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BRITISH BIRDS

AN ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE DEVOTED
TO THE BIRDS ON THE BRITISH LIST

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EDITED BY

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ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS TO THE
HAND-LIST OF BRITISH BIRDS.

BY
 THE AUTHORS.

As promised in the last issue of *British Birds* (Vol. VIII., p. 279) we now give a list of the corrections and additions to our *Hand-List* with short explanations and references. The names of the *Hand-List* thus revised will be used until further notice in *British Birds*. It should be mentioned that we intend so far as possible to adopt any necessary change of name only at the beginning of a volume of *British Birds* in order to avoid the confusion which might arise by the use of two different names for the same bird in one volume. As an additional safeguard a note referring to the nomenclature used will be found at the head of the Index of each volume.

24. *Carduelis hornemanni hornemanni*

25. *Carduelis hornemanni exilipes*

instead of *C. hornemannii*. The name is incorrectly quoted in the *Hand-List*, the original spelling being with only one "i."

54. *Emberiza palustris palustris*

instead of *E. pyrrhuloides palustris*. For full explanation see *Brit. B.*, VI., p. 153.

Add—

54A. *Emberiza palustris tschusii* Reiser and Almasy.—
THE EASTERN LARGE-BILLED REED-BUNTING.

See *Brit. B.*, VI., p. 154.

Add—

59A. *Calandrella brachydactyla longipennis* (Eversmann).—**THE EASTERN SHORT-TOED LARK.**

ALAUDA LONGIPENNIS Eversmann, Bull. Soc. Imp. Nat. Moscou, XXI, p. 219 (1848—Songaria).

Calandrella brachydactyla longipennis W. E. Clarke, Scot. Nat., 1915, p. 100.

In the *Hand-List* (p. 29) we stated that it was desirable that specimens of the Short-toed Lark should be examined as they might belong to the Eastern form. In the *Scottish Naturalist*, 1915, pp. 100-1, Mr. W. E. Clarke states that a recent comparison of the bird obtained at Fair Isle on November 11th, 1907, with the series at Tring shows it to be an example of *C. b. longipennis*. This form, which appears

to inhabit Transcaspia, Turkestan, Afghanistan, and Tibet, has been found on migration so far to the south-west as Algeria and the western Sahara. It is greyer on the upper-parts than the typical form, this distinction being especially noticeable on the crown, which is never reddish as in the typical form. The wing is also usually slightly longer and the bill often slightly more slender than in the typical form.

63. *Alauda arvensis cinerascens* Ehmcke.

ALAUDA CINERASCENS Ehmcke, Journ. f. Orn., 1904, p. 313.

instead of *A. a. cinerea* Ehmcke.

Ehmcke altered the name *cinerea* because it was preoccupied by *Alauda cinerea* Gmelin, Syst. Nat., I., 2, p. 798, 1789. According to Art. 36 of the "International Rules" a rejected homonym can never again be used, and therefore Ehmcke's alteration must be accepted.

72. *Anthus spinoletta petrosus* (Mont.).

ALAUDA PETROSA Montagu, Trans. Linn. Soc. London, IV, p. 41 (1798—Wales).

instead of *A. s. obscurus* (Lath.). Some months ago Mr. T. Iredale kindly pointed out to us that *obscurus* of Latham, 1790, could not be used owing to its prior use by Gmelin (*Alauda obscura* Gmelin, Syst. Nat., I., 2, p. 801, 1789). See under No. 63.

78. *Motacilla flava feldegg* Michahelles.

MOTACILLA FELDEGG Michahelles, Isis 1830, p. 812 (1830—Valleys of southern Dalmatia).

instead of *Motacilla melanocephala* Licht., which is preoccupied by *M. melanocephala* Gmelin 1789, and therefore the next oldest name, *M. feldegg*, must be used. See under No. 63.

80. *Motacilla cinerea cinerea* Tunst.

MOTACILLA CINEREA Tunstall, Orn. Brit., p. 2 (1771—New name for the "Grey Water Wagtail" and "Hoche-queuë ou Bergeronette jaune" of the Zool. Brit. and Brisson).

instead of *Motacilla b. boarula* L.

Mr. T. Iredale has pointed out to us that the earliest reference to *Motacilla boarula* is Scopoli, *Annus I Hist. Nat.*, p. 154, 1769, and this reference is given in the *B.O.U. List* (1915). It is clear, however, that Scopoli described (p. 153) the "Grey Wagtail" as *Motacilla flava*, and named the "Blue-headed Wagtail" *Motacilla boarula*! He says that his *M. flava* is not gregarious, non-migratory, and found along rivers, and that it has a grey back and yellow rump! Of his *M. boarula* he says only that it is smaller than his *flava*, gregarious, and not aquatic, follows the herds on the

meadows, and has a different note; his quotations refer with more or less certainty to *M. flava flava* or some of its races.

Under the circumstances, Linnaeus's later name of 1771 (Scopoli is 1769) cannot be accepted, and we must revert to the name *cinerea* of Tunstall.

113. *Bombycilla garrulus* (L.)

instead of *Ampelis garrulus* (L.). In the "latest Rules" i.e. the revised edition in the *Proc. IX. Intern. Congress of Zoology* (Monaco), 1914, p. 895, etc. in Article 30 (p. 902) the methods of the designation of type-species of genera are enumerated, and "elimination" is there entirely eliminated! As *Ampelis* could only be used by the process of elimination we must now adopt *Bombycilla* as the generic name of the Waxwing.

Add—

128A. *Phylloscopus fuscatus* (Blyth).—THE DUSKY WARBLER.

See *Brit. B.*, VII., p. 223.

Add—

148A. *Sylvia rüppelli* Temm.—RÜPPELL'S WARBLER.

See *Brit. B.*, VIII., p. 96.

Add—

158A. *Turdus philomelus hebridensis* Clarke.—THE HEBRIDEAN SONG-THRUSH.

See *Scot. Nat.*, 1913, pp. 53-5, also *Brit. B.*, VI., p. 341.

Add—

182A. *Luscinia svecica svecica* (L.).—THE LAPLAND BLUETHROAT.

See *Scot. Nat.*, 1912, p. 236, also *Brit. B.*, VI., p. 186.

184. *Erithacus rubecula rubecula* (L.).

185. *Erithacus rubecula melophilus* Hart.

instead of *Dandalus r. rubecula* and *Dandalus r. melophilus*. According to Opinion 39 of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, "the Latin names in the systematic tables in Cuvier's *Leçons d'Anatomie*, 1800, are available in so far as they are identifiable through the bibliographic references given on page xix. of the Introduction." This is the case in this instance. The opinion that "*Motacilla erithacus*," i.e. the Redstart, is the genotype of *Erithacus*

cannot be upheld, because Cuvier called it "Rouge-gorge," which is the name used by Daubenton, Buffon, etc., for the Robin!

221. *Ægolius funereus funereus* (L.)

STRIX FUNEREA Linnæus, Syst. Nat. Ed. X, I, p. 93 (1758—"Europa").

instead of *Ægolius tengmalmi tengmalmi* (Gm.). In the *Hand-List* (p. 105, footnote) Hartert wrote: "We cannot accept *funerea* L. (which was principally based on a figure of Billberg* representing Tengmalm's Owl), for its author says that it has the size of a Crow, while Tengmalm's Owl is about half that size. Moreover, Linnæus quoted as a doubtful synonym a figure of the Short-eared Owl." Recently, however, Prof. E. Lönnberg has shown (*Ibis*, 1913, pp. 398-400) that *Strix funerea*, Syst. Nat., 1758, is described as No. 51 of the *Fauna Svecica* 1746, which is based upon coloured plates which Prof. Olaf Rudbeck of Upsala had prepared. Prof. Lönnberg has examined these plates and finds that there are two which clearly represent Tengmalm's Owl, but in one, upon which is written "magnitudo corvi," the bird is much larger than in the other, upon which is written "magnitudo cuculi." In the *Fauna Svecica* Linnæus quotes these two plates under two different numbers, but in the *Systema Natura* 1758 he gives only one of them a name, viz., *Strix funerea*. The words "magnitudo corvi" are still to be read on the plate which Prof. Lönnberg states, "very distinctly displays a coloured figure of Tengmalm's Owl." This being so, we must accept the name *funerea*.

236. *Falco columbarius æsalon* Tunstall

FALCO ÆSALON Tunstall, Orn. Brit., p. 1 (1771—Typical locality: France).

instead of *Falco regulus regulus* Pall. *Falco æsalon* of Tunstall was rejected by us as a *nomen nudum* (*Hand-List*, p. 112, footnote), but opinion 38 of the International Commission decides that Tunstall's names are available under certain conditions, one of which being when they are identifiable through the French names quoted from Brisson, 1760. This being so, *æsalon*, referring to "l'Emerillon" of Brisson, must be accepted.

The American form of the Merlin differs from the European one in being altogether darker on the upper-parts, having more distinctly white-barred quills and in having the rectrices *always* distinctly and widely barred with black. These

* "Billberg" was of course a *lapsus calami* for Rudbeck!

differences, though obvious, are merely degrees of coloration and therefore the two forms must be considered as subspecies. *F. columbarius* L. 1758 being the oldest name, our British form must be called as above.

241. *Aquila clanga* Pall.

AQUILA CLANGA Pallas, Zoogr. Rosso-Asiat., I., p. 351 (1827—Russia).

instead of *Aquila maculata* (Gm.). It has been shown (*B.O.U. List*, p. 379) that *Falco maculatus* Gmelin 1788 is antedated by *Falco maculatus* Tunstall 1771 which = *Pernis apivorus*. Therefore the next oldest name *Aquila fusca* Brehm 1823 is used in the *B.O.U. List*. But Mr. T. Iredale has shown (*Ibis*, 1915, p. 388) that this name must also be discarded because of its prior use by Dumont (*Dict. Sci. Nat.*, I., p. 344, 1804) for a bird which appears to be a Golden Eagle. We must therefore fall back upon the next oldest available name *Aquila clanga* of Pallas.

251. *Milvus migrans migrans* (Boddaert)

FALCO MIGRANS Boddaert, Tables Planches Encl., No. 472, p. 28 (1783—Based on Daubenton's pl. 472, several countries of Europe mentioned, typical locality: France (Hartert 1914)).

instead of *M. k. korschun* (Gm.) which must be abandoned as the description of *Accipiter korschun* S. G. Gmelin does not agree with that of any *Milvus*, in fact it appears to refer to a young *Circus æruginosus*, with the description of which the author seems to have mixed his notes referring to a *Milvus*.

259. *Plegadis falcinellus falcinellus* (L.)

instead of *Egatheus f. falcinellus* (L.). Dr. C. W. Richmond and Mr. G. M. Mathews have shown (*Auk*, 1913, pp. 92-5) that *Egatheus* Billberg 1828 was undoubtedly introduced merely as a substitute for *Ibis* Lacepède. *Plegadis* Kaup 1829 must therefore be used as the generic name of the Glossy Ibis.

269. *Botaurus lentiginosus* (Mont.).

instead of *B. stellaris lentiginosus*. This Bittern is so widely different from *B. stellaris* that it should be looked upon as a species. The reference to allied subspecies under No. 268 must be altered accordingly.

270. *Phœnicopterus ruber antiquorum* Temm.

PHÆNICOPTERUS ANTIQUORUM Temminck, Man. d'Orn., 2nd ed., II., p. 587 (1820—Europe).

It is pointed out in the *B.O.U. List*, 1915, pp. 385-6. that *Phœnicopterus roseus* Pallas 1827 is antedated by *Ph. anti-*

quorum Temminek 1820, and we must in consequence use the latter name for the Flamingo.

The West Indian and the European Flamingos can only be treated as subspecies, as they agree in all essential characters and differ only in degree of coloration. Therefore the trinomial as above.

276. *Anser erythropus* (L.)

instead of *Anser finmarchicus* Gunner. In the *Hand-List erythropus* was rejected because it could not be decided to which species of White-fronted Goose it referred. Prof. E. Lönnberg has since (*Ibis*, 1913, pp. 400-2) brought forward evidence from Linnean manuscripts to show that the bird described by Linnæus under this name was the White-fronted Goose which *breeds* in northern Sweden, *i.e.* the Lesser White-fronted Goose.

284. It is very doubtful if the Pale-breasted Brent Goose is really different from *B. bernicla bernicla*, as in the Old World both dark and pale-breasted Brents nest together, and appear to be merely individual varieties. In no case can the name *glaucogastra* be used for the *pale*-breasted form, as under this name Brehm described the *dark*-bellied form!

296. *Anas acuta* L.

instead of *Dafila acuta* (L.). It is not possible to uphold the genus *Dafila*.

297. *Netta rufina* (Pall.)

instead of *Nyroca rufina* (Pall.). The Red-crested Pochard should be separated generically.

302. *Bucephala clangula clangula* (L.).

303. *Bucephala albeola* (L.)

instead of *Nyroca c. clangula* (L.) and *Nyroca albeola* (L.). The Goldeneyes differ too strikingly from true *Nyroca* and must therefore be separated generically. The oldest name of the genus is *Bucephala* rejected by some because of the prior *Bucephalus*, but valid according to the Rules of Nomenclature.

324. *Puffinus assimilis godmani* Allen

instead of *Puffinus obscurus godmani* Allen. See *Brit. B.*, VIII., p. 283.

358. Dr. P. R. Lowe contends (*Ibis*, 1914, pp. 395-99) that the Ringed Plover breeding in the British Islands should be separated from the typical form under the name *Charadrius hiaticula major* Seebohm, and we agree that there are evidently two forms. An examination, however, of the material at Tring as well as that at the British Museum, shows that the distribution of the two forms and therefore their nomenclature is not clear, and we must await further investigation before we can finally decide this point.

359. *Charadrius dubius curonicus* Gm.

Ein Regenpfeifer Beseke, Schriften d. Ges. naturf. Freunde Berlin, VII, p. 463 (1786—Kurland = "Courland"; the description is reproduced in Beseke, Vögel Kurlands, p. 66, 1792).

CHARADRIUS CURONICUS Gmelin, Syst. Nat. I, 2, p. 692 (1789—"Habitat in Curonia." Ex Beseke, l.c.).

instead of *Charadrius dubius* Scop. The Palæartic form is clearly separable from *Charadrius dubius dubius* (Philippine Islands, Hawaii, Formosa, etc.) by its smaller and less powerful bill. A third form, *Ch. d. jerdoni* from India, is probably also separable. Further details regarding the races of these birds will appear shortly in an article in the *Ibis* by Miss A. C. Jackson and E. Hartert.

372. *Calidris alba* (Pallas)

instead of *Calidris leucophæa* (Pall.). It has been pointed out by Mr. Witmer Stone (*Auk*, 1912, p. 208) that the name *leucophæa* occurs in that part of Vroeg's *Catalogue* which is not binomial and cannot therefore be used. The *Adumbratiunculæ* attached to the *Catalogue* have been conclusively shown to have been written by Pallas and the names used in this portion only of the *Catalogue* are available, while the author of the non-binomial first part is unknown. The name *Trynqa alba* is proposed in the *Adumbratiunculæ* for the Sanderling and must accordingly be used.

378. *Erolia maculata* (Vieill.)

instead of *Erolia maculata maculata* (Vieill.).

379. *Erolia acuminata* (Horsf.)

instead of *Erolia maculata acuminata* (Horsf.). Mr. G. M. Mathews first pointed out (*Birds Australia*, III., pp. 258-263) that there are really important differences between the American and the Siberian Pectoral Sandpipers, especially in the shape of the tail, but also in coloration, if birds in

the same stage of plumage are compared; this is especially noticeable in the summer plumage. It is therefore correct to consider Nos. 378 and 379 as species, and their names should be altered as above. Mr. Mathews also says that the correct name of *Erolia maculata* should be *E. pectoralis* because *Tringa maculata* of Vieillot had been anticipated by Linnæus's *Tringa maculata* of 1766; this, however, is a slip, as Linné called his bird *Tringa macularia*, and not *maculata*.

385. *Limicola falcinellus falcinellus* (Pontoppidan)

SCOLOPAX FALCINELLUS Pontoppidan, Danske Atlas, I., p. 623, and figure on pl. XXVI. (1763—Denmark).

instead of *Limicola p. platyrhyncha* (Temm.). Mr. G. M. Mathews has shown (*Austr. Av. Rec.*, I., 1912, pp. 31-2) that the Broad-billed Sandpiper was named by Pontoppidan and this antedates Temminck's *platyrhyncha* of 1815. The quotation, however, is as above, not "*Naturhist. Dannemark*, p. 170, 1763," as Mr. Mathews quoted. The *Danske Atlas I.*, appeared in 1763, while the *Kurzgef. Nachr. die Naturhistorie in Dannemark betr.* was a translation of the Natural History part of the *Danske Atlas*, and appeared in 1765.* Mr. Mathews (*l.c.*) also pointed out that Brünnich, in 1764, gave an excellent description of the Broad-billed Sandpiper, with the quotation of Pontoppidan, 1763.

Add—

386A. *Terekia cinerea* (Güld.).—TEREK SANDPIPER.

See *Brit. B.*, VI., pp. 74-78.

390. *Tringa ochropus* L.

instead of *T. ocrophus* (L.). It is true that Linnæus quoted "*Ocrophus sive Rhodophus*" of Gesner, Aldrovandus, and others, but in these works the name is spelt *ochropus*. We might, therefore, accept that Linné wrote *ocrophus* as a *lapsus calami* for *ochropus*.

421. *Sterna albifrons albifrons* Pallas

STERNA ALBIFRONS Pallas, Vroeg's Cat. Verzam. Vogelen, etc., Adumbratiunculæ, p. 6 (1764—Europe).

instead of *Sterna m. minuta*. Mr. G. M. Mathews has pointed out (*Birds Austr.*, II., p. 377) that this name has priority over *minuta* of Linneaus 1766. In reply to the same author's

* We find that Mr. Mathews has already made this correction (see *Austral Av. Rec.*, I., p. 84).

criticism of the "Distribution Abroad" given in the *Hand-List*, this is certainly wrong, and should read:—

"Breeds in Europe from the shores of southern Sweden to the Mediterranean, along the coasts of northern Africa, in the Canaries and on Madeira, and in north-west Asia as far as Turkestan. It winters in Africa and in Asia as far north as India, Burmah, Malacca and Java. Replaced by allied forms in Syria, Egypt, the Malay Archipelago, the China Seas and Japan, Australia, America, and perhaps parts of Africa."

422. *Sterna fuscata* L.

STERNA FUSCATA Linnæus, Syst. Nat., Ed. XII., I., p. 228 (1766—San Domingo. Ex Brisson, Orn. VI., p. 220, pl. xxi., fig. 1).

instead of *Sterna fuliginosa* Gm. "I queried *S. fuscata* because the tail in Brisson's figure is merely slightly emarginated, and even our youngest specimens show the deep fork in the tail. Mr. Iredale's suggestion (*Ibis*, 1914, p. 437) that 'I imagined without investigation' (*sic*) that the young of *Sterna anæsthera* and of the present species must be alike, is groundless, as young of both species are represented in the Tring Museum. Nevertheless, I now agree that there is not sufficient reason to query the name of Linnæus, which has also been adopted in the *American O.U. Check-List*."—E. H.

Add—

433A. *Larus fuscus affinis* Reinhardt. — THE BRITISH LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL.

See *Brit. B.*, VI., pp. 2-7 and p. 360.

The distribution of 433 *Larus f. fuscus* as given in the *Hand-List* must of course be altered. So far there are only a few definite records of its occurrence in Great Britain, and 433A is of course the form which breeds in the British Isles.

452. *Chlamydotis undulata macqueenii* (Gray and Hardw.)

instead of *Houbara u. macqueenii* (Gray and Hardw.). It is stated in the *B.O.U. List* (1915, p. 388) that *Houbara Bonaparte* is a *nomen nudum* and therefore cannot be used.

463. *Lyrurus tetrrix britannicus* Witherby and Lönnberg.—THE BRITISH BLACK GROUSE

instead of *Lyrurus tetrrix tetrrix* (L.). See *British Birds*, VI., p. 270.

NOTES ON THE BREEDING-HABITS OF THE
GREY PHALAROPE.

BY

MAUD D. HAVILAND.

TWENTY miles to the north of Golchika on the River Yenesei, Siberia, where the two promontories of Och Marina and Sopochnaya stretch out across the mouth of the river like the claws of a gigantic crab, I first saw the Grey Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) at midnight on June 30th, 1914. The sun was shining on the snows that still covered the tundra, and under the lee of the shore the shallows were packed with hissing, grinding cakes of ice, white or golden, according as to whether the rime or the sunshine reached their blue edges first. Just then, half-a-dozen Grey Phalarope came whirling over the river—five birds in ardent pursuit of a sixth which doubled away from them. The flash of their red breasts over the sun-lit ice made the eye blink at the riot of colour of the wonderful northern day-in-night, and by the time that I had done blinking, the birds had hurried past me and disappeared over the tundra.

This is, of course, a wholly frivolous and even futile record, but I have given it place, partly because it has stuck in my memory as a mental snapshot of curious distinctness, and partly because that was the only time that I ever saw the Grey Phalarope in a hurry. In the breeding-season, at least, this species seems to have none of the fractious intolerance and ardour of courtship that may be observed in the Red-necked Phalarope on the Yenesei.

On June 30th, numbers of Grey Phalarope were to be seen feeding together in the marshes at Golchika, and the sexes waded quietly side by side, in little parties of half-a-dozen birds. By July 2nd most of these birds had disappeared, most probably to continue their

journey northwards. It has been remarked (*antea*, Vol. VIII., p. 183) that the summer was a late one on the Lower Yenesei, and this, I think, accounts for the fact that this species was tolerably common on the middle of the estuary. It has only once previously been recorded to breed at Golchika—in 1895, by Mr. H. L. Popham, who found one nest (*Ibis* 1897). The same ornithologist did not observe it in his visit in 1897, and neither did Seeborn in 1877 (*Birds of Siberia*).



