charlestown Beach on Oct. 16, 1892, by Mr. F. L. Glezen, and two killed at Newport and presented by Mr. Newton Dexter to the Brown University collection. I have carefully examined the three specimens and find they are all young Lesser Snow Geese (*Chen hyperborea*).

**Sora Rail (*Porzana carolina*).** A fine male in breeding plumage was

shot at Quonochontaug, R. I., by Mr. H. H. Burdick, on the unusually early date of March 2, 1900. The weather at this time was mild for the season, with very little wind. In the collection of Mr. R. J. Davey, of Westerly, there is a handsome adult of the Yellow Rail (*Porzana noveboracensis*) which was shot near Westerly during the last week of September, 1897. This makes the fifth record for this rare Rail in this State. While riding through Wakefield near "Dale Carlia" corners on the morning of June 17, 1900, my attention was attracted by the song of a Black Poll Warbler, *Dendroica striata*. This is an unusually late date for it, my latest record previous to this being June 7, 1898. There was shot at Point Judith, August 5th, 1900, a young Bonaparte's Gull (*Larus philadelphia*). This is quite early for them to reach here, the main body arriving usually in late September.

South Auburn, R. I., Sept. 10, 1900.

HARRY S. HATHAWAY.

**Notes from Newport.** — July 19, 1900, I took off "Purgatory," Middletown, R. I., one American Scaup Duck (*Aythya marila*). It was a cripple and unable to fly. On August 21, 1900, while on Cormorant Rock, I saw a Cormorant fly past towards the southeast. It was probably a Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax dilophus*), but it was too far off to determine its species, at all events August 21 is an early date for Cormorants to appear here. Mr. Le Roy King took on September 8, 1900, a Baird's Sandpiper (*Tringa bairdii*) on the Second Beach marsh, Middletown, so far as we know this is the third record for Rhode Island. For ten days, from August 20 to 31, 1900, there were a great many Black Terns (*Hydrochelidon nigra surinamensis*) about; they were seen about Narragansett Bay as well as the Ocean, and one was taken on the Second Beach marsh by Mr. Le Roy King. They appeared to all be young birds.

Newport, Sept. 18, 1900.

EDWARD STURTEVANT.

**The European Ruff (*Pavoncella pugnax*) in Rhode Island.** — One of the most interesting captures which has been made in this State for a great many years, is a female of this species which was shot in the marsh near Seaconnet Point, Little Compton, on July 30, 1900, by Mr. Newton Dexter, who kindly permits me to publish the record. This is a widely distributed Old World bird, occasionally straggling to America; there being two records for Massachusetts, three for New England and nine for North America up to the time of this capture. Mr. Dexter has been particularly fortunate in collecting rare birds in this State, especially European species, he having taken beside the Ruff a Corn Crake (*Crex crex*) which was killed in Cranston in 1857.

South Auburn, R. I., Sept. 10, 1900.

H. S. HATHAWAY.

**The Acadian Sharp-tailed Sparrow in R. I.** — Mr. J. W. Staintor, of Providence, kindly permits me to publish the capture by him of four speci-



mens of the Acadian Sharp-tailed Sparrow, *Ammodramus nelsoni subvirgatus* (Dwight), at Charlestown Beach, R. I., on October 15, 1899. At the time he was after a partial albino of this species which he flushed from the grass in the marsh back of the beach. There were some eight or ten birds seen, which were all probably of this subspecies. The albino is blotched on the body quite heavily with white, there being about as much white as there is normal color. A male has been placed in the Charles H. Smith collection at Roger Williams Park, Providence.

South Auburn, R. I.

H. S. HATHAWAY.

**Birds observed at Chepachet, R. I.**—During a collecting trip to Chepachet, Providence County, Rhode Island, from August 31 to September 8, 1900, I observed the following-named birds:—

**Wood Duck** (*Aix sponsa*).—A brood was reported at Pascoag Reservoir during August, 1900.

**Hairy Woodpecker** (*Dryobates villosus*).—Two were seen, and an adult female taken September 1, 1900.

**Baltimore Oriole** (*Icterus galbula*).—Eight were seen September 1, 1900. This is the latest fall record for the State.