Fig. 1. FEMALE GREY PHALAROPE IN THE MARSH, YENESEI, 1914.
(Photographed by Maud D. Haviland.)

I found the first nest on Golchika Island early in July. My attention was called to it by the male bird, which flew round uneasily. Even when the nesting-ground is invaded, this Phalarope is very quiet and not very demonstrative. He flits round the intruder with a peculiar silent flight, rather like a big red moth, while he utters his chirruping alarm note—*zhit zhit*. This call is shriller than that of *Phalaropus lobatus*, and quite recognisable where the two species breed side by side. I sat down on a log of driftwood, and in about half-an-hour was able to flush the bird from four fresh eggs.

This nest, however, was not placed very well for photography, for about fifty yards away was a turf hut, which a Russian family had just taken possession of for the summer, and I dared not leave the hiding tent or apparatus near the spot. On the following day I was more fortunate, and found a nest which was also on the island but about half a verst away. It was in rather a dryer situation than the last, but like all the nests of this species that I saw, the eggs lay on quite a substantial



Fig. 2. NEST OF GREY PHALAROPE, YENESEI, JULY, 1914.

(*Photographed by Maud D. Haviland.*)

platform of dead grass. In other cases the sites were so wet that the bird must have been sitting actually in water—and the photographer would have had to do likewise! In the photograph, the grass has been parted in order to show the eggs, but before this was done they were screened as carefully as the eggs of a Redshank or Reeve.

I pitched the tent at once, and went in to hide. The male Phalarope stood on a tussock about twenty yards away and watched attentively. I should not thus have tackled the nest of any other Wader, but I relied upon

the confidence and simplicity of the Phalarope, and I did not rely upon them in vain. In about twenty minutes I caught sight of the bird creeping round the tent, and a few minutes later he settled down upon the eggs. In this, my first glimpse of a Grey Phalarope at close quarters, two points struck me forcibly. One was the apparent extraordinary length of the bird. The single pair of legs in the middle seemed quite insufficient to support so long a body, and with his quaint perky gait, it seemed as if the bird swayed to and fro upon cee-springs as he walked. The other was the peculiar harmony of the colour of the mantle with the grass around, bleached or blackened by snow and thaw. The long, blade-like form of the secondary feathers, and the buff longitudinal shoulder bands seemed to emphasize the scheme until the bird was almost indistinguishable from his surroundings. This curious, streaky, wiry appearance is perhaps indicated in Fig. 3, though, of course, the help of the beautiful colour-values is lost in a reproduction in monochrome. "Oh, for an autochrome plate!" said I, as the bird cuddled down, and sat there motionless hour after hour.

It was a matter of monotonous ease to photograph the Phalarope on his eggs. Two or three times I was obliged to show myself in order to re-arrange the tent. Each time he ran off the nest and stood waiting a few yards away until I was hidden again, and then he came back at once. All day he incubated the eggs by himself, and the female never came near the place. Towards evening I wanted to pack up the camera, and by way of driving the bird from the nest I flipped a bit of moss at him from the tent. This had the desired effect, but as he strolled away doubtfully, a second piece fell right into the nest. Taking no notice of the strange upheavals in the tent, the plucky little fellow ran back at once, and I took a final photograph of him as he solicitously picked the moss off his precious eggs.



Fig. 3. MALE GREY PHALAROPE ON THE NEST, SHOWING, THE HARMONIZATION OF THE STREAKED PLUMAGE WITH THE BACKGROUND OF GRASS.

(*Photographed by Maud D. Haviland.*)

Altogether I found five nests of this species—two on the Golehika Island and three in the marshes on the mainland. It seems as if both male and female unite to care for the young, and when the breeding-ground is approached they fly around and call anxiously. The Grey Phalarope breeds comparatively late, for eggs very slightly incubated were found on July 11th. This was probably owing to the flooded state of the marshes. Nevertheless, because the young broods fledge with



Fig. 4. MALE GREY PHALAROPE CLEARING THE EGGS.
(*Photographed by Maud D. Haviland.*)

strange rapidity, the Grey Phalaropes were the first of all birds to leave the district. There was no flocking, no preliminary flights over the river to advertise their movements. They just disappeared at the beginning of August, and by the 5th of the month there was not a bird to be seen. The early departure of this species is curious, because the Red-necked Phalarope, which is apparently identical with it in habits, food and haunts, remained common until the end of August.

THE LATE LEWIS N. G. RAMSAY.

THE present war finds many of the younger students of British ornithology serving in some branch of His Majesty's Forces, and it is only fitting that the fullest tribute should be paid to the memory of those who lay down their lives for their country and that the fullest acknowledgment should be made of the value of their unfinished scientific labours. Ornithologists have cause to mourn the loss of one most enthusiastic fellow worker in Lewis Neil Griffith Ramsay, M.A., B.Sc., who, although only twenty-five years of age, had already much good work to his name.

Mr. Ramsay was born at Aberdeen on 3rd February, 1890, the second son of Professor Sir William M. Ramsay. He was educated at Merchiston School, Edinburgh, and afterwards studied at Aberdeen University and later at Christ's College, Cambridge, and at the Imperial College of Science. He graduated M.A. at Aberdeen in 1910, and B.Sc. in 1913, and was about to submit a piece of research work for his Cambridge B.A. During 1914 he acted as Assistant to the Professor of Natural History at Aberdeen, and shortly before the outbreak of war he had been made a Beit Memorial Fellow and was about to take up work at the Imperial College.

From an early age Mr. Ramsay had been a keen student of birds and he had amassed a great amount of data regarding the ornithology of Aberdeenshire. On the more technical side may be mentioned his notes on the moult of the Herring-Gull and on the collections made by the Scottish National Antarctic Expedition. He himself had travelled considerably and had made valuable collections not only of birds but also of mammals, insects, and botanical specimens in various places, notably in Asia Minor in the summer of 1907. In addition to his work on birds, Mr. Ramsay has left unfinished a "Revision of the Nereidæ," a piece of work which was expected by competent judges who knew its substance to become a classical paper on that group of marine worms. Latterly he had turned to Entomology with a view to studying it from the economic side.

He was liked and respected by all with whom he came in contact. He was conspicuous for the enthusiasm which he displayed in everything he took up, whether scientific work, hill-climbing, or athletics. Among other things he had been a keen volunteer and Territorial. Early in September last he rejoined his old unit, the 4th Battalion Gordon Highlanders (T.F.), becoming a sergeant. Later he became

a Second-Lieutenant in the 3rd (Special Reserve) Battalion of the same regiment, and in December was sent to the 2nd Battalion at the front. It was on 21st March that he met his death in the region of Neuve Chapelle.

The following is a list of his published scientific papers :—

- Note on Garganey in Aberdeenshire [with A. L. T.] *Ann. Scot. N. H.*, 1907, p. 248.
- Note on Gadwall in Aberdeenshire [with A. L. T.] *A.S.N.H.*, 1908, p. 184.
- Probable Breeding of Blue-headed Wagtails near Aberdeen. *A.S.N.H.*, 1908, p. 253.
- Note on Spotted Redshank in "Dee," *A.S.N.H.*, 1910, p. 249.
- Note on Supposed Occurrence of Grasshopper Warbler in "Dee" [with A. G. D.], *Scot. Nat.*, 1911, p. 116.
- Note on Mealy Redpoles in Aberdeenshire. *S.N.*, 1911, p. 182.
- On the Moults of the Herring-Gull and other Species, *S.N.*, 1913, p. 100.
- Note on the Oviposition of *Rhyssa* (*Entomologist*, 1914, pp. 20-22).
- Observations on Bird-Life on the Anatolian Plateau during the Summer of 1907, *Ibis*, 1914, p. 368.
- Sections II, III, IV, VIII, X, XI, XII and XIII of *The Ornithology of the Scottish National Antarctic Expedition*, 1902-4.
- On the Genera *Ceratocephale* Malmgren and *Tylorhynchus* Grube (*P.Z.S.*, 1914, pp. 231-235).
- On the Annelids of the Family Nereidæ collected by Mr. F. A. Potts in the North-East Pacific in 1911, with a note on the Morphology of *Mieronercis* as a Representative of the Ancestral Type of the Nereidæ (*P.Z.S.*, 1914, pp. 237-250).
- Polychæta of the Family Nereidæ collected by the Scottish National Antarctic Expedition, 1902-4 (*Trans. R.S.E.*, 1914, Vol. I., Pt. I., No. 3, pp. 41-48).

It is to be hoped, further, that some of Mr. Ramsay's other work may in due course be completed for publication.

A. L. T.

RECOVERY OF MARKED BIRDS.

THE following have kindly sent in subscriptions towards the expenses of the Marking Scheme since the last acknowledgment was made : Messrs. C. F. Archibald, J. S. Allison, J. Bartholomew, R. O. Blyth, W. Davies, Miss M. Garnett, London Natural History Society, Capt. W. F. Mackenzie, Mr. A. Mayall, Dr. H. J. Moon, and Mr. J. H. Owen.

STARLING (*Sturnus v. vulgaris*).—Three adults, marked by Mr. T. C. Hobbs at Gosforth, Northumberland, in Jan., 1913. Recovered at the same place in Oct. and Nov., 1914, and Jan., 1915.

Three adults marked as above in Nov., 1913. Recovered at same place in Oct. and Dec., 1914.

46258, immature, marked by Mr. W. E. Suggitt at Cleethorpes, Lincolnshire, on Aug. 8th, 1913. Reported by Mr. R. Giddings at Tilshead, Wiltshire, on Oct. 30th, 1914.

46287, marked as 46258. Reported by Mr. H. B. Wildsmith at Cleethorpes in Feb., 1915.

6190, adult, marked by Mr. H. W. Robinson at Aldcliffe, Lancaster, on May 18th, 1914. Reported at the same place in middle of Sept., 1914.

20753, nestling, marked as 6190 on May 23rd, 1911. Recovered at the same place in first week of Dec., 1914.

11956, adult, marked by Mr. N. H. Joy at Bradfield, Berkshire, on Jan. 27th, 1911. Caught and released at same place on Jan. 12th, 1912, and reported by Mr. A. E. J. Clark at Sulham, near Pangbourne, Berkshire, on April 5th, 1914.

15447, marked as 11956 on Dec. 12th, 1911. Reported by Mr. W. H. May at Twyford, Berkshire, July 4th, 1914.

15823 and 15997, marked as 11956 on Jan. 8th and 9th, 1912. Reported by Mr. E. C. Denis de Vitre at Hampstead Norris, Newbury, Berkshire, on Jan. 11th and April 10th, 1915.

16583, marked as 11956 on Feb. 4th, 1912. Reported by Mr. R. Poulton at Beenham, Berkshire, on Nov. 14th, 1914.

16483, marked as 11956 on Feb. 5th, 1912. Reported by Miss A. L. Millson at Bucklebury, near Reading, on June 27th, 1914.

16452, marked as 11956 on Feb. 7th, 1912. Reported by the Rev. A. J. P. Shepherd at Sulhamstead, Reading, on April 6th, 1914.

41090, nestling, marked as 11956 on June 20th, 1913. Reported by Mr. J. Cullom at Basingstoke, Hampshire, on Feb. 11th, 1915.

19811, nestling, marked as 11956 on July 25th, 1912. Caught at same place on Feb. 9th, 1915, and re-marked. Four nestlings, marked as 11956 in May and June, 1913. Caught at the same place in Nov., 1914, and Feb., 1915, and marked again.

Three adults, marked as 11956 in Jan., 1911. Caught at the same place in Nov., 1914, and marked again.

7510, marked as 11956 on Jan. 15th, 1911. Caught again at the same place on Jan. 5th, 9th, Feb. 4th, 1912, and Nov. 15th, 1914.

11894, marked as 11956 on Feb. 1st, 1911. Caught at the same place on Jan. 29th, 1912, and again on Feb. 21st, 1915.

11935, marked as 11956 on Feb. 1st, 1911. Caught at same place on Jan. 10th, 1912, and Nov. 14th, 1914.

Three adults marked as 11956 in Jan. and Feb., 1912. Caught at same place in Oct. and Nov., 1914, and marked again.

Two adults marked as 11956 in Nov. and Dec., 1912. Caught at same place in Nov., 1914, and re-marked.

Three adults marked as 11956 on Jan. 22nd, 1913. Caught at same place in Nov., 1914, and re-marked.

83913, adult, marked by Mr. R. Burnier at Bradfield, Berkshire, on Oct. 18th, 1914. Reported by Mr. W. Salmon at Wembley Park, Middlesex, on Jan. 5th, 1915. Ring replaced and bird released.

6882, adult, marked by Miss M. Garnett at Windermere, Westmorland, on May 8th, 1911. Reported by Miss L. Sykes at the same place on March 6th, 1915.

18848, nestling, marked by Mr. H. W. Ford-Lindsay at Pett, Sussex, on May 12th, 1912. Recovered at the same place on March 11th, 1915.

41325, adult, marked by Dr. H. J. Moon at The Fylde, Lancashire, on May 30th, 1913. Reported by Mr. F. Gillett at St. Anne's-on-Sea on April 8th, 1914.

48153, nestling, marked by Mr. M. Portal at Hexham, Northumberland, on June 28th, 1914. Recovered at the same place on Nov. 26th, 1914.

GREENFINCH (*Chloris ch. chloris*).—T798, adult, marked by Mr. J. Bartholomew at Torrance, near Glasgow, Stirlingshire, on Dec. 15th, 1913. Reported by Mr. T. Newton at Bishopsbriggs, near Glasgow, on Dec. 22nd, 1914.

W338, nestling, marked as T798 on June 1st, 1914. Reported by Mr. A. McCallum at Bishopsbriggs, near Glasgow, about Jan. 30th, 1915.

CHAFFINCH (*Fringilla c. cælebs*).—H543, adult, marked as T798 on Jan. 17th, 1912. Caught at the same place on Dec. 7th, 1914, and marked again with W429.

REED-BUNTING (*Emberiza s. schoeniclus*).—H65, nestling, marked by Mr. A. G. Leigh at Hampton-in-Arden, Warwickshire, on May 28th, 1913. Reported by Mr. C. Cooper near Birmingham on Nov. 22nd, 1914.

GREAT TIT (*Parus m. newtoni*).—S111, nestling, marked by Mrs. Patteson at Limpsfield, Surrey, on May 24th, 1914. Reported by Mr. S. Kendall Barnes between Orpington and Down, Kent, at the end of Aug., 1914.

BLUE TIT (*Parus c. obscurus*).—L233, adult, marked by the London Natural History Society at Woodford Green, Essex, on Oct. 6th, 1912. Reported by Mr. J. C. Crowther at the same place on Dec. 29th, 1914.

0767, nestling, marked by Mr. J. R. B. Masfield at Cheadle, Staffordshire, on June 13th, 1913. Caught about one mile away on Jan. 5th, 1915.

MISTLE-THRUSH (*Turdus v. viscivorus*).—46824, adult, marked by Mr. T. C. Hobbs at Gosforth, Northumberland, on Dec. 2nd, 1913. Reported by Mr. T. Watson at the same place on April 1st, 1915.

BRITISH SONG-THRUSH (*Turdus ph. clarkei*).—45571, nestling, marked by Dr. H. J. Moon at The Fylde, Lancashire, on April 14th, 1914. Reported at Pontillado, Spain, on Nov. 18th, 1914.

47624, marked as 45571 on April 1st, 1914. Reported by Mr. R. Murray at Knockerocherry, co. Roscommon, on Dec. 22nd, 1914.

81104, marked as 45571 on July 2nd, 1914. Reported by Mr. W. J. Lewes near Blackpool, Lancashire, on Nov. 20th, 1914.

47414, marked as 45571 on April 28th, 1914. Reported by Mr. H. Jones at Blackpool on Feb. 22nd, 1915.

45081, marked as 45571 on June 22nd, 1913. Reported by Mr. P. Marginson at Fleetwood, Lancashire, on Feb. 20th, 1915.

45452, nestling, marked as 45571 on April 22nd, 1914. Reported by Mr. R. Harrison near Preston, Lancs., on April 14th, 1915.

19589, nestling, marked by Mr. C. F. Archibald at Rusland, Lancashire, on May 17th, 1913. Reported

by Mr. C. Forster at Ambleside, Westmorland, on March 11th, 1915.

14329, nestling, marked by Mr. J. Bartholomew at Torrance, near Glasgow, Stirlingshire, on June 6th, 1911. Reported by Mr. J. McCorriskien at Cadder, near Glasgow, on Jan. 16th, 1915.

41115, adult, marked by Mr. T. A. Coward at Bowdon, Cheshire, on Jan. 28th, 1913. Caught at the same place on Nov. 30th, 1914.

BLACKBIRD (*Turdus m. merula*).—49549, adult, marked by Mr. T. C. Hobbs at Rock, near Alnwick, Northumberland, on Aug. 13th, 1914. Reported by Mr. J. Worsley at Longton, near Preston, Lancashire, on Jan. 20th, 1915. 19089, adult female, marked by Miss C. M. Aeland at Banstead, Surrey, on April 27th, 1913. Recovered at the same place early in Feb., 1915.

S2, nestling, marked by Mr. J. Bartholomew at Torrance, near Glasgow, Stirlingshire, on June 26th 1913. Caught at the same place on Dec. 12th, 1914.

G391, nestling, marked by Mr. H. W. Robinson at St. Mary's, Scilly Isles, on May 30th, 1914. Reported by Mr. J. Barrett at the same place on Dec. 25th, 1914.

48885, nestling, marked by Dr. H. J. Moon at Lytham, Lancashire, on May 12th, 1914. Reported by Mr. R. M. Whitehead at the same place on Jan. 19th, 1915.

44830, nestling, marked by Mr. H. W. Ford-Lindsay at Pett, Sussex, on May 24th, 1914. Recovered at the same place on Feb. 27th, 1915.

WHINCHAT (*Saxicola r. rubetra*).—Y239, nestling, marked by Dr. H. J. Moon at Ingleton, Yorkshire, on June 15th, 1914. Reported by Mr. W. C. Tait near Loulé, Portugal, on Oct. 4th, 1914.

BRITISH REDBREAST (*Erithacus r. melophilus*).—H908, nestling, marked by Mr. N. H. Joy at Bradfield, Berkshire, on May 13th, 1912. Reported by Dr. E. D. van Oort at Rockanje on the island of Voorne, Zuid-Holland, between Nov. 15th and 20th, 1914.

U379, nestling, marked by Mr. A. E. Aldous at Barten Mill, Suffolk, on June 5th, 1914. Reported by Mr. C. Boreham at Mildenhall, Suffolk, on Feb. 12th, 1915.

N639, adult, marked by Mr. P. A. Buxton at Fairhill, Tonbridge, Kent, on Dec. 30th, 1913. Caught at the same place on March 20th, 1915, and again released.

(To be continued.)

OCCURRENCES OF COMMON AND BLACK RED- STARTS AT LIGHT-STATIONS IN IRELAND.

As the frequency, distribution and dates of arrival of Redstarts in Ireland are imperfectly known, I have prepared the following list of light-stations, and the dates on which the birds were killed at each.

All the specimens were forwarded to me, and are now in my collection.

It will be observed from the following tables that the earliest date for the Common Redstart is April 22nd, and the latest, November 19th.

For the Black Redstart, the earliest is September 19th, and the latest June 15th.

Most Common Redstarts were killed in September and October, and nearly all the Black Redstarts were killed in October and November.

Twenty-one Common Redstarts were sent from the east coast, eight from the south, and three each from the north and west respectively.

Thirty-five Black Redstarts were killed on the south coast, thirty on the east, twelve on the west, and three on the north.

Altogether thirty-five Common Redstarts and eighty Black Redstarts were forwarded—twenty-six Common Redstarts were killed striking and thirty-two Black; the remainder were either shot, caught, or found dead.

COMMON REDSTARTS.

Date.	How Procured.	Station.	Specimen.
7. 9.96	Caught striking ..	Fastnet	Leg and Wing
5.10.87	Caught alive ..	„	Skin
20. 9.09	<i>Two</i> killed striking	Old Head Kinsale	„
22. 9.09	Killed striking ..	„	„
29. 9.13	„ ..	„	„
17.10.10	Caught at light ..	„	Leg and Wing
2.10.10	Killed striking ..	Coningbeg ..	„
5. 5.91	„ ..	Tuskar	„
18. 9.00	„ ..	„	„
24. 9.98	Found dead ..	Blackwater ..	„
24. 4.86	Shot	Rockabill	Stuffed
30. 4.89	Caught	„	„
4. 5.08	Killed striking ..	„	Skin
7. 5.94	„	„	„
9. 5.85	Caught	„	Stuffed
-. 5.08	Found dead ..	„	Leg and Wing

Date.	How Procured.	Station.	Specimen.
1. 9.13	Killed striking ..	Rockabill ..	Skin
7. 9.13	" ..	" ..	Leg and Wing
28. 9.08	" ..	" ..	"
2. 10.08	<i>Two</i> ..	" ..	"
6. 10.10	<i>Two</i> ..	" ..	Skins
20. 10.08	Killed striking ..	" ..	"
26. 10.08	" ..	" ..	Leg and Wing
19. 10.11	" ..	St. John's, Down	Skin
19. 11.11	" ..	" ..	"
1. 5.08	" ..	Maidens ..	"
8. 11.91	" ..	Killybegs ..	"
22. 4.01	" ..	Inishtrahull ..	"
28. 4.97	" ..	" ..	"
5. 5.96	" ..	" ..	"
28. 10.08	" ..	North Aran ..	Leg and Wing
13. 9.91	Shot ..	Blackrock, Mayo	Stuffed

BLACK REDSTARTS.

25. 3.10	<i>Four</i> killed striking	Fastnet ..	Skins
19. 9.09	Killed striking ..	Fastnet ..	Leg and Wing
8. 10.10	" ..	" ..	"
13. 10.97	Caught striking ..	" ..	"
19. 10.87	Caught ..	" ..	Skin
20. 10.88	Caught ..	Fastnet ..	"
29. 10.88	Died from exhaustion	" ..	Leg and Wing
30. 10.04	Caught striking ..	" ..	"
2. 11.97	Caught ..	" ..	"
21. 1.11	<i>Three</i> Shot ..	Old Head of Kinsale	Legs & Wings
8. 4.10	Killed striking ..	" ..	"
2. 4.11	" ..	" ..	"
19. 10.10	<i>Two</i> Shot ..	" ..	Skins
23. 10.10	<i>Two</i> ..	" ..	Legs & Wings
25. 10.10	" ..	" ..	"
28. 10.10	" ..	" ..	"
29. 10.10	Shot ..	Old Head of Kinsale	Leg and Wing
30. 10.10	<i>Two</i> Shot ..	" ..	"
14. 11.05	Chased by hawk ..	" ..	"
23. 10.93	?	Ballycottin ..	"
29. 10.10	?	" ..	"
5. 11.02	Killed striking ..	Mine Head ..	"
18. 11.85	Shot ..	" ..	Stuffed
27. 4.97	" ..	Dungarvan ..	"
30. 3.11	Killed striking ..	Tuskar ..	Leg and Wing
27. 4. ?	?	" ..	"
15. 10.11	Caught exhausted	" ..	"
15. 10.12	" ..	" ..	"
17. 10.14	Killed striking ..	" ..	"
23. 10.95	Died on rock ..	" ..	Skin
1st week			
11.86	Caught ..	" ..	Leg and Wing
3. 11.14	Caught in kitchen	" ..	"
1st week			
11.01	Killed striking ..	" ..	"
3. 11.01	" ..	" ..	"
4. 11.01	" ..	" ..	"

Date.	How Procured.	Station.	Specimen.
7.11.01	Killed striking ..	Tuskar ..	Leg and Wing
8.11.01	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..
10.11.98	.. ..	.. ..	Skin ..
16.11.98	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..
Received			
21.11.97	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..
16. 3.99	Found on deck ..	Blackwater ..	.. ..
2.11.12	.. ..	.. ..	Leg and Wing
18. 3.99	Died on deck ..	Coningbeg ..	Skin
23.10.87	Killed striking ..	Arklow South ..	Leg and Wing
15.11.12	Found dead ..	.. ..	.. ..
13.11.02	? ..	Dunbur ..	Stuffed
28.10.99	Shot ..	Wicklow Head ..	Leg and Wing
Received			
1.11.99	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..
4.11.10	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..
6. 5.07	Caught ..	Rockabill ..	.. ..
2.10.08	Killed striking ..	.. ..	.. ..
30.10.07	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..
21.11.85	Shot ..	.. ..	Stuffed
16.12.11	Caught ..	Drogheda N. ..	Leg and Wing
20.11.08	.. ..	Maidens ..	.. ..
22. 4.01	Killed striking ..	Inishtrahull ..	Skin
26. 4.98	.. ..	.. ..	Leg and Wing
20.10.87	Shot ..	Tearaght ..	.. ..
21.10.05	.. ..	Tory Island ..	.. ..
18. 1.09	.. ..	Poer Head ..	Leg and Wing
24. 1.07	.. ..	.. ..	Skin
20.10.87	Killed striking ..	Skelligs ..	.. ..
23.10.87	Found dead ..	.. ..	Leg and Wing
26.10.13	? ..	.. ..	.. ..
31.10.14	Found dead ..	.. ..	.. ..
13.11.84	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..
16.11.84	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..
20.10.87	Shot ..	Tearaght ..	.. ..
21. 1.03	Killed striking ..	Bull Rock ..	.. ..
15. 6.03	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..
5.11.04	Found dead ..	.. ..	.. ..
7.12.01	Caught ..	.. ..	.. ..
8.11.12	.. ..	Eagle Island ..	Skin

R. M. BARRINGTON.



NOTES

SNOW-BUNTING IN PEMBROKESHIRE.

THE occurrence of a Snow-Bunting (*Plectrophenax n. nivalis*) in Pembrokeshire is so unusual that I think it is worth recording that I had a splendid view of an example of this species on April 27th, 1914. It was extremely tame and the locality was a short distance from the sea at St. Ann's Head, Milford Haven.

W. M. CONGREVE.

STATUS OF GREY WAGTAIL IN BERKSHIRE.

THIS species may now be ranked as a resident in Berkshire. I first found it nesting with us in 1898. Since then it has increased its range and now breeds regularly in suitable localities along the Thames, Kennet and Loddon, its original single station having increased to about ten to my knowledge, and I have little doubt that others unknown to me exist.

H. M. WALLIS.

PIED WAGTAILS NESTING ON THE GROUND.

WHEN staying in Norfolk recently, I was rather puzzled to account for the presence of several pairs of Pied Wagtails (*Motacilla a. lugubris*) among the sandhills, a long distance from any very obviously suitable nesting-site.

I presently found a nest, lined with rabbit-fur, and containing five fresh eggs, built absolutely on the ground in the sand among the dunes, with a tuft of maram grass hanging over. I think that if I had cared to prolong the search, at least another nest or two would have been found in the sandhills, and one of the wildfowlers told me he found a Wagtail's nest in a similar situation last year, containing young birds.

CLIFFORD BORRER.

MISTLE-THRUSH SINGING ON THE WING.

REFERRING to Mr. N. H. Foster's note on this subject (Vol. VIII., p. 292), I had never heard a Mistle-Thrush sing on the wing until March 5th, 1911, when one flew singing over my head in Burnham Beeches. I have since heard this song uttered on the wing in the same district, possibly by the same bird. Yarrell mentions that the song "is said to be occasionally uttered on the wing," and one or two writers record that they have so heard it (*e.g.* Mr. J. Whitaker in *Notes on the Birds of Nottinghamshire*, and the late Mr. R. J.

Ussher in Ussher and Warren's *Birds of Ireland*). But the habit cannot be at all common. Macgillivray, whose *British Birds* contains perhaps the best account of this species ever published, after saying that "several individuals have heard it sing when flying from one place to another," adds "on such occasions I have only heard it utter its harsh scream."

A. HOLTE MACPHERSON.

MISTLE-THRUSH AND BLACKBIRD SINGING ON THE WING.

I HAVE only once heard the Mistle-Thrush singing on the wing and considering the occurrence unusual I made a note of the date—30th March, 1913. On April 30th, 1915, only a few days before reading Mr. Nevin H. Foster's note, I heard for the first time a Blackbird singing when in flight. He had been in song at the top of a tree just previously and continued his song as he flew to another close by. From my own experience I should say that these two instances are vagaries, perhaps connected with exceptional excitement during the breeding-season. Has anyone ever tried to explain why some species, e.g. the Sky-Lark, Tree-Pipit, and Common Whitethroat usually sing when in flight? E. W. HENDY.

WRENS LAYING IN YEAR-OLD NESTS.

REFERRING to my note in *British Birds*, Vol. VIII., p. 98, concerning the probability of Wrens laying in nests built in a previous year, the following record is interesting. I marked seven "cocks' nests" last season as carefully as I could with the intention of visiting them this year and definitely proving or disproving my theory, and with very fairly conclusive results. One nest I have, I regret to say, been unable to find: one remains, as yet, as it was last spring, compact and dry but unlined: two have met with disaster, one having apparently fallen to pieces and the other been pulled out entirely from an overgrown stump; of the remaining three, two now contain sets of six eggs and the third young birds. This record goes some way to prove that in at least a great number of cases twelve-months-old nests are lined and used.

LEWIS R. W. LOYD.

CURIOUS POSITION OF DIPPER'S NEST.

ON April 6th, 1915, I found the nest of a Dipper (*Cinclus c. britannicus*) on the river Morda, near Oswestry, Shropshire, completely out of sight in an old Sand-Martin's hole which

had been much enlarged inside. The nest was not nearly so bulky as usual and most of the moss exterior was missing. There was a small dome and the nest contained four fresh eggs. As incubation advanced the mouth of the hole got rather enlarged and very slippery, owing to the birds bringing wet when they alighted. The entrance to the nest was about six inches up the hole.

J. H. OWEN.

SNIPES LAYING FIVE EGGS.

ON April 21st, 1915, I found in Denbighshire several nests of Snipe (*Gallinago g. gallinago*), one of which contained two fresh eggs. I revisited this nest on April 25th, and was very surprised to find that it contained five eggs. Judging by the similarity of the eggs they seemed to be the produce of one bird. On this day the eggs were arranged at various angles, but when I next looked at the nest later in the month the five eggs were all turned with their points inwards as is usual in normal clutches of four. I think, however, this arrangement is unusual in cases of five eggs in Limicoline birds. I have seen two sets of five eggs in Lapwings' nests, and in each case four eggs were pointed inwards and the fifth was outside the square.

J. H. OWEN.

BLACK TERNS IN MONMOUTHSHIRE.

ON May 9th, 1915, I saw a Black Tern (*Hydrochelidon n. nigra*) at the Yns-y-fro Reservoir, near Newport. It was apparently catching insects, flying across the lake against the wind to do so, and then quickly returning to the lee side to repeat its flight. It did not touch the water while I watched it.

I have also seen a second specimen shot on 30th April, 1912, while hawking over a pond on the northern boundary of the county near Beaufort.

A Turnstone (*Arenaria i. interpres*) was shot on Yns-y-fro Reservoir on 7th inst., after feeding there all day. Distance from the sea 4 miles.

R. C. BANKS.

UNRECORDED IVORY-GULL FROM ORKNEY.

HOWARD SAUNDERS, in his *Manual of British Birds*, states that the Ivory-Gull (*Pagophila eburnea*) has occurred four times in Orkney, and about thirty-five times in all in Great Britain. Mr. Thomas Ground, of Birmingham, writes me that he has in his collection an adult specimen, sex unknown, which was shot at Holm, Orkney, on or about April 1st, 1895, and forwarded to him through the late Jimmy Sutherland, of Stromness. It was observed, on or about

that date, feeding on a dead shark at the pier of Holm by one Flett, who got a man named John Woodridge to shoot it for him. It was first set up by the late John Begg, of Stromness, and later by Cullingford, of Durham. This makes the fifth record for Orkney.

H. W. ROBINSON.

[The Ivory-Gull is stated to have occurred four times in the Orkneys by Gray (*Birds of West Scotland*), and this is probably the origin of Howard Saunders's statement, but at least three additional records of birds shot, besides two seen, are mentioned by Buckley and Harvie-Brown (*Fauna of Orkney Islands*).—EDS.]

LITTLE AUK IN CORNWALL.

ON January 29th, 1915, I saw a Little Auk (*Alle alle*) at Penzance. It was stranded on the beach a few yards from the water's edge, and I could, I believe, have touched it as the bird could only move a few inches at a time. Stupidly enough, I did not think of trying to ring it, but only approached to within a few feet. This caused it to try and reach the water, which it with great difficulty succeeded in doing, and then swam away. I believe it to be rather rare to see these birds on the south-west coast.

MAUD MONTAGU BRUCE.

CARRION-CROW IN CO. WEXFORD.—Mr. W. J. Williams records (*Irish Nat.*, 1915, p. 91) that he saw a *Corvus corone* and heard its unmistakable note at the North Slob, co. Wexford, on February 15th, 1915.

ROSE-COLOURED STARLING IN BEDFORDSHIRE.—Mr. J. Steele Elliott states (*Zool.*, 1915, p. 118) that he has recently examined an adult male *Pastor roseus* which was picked up dead near Thurleigh in October, 1913.

PIED FLYCATCHER OFF WEXFORD.—An example of *Muscicapula h. hypoleuca* is recorded by Professor C. J. Patten (*Irish Nat.*, 1915, p. 64) as having struck the Tuskar Lighthouse on August 16th, 1914. There are only some twelve previous occurrences for Ireland.

MONTAGU'S HARRIER IN CO. DUBLIN.—A young male *Circus pygargus* is stated by the Hon. C. Baring (*Irish Nat.*, 1915, p. 70) to have "met death by misadventure in August 1909" on Lambay Island, co. Dublin.

COMMON EIDER IN DONEGAL.—Although rarely notified, occasional visits of Eiders (*Somateria m. mollissima*) to the

north of Ireland are probably not infrequent (*cf. Brit. B.*, VII., p. 196). Professor C. J. Patten records (*Irish Nat.*, 1915, p. 79) the presence of two examples (probably young birds) off Inishtrahull on Sept. 8th, 1913.

FORK-TAILED PETREL IN WORCESTERSHIRE.—Mr. T. Ground records (*Zool.*, 1915, p. 115) that an example of *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* was picked up dead near Evesham on September 19th, 1914. Mr. Ground suggests that this may possibly have been the same bird recorded by Mr. Forrest (*Brit. B.*, VIII., p. 198) near Shrewsbury on the 18th.

INCREASE OF FULMAR PETREL IN CO. KERRY.—Mr. R. M. Barrington, who announced the breeding of twelve pairs of *Fulmarus g. glacialis* at the Great Skellig in 1913 (*antea*, Vol. VII., p. 56), now states (*Irish Nat.*, 1915, p. 91) that there were some seventy birds at this place in 1914.



REVIEWS

British Birds. Written and illustrated by A. Thorburn, F.Z.S., with 80 plates in colour. $13 \times 10\frac{1}{2}$ inches. 4 Vols. £6 6s. net. (Longmans.) Vol. I. 1915.

To issue the first volume of so large a work as this just now would seem a bold policy, but Mr. Thorburn's paintings are deservedly popular and there is much to admire in the beautiful plates in this volume. The plan of the work is to illustrate on the same plate, without undue crowding, as many species as possible of the same family and drawn to the same scale. Mr. Thorburn has managed this by employing a tinted background over the whole plate, on which he has placed the different species, each with a little setting of its own more or less appropriate to its natural habitat. By this plan a large number of species are illustrated in a comparatively small space and a comparison of closely-allied species can easily be made. On the other hand, as the book does not pretend to be of scientific importance, it must be judged chiefly from an artistic standpoint, and this plan, together with the absence of any margin (which should be regarded as a frame) give the plates the appearance of pages cut from a sketch-book. The sketches are nevertheless beautifully finished, and on the whole they are accurate and well reproduced.

Mr. Thorburn illustrates all the rare "stragglers," even the Siberian Thrush, which we do not consider to have a rightful claim to inclusion in the British list, and his figures are always drawn from adult birds in their most striking plumage. In some cases this is misleading, as for instance in the Yellow-breasted Bunting, where an adult male in summer is illustrated—a plumage in which the bird has never occurred in the British Isles. Mr. Thorburn has fought shy of subspecies and he includes neither of the Willow-Tits! It seems a pity to have missed this opportunity of illustrating those subspecies, at all events, which have well-marked colour differences, especially as the artist has been able to show very successfully the difference in the tone of coloration of the Reed- and Marsh-Warblers.

A page or so of letterpress is given for each species, but as Mr. Thorburn states, this is mostly a compilation, and his original intention was to produce a sketch-book of British birds. In this he has succeeded admirably, and every page of his sketch-book is well worth the closest scrutiny.—H.F.W.



LETTERS



BIRDS AND SHELL-FIRE.

To the Editors of BRITISH BIRDS.

SIRS,—I have lately been reading various articles in the papers regarding birds in the war-stricken parts of France, so I thought you might care to have a few of my personal observations on this subject.

I will first enumerate the birds I have actually seen. These include the House-Sparrow, Swallow, House-Martin, Chaffinch, Yellow-Hammer, Sky-Lark, Willow-Wren, Magpie, Kestrel and Wood-Pigeon. All of these I have seen flying about in front of our own and the French artillery during an artillery duel. The House-Sparrows continue to sit on the house-tops of this village (I cannot name it), which is about $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile from the French trenches, although the shells are continually knocking large holes in the roofs. So far I have only seen one of these birds killed at all.

Under the eaves of two of the cottages three pairs of House-Martins have already built their nests. (I may add that this village has had about twenty shells fired over and on it each day for the last two days. In fact it is only left standing because there are so many spies in it. We have caught three of them.)

A Magpie always seems to fly over our guns at about 9 a.m. each morning, while a Kestrel has appeared once.

Sky-Larks are continually up in the air, and are continually being mistaken at first sight for aeroplanes.

I heard a Willow-Wren at a point on a road about one mile east of Poperinghe. Swallows were also just on the outskirts of the same town. Chaffinches are quite numerous, and sing lustily when there is no cannonading. However, when lyddite shells are flying about, all the birds seem to realise that the ground is the only safe place for them, and accordingly they seek cover in the lowest parts of the hedges.

It is difficult to tell Wood-Pigeons sometimes from tame pigeons when they are at all high up. I think I have only seen one Wood-Pigeon, the rest are mostly pets kept by German gentlemen, one of whom, I may mention, was found in an attic here with six of his pets, and a note-book, and he swore he was English.

PATRICK A. CHUBB.

2ND K.O.Y.L.I., B.E.F., FRANCE.

April 30th, 1915.

BRITISH BIRDS

EDITED BY H. F. WITHERBY, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U.

ASSISTED BY

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NOTES ON THE MOULTS AND SEQUENCE OF PLUMAGES IN SOME BRITISH DUCKS.

BY

ANNIE C. JACKSON, HON. MEM. B.O.U.

THESE notes are based on an examination of the specimens in the Tring Museum, the Natural History Museum South Kensington, Mr. H. F. Witherby's collection and my own, of the following species:—Mallard (*Anas p. platyrhyncha*), Gadwall (*A. strepera*), Teal (*A. c. crecca*), American Green-winged Teal (*A. c. carolinensis*), American Blue-winged Teal (*A. discors*), Garganey (*A. querquedula*), Wigeon (*A. penelope*), American Wigeon (*A. americana*), Pintail (*A. acuta*), Shoveler (*Spatula clypeata*), Common Pochard (*Nyroca f. ferina*), Ferruginous Duck (*Nyroca nyroca*), Tufted Duck (*Nyroca fuligula*), Scaup-Duck (*Nyroca m. marila*). Owing to absence in many cases of material required I have been unable to follow out in every detail the sequence of the plumages and moults of all these species, but the facts elucidated during the course of my examination of this material seem of sufficient interest to warrant their being recorded without further delay.

The only work that I am aware of which deals with the sequence of plumages in the surface-feeding ducks is Mr. J. G. Millais's charming monograph of the group, viz., *The Natural History of British Surface-Feeding Ducks*. While appreciating the author's endeavours in the task of unravelling the changes of plumages and moult, I am unable to corroborate his views on the part played by "colour change." It will be remembered that Mr. Millais explains the assumption of various plumages, eclipse, winter, etc., by a moult in conjunction with colour change or repigmentation of the feather. The evidence derived from my examination of many skins and specimens in the flesh has firmly

convinced me that in the sequence of plumages in the ducks, "colour change" plays no part, and that the different plumages are simply and naturally acquired by a moult only. This is as one would have expected, especially after a perusal of Mr. R. M. Strong's valuable paper on the *Development of Colour in the Definitive Feather*, which demonstrates that all the histological conditions render the possibility of the repigmentation of the feather highly improbable.

Perhaps the most interesting fact I have to record is that female surface-feeding ducks in spring have a complete body-moult, the tail and inner secondaries also being involved. The down, too, is shed and replaced by the usual down, and in addition by a luxuriant down much longer and coarser than the ordinary down. Mr. Millais has apparently overlooked both these moults, and there seems to be no mention of them in literature. The fact that the female Long-tailed Duck moults its whitish winter down and acquires just before the breeding-season an almost black down was first discovered by Dr. E. Hartert, who told me about it. Subsequently I discovered that the females of the surface-feeding ducks and those of the genus *Nyroca* also acquired a special down just before the breeding-season. Female *Tadorna tadorna* also have a down moult in spring, but my investigations of the moults of this species are not yet complete. This down is evidently used for embedding the eggs in during incubation, and has been designated "nest down" by Dr. Hartert, a term I propose to use in describing it.

The only remark Mr. Millais makes about the spring moult of the female is as follows: of the adult female Mallard (*op. cit.*, p. 27) he says that "late in the spring (May, in fact) . . . there is sometimes a slight influx of new feathers on the breast, especially where the bird has heavily plucked herself of both down and feathers for the 'building up' of her nest. The whole plumage then (by means of a colour change) becomes much darker,

especially about the head, breast, and scapulars, and the spots, which in the winter were hidden under the feathers . . . work down to the surface." In dealing with the remaining species no reference at all is made to moult, though attention is called to changes by abrasion; *e.g.*, in referring to the spring plumage of the adult female Teal, p. 88, he says: "during the winter the breast is white, concealing the spots which work down and appear in the spring." In some cases while a change in the plumage is noted, no explanation is given of how this change is brought about, and the reader is left in doubt whether it is to be attributed or not to "colour change" as is more or less implied by the author. For example, of the female Gadwall, p. 37, he says: "In the summer the whole plumage becomes very much darker; the black-brown upper-parts of the back and scapular feathers work more to the surface, and their light edges are duller and narrower. The breast, too, for the greater part, becomes heavily spotted, particularly so towards the vent." More instances might be quoted, but these, I think, are sufficient to show that the probability of a spring-moult had not been considered by the author.

What makes this spring-moult all the more interesting is the fact that with one or two apparent exceptions named overleaf it does not take place in the male; a few body-feathers may be grown in here and there, but there appears to be no general moult. Of course, there is a possibility, but I think a remote one, that specimens showing moult have not found their way into the collections mentioned; but I think this is most unlikely, as of the common species such as Mallard, Teal, and Wigeon, a large series of spring specimens was examined. Moreover, I have also examined specimens in the flesh, and in some cases have had both sexes sent to me obtained on the same date, the male with no trace of moult whatever, the female moulting heavily.