**Myrtle Warbler** (*Dendroica coronata*).—Arrived in numbers at Chepachet September 7 and 8, 1900. This is the earliest record of their arrival within the State.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler** (*Dendroica pensylvanica*).—Abundant beside the Chepachet River, where it was last seen September 7, 1900.

**Black-poll Warbler** (*Dendroica striata*).—One female taken September 3, 1900. This seems to be the earliest fall record for Rhode Island.

**Mourning Warbler** (*Geothlypis philadelphia*).—A female, seen September 4, 1900, is, as far as known to the writer, the only fall record for the State.

The following were also observed: Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*), Green Heron (*A. virescens*), Woodcock (*Philohela minor*), Solitary Sandpiper (*Helodromas solitarius*), Ruffed Grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*), Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter velox*), Cooper's Hawk (*A. cooperii*), Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo borealis*), Screech Owl (*Megascops asio*), Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*), Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*), Black-billed Cuckoo (*C. erythrophthalmus*), Kingfisher (*Ceryle alcyon*), Northern Downy Woodpecker (*Dryobates pubescens medianus*), Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus luteus*), Chimney Swift (*Chaturapeiagica*), Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*), Phœbe (*Sayornis phæbe*), Wood Pewee (*Horizopus virens*), Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*), Crow (*Corvus americanus*), English Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), Goldfinch (*Astragalinus tristis*), Vesper Sparrow (*Poocætes gramineus*), Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella socialis*), Field Sparrow (*S. pusilla*), Song Sparrow (*Melospiza fasciata*), Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Zamelodia ludoviciana*), Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga erythromelas*), Barn Swallow (*Hirundo erythrogastra*), Cedar-bird (*Ampelis cedrorum*), Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*), Nash-

ville Warbler (*Helminthophila rubricapilla*), Parula Warbler (*Compsothlypis americana usneæ*), Oven-bird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*), Water Thrush (*S. noveboracensis*), Maryland Yellow-throat (*Geothlypis trichas*), Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*), Catbird (*Galeoscoptes carolinensis*), Brown Thrasher (*Harporhynchus rufus*). White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*), Chickadee (*Parus atricapillus*) Robin (*Merula migratoria*), and Bluebird (*Sialis sialis*).

Fort Adams, Newport, R. I.

Louis di Zerega Mearns.

**A Rare Capture.**—Mr. Newton Dexter writes me that he took a Marbled Godwit (*Limosa fedoa*) at Sakonnet, R. I., on August 29, 1900.

EDITOR.

**Notes from Newport, R. I.**—*Tryngites subruficollis*, BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER. One shot on Sept. 15, 1900, on a lawn near a beach at Castle Hill.

*Icterus spurius*. ORCHARD ORIOLE. Two were seen near Fort Adams on June 9 and 22, 1900.

*Icteria virens*. YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT. Seen throughout June, and on Aug. 4 and 5, 1900.

LOUIS DI ZEREGA MEARN'S.

#### ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE NOTES, 1900.

The notes here given are either earlier or later than those for the species given in 'The Birds of Rhode Island.'

Wilson's Tern (*Sterna hirundo*). Abundant, Sept. 26, 1900; one Sept. 30, 1900.

Black Tern (*Hydrochelidon n. surinamensis*). One, Sept. 18, 1900.

Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Ereunetes pusillus*). Three, July 14, 1900.

Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*). One, Oct. 3, 1900.

Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*). Thirty, Sept. 18; six, Oct. 3, 1900.

Nashville Warbler (*Helminthophila rubricapilla*). One, Sept. 10, 1900.

Yellow Palm Warbler (*Dendroica p. hypochrysea*). Two, Sept. 15, 1900.

Water Thrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*). One, Aug. 12, 1900.

Pipit (*Anthus pensilvanicus*). One, Sept. 16, 1900.

Vicinity  
of Newport,  
Louis di Z.  
Mearns.

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