The apparent exceptions to this statement are Gadwall, Shoveler, and Blue-winged Teal. Some of the spring male Gadwall examined were in fairly full body-moult, though none showed any wing- or tail-moult, while from the worn and abraded specimens occurring in May, I am convinced that this moult does not take place in each individual and is probably of irregular occurrence, in some birds not taking place at all, while in others it may occur to a greater or lesser extent. Whether first-winter Gadwall (which are easily distinguished from adult winter ones by the different colour of the wing-coverts) have a partial moult in spring or not is difficult to say. Some birds only completely attain their first winter-plumage by March or April, and the possibility of their then commencing a spring-moult is most unlikely, though those which attain their first winter-plumage earlier may do so. One or two February specimens were found to be in moult, but it is difficult to say whether these specimens were completing their first winter-moult (I think this the most probable explanation) or commencing a spring-moult. As regards the male Shoveler, many spring specimens were handled, but only two adult males were found to be in moult: one dated March 28th, Texas, in the collection of the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, was moulting fairly heavily all over the body, but not the tail or wings; the other, dated April 2nd, was moulting on the upper-parts only. No other adult male in moult was discovered, which is fairly conclusive evidence that a spring moult (apart from the renewing of a stray feather or two) in this species, in the adult at least, is an unusual occurrence. Young males, on the other hand, may be found moulting throughout the spring months, and while some do not attain the plumage resembling the adult till April or May others do so by February or March, and may have a partial spring-moult in April or May. Three males of the Blue-winged Teal, out of the series examined,

were in moult, viz., one March 26th moulting a little on the head, mantle, breast, and belly; one March 29th moulting a feather or two on the breast and mantle only; and one April 12th moulting heavily on the breast. One adult male, Garganey, March 5th, out of a good series, was moulting on the head, neck, mantle and one tail-feather, and one March 6th was moulting on the upper-parts only. This list comprises all the spring males found in moult—fairly conclusive evidence surely that a spring-moult in the male is an unusual occurrence.

While I feel that at this stage it is too early to theorize, one cannot reflect on this question of the spring-moult of the female and its practical absence in the male without wondering if the so-called eclipse-plumage of the male represents the winter-plumage, while the adult winter-plumage which is acquired, as will be seen, by a moult similar in the parts involved to that of the female in spring, represents the summer-plumage. Whether there is anything in this suggestion or not, the collection and careful examination of moulting specimens alone will decide.*

The sequences of plumages in the ducks may be classified as follows:—

	Nestling.
	Juvenile.
Adult Winter.	First Winter.
Adult Summer.	First Summer.
Adult Eclipse.	First Eclipse.
	Second Winter, etc.

These terms are fully discussed and explained in *British Birds*, Vol. III., p. 211. The first eclipse-plumage is, as its name implies, the first eclipse to be assumed by the young bird and appears in most cases to be identical with the adult eclipse, though details of moult are possibly different. From the following notes

* For other reasons Mr. W. P. Pyecraft has made the same suggestion (*cf. Bull. B.O.C.*, xxxiii., p. 67).—Eds.

it will be seen that while first winter birds of some of the species are almost indistinguishable from the adults, others are differentiated by their wing-coverts which are of the juvenile plumage, *e.g.* Gadwall, Wigeon, etc.

The following is a brief summary of the moults and sequence of plumages in the

SURFACE-FEEDING DUCKS.

Adult male. Winter.—This plumage is acquired by a complete body- and tail-moult, and the innermost secondaries are also moulted, but not the rest of the wings (unless the inner secondary coverts are moulted, but I have seen no specimen showing this). The moult may commence at the end of July or in August (Mallard and Wigeon) or later (Pintail) and may be completed as early as the end of September or beginning of October (Mallard) but often not till November (Wigeon) or even later.

Adult male. Summer.—No general moult, but body-feathers here and there may be renewed (exceptions, Gadwall, Shoveler and others previously mentioned, see p. 37). Plumage as in winter but in some specimens very abraded.

Adult male. Eclipse.—This plumage is acquired by an apparently complete body-moult and by a complete wing-moult, while in Mallard, Wigeon, Pintail and possibly in other species the central pair of tail-feathers (in the Mallard usually the two central pairs) are moulted and replaced, in the Mallard by uncurled sepia feathers, in the Wigeon by shorter less-pointed feathers, and in the Pintail by mouse-grey feathers slightly pointed but not extending more than about one and a half inches beyond the next pair of tail-feathers.* The other tail-feathers are not moulted until the commencement of the next moult, but occasionally a pair or two may be found in quill before the appearance of the first winter feathers. The wings may be shed at the commencement of the moult into eclipse or towards the end of the moult and may still be in quill at the commencement of the following moult into the winter-plumage. The male in eclipse is usually described as resembling the adult female, but this statement is not applicable to all the species, and the eclipse plumage

* Mr. Millais states in *British Diving Ducks* (Vol. I. page 3) that the central tail-feathers in the Mallard only moult once a year, whereas as shown above they moult twice a year. This misconception of the moults has, it would appear, led Mr. Millais to believe that these feathers actually change colour.

is more correctly described as being a mixture of that of the juvenile male and the adult female, though in some species it is distinct from both. The eclipse Mallard, Teal and Garganey resemble the juvenile male on the head and upper-parts, while the under-parts are like those of the adult female; in the Pintail the eclipse plumage of the upper-parts is quite distinct from both, though the head and neck resemble the juvenile male and the under-parts the adult female.

Adult female. Winter.—This plumage is acquired by a complete moult. Apparently the remiges are all dropped together as in the adult male, but I have only been able to examine three specimens showing wing-moult, viz., one Mallard, July 1st, and one October 2nd with remiges all in quill, and one Teal, ditto, May 1st.

Adult female. Summer.—The body-plumage, tail, and innermost secondaries and down are completely moulted from February to May. In the Mallard this plumage is the same as the winter; in the Teal the upper-parts are darker and the under-parts more spotted; in the Garganey the feathers of the upper-parts have much broader buff edges and the same applies to the Shoveler, which has also more plentiful buff markings on the upper-parts. In the Pintail and Wigeon the plumage appears to be the same as in winter. No spring or summer specimens of Gadwall have been examined. Towards the end of this moult the down moult commences. In the ducks there is a well-developed down, apart from the downy filaments which the barbs of the contour feathers degenerate into towards the base of the feathers; in the female this down is moulted in spring and replaced by a similar down and in addition by a much stronger and more luxuriant down, which does not seem to differ in structure microscopically except in its much greater coarseness. In a female Teal in my collection, both downs are in sheath, and it is of interest to note that they emerge from separate *papillæ*. This “nest” down is easily recognised from the normal down by its much greater length, by the strength of barbs and barbules (the latter being very plainly visible to the naked eye), by its silky, almost plume-like, appearance, and by its different colour.

In the Mallard, the ordinary down is grey, the “nest” down black; in the Teal and the American Green-winged Teal the ordinary down is ashy-brown, the “nest” down black with faint buff tips; in the American Blue-winged Teal the ordinary down is pale ashy-brown, the “nest” down blackish-

brown, tipped light buff; in the Garganey the ordinary down is ashy-brown, the "nest" down blackish-brown, tipped light buff; in the Wigeon and the American Wigeon, the ordinary down is ashy-brown, the "nest" down blackish-brown tipped white; in the Shoveler the ordinary down is ashy-brown, the "nest" down blackish-brown with faint white tips; in the Pintail the ordinary down is ashy-brown, the "nest" down black. Apparently this "nest" down is used to line the nest with, and in late summer females which have bred, very little, if any, remains.

Nestling.—It is interesting to note that nestlings of the different species have the same general colour pattern, though in some of the species the colours comprising the pattern are slightly different.

Juvenile.—The juvenile plumage more or less resembles that of the adult female, but is always distinguishable and in most cases the sexes are slightly different.

First winter. Male.—Resembles the adult male, and in Mallard, Teal, and Garganey is hardly distinguishable from it; in Gadwall, Pintail and Wigeon, the first winter male is distinguished by the different colour pattern of the wing-coverts. This plumage is acquired by a complete body- and tail-moult, some innermost secondaries and usually their coverts but not the rest of the wings (exceptionally some of the median coverts are moulted in some specimens of Wigeon and American Wigeon examined).

The period of moult from juvenile to first winter plumage varies in the different species, as well as individually, some juvenile birds of the same species attaining the first winter plumage before January, while in others the moult is slow and irregular and the plumage may not be completed till April or later, while in some cases the moult is never completed, and some juvenile body-feathers (frequently those of the back and rump) are retained all through the summer.

First winter. Female.—Resembles the adult female. In the first winter Mallard the back and rump are less glossy; first winter Teal are very similar to adult; while first winter Gadwall, Garganey, and Shoveler are distinguished by the wing-coverts. Moult as in the male.

First summer. Male.—No general moult but a few body-feathers may be renewed. (For possible exceptions to this statement see pages 37 and 38.) Plumage as winter.

First summer. Female.—Moult apparently as in adult female, and new plumage as adult female.

First eclipse.—Probably as adult eclipse, but the details of moult, which from absence of material I am unable to furnish, are possibly different.

Second winter. Male and female.—Not distinguishable from the adults and the moult is probably the same.

THE GENUS *NYROCA*.

The sequence of plumages and moults in the genus *Nyroca* appears to be very similar to that of the surface-feeding ducks, but I do not propose to deal in full with it at present, beyond stating that female Pochard, Tufted Duck, and apparently Scaup, have as complete a spring-moult as do the female surface-feeding ducks, and also acquire just before breeding commences a special "nest" down in addition to the ordinary down, which is also renewed at this time. In the Pochard the ordinary down is ashy-grey or light ashy-brown, the "nest" down is black; in the White-eyed Pochard the ordinary down is pale ashy, the "nest" down black-brown, buffy-white towards the tip; in the Tufted Duck the ordinary down is ashy-brown, the "nest" down black, brownish-black towards the tip; in the Scaup the ordinary down is ashy-brown, the "nest" down black.

In conclusion I wish to thank Lord Rothschild, the authorities of the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, and Mr. H. F. Witherby, for kindly permitting me the use of their collections.

RECOVERY OF MARKED BIRDS.

(Continued from page 22.)

MERLIN (*Falco c. aesalon*).—25552, nestling, marked by Mr. J. D. Patterson at Goathland, Yorkshire, on June 20th, 1912. Recovered at Middlesbrough, Yorkshire, during first part of Oct., 1914.

SPARROW-HAWK (*Accipiter n. nisus*).—42582, nestling, marked by Mr. P. A. Buxton at Sudbury, Essex, on June 14th, 1913. Reported by Mr. H. Wright at Castle Hedingham, Essex, on Jan 14th, 1915.

COMMON HERON (*Ardea cinerea*).—50058, nestling, marked by Mr. J. R. B. Masefield near Cheadle, Staffordshire, on May 11th, 1912. Reported by Mr. A. Gwynne-Vaughan at Rhayader, Radnorshire, about March 15th, 1915.

MALLARD (*Anas p. platyrhyncha*).—31203, nestling, marked by Mr. F. W. Smalley at Silverdale, north Lancashire, on May 15th, 1911. Recovered at the same place on Oct. 22nd, 1914.

34820, adult, marked by Mr. M. Portal at Stranraer, Wigtownshire, on Feb. 28th, 1914. Reported by *Kaskö Tidning* at Kaskö, Finland, on Aug. 17th, 1914.

34805, marked as 34820. Reported by Mr. P. de Jong at Ternaard, Province of Friesland, Holland, on Nov. 26th, 1914.

34853, marked as 34820. Reported by Dr. Einar Lönnberg and Mr. G. H. T. Harding at Ellinge, near Eslof, Scania, Sweden, on Nov. 14th, 1914.

Nine others marked as 34820. Recovered at the same place on Nov. 11th, Dec. 3rd, 1914, Jan. 15th, Feb. 4th, 10th, and 23rd, 1915.

Three, marked as 34820 on Oct. 10th, 1914. Recovered at the same place on Dec. 3rd, 1914.

WIGEON (*Anas penelope*).—31727, adult male, marked by Mr. M. Portal at Leswalt, Stranraer, Wigtownshire, on Jan. 31st, 1914. Recovered at the same place on Jan. 23rd, 1915.

CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax c. carbo*).—Four nestlings, marked by Miss A. Pease at the Farne Islands, Northumberland, in Aug., 1914. Recovered in Northumberland (Oct., 1914, Jan., 1915), Yorkshire (Nov., 1914), Devonshire (Dec., 1914).

100795, nestling, marked by Mr. A. O. Whitehead at Badcall Bay, Sutherland, on June 16th, 1914. Reported by Mr. A. Nicolson at Stornoway, Lewis, Outer Hebrides, in Feb., 1915.

Two nestlings, marked by Mr. H. W. Robinson at Inisvouls, Scilly Isles, on May 14th, 1914. Recovered in Cornwall (Sept., 1914) and Concorneau (Finistère), France (Oct., 1914).

Four nestlings, marked by Mr. H. W. Robinson at the Isle of Melidgan, Scilly Isles, in April and May, 1914. Recovered Scilly Isles (Sept., 1914), Cornwall (Aug. and Dec., 1914), and Pontevedra (Galicia) Spain, (Oct., 1914).

SHAG (*Phalacrocorax g. graculus*).—100793, nestling, marked by Mr. A. O. Whitehead at Handa Island, Sutherland, on June 18th, 1914. Reported by Mr. J. MacLeod at Stornoway, Lewis, Outer Hebrides, on Dec. 28th, 1914. Four nestlings, marked by Mr. H. W. Robinson at Inisvouls and Rosevere, Scilly Islands, on June 2nd and July 16th, 1914. All recovered in Cornwall, Oct., Nov., 1914, and March, 1915.

GANNET (*Sula bassana*).—100198, nestling, marked by Mr. J. M. Campbell at the Bass Rock, Haddingtonshire, on Sept. 16th, 1914. Reported by Mr. R. Fleming near St. Abb's Head, Berwickshire, on Sept. 20th, 1914.

100194, marked as 100198. Reported by Mr. R. W. Garside, near Huddersfield, Yorkshire, on Oct. 12th, 1914.

100129, marked as 100198 on Sept. 12th, 1914. Reported by Mr. W. A. Nicholson near Portobello, Midlothian, on Oct. 23rd, 1914.

OYSTERCATCHER (*Hæmatopus o. ostralegus*).—65841, nestling, marked by Mr. T. Haig at Kingussie, Inverness-shire, on July 28th, 1914. Reported by Mr. P. H. Horton at Rosemullion near Falmouth, Cornwall, on Sept. 15th, 1914.

LAPWING (*Vanellus vanellus*).—6825, nestling, marked by Mr. J. Bartholomew at Torrance, near Glasgow, Stirlingshire, on May 13th, 1910. Reported by Mr. I. Casolani at Ratheormal, co. Cork, on Dec. 22nd, 1914.

8079, nestling, marked by Lieut.-Col. H. A. F. Magrath near Archiestown, Morayshire, on June 28th, 1910. Reported by Mr. W. McCarthy at Lombardstown, co. Cork, on Jan. 16th, 1915.

19410, nestling, marked by Miss S. Mounsey Heysham at Rockcliffe Marsh, Cumberland, on May 23rd, 1912. Reported by Mr. C. F. A. Ritson near Kirkbride, Carlisle, on Nov. 6th, 1914.

19659, nestling, marked by Mr. R. E. Knowles on the east Cheshire Hills on June 21st, 1912. Reported by Mr. J. A. Morton near Kidderminster, Worcestershire, in Nov., 1914.

81574, marked as 19659, on June 7th, 1914. Reported by Mr. R. Kenworthy at Wythenshaw Wood, Cheshire, on Oct. 22nd, 1914.

18648, nestling, marked by Mr. R. O. Blyth at Skelmorlie, Ayrshire, on May 30th, 1914. Reported by Mr. J. A. Condor at Thurles, co. Tipperary, on Dec. 24th, 1914.

42929, nestling, marked by Mr. A. Bankes near Salisbury, Wiltshire, on June 12th, 1913. Reported by Mr. C. Button at Sopley, Christchurch, Hampshire, on Nov. 21st, 1914.

45153, nestling, marked by Capt. W. F. Mackenzie at Lamlair, Ross-shire, on June 9th, 1914. Reported by Mr. T. Marley near Tagoat, co. Wexford, on Dec. 25th, 1914.

80344, nestling, marked by Miss M. H. Greg at Carsphairn, Ayrshire, on June 6th, 1914. Reported by Mr. R. J. Turkington on borders of Lough Neagh, co. Armagh, on Dec. 25th, 1914.

3037, nestling, marked by Miss A. C. Jackson at Evanton, Ross-shire, on July 3rd, 1910. Found dead (recently) at the same place in April, 1915.

COMMON REDSHANK (*Tringa totanus*).—18068, nestling, marked by Mr. A. G. Leigh at Hampton-in-Arden, Warwickshire, on May 22nd, 1914. Reported by Mr. S. Every at Landulph, Hatt, Cornwall, on Jan. 29th, 1915.

COMMON CURLEW (*Numenius a. arquatus*).—26005, nestling, marked by Mr. C. K. Parker at Edenfield, Lancashire, on June 3rd, 1912. Reported by Mr. T. Bruce near Kenmare, co. Kerry, on Nov. 9th, 1914.

29842, nestling, marked by Mr. A. Bankes near Fewston, Yorkshire, on June 13th, 1914. Reported by Mr. A. Moran at Ballydavid, Dingle, co. Kerry, on March 28th, 1915.

32742, nestling, marked by Mr. E. W. Hendy at Shutting's Low, Cheshire, on July 5th, 1914. Reported by Mr. A. Anger near Liverpool on April 3rd, 1915.

WOODCOCK (*Scolopax rusticola*).—25358, nestling, marked by Mr. C. Hyslop (Gamekeeper to Mr. H. S. Gladstone) at Drumlanrig, Dumfries-shire, on May 2nd, 1912. Reported in the *Shooting Times* at Thurles, co. Tipperary, on Feb. 1st, 1915.

19437, nestling, marked by Miss S. Mounsey Heysham, at Castletown, Cumberland, on May 6th, 1913. Recovered at the same place on Jan. 7th, 1915.

44025, marked as 19437 on May 4th, 1914. Recovered at the same place on Dec. 12th, 1914.

81376, marked as 19437 on June 13th, 1914. Reported by Mr. J. Bell about four miles away on Oct. 30th, 1914.

48508, nestling, marked by Mr. R. Stewart at Buchanan, Drymen, Stirlingshire, on May 5th, 1914. Reported by Mr. J. G. Black at Carna, co. Galway, on Jan. 9th, 1915.

48061, nestling, marked by Mr. J. H. Milne-Home at Canonbie, Dumfries-shire, on May 11th, 1914. Reported by Inspector-General M. FitzGerald, R.N. at Kilnaboy, co. Clare, on Nov. 2nd, 1914.

16950, nestling, marked by Mr. J. H. Milne-Home at Ewes, Dumfries-shire, on July 28th, 1914. Reported by Mr. J. Palmer in Roxburghshire about end of Oct., 1914.

16949, marked as 16950. Reported by Mr. R. Spencer at Morpeth, Northumberland, on Nov. 13th, 1914.

SANDWICH TERN (*Sterna s. sandvicensis*).—83174, nestling, marked by Miss A. Pease at the Farne Islands, Northumberland, on July 15th, 1914. Reported by Senor J. S. Cantinho at Silves, Algarve, Portugal, on Sept. 30th, 1914.

BLACK-HEADED GULL (*Larus ridibundus*).—10993, nestling, marked by Mr. J. Steele Elliott at Bresaddfed Lake, Anglesey, on June 22nd, 1910. Reported by Mr. D. O'Meara, R.N., at Arrochar, Loch Long, Dumbartonshire, on Dec. 29th, 1914.

26540, nestling, marked by Mr. H. W. Robinson at Ravenglass, Cumberland, on June 1st, 1912. Reported by Mr. A. McKillop at Llanerchymedd, Anglesey, on Feb. 16th, 1915.

29072, marked as 26540 on June 19th, 1912. Reported by Mr. J. Ruth at Duncormick, co. Wexford, on Feb. 20th, 1915.

61422, marked as 26540 on May 31st, 1913. Reported by Mr. H. B. Turney at Flookburgh, Morecambe Bay, Lancashire, on Feb. 9th, 1915.

61606, marked as 26540 on June 7th, 1913. Reported by Mr. A. J. Huggard at Waterville, co. Kerry, on Feb. 15th, 1915.

60591, marked as 26540 by Mr. B. Pickard on May 17th, 1913. Reported by Mr. W. Mosse Robinson at Chingford Marshes, Essex, on Jan. 2nd, 1915.

60536, marked as 60591. Reported by M. Caillot at Port Talbot, Glamorganshire, on Feb. 19th, 1915.

63787, nestling, marked by Mr. A. W. Boyd at Delamere Forest, Cheshire, on June 15th, 1914. Reported by Mr. F. T. Platt at Northwich, Cheshire, on Dec. 28th, 1914.

HERRING-GULL (*Larus a. argentatus*).—35415, nestling, marked by Mr. T. A. Coward at Puffin Isle, Anglesey, on June 24th, 1914. Reported by Mr. A. Abram near Preston, Lancashire, on Dec. 4th, 1914.

BRITISH LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus f. affinis*).—9948, nestling, marked by Mr. H. W. Robinson at Foulshaw, Westmorland, on June 25th, 1913. Reported by Mr. J. E. Moores near Lisbon, Portugal, on Nov. 17th, 1914.

34267, marked as 9948 on July 16th, 1914. Reported by Mr. W. C. Tait near Fao, Portugal, at the end of Dec., 1914.

36354, marked as 9948 by Mr. F. W. Smalley on July 16th, 1914. Reported by Mr. W. C. Tait at Rodac, near Oporto, Portugal, at the beginning of Nov., 1914.

36225, marked as 36354 on July 1st, 1914. Reported by Mr. W. C. Tait at Lisbon, Portugal, at the end of Dec., 1914.

Forty-six nestlings, marked by Miss A. Pease at the Farne Islands, Northumberland, in August, 1914, have been recovered as follows:—Nine in Northumberland, Sept. 22nd, 25th, 29th, Oct. 27th, 29th, Nov. 2nd, 1914 (one on Nov. 22nd was injured and unable to fly). Two in Durham, Sept. 22nd and Oct. 20th, 1914. Two in Yorks., Sept. 24th and Oct. 9th, 1914. One in Lancs., Sept. 29th, 1914. One in co. Mayo, Oct. 26th, 1914. Two in France, Finistère, Sept. 18th, Manche, Oct. 2nd, 1914. Twenty-three in Portugal, Sept. 28th, 29th, 30th, Oct. 15th, 16th, 19th, 21st, 26th, 30th, Nov. 2nd, 5th, 12th, 24th, 28th, 30th, Dec. 4th, and end of Dec. 1914, Jan. 10th, 1915. One Straits of Gibraltar, Jan. 3rd, 1915. One Casablanca, Morocco, Dec. 25th, 1914. One Oran, Algeria, Dec. 15th, 1914. One Sardinia, Nov. 5th, 1914. One Valentia, Spain, April 4th, 1915. One St. Louis, Senegal, April 18th, 1915.

NOTES

PIED WAGTAILS NESTING ON THE GROUND.

REFERRING to Mr. Clifford Borrer's note on this subject (p. 26, *ante*), I have rarely seen the nest of the Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla a. lugubris*) in Ireland in any other position than on the ground. A frequent position is in a recess in a bank but here the nest is on the ground. Once I saw this nest in a heap of refuse stones in a quarry, but here also it was placed on the ground where there was a cavity in the heap. Thompson (*Nat. Hist. of Ireland*, Vol. I., p. 216) says: "The situations generally known to me as selected for its nest were on the ground beneath piles of loosely-heaped stones."

NEVIN H. FOSTER.

[There is nothing unusual in the fact of a Pied Wagtail breeding on the ground in a hollow on a bank side, in stone quarries, etc., but Mr. Borrer's note refers to a nest found on the ground among sand dunes, a much less frequent site. I have, however, seen nests of the White Wagtail (*M. alba alba*) similarly placed, under shelter of the tufts of marram grass, on the islands off the Dutch Coast.—F.C.R.J.]

EARLY NESTING OF REED-WARBLER.

ON May 16th, 1915, I found a completely finished nest of a Reed-Warbler (*Acrocephalus s. streperus*) at the Tring Reservoirs, Hertfordshire. I think this is a quite unusually early record.

E. HARTERT.

[Mr. A. H. Daukes records having found two nests with four eggs and one with five eggs on the River Cam on May 15th, an extraordinarily early date (*Country Life*, July 24th, 1909, p. 143). A nest with three eggs on May 23rd is recorded in the *Field* (2, VI., 1906), and a nest with eggs from Cheshire on May 20th, 1908, is mentioned in the *Bull. B.O.C.*, XXIV., p. 102. On one occasion I found young in a nest at Oxford on June 7th, and I also found a nest with two eggs at the same place on May 21st, 1886.—F.C.R.J.]

MISTLE-THRUSH, SONG-THRUSH AND BLACKBIRD SINGING ON THE WING.

REFERRING to the notes on this subject (*Brit. Birds*, Vol. VIII., p. 292; Vol. IX., pp. 26-7) I may state that I have two records of a Mistle-Thrush singing on the wing, and several of Song-Thrushes and Blackbirds performing in

this way, on dates ranging from January to the end of June. This habit does not appear to me to be particularly unusual with the two latter species, especially during the breeding-season. On May 7th, 1915, I observed a Song-Thrush flying from tree to tree, singing as it flew, and it ended by flying down on to the lawn, where it sang for several moments. I have also a record of a Robin, and a Common Wren, singing while on the wing. It would appear that this habit is not as rare as might be supposed among species which habitually sing from a perch.

M. L. KLEINWORT.

CUCKOO'S METHOD OF DEPOSITING EGG.

ON May 19th, 1915, I visited an old friend of mine in Norfolk. He leads a very secluded life but is a keen observer of natural history and a man whose word one can trust implicitly. There are some old ruins just outside his dining-room window in which Wagtails, etc., often make their nests. He told me he had twice seen a Cuckoo (*Cuculus c. canorus*) lay her egg on the grass, take it in its beak and deposit it in a Wagtail's nest. He stated he had seen the performance so distinctly, just outside the window, that there was no doubt about it. This evidence should settle the question of how the egg gets into the nest.

H. M. UPCHER.

[Similar positive evidence as to the deposition of the egg by means of the bill has already been recorded by J. B. Bailly (*Ornithologie de la Savoie*, I., p. 387), A. Malcolm Yeats (*Field*, 1895, p. 929) and Capt. S. G. Reid (*cf. Ibis* 1915, p. 367). The fact that eggs have been found in the nests of such species as Golderest, Starling, Great- and Blue-Tit, Willow-Warbler, Wood-Warbler, Chiffchaff, Wheatear, Stonechat, etc., is also extremely strong confirmation of this. On the other hand, there is evidence that occasionally the Cuckoo lays while sitting on the nest. Mr. J. H. Owen surprised a Cuckoo sitting on an empty Blackbird's nest. Naumann also saw an egg laid by a Cuckoo while sitting on a Reed-Warbler's nest. See also *Field*, 1897, p. 927.—F.C.R.J.]

LONG-EARED OWL NESTING IN ESSEX.

RECORDS of the nesting of the Long-eared Owl (*Asio o. otus*) in Essex are so scarce that the finding of a nest with eggs in it may be of some interest. This nest was found by myself and two boys on May 1st, 1915, at Felsted. It contained two very small eggs, one obviously infertile and the other highly incubated, but not looking right and too light in weight. The bird was sitting then and up to May 3rd. We again visited the nest on May 6th and found it deserted.

On climbing up we found that one egg had gone, except for fragments of shell, and the other had been broken and had a chick in it that had died in the shell. The site was an old Sparrow-Hawk's nest (of last year) in a Scotch fir, this year's nest being in another Scotch fir a few yards away.

J. H. OWEN.

ARRANGEMENT OF EGGS IN CLUTCHES OF FIVE OF SNIPE AND LAPWING.

MR. J. H. OWEN'S note in the last number on Snipe and Lapwing laying five eggs was most interesting. Once (April 30th, 1910) I saw a Snipe's nest with five eggs, and,



Fig. 1. NEST OF LAPWING TO SHOW ARRANGEMENT OF FIVE EGGS.

(Photographed by G. T. Atchison.)

as was the case with his nest, all the eggs were turned with their points inwards, as is usual with normal clutches of four. I have three times seen Lapwings' nests with five eggs, and on each occasion the eggs were arranged in different formation. The first nest (April 27th, 1909) had the eggs arranged in a ring, points inwards, as in normal clutches of four (fig. 1). On the second occasion (May 1st, 1910) the eggs were in two rows, three and two respectively, points inwards and alternate (fig. 2). Presumably the bird sat lengthwise along the rows. The last time (April 16th, 1914) one of the eggs was at the bottom of the nest, and the other four were arranged one at each side and at each end of the

egg at the bottom of the nest (fig. 3). I am sure from the ground-colour and markings on the eggs that they were



Fig. 2. NEST OF LAPWING TO SHOW ARRANGEMENT OF FIVE EGGS.

(Photographed by G. T. Atchison.)



Fig. 3. NEST OF LAPWING TO SHOW ARRANGEMENT OF FIVE EGGS.

(Photographed by G. T. Atchison.)

in each case the product of one hen. All four of these nests were found a few miles south of Cheviot.

GEORGE T. ATCHISON.

BIRDS OF LEWIS, OUTER HEBRIDES.—Mr. R. Clyne, who has been stationed at the Butt of Lewis Lighthouse for

six years gives (*Scot. Nat.*, 1915, pp. 29-37 and 77-81) some very interesting notes on the birds he has observed in this barren spot. The following are of considerable interest and do not appear to have been previously recorded :—

CARRION-CROW (*Corvus c. corone*).—One in 1909. Mr. Clyne states that it has been recorded several times in Lewis, but the only note of the occurrence of the bird in the Outer Hebrides which we have is of three at the Flannans in November, 1912.

SISKIN (*Carduelis spinus*).—One on October 9th, 1908, is apparently the same as that recorded under date November 11th, in the *Bull. B.O.C.*, XXVI., p. 252.

MEALY REDPOLL (*Carduelis linaria*).—Present in small numbers in October and November, 1908, 1910 and 1913.

LINNET (*Carduelis c. cannabina*).—Small parties in spring and “a few are known to have bred.” Further details would have been interesting as the bird has not, we think, been recorded before as breeding in the Outer Hebrides, and indeed has been reckoned as only a rare vagrant to those islands.

HOUSE-SPARROW (*Passer d. domesticus*).—That a few pairs breed is interesting, as the bird is extremely local in the Outer Hebrides.

PIED WAGTAIL (*Motacilla a. lugubris*).—A few seen annually in spring and autumn on migration. The bird is said to be very rare in the Outer Hebrides and has been confused with the White Wagtail.

PIED FLYCATCHER (*Muscicapa h. hypoleuca*).—One on August 23rd, 1914.

GARDEN-WARBLER (*Sylvia borin*).—One on August 26th, 1913.

BLACKCAP (*Sylvia a. atricapilla*).—Several in October, 1913. Both these Warblers are rarely recorded in the Outer Hebrides.

RING-OUZEL (*Turdus t. torquatus*).—One on October 17th, 1910.

REDSTART (*Phœnicurus ph. phœnicurus*).—This is recorded in October, 1908, 1910 and 1911. Mr. Clyne has only one spring record, viz., April 2nd, 1914, but he adds, “I have just been informed that a pair successfully nested in 1914 near Galson Farm about 8 miles S.W. from the Butt.” Hitherto the Redstart has been known only as a rare migrant to the Outer Hebrides, and we hope that further details will be given of this nesting record.

HOUSE-MARTIN (*Hirundo u. urbica*).—Only twice seen on June 24th, 1912, and October 8th, 1914. There are very few records of House-Martins in the Outer Hebrides.

COURTSHIP-HABITS OF THE GREAT CRESTED GREBE.—A very interesting paper, to which we should have drawn attention some time ago, was published last autumn on the courtship-habits of *Colymbus c. cristatus* by Prof. Julian S. Huxley (*P. Z. S.*, 1914, pp. 491-562, Plates I. and II.). The paper is too long to analyse here, and it should be read in its entirety by everyone interested in the habits of these birds, as well as by students of the theory of sexual selection. It is well planned and easy of reference, and contains a great deal of very careful observation recorded with the minuteness necessary to the subject, but in a very readable style. Two plates containing a number of clever pen and ink sketches illustrate the paper admirably.



LETTERS

BRITISH BIRD-NAMES.

To the Editors of BRITISH BIRDS.

SIRS,—Under the title “The B.O.U. List of British Birds” the authors of the *Hand-list* have given a review of that *List* and, as I anticipated, have at once agreed to some of the obvious emendations upon their own work which are there recorded. In well-chosen phrases they have expressed the aims and views of the priority-hunter. I would quote one only: “Our sole interest in nomenclature is centred in the desire for uniformity and fixity.” With this sentence clearly in mind, I offer the following remarks on some of the *B.O.U. List* alterations rejected by the authors of the *Hand-list*.

APUS.

This name is apparently to be retained under the quotation of the Recommendation attached to Article 36. This case, however, is governed by Opinion 36 where errors of transliteration are amenable to emendation. This Opinion was concurred in by Dr. Hartert. The facts are: Scopoli proposed *Apos* for *Monoculus Apus*: the correct transliteration is *Apus*, and so Scopoli’s name was corrected and has been so used for too many years to consider. This usage is now endorsed by Opinion 36 and there is no recourse. Later in the same work Scopoli proposed *Apus* for *Hirundo Apus*. This name was rejected consistently until the last few years, and even most of its supporters have now abandoned that position. The argument that Scopoli intended to use two different words is not borne out by criticism of Scopoli’s work, and it was not unusual for the early workers to use the same name in two different groups. Even Linné did thus. To achieve uniformity earlier the rejection of *Apus* is urged.

HIRUNDO.

Dr. Hartert’s argument that Forster fixed the type by his action is not endorsed by the International Commission, as they have already given their Opinion (62) against this, and there is no need for another Opinion but the acceptance of *Hirundo* as used in the *B.O.U. List*.

COLYMBUS.

Here is a rather serious mistake. It is written: “It has already been decided by a special committee appointed by the International Commission that *Colymbus* must be used for the Grebes (*cf. IX. Congr. Intern. Zool.*, p. 862).” This suggests that the matter was there settled, but this is not so. The *List* there put forward by the special committee was not endorsed but was referred back for reconsideration and I have good reason to state that this name will be reconsidered in view of the new fact recorded by Mr. Mathews and myself (*Ibis* 1913, p. 217), which was unknown when the special committee drew up their *List*. Under the Laws and Opinions *Colymbus* must be used for the Divers.

Puffinus assimilis baroli.

This name might be used for the Little Dusky Shearwater of the North Atlantic Ocean. A more unfortunate little bird as regards names it would be hard to find. The B.O.U. Committee pathetically remark upon this and add confusion by selecting as species-name a name obviously wrong. Now Dr. Hartert assails "*baroli*" and would reject it in favour of *godmani*. The facts in connection with the former name are simple: Bonaparte described a bird and his description, as all his descriptions are, is faulty, but the faults are somewhat superficial. We have all the specimens he referred to his species and they all prove conspecific: surely then the name is available. Just above Dr. Hartert advocates the retention of Gmelin's faulty description for the Gull-billed Tern, of which we have not the original specimens and states: "If this practice (of rejecting faulty descriptions) were followed hundreds of well-known names would have to be rejected," a conclusion I emphatically endorse. Then why should there be any argument about *baroli*? I can see no valid reason and I might state that I, myself, first brought the name *godmani* to the notice of British ornithologists, so that my prejudice would be in favour of the latter name. The acceptance of the undoubtedly applicable *baroli* would certainly be an aid to uniformity and fixity.

I hope that these emendations will be included in the list of alterations and we will thereby gain a year or more in the race for uniformity,—a race rapidly growing to a close if the signs be read aright.

TOM IREDALE.

Mr. Iredale raises some critical points and I will discuss them *seriatim*.

APUS.

I cannot admit that an error of transliteration is evident. The rendering of Opinion 36 clearly shows that we do not lightly judge a different spelling to be "an error of transliteration," and that we consider cases worthy of an "Opinion" in which we alter spelling, and that we only do so if we consider the error evident. This is not the case with the generic names *Apus* and *Apos*. As Scopoli introduced both these names, it is more logical and more polite to the author to suppose that he did so purposely, than that he erroneously transliterated the name *Apus* in one case. Both names can be used as well as *Galerita* and *Galerida*, *Carabus* and *Carapus*, *Picus* and *Pica*, *Polyodontus* and *Polyodontas*, etc., etc., etc.

HIRUNDO AND CHELIDON.

Mr. Iredale insists that, rigidly construed, Forster did not fix the type of *Hirundo*, and that, on the basis of Opinion 62 of the International Commission, which contends "that there is no authority in the Code for excluding a species from consideration in selecting it as type because it had already been made the type of some other genus," the action of Gray, who, in 1840, regarded as type of *Hirundo* the Swallow (*H. rustica*) must be accepted. I am obliged to Mr. Iredale for explaining this, *in litt*.

I differ from this view for the following reasons: Although, rigidly construed, Forster, in 1817, did not formally fix the type of *Hirundo*, he was the first author who finely divided Linneus's mixed assemblage of *Hirundo*, which originally contained Swallows, Martins, Swifts and Goatsuckers, not only separating the Swifts and Goatsuckers, which

had been done before, but also the various *Hirundinidae*. His action would have been acceptable and irreproachable had not Gray, in 1840, regarded *H. rustica* as the type of *Hirundo*. According to Opinion 62 this would be acceptable, though Forster had already made *H. rustica* the type of his *Chelidon*. In my opinion, however, we have in this case to look upon the facts in a different light.

Forster created the new genera *Riparia* and *Chelidon*. The former has now been universally adopted, and we would sail a clear course if we also adopted *Chelidon* (type *H. rustica*) and *Hirundo* in a restricted sense, type *urbica*, as I have done. Gray's action of 1840 should in this case be rejected, because he was in ignorance of Forster's work, or disregarded it. Gray made *riparia* the type of *Cotyle*, though it was already the type of *Riparia*; he made *bicolor* the type of *Chelidon* Boie, though *Chelidon* had been created before Boie, the type being *rustica*, and if we follow Gray there is no genus to embrace *urbica*, so that later authors had to invent for the latter the new names *Delichon* and *Chelidonaria*. This was certainly never Gray's view, who, in my opinion, made a blunder of his subfamily *Hirundinina* and should therefore—in this case—not be followed, and Forster's clear and simple action, with the genera *Hirundo*, *Chelidon* and *Riparia* be preferred to Gray's *Hirundo* (in another sense), *Cotyle* (= *Riparia*), a new, later name, for *urbica*, and *Chelidon* in the sense of a synonym of *Tachycineta* of 1850!

I repeat once more :—

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Forster 1817 : | <i>Hirundo</i> with <i>urbica</i> .
<i>Chelidon</i> with <i>rustica</i> .
<i>Riparia</i> with <i>riparia</i> . |
| Gray 1840 : | <i>Hirundo</i> with <i>rustica</i> .
<i>Cotyle</i> (= <i>Riparia</i> 1817) with <i>riparia</i> .
<i>Chelidon</i> (= <i>Tachycineta</i> 1850) with <i>bicolor</i> .
No genus for <i>urbica</i> . |

Which is preferable? Undoubtedly the former, and this view should be adopted in order to secure the simpler and less complicated nomenclature of Forster on the plea that it was erroneously disregarded by Gray, whose action, in this case, was irresponsible and wrong.

COLYMBUS.

It is quite true that the List drawn up by the special committee appointed by the International Commission has not been further endorsed, because there has been no opportunity for doing so. But the contention that Gray fixed the type of *Colymbus* 1758, as constructed by Messrs. Mathews and Iredale (*Ibis* 1913, pp. 217, 218) is quite arbitrary. There is no reason to suppose that the A.O.U. Committee overlooked that Gray, in 1855, had selected a type for "*Colymbus* Linné 1735." If Gray stated "*Colymbus* Linné 1735 nec 1766," we must rigidly follow this, and have no right to suppose that Gray considered *Colymbus* of 1735 to be the same as *Colymbus* of 1758. Gray did not consider the tenth edition at all, as a rule, because he, like all his contemporaries, discarded it in favour of the 12th, which they declared to be the corrected and enlarged tenth edition, and the final work of its author. The genus *Colymbus* of 1766 is the same as that of 1758, only that its author (rather erroneously) added some forms formerly placed (and much more correctly) in *Alca*. Therefore the type of *Colymbus* 1758 remained formally without a designated type, and the action of the B.O.U. Committee in 1886 is valid.

Puffinus assimilis baroli.

Bonaparte's *Puffinus baroli* was not based only on specimens, but evidently on the notes made by Bonaparte during his travels in various museums, and his diagnosis does not agree. If a diagnosis agrees in the main and disagrees in one detail (as in the case of the Gull-billed Tern), and if we are sure what was really meant, this is quite a different matter to a diagnosis disagreeing in the main character, as is the case in Bonaparte's *Puffinus baroli*; in the latter the description of the colour applies to about twenty Petrels, and the measurements are all-important. They disagree, and for this and other reasons fully stated in Brit. B., VIII., p. 282, *antea*, it is unwise to accept the name *baroli* for the bird we called *Puffinus assimilis godmani*.

E. HARTERT.

Obituary.

THE LATE CECIL M. DYER.

CECIL MACMILLAN DYER, who was killed in action in Flanders on April 8th, was born at Oxford on January 17th, 1894, and educated at Clifton and at Christ's College, Cambridge, where he had just completed his second year of residence when war broke out. He at once volunteered for the Special Reserve, got a commission in the Rifle Brigade, and went out to France with the 4th Battalion in December. He went through much hard fighting, especially at St. Eloi about the middle of March. He was shot through the head while on duty in the trenches. Mr. Dyer began to take an interest in birds while still a boy, and pursued his observations actively at Clifton. When he went up to Cambridge, where he was working for the Natural Science Tripos, he soon got into touch with other naturalists there, and helped to organize a scheme for recording the nesting-habits of the birds of that part of Cambridgeshire. Mr. A. H. Evans, under whose guidance the scheme was drawn up, describes Mr. Dyer as a very accurate observer, and there is little doubt that had his life been spared he would have made valuable contributions to ornithology. He was elected a member of the British Ornithologists' Union in 1914.

G. A. M.

BRITISH BIRDS

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NOTES ON A LONG-EARED OWL NESTING ON THE GROUND IN NORFOLK.

BY

J. H. GURNEY, F.Z.S., AND E. L. TURNER, HON. MEM. B.O.U.

ON April 6th, 1915, a head-keeper in the Norfolk Broad district, who is a practical and particularly careful observer, chanced to find the nest of a Long-eared Owl (*Asio o. otus*). The nest was on the ground, and not raised in any way, which is very unusual. On the 15th he showed the nest to Dr. S. H. Long (Sec. Nor. Nat. Soc.) and me, when we jotted down a few memoranda which may be worth preserving. A situation on the ground would hardly be chosen by a Long-eared Owl, which is essentially an Owl of the fir-woods, in any but a treeless district, yet nests on the ground have been recorded in Norfolk before (*see Zoologist*, 1900, p. 103, and *Bull. B.O.C.*, XIII., p. 57).

In the latter case, Sir Digby Pigott exhibited a photograph of a nest at Sheringham, a district where there is no lack of trees. In Cambridgeshire also a nest was found on the ground, and photographs taken of it at Wicken by Mr. C. R. Gurney in 1906, but this was in a marsh.

The Long-eared Owl, although less persecuted in Norfolk than it used to be, does not increase; indeed several extents of country might be named which are believed not to harbour more than a pair or two.

At Keswick, for instance, I do not remember to have seen it on more than one occasion (July 15th). On the other hand, in the extensive woods near the coast it is commoner and less exclusive than the Tawny Owl, a limited extent of "territory" serving for more than one pair. There are certain localities where it yearly builds, and generally in a fir-tree—a spruce-fir for choice. Here it appropriates some squirrel's "drey,"

or failing that, the platform nest of a Wood-Pigeon will serve its purpose, for in any case it is not a great nest-builder. A wood entirely without fir-trees is at no time to the liking of a Long-eared Owl, but wherever the nest may be it is sure to be better kept than the Barn-Owl's dirty nursery, where eggs and young birds and pellets are all mixed up together.

On the present occasion the nest, which held five unsullied eggs, was in the middle of a small plantation on the marsh, and was arched over and partly concealed by a growth of brambles. We both at once observed that the hen Owl was sitting with both "horns" erect, which gave her the appearance, as Mr. Long remarked, of a leveret.

The eggs were deposited on oak leaves, which in the keeper's opinion were not gathered by the Owl, but were lying almost where they fell. The sitting Owl had caused a slight depression, but I could not see if there was any down beneath the eggs, which we hardly liked to lift. A few Blackbird's and Thrush's feathers dropped among the brambles indicated the food which the cock Owl had been bringing to his mate. The cock was about fifteen yards away, keeping guard in a small spruce-fir, where he seemed to be dozing, in a very stiff and uncomfortable position, and he also had both "horns," if the erectile ear-tufts may be so termed, erect. This may have been because he had heard us coming, for Mr. Walpole Bond, who has written a very exact account of the Long-eared Owl (*The Field*, Nov. 4th, 1905), says it is not a usual habit unless the Owl is surprised.

Beneath the spruce lay several pellets, apparently composed of the fur and bones of voles. J.H.G.

On April 6th this nest of the Long-eared Owl contained three eggs. There were four on the 8th and five on the 10th, so that the eggs would appear to be laid at an interval of two days.

I first saw the nest on May 1st; it then contained four eggs and one newly-hatched young, and one of the eggs was chipping. Close to the nest were the remains of a Blackbird and a short-tailed field-vole. The breast and liver of the former had been devoured, while the liver and minute bits of flesh were all that had been plucked from the vole. This was at 10 a.m. I put up my little tent about twenty feet from the nest and went away.

On May 2nd another Owlet was hatched. Both were blind and scantily clothed with down, which was sparsely distributed along the feather tracts, being much thicker on the wings. When the latter were closed the Owlet looked like a ball of white fluff, but when it fluttered its wings feebly in search of shelter, using them to balance its general top-heaviness, bare patches of pink skin were visible. The head was well covered, and two pointed tufts of down clearly defined the position of the "horns" even at that early stage. In a few days the Owlet assumed a greyish tinge owing to the sprouting of the feathers. That day I moved my tent a little nearer the nest.

On May 4th two more eggs were chipping and on the 5th a third bird was hatched, but one egg had disappeared. Some days later I threw out the fifth, which was bad. At the end of seven days the first Owlet hatched was just twice the size of the third.

The old bird sat very close during the first week and allowed me to stand near and watch her indefinitely. On May 3rd I made my first exposures. The rustling caused by putting up the camera frightened her away and during her absence the young uttered a feeble "cheep." When leaving the nest she made no sound, but silently floated over the low bushes like some giant moth. She then circled overhead for a few moments and flew to a tall tree, where her mate joined her. Neither of the adult birds made any pretence at defending their young. Together they watched and waited,



FIG. 1. WIDE-EYED AND ALERT.
(*Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.*)

stretching out their necks and moving their heads from side to side and uttering queer moaning sounds like long-drawn sighs. When all was quiet in the tent the male returned to his look-out post on my left, and the female gradually approached the nest.

Her behaviour on each occasion when I photographed her was curiously stereotyped. She always returned about ten minutes after I had put up the camera and invariably resented the first click of the shutter. My only chance of securing an animated picture was to photograph her the moment she swooped down to the nest, while she paused for a second before covering the young. I was keenly alert in order to seize this psychic moment, and had to remain absolutely motionless during her absence, otherwise she would not return. Her movements were so swift and noiseless, it was some time before I could detect the faintest sound heralding her approach. By listening intently I learned to distinguish a very faint "ooh, ooh," high pitched and barely audible above the whispering of the wind in the leaves. At first I mistook this for the far-away cooing of Wood-Pigeons, but an answering moan, in a lower key and coming from my left, convinced me that the sounds were produced by the Owls. This duet was kept up until the high-pitched moan (which sounded as though it were blown through a reed) came from just overhead, and the next moment the female would be standing by the nest, wide-eyed and alert (Fig. 1), while a second or two later she assumed the supine attitude characteristic of this Owl when brooding (Fig. 2). During the four, seven, or ten hours I chose to sit by her she seldom altered her position, though her changes of expression were varied. For the most part she sat gazing at me through narrow slits of eyes, like a contented cat, the "horns" half-raised. On several occasions I put my hand through the front of my tent in order to insert lenses of varying focal length. Sometimes this annoyed her and she showed her indignation by



Fig. 2. THE CHARACTERISTIC SUPINE ATTITUDE.
(Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.)

opening wide her eyes and bristling her feathers (Fig. 3), and judging by various spasmodic jerkings of the body she also made inaudible remarks.

The male would warn her of danger by uttering the deep-drawn "ooh, ooh." If one or other of the game-

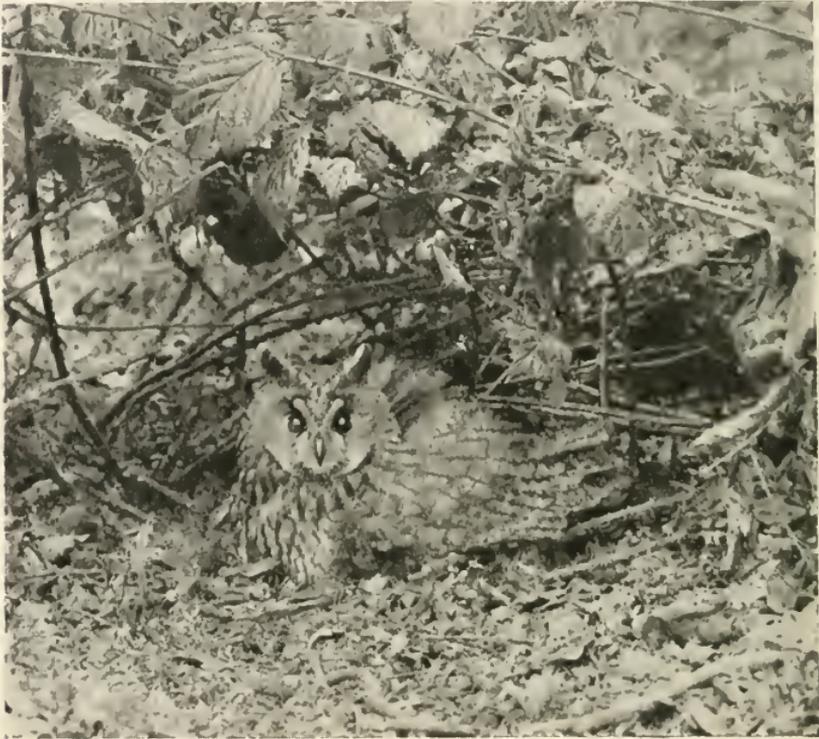


Fig. 3. OPENING WIDE HER EYES AND BRISTLING HER FEATHERS.
(Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.)

keepers came through the wood, or if I lifted the flap of my tent and crept out for a change of air and position, he told her of it.

I visited the Owls at various hours and spent much more time with them than was necessary to secure photographs, because I was very keen to see them fed. But in this I was disappointed. Young birds of prey require very little food during the first ten days of their lives, and



Fig. 4. YOUNG AND OLD.
(*Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.*)

the food given is always doled out in minute shreds, therefore the hunting is not very strenuous; but no doubt had I been able to continue my observation a week or two longer, or if I could have stayed in the wood all night, I might have seen the male bring food.

There was often food in the nest all day. I found the remains of very young water-voles, short-tailed field-voles, Chaffinches, and on one occasion the tail end of an adult Swallow, besides the Blackbird already mentioned. One evening, after dark, while the male Owl was still at his post in the fir tree, an aeroplane circled over the wood. I hoped it was the usual patrol somewhat belated, and astray, and not an oversea migrant! It was curious to note the behaviour of the birds during this disturbance. The Wood-Pigeons, which had come in to roost, rose in a mass and fluttered noisily round and round; Pheasants crowed and flew to and fro; all the small birds twittered and called. A Whitethroat and a Willow-Wren began short snatches of song and broke off abruptly—but the Owl, which I could but dimly see, sat tight and showed no fear.

The photographs reproduced here were taken on May 11th. They were the last of the series. I reached my tent at 2.45 a.m. but the young had finished their meal and the male bird was at rest. It was a splendid morning when my host and I started for the mile and a half's row. The Broad lay calm and still, reflecting the stars like a huge mirror, and the air was soft and warm as the pageant of dawn slowly unfolded. But later on the cold grew intense while I waited for the light. When I came out of my tent at 6 a.m. everything was covered with white frost, and there was a mist all over my lens. I developed the photographs with a sinking heart, but luckily the mist on the lens had not affected the picture. The rime on the bramble leaves shows distinctly.

Fig. 4 was the only photograph showing the two young nestlings against the old bird. The third Owlet

was too tiny to face the cold and always managed to creep beneath his elder brethren when the mother was away. Feathers began to appear about the fourth day and after that the young rapidly increased in strength, and began to show fight. The first Owlet had left the nest on May 24th and could not be found, the second was only a few yards away, while the third remained still in the nest.

E.L.T.

NOTES

UNUSUAL NESTING SITES.

THE following instances of unusual nesting sites which have come under my notice recently near Felsted, Essex, may be of interest to record.

GREENFINCH (*Chloris ch. chloris*).—I have had several instances of nests in stacks of various kinds: some nests were just under the thatch and some in the sides or ends fairly low down.

YELLOW BUNTING (*Emberiza c. citrinella*).—A nest in the side of a hayrick just under the shelter of the thatch. Three young were reared in it and left the nest on June 16th.

REED-BUNTING (*Emberiza s. schœniclus*).—Two nests in stacks. The first just under the thatch in one end of a haystack. Five young reared. The second in the end of a straw rick about five feet from the ground. Four eggs were laid, but they disappeared about the time they ought to have hatched.

BLUE TIT (*Parus c. obscurus*).—Nest of the usual materials in the fork of a branch of a cedar, some three feet from the main trunk and six feet from the ground. The nest was deserted when quite substantial, probably owing to too frequent inspection.

REDBREAST (*Erithacus r. rubecula*).—Small nest, mostly lining, built inside the nest of a Song-Thrush after the young had flown. This was in a cedar at the end of one of the branches and about five and a half feet from the ground. Now (June 18th) contains five young. J. H. OWEN.

[A Blue Tit's nest built on the open branch of a tree is recorded in Rowley's *Orn. Miscellany*, I., p. 73.

Instances of Robins building in old nests of Blackbird, Thrush, Hedge-Sparrow, and Swallow will be found recorded in *British Birds*, Vol. II., p. 90.—F.C.R.J.]

RARE BIRDS IN KENT AND SUSSEX.

BLACK LARK (*Melanocorypha yeltoniensis*).—A male was seen at the Grove, Hollington, St. Leonards-on-Sea, early in the month of January, 1915, and a female was shot at Westfield (Sussex) on January 30th, and another (also a female) at the same place on February 1st.

TEREK SANDPIPER (*Terekia cinerca*).—Three Terek Sandpipers, one of which I saw in the flesh, were shot at Rye in the month of May, 1915, a male having been killed on May 26th, and a male and female on May 28th. These are the first obtained in Sussex. In 1912 I recorded in *British Birds* (Vol. VI., p. 74) the first specimens of this species obtained in Great Britain; they were shot on Romney Marsh, Kent, in the month of May.

THE MEDITERRANEAN BLACK-HEADED GULL (*Larus melanocephalus*).—On Friday evening, July 16th, 1915, Mr. G. Bristow, taxidermist, of Silchester Road, St. Leonards-on-Sea, brought me a specimen of this bird in the flesh for identification. It had been shot the previous day (July 15th) at Rye, and was a male, and had the appearance of being quite freshly killed. There was no mistake about its identity. The hood was jet black, and there was a small crescentic white patch above and below the eye; quills white, the first only externally margined with black. On July 18th I heard from Mr. Bristow that two more examples (male and female) were shot the next day, July 16th, and on the 23rd he brought a fourth in the flesh for me to see; this had been shot at Rye on the 21st. He was informed that there were about six or seven of these Gulls in the party. There are four authentic instances of its previous occurrence in Great Britain.

T. PARKIN.

MARSH-SANDPIPER (*Tringa stagnatilis*).—A fine pair of Marsh-Sandpipers was shown to me on May 25th, 1915, having been shot the previous day on Romney Marsh.

SABINE'S GULL (*Xema sabini*).—A wounded example of Sabine's Gull was picked up alive at Jury's Gap (Kent) on May 6th, 1915. I saw it after it was put out of its misery, and upon examination found the wing fractured. There was every appearance of the damage being done by a shot gun, and probably several days before being found. It would be interesting to know if anyone saw this bird, or where it was when shot at. It was a male. The irides and mouth were a bright red.

GREAT BLACK-HEADED GULL (*Larus ichthyaetus*).—An example of the Great Black-headed Gull made its appearance in Rye Harbour early in May, 1915, and was seen on several occasions by the "lookers" between Rye Harbour, in Sussex, and Jury's Gap in Kent. No doubt the bird's range extended farther east and also west, as it was in company with the large number of Black-headed Gulls that breed at Lydd, and move to and fro following the shoals of fish.

On June 26th I was shown the bird in the flesh, it having been shot the previous day at Jury's Gap, so the record belongs to Kent. It was a male in splendid plumage, and when I saw it there was a decided pink flush over the white of the breast, which will of course disappear.

Four years ago I heard of one being seen in Rye Bay. It was in July, 1911, and after being in the locality for over a week evidently escaped the guns, as I did not hear of it being obtained anywhere in the British Isles.

H. W. FORD-LINDSAY.

UNUSUAL MIGRATION OF SEA-BIRDS.

DURING the last week in June, and continuing up to July 6th, there was a quite unusual migration of sea-birds, passing the Yorkshire coast in a northerly direction. I was upon the Marine Drive and piers at Scarborough on nearly every day during this period, and on each occasion there were thousands of Guillemots, in small parties numbering from half a dozen individuals up to 40 or 50 together. A steady stream of such flocks was passing all day until dusk, and almost all going in the same direction—very few returning south and these mostly single birds. Smaller numbers of Razorbills, Puffins, Kittiwakes and Herring-Gulls were also noticeable and all proceeding steadily northwards.

This migration was still continuing on July 16th, when many birds were passing, although not in such numbers as previously. On the 16th, there were fewer Guillemots but many more Puffins going north. I did not see any Kittiwakes on this date. I have not been on the shore since the 16th, but am told that the movement has now ceased. In my experience it is most unusual to see such a migration at this season.

W. J. CLARKE.

CURIOUS NESTING-SITE FOR TREE-SPARROW.

ABOUT two months ago, while strolling through a plantation, I was looking for some nests in a hawthorn hedge when suddenly I heard a rustle and a bird flew out of the other side of the hedge. On examining the spot I found a domed nest. The nest was about four-and-a-half feet from the ground, placed between fairly strong branches, and although firmly fixed was roughly put together, composed of roots and grasses (dry), well lined with feathers and bits of cotton-wool. I have visited the nest three or four times since my first discovery and each time I have found the eggs cold and no sign of the parent birds, so now after six weeks, concluding

that it has been deserted, I have taken the three eggs. It is a great pity I did not see the parent bird, but after much consideration and reference, I conclude that it is the nest of a Tree-Sparrow (*Passer m. montanus*).

CECIL W. SOMERVILLE.

[The eggs are typical specimens of Tree-Sparrow's eggs.—F.C.R.J.]

INFERTILE EGGS IN NESTS OF WHITETHROAT.

I HAVE recently examined in the neighbourhood of Gerrard's Cross, Buckinghamshire, a dozen nests of the Whitethroat (*Sylvia c. communis*). Seven of these nests contained each two young birds apparently from about three to five days old, and three eggs without any sign of incubation, and the remaining five nests each contained two clear eggs and three young. Upon careful examination none of the eggs appeared to be in any way damaged, and the nests were all situated in a neighbourhood unfrequented by the public. It would be interesting to know whether any other readers of *British Birds* have had similar experience of the breeding of this species this season in other parts of the country.

WALTER C. HETHERINGTON.

LARGE NUMBER OF YOUNG IN BROODS OF SWALLOWS IN 1915.

ON June 30th, 1915, I found a nest of Swallows (*Chelidon r. rustica*) near Lancaster, containing a brood of eight, which I venture to think is most exceptional. The present summer is a splendid one for Swallows, the size of the broods being altogether exceptional. During the last six days of June I visited twenty-five nests around Lancaster; of these the one mentioned above contained eight young, while four had broods of six, and twelve of five.

That is, seventeen nests out of twenty-five, or sixty-eight per cent., contained broods of five or more, the average brood being 4.92. Comparing this with the best average during the last seven years, 1911 shows forty-five per cent. of broods of five or more, the average brood being 4.4 (see *British Birds*, Vol. VII., p. 172).

H. W. ROBINSON.

TAWNY OWL NESTING ON THE GROUND.

ON June 13th, 1915, I was shown three young Tawny Owls (*Strix a. aluco*) at the root of a large birch tree in a wood near Cheadle, Staffordshire. The eggs were laid on the bare ground, without the slightest apology for a nest, and without

more shelter than that afforded by a part of the trunk of the tree which overhung a few inches. When I saw the young birds they had just been supplied with a freshly-killed meadow-vole (*Microtus agrestis*) for food. The three young birds varied considerably in age and size, and several days must have elapsed between the hatching of the eggs. On 2nd June I found a young Tawny Owl fallen out of a nest in a tall fir tree, and by its side a freshly-killed long-tailed field-mouse.

J. R. B. MASEFIELD.

[For a list of instances of Tawny Owls nesting on the ground, see *Brit. Birds*, IV., p. 24-25.—F.C.R.J.]

FEEDING-HABIT OF THE BLACK-HEADED GULL.

THE photograph here reproduced illustrates a feeding-habit of the Black-headed Gull (*Larus r. ridibundus*). It was taken from a tent pitched beside a pond, where the Gulls used to feed in the shallow water. The bird while swimming along



suddenly took wing, and rising about six inches above the surface, took a vertical header downwards, in the same way as a Cormorant or Grebe. The result, however, was quite ineffective, for where the Grebe would have sunk like a stone, the Gull was as buoyant as a ping-pong ball and was never able to submerge more than half of the body. It could not obtain impetus for the "dive" except by spreading the wings, and the period between the spring and the submersion was too short to allow the wings to be folded. Twice

I observed that tufts of weed were brought to the surface—proof that the birds were feeding, not bathing. I suppose that for respiratory reasons Gulls are not able to feed with only the head submerged like a duck, which in a case of this kind would seem to have been the obvious thing to do.

MAUD D. HAVILAND.

NEST OF COMMON TERN WITH TEN EGGS.

THE photograph reproduced represents a nest of the Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) containing the extraordinarily large number of ten eggs, evidently the produce of several birds. It was found by Mr. G. H. Lings on Gardiner's Island, off



NEST OF COMMON TERN CONTAINING TEN EGGS, GARDINER'S ISLAND
U.S.A., JUNE 20, 1915.

(Photographed by G. H. Lings, M.B.O.U.)

Long Island, U.S.A., on June 20th, 1915. Another nest examined by him on this occasion contained six eggs and two others four each. About a thousand pairs appeared to be nesting here, and the nests had not been tampered with in any way. The keeper informed Mr. Lings that in some years nests with four eggs were fairly common. H. MASSEY.

SANDWICH TERN NESTING IN ANGLESEY.

A COLONY of Sandwich Terns (*Sterna sandvicensis*) has become established recently on the Anglesey Coast. It comprised between thirty and forty nests when Mr. S. G. Cummings and I discovered it on June 15th, 1915, and we were told that a few pairs bred in 1914, but that no nests had been noticed previously. In Britain, at any rate, the Sandwich Tern usually nests on sand dunes or low grassy islets, but

the Anglesey colony is located on the summit of a rocky stack at a little distance from the shore. The nests were segregated in an area of a few square yards, but those on the outer edge impinged on the nesting areas of the Common and Roseate Terns which breed in hundreds on the stack. Most of the eggs were on the bare and jagged rock, or on what little earth there was, but a few were among the plants of wild beet that clothed the top of the stack. Fragments of dried stems of beet had been used by one or two pairs to line their nests, and some had made rudimentary nests of flakes and chips of stone, but in most cases the eggs were laid on the naked rock. Nearly all of the nests held two eggs, but in a few cases birds were incubating only one. No young had been hatched at the time of our visit. We did not detect any Arctic Terns actually nesting on the stack, but there was a small colony on another stack a few yards away, and the alarm cries of the Arctics mingled in the clamour from the dense white cloud of Terns that hung above us when we landed. The Lesser Tern nests in this neighbourhood, although, naturally, not upon the stack itself, and the five species of Terns that nest in Britain may be seen in the course of an hour's stroll along the coast. Indeed, on one occasion as the tide was falling and the birds were coming in from fishing to rest on the shore, we had in view on one sandbank, and within a few feet of one another, examples of all five, Common, Arctic, Roseate, Lesser and Sandwich—an experience probably unique in this country. There is no necessity to indicate the precise locality of this Tern colony, and it must suffice to say that it is on private property and is rigorously protected. C. OLDHAM.

LAND-RAILS IN STAFFORDSHIRE.

I AM pleased to report that the Land-Rail (*Crex crex*) turned up this year in quite average numbers in the district of Cheadle, Staffordshire. On May 9th, 1915, one was killed close to the town of Longton by flying against telegraph-wires. This very dry season is bringing on a very early hay harvest, and this will be most disastrous to Land-Rails' nests, which will be mown over and destroyed before the young are hatched. This result will probably cause a diminished number of this waning species.

J. R. B. MASEFIELD.

MOOR-HENS USING TWO NESTS FOR ONE BROOD.

I HAVE a couple of ponds in a meadow here (near Guildford) some eighty yards apart, connected by a dike, inhabited

by one pair of Moor-Hens (*Gallinula ch. chloropus*). One of the ponds is always quite clear with only a few bunches of rushes round the margin, and in one of these the Moor-Hens made their nest and laid eight eggs. The other pond was then quite clear, but later was overgrown with reeds, flags, etc.

When the birds had been sitting for about a week I noticed a new nest in the reeds, which had now begun to grow in the other pond.

As soon as the young were hatched they were removed to the new nest, where there was by that time plenty of cover. This, I think, is interesting, especially in view of the fact that preparations were made well in advance.

HORACE TERRY.

RARE BIRDS IN FAIR ISLE.—Mr. W. Eagle Clarke contributes an interesting paper on the more uncommon visitors to Fair Isle during 1914 (*Scot. Nat.*, 1915, pp. 101-105). Mr. Jerome Wilson acted as regular observer—and apparently a very efficient one—during this year, while the Duchess of Bedford, who visited the island in the spring, added a valuable series of notes. We append below brief extracts of the more important records in this report, all being for the year 1914.

NORTHERN BULLFINCH (*Pyrrhula p. pyrrhula*).—Male and female February 27th, female February 28th.

SERIN (*Serinus c. serinus*).—Female May 22nd. Only the second record for Scotland.

ORTOLAN BUNTING (*Emberiza hortulana*).—An extraordinary number on May 8th.

CONTINENTAL GREAT TITMOUSE (*Parus m. major*).—One on October 27th, followed by others to the number of about a dozen. Two stayed on at all events as late as January 23rd, 1915.

SIBERIAN CHIFFCHAFF (*Phylloscopus c. tristis*).—Female October 24th.

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER (*Ph. s. superciliosus*).—One October 8th, one 28th.

REED-WARBLER (*Acrocephalus s. streperus*).—One June 10th. Previous records have been in autumn.

MARSH-WARBLER (*A. palustris*).—One June 8th. There are only three or four previous records for Scotland, and curiously the last was June 7th, 1913, at Fair Isle.

ICTERINE WARBLER (*Hypolais icterina*).—One June 11th.

BARRED WARBLER (*Sylvia n. nisoria*).—Appeared on ten different days between August 22nd and September 21st, as many as four being seen on August 29th.

BLACK REDSTART (*Phœnicurus o. gibraltariensis*).—Three times in April, once October.

HOBBY (*Falco s. subbuteo*).—One June 9th, and one November 21st.

WOOD-SANDPIPER (*Tringa glareola*).—Single birds on June 11th and 12th.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa limosa*).—Two May 26th.

NORTHERN BULLFINCH IN CAITHNESS.—Mr. G. Bain records (*Scot. Nat.*, 1915, p. 68) that a female example of *Pyrrhula p. pyrrhula* was shot at Shurrey in the parish of Reay early in January, 1915.

RUDDY SHIELD-DUCK IN INVERNESS.—Miss A. C. Jackson records (*Scot. Nat.*, 1915, p. 93) that three *Casarca ferruginea*, which were very wild, were observed by Mr. Berry on the Beauly Firth on July 17th, 1914.

GADWALL NESTING IN CAITHNESS.—In July, 1912, Miss A. C. Jackson reported the interesting discovery of *Anas strepera* breeding in Caithness (*cf. Brit. Birds*, VI., p. 318). The same observer now states (*Scot. Nat.*, 1915, p. 94) that she again observed a pair of Gadwall with young on the same loch in July, 1914. Miss Jackson also states that she saw a female and four young on another loch thirty miles distant.

NESTING-HABITS OF SLAVONIAN GREBE.—It is now well known that *Colymbus auritus* breeds on a loch in Scotland. Miss L. J. Rintoul and Miss E. V. Baxter give some notes (*Scot. Nat.*, 1915, p. 69) on the habits of the birds as observed by them during a visit to the loch, where two nests with eggs were inspected.

BLACK-TAILED GODWITS IN CAITHNESS AND INVERNESS.—An example of *Limosa limosa* in breeding plumage was seen by Miss A. C. Jackson at the edge of a freshwater loch near the east coast of Caithness on May 26th, 1914 (*Scot. Nat.*, 1915, p. 68). This is the first record for the county. Miss Jackson also records (*t.c.*, p. 93) that one was seen on September 21st, and another on the 22nd, by Mr. Berry on the Beauly Firth.

WHIMBREL IN FORTH IN WINTER.—Mr. F. S. Beveridge records (*Scot. Nat.*, 1915, p. 94) that five *Numenius phaeopus* were amongst a flock of Bar-tailed Godwits at Musselburgh on January 25th, 1915.

HONOUR TO MR. T. H. NELSON.—On Degree Day, July 3rd, at Leeds University, the Duke of Devonshire, as Chancellor, conferred the degree of Master of Science, *honoris causa*, upon Mr. Thos. H. Nelson, J.P., of Seafield, Redcar, in recognition of his labours in connexion with Yorkshire natural history, and especially his work on the *Birds of Yorkshire*.



REVIEWS

The Birds of Lincolnshire. By the Rev. F. L. Blathwayt, M.A., M.B.O.U. (*Lincolnshire Naturalists' Union Transactions*, 1914, pp. 178-211).

THE late John Cordeaux contributed much on the subject of Lincolnshire birds, his *Birds of the Humber District* being especially well known, and Mr. G. H. Caton Haigh has for many years made most valuable observations in north-east Lincolnshire, yet no complete list of the birds of Lincolnshire has hitherto been published. Mr. Blathwayt's list is therefore very welcome, and will form a valuable basis for workers on the status and distribution of birds in Lincolnshire. A very brief summary of the status and distribution of each species is given, and a number is affixed to those birds which the author definitely admits, while the species of doubtful occurrence are left unnumbered. Some of those numbered will require further consideration, as the evidence for their admission is not quite conclusive, while further research will no doubt result in the inclusion of others such as the Rose-coloured Starling, of the occurrence of which Mr. Blathwayt seems to have found no record. The Ferruginous Duck is not included, and we are afraid that our mention of Lincolnshire in the *Hand-List* as one of the counties in which this bird has occurred is a mistake, originating in Howard Saunders's statement (*Manual*, 2nd ed., p. 445) that it has occurred "along the Trent Valley up to Nottinghamshire." We think this should have read *in* Nottinghamshire (where the bird has occurred three times) and not "up to Nottinghamshire." Mr. Blathwayt mentions a Dipper, which may have been *Cinclus c. cinclus*, obtained about 1905 at Washingborough, and as there are so few definite records of this race we hope the specimen, if still available, will be submitted for comparison. The Indian Roller recorded by Mr. Cordeaux was not, as stated by Mr. Blathwayt, "probably an example of the European species" (see *Ibis*, 1891, p. 147). We note some records omitted, as for instance those of the Osprey, Kite and Hoopoe in the *Zoologist*, 1884, pp. 70-1.

The Scandinavian Rock-Pipit is said to occur as a winter visitor to the coast: this may be so, but we know of no character to distinguish it from the common Rock-Pipit

in winter plumage. The nesting of the Wood-Lark near Sleaford in 1902, of the Garganey in the north-west of the county in 1914, and of the Curlew at Scotton Common in 1900, are interesting records. The Stone-Curlew, on the other hand, is now regarded as only a "possible" nester.

We have two serious complaints to make about Mr. Blathwayt's list, and these are that he employs an antiquated system of nomenclature, and that while he includes certain races as full species (apparently only because they were described some years ago), he ignores others equally distinct, for what reason it is difficult to guess. We should be considered mad if we went to war to-day with weapons of twenty years ago, and surely it is no less unreasonable to refuse to make use of modern equipment in science. Let us take one instance: under Redbreast, Mr. Blathwayt says, "very large immigration noticeable on the coast in October." Now if these birds are real immigrants they must be of the Continental form *Erithacus r. rubecula*. The British Redbreast was described as distinct fourteen years ago—surely ample time for ornithologists to have learnt something about it, yet Mr. Blathwayt gives no indication that the residents and "immigrants" are in any way different, and by thus ignoring modern work, the fact that the latter really came from oversea remains unsubstantiated.

Lincolnshire is in many respects an interesting county from the ornithologist's point of view, and we hope that Mr. Blathwayt's list will give an impetus to bird-work in the county, and especially along the shores of the Wash, which have so far been much neglected. H.F.W.



LETTERS



RACES OF THE RINGED PLOVER.

To the Editors of BRITISH BIRDS.

SIRS.—In the last Additions and Corrections to the *Hand-List*, the authors state (*antea*, p. 8) that the distribution and therefore the nomenclature of the races of Ringed Plover are not clear, and further investigation is needed. A paper by Herr Lehn Schiöler (*Dansk Ornith. Foren. Tidss.*, II. and III., March 1915, pp. 161-181) has evidently escaped their notice. In it the author goes very fully into the question and has had a very large material at hand. He shows good arguments for considering that the restricted type-locality for the typical race should be middle and south Sweden. According to his investigations, he considers Dr. Lowe was in error when he stated "that *C. h. major* is a larger bird in every respect" than *C. h. hiaticola*, and shows that *major* and *hiaticola* are of the same size but differ in colour, and it is the north-easterly form than which *major* is larger. To make it quite clear I give Herr Schiöler's conclusions.

(Translation.)

" 1. The typical, *Ægialitis h. hiaticola* L., with an average wing length of 131 mm. for males and 132 mm. for females : colour of upper parts brown-grey ; orbital margin strongly marked, whereby the shape of the head is arched and roundish.

" It breeds in mid and south Sweden, Denmark, south coast of Norway and north coast of Germany.

" 2. The north-eastern, *Ægialitis h. intermedia* Ménétries, with an average wing measurement of about 124-125 mm. ; colour of the upper parts as in the typical form but the whole bird is small, its bill and legs are weaker, and as the orbital margin is not so well marked, the head seems less arched.

" It breeds in north Sweden, Kola, N. Russia and the arctic coast of Siberia, east to the Tschuki Peninsula. (From the last-named locality presumably originated the specimens from Australia recorded by Gould [Palmén].)

" 3. The English, *Ægialitis h. major* Seebohm, which in size is quite like the typical form, and resembles it in the shape of the head. It differs in the pale grey—not brown-grey—colour on the upper parts.

" It breeds in the British Islands and possibly on the coasts of Holland, Belgium and west France.

" 4. The Icelandic—to which probably should be joined the Greenlandic—*Ægialitis h. septentrionalis* Brehm : it stands in size between the typical and the north-easterly forms : it resembles these forms in the appearance of the

“colour of the back: it is doubtful how the shape of the
“head appears. This race requires more minutely to be
“examined.

“It breeds in Iceland, Greenland and possibly Spitsbergen:
“perhaps also the north-west Norwegian Ringed Plover
“belongs to this form.”

CLAUD B. TICEHURST.

[We had not seen Herr Schiöler's paper at the time we went to press with the article in question. We have not yet had an opportunity of examining Swedish examples of the Ringed Plover (there seem to be none available in England) and it would be useless for us to attempt to discuss Herr Schiöler's conclusions without having examined birds from the typical locality of *Charadrius hiaticula hiaticula*. That two forms are separable is obvious, as mentioned on page 8 (*ante*), but without further material we cannot give our opinion as to the ranges and names of these forms, nor as to whether other forms are separable. The name *intermedius* of Ménétries would appear to refer to *dubius* and not to *hiaticula* (*cf. Ibis*, 1915, p. 533).—EDS.]

BRITISH BIRDS

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NOTES ON THE BREEDING-HABITS OF THE
ASIATIC GOLDEN PLOVER.

BY

MAUD D. HAVILAND.

A LITTLE while ago I was watching half-a-dozen Golden Plover (*Charadrius apricarius*) resting on some Berkshire ploughed fields. The last time that I had looked at a Golden Plover at close quarters was at Golchika, at the mouth of the Yenesei river, and I could not help being struck with the difference between the European bird and the Asiatic Golden Plover (*Charadrius d. fulvus*). *Charadrius apricarius*, judged even in breeding-plumage, is, when seen in the field, merely an understudy of the Asiatic bird, and a beggarly understudy at that. In the Asiatic Golden Plover the black of the breast is more uniform and more intense; the fretty gold pattern of the wings is brighter; and the white neck-stripe, whose line is just that of the quaint dignified curve of a lord chancellor's wig, is as clear and defined as if it had been traced out with chalk.

Nevertheless, the Asiatic Golden Plover is a bird that leaves the photographer discontented. Monochrome does no justice to contrasts of black and ochre, and except perhaps for the comparative slenderness of the bill, and a certain grace and alertness of pose which are more readily captured by the eye than by the camera, photographs of *Charadrius d. fulvus* might equally well represent the Grey Plover (*Squatarola squatarola*).

Both Seebohm and Mr. Popham found the common Golden Plover (*C. apricarius*) on the Yenesei, and the latter has in his collection a bird with parti-coloured axillaries, which has been pronounced by Mr. H. E. Dresser to be intermediate between the two species, but as far as I know, in 1914, I met with nothing but *Charadrius d. fulvus*. I first saw a few birds at Dudinka, where they were probably on migration, and afterwards

the species was common all the way down to Golchika. Each pair occupied perhaps two furlongs of tundra. I should think that every acre of moss and lichen from the Yenesei to the Lena in summer is thus parcelled out. Your progress across the tundra in July is heralded and attended by a chorus of plaintive cries. Both birds meet you a quarter of a mile from the nest, and never leave you until you are at the boundaries of their own territory, and they can safely hand you over to their next neighbours for espionage. Covert, of course, there is none—but it is needless to say more. The suspiciousness and patience of the Golden Plover are the same all the world over; and I will not dwell upon them to those who themselves have no doubt walked vainly for half a day about the bird's breeding-grounds in this country, and listened to its maddening but at the same time most musical protests.

It is a thankless and also a futile task to reduce the calls of birds to syllables: but with this much of deprecation, I will follow the prevailing custom to say that, as well as I can render it, the alarm note of this species is a double-barrelled whistle "Kleee-ye." Sometimes it is prolonged into "Kleee-ee-ye," and there is also a sort of bubbling cry which is uttered on the wing, and is very reminiscent of the note of the Ringed Plover, but it is seldom heard. Roughly speaking, the alarm note of the common Golden Plover is monosyllabic: that of the Asiatic Golden Plover is dissyllabic; and that of the Grey Plover is distinctly trisyllabic in character.

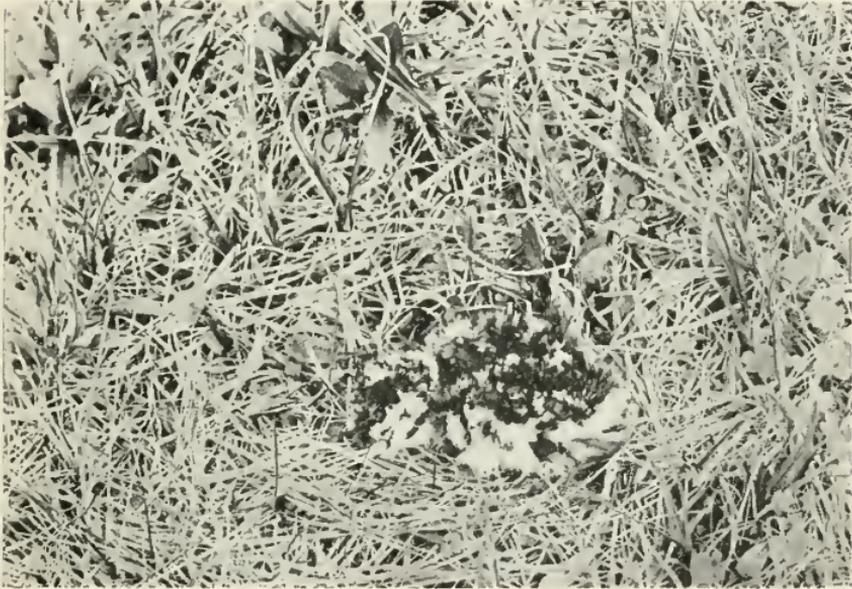
The first nest was found on July 4th. It was a shallow depression, lined with dry lichen haulms on a slope of the tundra. The bird, which must, I think, either have been deaf or else exceedingly stupid, did not move until I was well over the hill and within sixty yards of her, when she jumped up and feigned a broken wing. The eggs agreed with those described by Mr. Popham, being paler in ground colour than the type of *Charadrius*



ASIATIC GOLDEN PLOVER ON TUNDRA.

(In the background are seen the very characteristic mudhills that occur along the river banks.)
(*Photographed by Maud D. Haviland.*)

apricarius. Measurements : 47.5×33 , 47×33 , 48×33 , 49×32 mm. Needless to say, I had not intended to waste any of the precious hours of a season that in those high latitudes is all too short in trying to photograph such an unsatisfactory subject as this Plover. However, on July 18th, after a couple of hours watching, I marked down a nest with chipping eggs. Once their secret was discovered, the old birds became remarkably tame, and I



YOUNG ASIATIC GOLDEN PLOVER.
(Photographed by Maud D. Haviland.)

was able to photograph them without much difficulty as they ran round me. At the time I was staying in a native *choom*, and had no tent or hiding contrivance with me. However, even if I had had such a thing, it is doubtful whether it would have been of much use, for it was the first day of the warm weather, and, likewise of the mosquito season. I may remark in passing that it is not possible to focus a reflex camera from behind a veil, nor to release the shutter accurately when wearing gloves. The trials—and incidentally the heroism—of

bird photographers have already been described *ad nauseam* in the halfpenny press, and as I do not want to be suspected of a desire to compete in these journalistic flights, I will observe merely that the Yenesei mosquito is not an epicure. Oil of lavender, essence of cloves, and all the nice things that English chemists sell as preventatives, make him sing with pleasure as he settles (out of sight) on your neck or wrist, and when



ASIATIC GOLDEN PLOVER.

(Photographed by Maud D. Haviland.)

he is really hungry, as he was on the morning that these photographs were taken, he will gladly plunge his proboscis through the thick layer of Stockholm tar and lard that you have smeared on your skin, to the detriment of your complexion, in the vain hope that it will baulk him of his luncheon.

One of the birds was remarkably tame, and by means of a 14 in. lens I secured a series of photographs, of which the accompanying illustrations are examples. The other bird, which was in poor plumage, kept its distance, but

the parent at the nest even came back and brooded the moist chicks while I was sitting under a halo of mosquitoes only a few yards away. It was typical of the ironies of bird-photography that, during my stay on the Yenesei, I obtained a series of such a wary species as the Golden Plover with no preparation, while I failed egregiously to photograph such a common species as the Lapland Bunting at the nest.



ASIATIC GOLDEN PLOVER BROODING YOUNG.

(*Photographed by Maud D. Haviland.*)

As soon as the young ones were able to run alone, which, roughly speaking, was about July 20th, the birds left the higher ground and began to collect into flocks in the marshy places of the tundra. I am inclined to think that the young birds must need to wash and drink a great deal, as otherwise it is not easy to understand why all the waders of the tundra should leave the nesting-sites so early and wander down to the sphagnum swamps. Some of the Asiatic Golden Plover

even crossed the mud-hills and came down to the banks of the river.

I spent the night of August 1st on the tundra. In one tract of marsh about half-a-mile square there were not only four or five pairs of these Plover, which evidently had young ones in the neighbourhood, but overhead a flock of eight or nine more birds was wheeling. I do not think that these latter were nesting, and am inclined to think that they may have been non-breeding birds. If so, there must have been some movement about that time, for I did not notice such flocks at any time during July or later in August until towards the end of the month.*

On August 5th, I shot a female of the year by the Golchika river. It was fully-fledged except for a little coronal of down, and was accompanied by the parent. According to Seebohm†: "Young in first plumage resemble adults in spring plumage on their upper-parts, except that the tail-feathers, instead of being dark brown with transverse bars, are uniform dark brown with marginal yellow spots." The mantle is more deeply spotted with yellow than that of the parent, and the breast is not black but resembles that of the old bird or

* Since the above was written, I have found the following note on the Grey Plover (*Squatarola squatarola*) by Messrs. Seebohm and Harvie-Brown (*Ibis* 1876, p. 222): "The males associate in small parties of three or four whilst the females are sitting: they rise to a great height and dash about in erratic curves, or dive down impetuously and rapidly rise again . . . flying with long tern-like sweeps of their wings . . . utter their musical treble note."

Although in the case of the Golden Plover mentioned above, the young were hatched, it has occurred to me that what I noticed in *C. fulvus* may be the same thing that Messrs. Harvie-Brown and Seebohm recorded of *S. squatarola*, but whether the birds in the flock were males or females and whether they were the mates of those which were tending the young in the marsh, I do not know. In the latter case there must have been eight or nine broods at least in the area. In this connection it may be worth mentioning that on July 16th and two following days, just about the time that the young were hatching, I saw also parties of Little Stints skimming excitedly about the marshes. During the incubation-period such flights were not seen. Two birds that I shot from two such flocks were both females. Mr. Trevor-Battye (*Ice-bound on Kolguev*) mentions very similar flocks of Little Stints on Kolguev during the nesting-season.

† Cited by Howard Saunders, *Manual of British Birds*, p. 550.

of the Grey Plover in winter-dress, only that it is more suffused with ochre.

The nestling was first described by Mr. H. L. Popham (*Ibis*, 1897) as being more spotted, with white about the sides of the head, than the chick of *C. apricarius*. A brood of four that I found much resembled the young of *C. apricarius* except in the tint of the yellow down, which is gamboge in the eastern and ochre in the western species. In *C. fulvus* the pattern on the sides of the head is present (not as in the young of the Grey Plover) and follows the arrangement of colour of *Charadrius apricarius*. However, the white tract between the homogeneous mottling of the crown and nape, and the successive black and yellow bands which lie above and behind the eye, and which in *C. apricarius* is sometimes hardly discernible, is very pronounced in *C. fulvus* and has enlarged at the expense of the coloured bands below it. The nape and upper part of the body are more spotted with white, and there is little or no yellow on the cheek below the eye.

The Asiatic Golden Plover is a late migrant from Golchika. On August 26th, a windy sunny day, as I was walking beside the Yenesei, a flock of perhaps thirty flew close to me; and during the stormy weather that prevailed during the last days of the month, I saw several parties flying southwards up the river, but by September 2nd the birds had all disappeared.

SCREENED AND OPEN NESTS OF REDSHANKS.

BY
C. W. COLTHRUP.

IN Miss Haviland's most interesting notes on the Grey Phalarope (*antca*, pp. 11-16), her reference to the screening of its eggs by the Redshank reminded me that this is not always done, as the photographs here reproduced prove. In Romney Marsh the eggs are frequently laid on the bare



Fig. 2. SCREENED NEST OF REDSHANK.
(Photographed by C. W. Colthrup.)

shingle, sometimes in the centre of a straggling piece of sloe bush (fig. 1), notwithstanding that long grass is near at hand and is taken advantage of by other members of the species.

In a marsh in Hampshire some Redshanks lay their eggs on the grass quite openly like the Lapwing, simply making a "scratch out" and lining it with grass; others make a hollow in the heather and line it with lichen with no attempt at concealment, while some make their nest and lay their eggs in a tuft of grass, with a regular "run" to it and well concealed (fig. 2).



FIG. 1. OPEN NEST OF REDSHANK, ROMNEY MARSH BEACH.
(*Photographed by C. W. Colthrup.*)

NOTES

BIRDS' METHOD OF EATING BUTTERFLIES.

With regard to Mr. C. I. Evans's query in the December (1914) number (Vol. VIII., p. 171), one evening in August, 1904, I watched a pair of Stonechats (*Saxicola t. hibernans*) near Beachy Head catching chalk-hill blue butterflies (*Agriades corydon*), and feeding their fully-fledged young on them, in an elder tree. After catching the butterflies they settled on a branch and nipped the wings off. The ground under the tree was strewn with the severed wings.

On July 28th, 1909, at Herne Bay Station, Kent, I watched a pair of House-Sparrows (*Passer d. domesticus*) bring meadow-brown butterflies (*Euphydryas aurinia*) to their young in a nest in the ornamental ironwork at the top of one of the platform posts. Before feeding the young they severed the wings, which floated down to the platform.

I have made observations for a number of years and in most cases have found that birds nip off the wings of butterflies and moths before eating the bodies. C. W. COLTHRUP.

ADDER EATING YOUNG BIRDS.

At the foot of the Downs near Folkestone, I have from time to time had under observation a number of nests of small birds, built on and in the sides of a bank, and had often been unable to account for the sudden disappearance of the young until one evening I found the solution. While walking along this bank I met a fisherman with an adder on the end of a piece of string. He had been watching a Skylark's nest in the hope of taking the fully-fledged young, and on visiting the nest found that the adder had killed the four young, and had already swallowed one, which could be seen half-way down its body. C. W. COLTHRUP.

RUSTIC BUNTING IN SUSSEX.

A MALE Rustic Bunting (*Emberiza rustica*) was shot at Westfield, Sussex, on December 4th, 1914. There are two previous records for the county, one near Brighton, October 23rd, 1867, and one, also at Westfield, on September 22nd, 1902. J. B. NICHOLS.

THE NORFOLK ASHY-HEADED WAGTAIL NOW IDENTIFIED AS A GREY-HEADED WAGTAIL.

ABOUT May 1st, 1842, a Wagtail was killed at Sheringham in Norfolk, and recorded by my father in *The Annals and Magazine of Natural History* for that year (p. 353) as *Motacilla neglecta*.

On subsequent examination it was decided that it was referable to *Motacilla flava cinereocapilla* Savi, and was re-mentioned under that name in the *Norwich Naturalists' Soc. Trans.* (Vol. II., p. 226).

This bird has recently been submitted to a careful scrutiny by Dr. Claud Ticehurst, and compared with a series of skins, the result being that he is quite satisfied that it should be assigned to *M. f. thunbergi*, Billberg (= *M. borealis* Sundevall).
J. H. GURNEY.

[Mr. Gurney has kindly allowed me to see this bird and it is certainly a typical adult male *M. f. thunbergi*. This being so, the inclusion of the Ashy-headed Wagtail *M. f. cinereocapilla*, in the British List, now rests solely upon the specimen obtained in May at Penzance and figured by Gould (*Birds of Great Britain*, Part xxii.). This figure is a very good one and in my opinion undoubtedly represents an adult male *M. f. cinereocapilla*.—H.F.W.]

NESTING TERRITORY CLAIMED BY MALE TREE-PIBIT.

It is my opinion that the nesting territory is owned or claimed by the male Tree-Pipit (*Anthus t. trivialis*). On a small Surrey heath I find, year after year, a number of nests of the Tree-Pipit in almost the same situations and the males sing from the same trees each year. I base my opinion on the assumption that the female always lays the same type of egg, and as I find quite different types of eggs each year in these nests, I feel justified in assuming that the males bring different females back each year. I have also noticed that Tree-Pipits are very fond of building their nests near small paths that intersect the heath. If the nest is built in the middle of the heath it is usually near a small tree.

C. W. COLTHROP.

NEST MATERIAL USED BY BLACKCAPS.

RECENTLY I have been studying the nests of the Blackcap (*Sylvia a. atricapilla*) and find that in this district (Bray, co. Wicklow), where the birds are fairly common, all the nests

are largely composed of the weaker and withered stems of last year's "Robin-run-the-hedge" (*Galium aparine*), whose recurved asperities—or small prickles on the angles of the stem—prevent it slipping backwards when once pulled into position.

By using this plant for binding, the semi-transparent and flimsy nest is made quite strong, indeed stronger than the heavier and thick-walled nests of some other species. I find that Montagu in his *Ornithological Dictionary* (1802) states that the nest of the Blackcap is "composed of dried stalks, generally of goose-grass," which is another name* for *G. aparine*, but subsequent authors seem to have overlooked this fact.

RICHARD M. BARRINGTON.

WRENS USING "COCK'S" NEST FOR SECOND BROOD.

WITH reference to Mr. Lloyd's note on the use of "cock's" nests by Wrens (*antea*, p. 27) I may mention that a pair of Wrens built three nests during May, 1915, in a garden at Orpington, Kent. In one of these they reared a brood. On July 10th I was surprised to find a Wren sitting on five eggs in one of the other two nests.

S. KENDALL BARNES.

WREN'S LONG INCUBATION OF INFERTILE EGGS.

ON May 29th, 1915. I found a Wren (*Troglodytes t. troglodytes*) sitting on four infertile eggs that had obviously been incubated for a considerable time even then. I visited the nest periodically, and the bird continued to sit until July 18th. On July 19th the nest was deserted and the eggs cold. I think this must be a record incubation.

J. H. OWEN.

CURIOUS POSITION OF DIPPER'S NEST.

IN *British Birds* (*antea*, p. 27) Mr. J. H. Owen records the nest of a Dipper (*Cinclus c. britannicus*) about six inches up the old nesting-hole of a Sand Martin. While looking over the volume of the *Zoologist* for 1859, I came across a note from Mr. H. Smurthwaite, of Richmond, Yorkshire, in which he states that a Dipper's nest was found at the end of an old Sand Martin's hole in a sand-bank overhanging a small brook. It contained five fresh eggs, and the bird was caught on the nest and drawn out with some difficulty, the opening

* See Britten and Holland, *Dictionary of English Plant Names*, 1886.

being only just large enough to admit the finder's arm. In this case the nest only differed from the ordinary type in lacking the dome, and was placed at the very end of the hole, which was nearly two feet in depth.

F. C. R. JOURDAIN.

LARGE FLOCK OF ALPINE SWIFTS IN KENT.

ON July 15th, 1915, in a heavy downpour of rain with some hail, a flight of about one hundred Alpine Swifts (*Apus melba*) passed over Kingsdown, flying low (about 40 or 50 ft. from the ground) and in a north-westerly direction, the wind being against them. A few Common Swifts were with the flight. They appeared to settle on the ground after crossing a field, but I am uncertain as to this, the ground being undulating, and of course it would be unusual for these birds to alight on a flat surface. On July 22nd I saw five Alpine Swifts hawking flies, and on the same day an enormous flight of Common Swifts, numbering thousands, at Walmer. On August 3rd, passing over the Downs at their highest elevation, I again saw five Alpine Swifts, four of which were flying with two or three Common Swifts. The fifth flew up from a corn-field, within a few feet of where I stood, and must have been resting either upon the ground or on the stems of wheat. Since that date I have not seen any example of either species.

On each occasion that I saw these birds they were in company with a few Common Swifts, and were perfectly easy to indentify both by their colouring and superior size. Moreover I have seen numbers of these birds in their native haunts in the Alps, but have never met with them previously in this country, nor have I ever before seen a specimen alight on a horizontal surface. The perpendicular sides of rocky elevations are always preferred, the bird's legs being very short, and its long and sharp hooked claws better adapted for clinging than for perching.

ARNOLD H. MATHEW.

[In the *Field* for August 21st, 1915, Mr. H. Holmes records the presence of an Alpine Swift at Whithorn, Wigtownshire, during the first week of August, 1915.—EDS.]

ADULT CUCKOO KILLING NESTLING MEADOW-PIPITS.

ON May 27th, 1915, while watching a Cuckoo (*Cuculus c. canorus*) on a slag bank near the Tees marshes I saw it go

to some long grass where presently an excited little party of Meadow-Pipits, Pied Wagtails, Wheatears and Sky-Larks collected. To get a better view I crept to within a dozen yards without disturbing the birds. At first the Cuckoo seemed to be only feeding, but on noticing the peculiar "shivering" actions of two of the Meadow-Pipits—quite unlike the fluttering and hovering flights of the other birds—this at once convinced me that their young were being disturbed. On my jumping up the Cuckoo flew away followed by all except the pair of Pipits, which kept near, and on looking at the spot I found their nest empty, well hidden in the slag and grass. About a foot away from the nest, however, two nestlings were laid upon a flat piece of slag, their necks broken, and blood oozing from their heads and bodies as if they had been battered upon the piece of slag. Another young one, evidently the last to be tackled before my intervention, had dropped into a crevice close to the nest and was just alive. This was replaced into the nest, and I had to leave the place. On returning to the scene of this little tragedy two days later this nestling also lay dead upon the same piece of slag as the other two, so it seems that the Cuckoo must have returned and finished her work after I left on the 27th. C. E. MILBURN.

[A very similar instance of young birds being apparently killed by a Cuckoo is recorded by Mr. J. H. Gurney in the *Trans. Norfolk & Norwich Nat. Soc.*, Vol. VI., pl. 4, pp. 374-375, where references are given to other cases (*cf. Zool.*, 1889, p. 261).—F.C.R.J.]

CUCKOOS' EGGS AND NESTLINGS IN 1915.

Cuckoos seemed to be very plentiful in the Felsted district in 1915. Although unable to spend much time searching for eggs, I nevertheless saw thirty eggs and young. The fosterers victimized consisted in eighteen cases of Hedge-Sparrows, Pied Wagtails in six cases, Sedge-Warblers in five, and Robin in one. Seven of the eggs which I watched were destroyed by mice, the Cuckoo's egg being eaten first in each case, and several other eggs came to grief during incubation. Out of eleven young only six survived the nestling stage.

One egg, found in a Hedge-Sparrow's nest at Little Leighs, is worth a short notice. It was rather below the average size, and unusual in shape. In colour it was almost pure white with a well-defined ring of small reddish-brown spots

at the large end, and elsewhere practically unmarked. It is now in Mr. Hughes-Hughes's collection.

Mating notes were last heard by me on July 2nd and calling was last noted on the 4th. On July 3rd at 4 p.m. a Sedge-Warbler's nest under observation contained four eggs. On the 8th this nest held a Cuckoo's egg and two Sedge-Warbler's eggs, the Sedge-Warblers' hatching on July 16th and the Cuckoo's egg on the 17th at mid-day. Probably this egg was laid on July 4th or 5th. Another Sedge-Warbler's nest not far off contained a Cuckoo's egg (evidently laid by the same bird) and three eggs of Sedge-Warbler on July 8th. On the next day the Warbler laid a fourth egg, but two days later a mouse had destroyed the eggs. Probably this egg was laid on the 6th or 7th, two or three days after calling had ceased in the neighbourhood.

J. H. OWEN.

[See previous notes from this district in Vol. VI., pp. 330-3, Vol. VII., pp. 233-4 and Vol. VIII., p. 118.—EDS.]

LESSER KESTREL IN SUSSEX.

A LESSER KESTREL (*Falco n. naumanni*) was shot at Staple-cross, Sussex, on April 7th, 1914, and was examined in the flesh by Mr. H. W. Ford-Lindsay. It was a young male assuming adult plumage, but still retaining some of the juvenile feathers. This species has only once previously been recorded for Sussex.

J. B. NICHOLS.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER IN SUSSEX.

A MALE Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius curonicus*) was shot at Rye, Sussex, on April 18th, 1914. It was examined in the flesh by Mr. W. Ruskin Butterfield, and I saw it just after being skinned. This is the tenth well-authenticated British specimen, and the third from Sussex.

J. B. NICHOLS.

AMERICAN PECTORAL SANDPIPER IN SUSSEX.

AN adult female of the American Pectoral Sandpiper (*Tringa maculata*) was shown me in the flesh on August 7th, 1915, having been shot the previous day at Rye Harbour, Sussex. It was in very worn plumage.

W. H. FORD-LINDSAY.

CURLEW AND COMMON SNIPE NESTING IN SUSSEX.

It may be of interest to note that a pair of Curlews (*Numenius a. arquata*) nested on a heath in Sussex in 1912. I saw the eggs when fresh laid.

I have found the Common Snipe (*Gallinago g. gallinago*) nesting near East Grinstead during the last four seasons

C. W. COLTHRUP.

[We believe that the Curlew has not previously been proved to breed in Sussex, though it has been recorded as nesting in Surrey.—Eds.]

CASPIAN TERNS IN KENT.

A FINE pair of Caspian Terns (*Sterna tschegrava*) was shot at Jury's Gap, Kent, on August 4th, 1915. I saw them in the flesh the next day. My previous record was in 1913 for Sussex (*B.B.*, Vol. VII., p. 59). H. W. FORD-LINDSAY.

[This is apparently the first definite record for Kent, as Dr. N. F. Ticehurst, in his *History of the Birds of Kent*, p. 494, includes it in brackets, all previous notices being erroneous or dubious.—Eds.]

SOOTY TERNS IN KENT.

A male Sooty Tern (*Sterna fuscata*) was shot at Jury's Gap, Lydd, Kent, on April 9th, 1914, and I examined it in the flesh on April 11th. A female was also got at the same place on April 10th, 1914, and was examined in the flesh by Messrs. W. Ruskin Butterfield and H. W. Ford-Lindsay. These are the seventh and eighth recorded British specimens, and the first definite records for Kent. J. B. NICHOLS.

IRISH NAMES OF BIRDS.—Mr. R. F. Scharff contributes to the *Irish Naturalist* (1915, pp. 109-129) a list of Irish names of birds found in Ireland.

RARE BIRDS IN SHETLAND.—Mr. S. Bruce notes (*Scot. Nat.*, 1915) the following as having occurred in 1914 at or near Lerwick:—A Grey-headed Wagtail (*Motacilla f. thubergi*) procured on September 13th: a Great Tit, probably *Parus m. major*, on Oct. 25th, and three on the 29th (six or seven in all were seen) (p. 115): a Barred Warbler (*Sylvia n. nisoria*) on June 14th (p. 143), is especially noteworthy as it has seldom been observed in the British Islands on spring passage: a Sparrow-Hawk (*Accipiter n. nisus*) was shot on Nov. 15th.

and a Curlew-Sandpiper (*Erolia ferruginca*) is recorded for Sept. 7th (p. 115).

BIRDS IN NORFOLK IN 1914.—Mr. J. H. Gurney's ornithological report for Norfolk for 1914 (*Zool.*, 1915, pp. 121-146) is, as usual, well and carefully put together, but this year is somewhat lacking in items of great interest. We have, however, a short account of the nesting of the Cormorants, which has already been treated at length by Miss E. L. Turner in these pages. The following are worthy of note: A Spoonbill (*Platalca l. leucorodia*) appeared at Breydon on April 7th and between that date and August 4th twelve in all were seen there, while one was seen on Kelling beach on August 17th; a Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougalli*) was seen at Wells on June 6th and one at Blakeney later in the month; a Bluethroat (*Luscinia svecica*) was caught at Yarmouth in a fruit-net on June 12th (the Bluethroat is seldom observed in summer); a Little Bustard (*Otis tetrax*) was shot at Barton Bendish on October 1st, and a Stone-Curlew (*Burhinus ω . adicnemus*) is reported in December.

JAYS IN CO. CORK.—The Rev. W. M. Abbott writes to the *Irish Naturalist* (1915, p. 107), that a "small colony" of six or eight Jays, presumably *G. g. hibernicus*, has settled during the last few years in the woods of Convamore, Ballyhooley.

DARTFORD WARBLER IN STAFFORDSHIRE.—In his yearly report on the Zoology of Staffordshire, Mr. J. R. B. Masefield states (*Trans. N. Staffs. Field Club*, 1914-15, p. 151) that an example of *Sylvia n. dartfordiensis* was seen at elose quarters by the Rev. J. O. Coussmaker, on March 22nd, 1915, near Rugeley. It is interesting to note that the Dartford Warbler was reported from the same place about 1870. See *Zoologist*, 1903, p. 423.

TENGMALM'S OWL IN SCOTLAND.—Mr. H. Coates records (*Scot. Nat.*, 1915, p. 116) that a specimen of *Egolius f. funercus* obtained at Craighall, near Blairgowrie (Perthshire) in February, 1915, has been presented to the Perth Museum. On page 143 of the same journal Mr. H. W. Robinson notes that Mr. T. Ground, of Birmingham, has a specimen of this owl which was picked up dead on Scalloway (Shetland) on March 14th, 1897. There are only five previous occurrences of Tengmalm's Owl in Scotland.

KING-EIDER IN ORKNEY.—Mr. H. W. Robinson records (*Scot. Nat.*, 1915, p. 143) that a female *Somateria spectabilis*

picked up at Longhope on November 1st, 1895, is in Mr. T. Ground's collection.

SYSTEMATIC POSITION OF THE RUFF AND OF THE SEMI-PALMATED SANDPIPER.—Dr. P. R. Lowe, we are very glad to see, is turning his attention to the anatomy of birds, and has commenced in the *Ibis* a series of papers entitled "Studies on the Charadriiformes." In the first of these (*etc.*, 1915, pp. 609–616) he discusses the systematic position of *Machetes pugnax* and *Ereunetes pusillus*, at the same time reviewing some osteological characters which differentiate the EROLINÆ from the TRINGINÆ. Dr. Lowe comes to the conclusion that both these birds belong to the former group, whereas they have generally been associated with the TRINGINÆ or Redshank group. Dr. Lowe will find, however, that in our *Hand-List* they are placed near the Dunlins.

BRITISH BIRDS

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ON " WAIT AND SEE " PHOTOGRAPHY.

PART I.

BY

E. L. TURNER, H.M.B.O.U.

THIS method consists in putting up a tent (or perhaps several) near any feeding-ground frequented by birds, and sitting inside it all day with a reflex camera. It is far more exciting than it sounds, for the simple reason that you never know what may turn up. The charm of this sport lies in its very waywardness. Some of us are tired of photographing the eternal bird on its eternal nest. The game lacks variety for the naturalist, who is keen to learn something of those habits and instincts which culminate in the building of the nest, and in the rearing and dispersal of the young. There are so few bird photographers who care for anything more than the acquisition of a pretty picture or a technically perfect print. This rebel utterance perhaps needs qualifying. One's work should, of course, be as perfect as circumstances allow, but to the photographer who loves the bird better than the photograph, a technically imperfect print, if it expresses an emotion or a momentary action, is of infinitely more value than the self-consciously beautiful pictures one can obtain of nesting birds.

By the " wait and see " method one sees so much of the inner life of birds when they are absolutely unconscious of observation. By means of properly adjusted peep-holes a large area can be watched, therefore no moment of the long hours lacks interest, even if no satisfactory photographs are obtained. Sometimes the most enthusiastic photographer is apt to be bored if forced to face one properly conducted pair of birds all day, when they have settled down to business and forgotten the mad riot, and the joy of living, and the lust of fighting, which possessed them in the early spring.

One cannot, of course, record the best things one sees. These always take place just out of range or round the next corner. How can a mere camera depict a Sky-Lark hunting for food in the long grass close to the tent,



FIG. 1. "A HUNGRY HOODED CROW."
(*Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.*)

twittering happily to herself as she ruthlessly slays insect after insect, and lays them in a tiny heap until the bundle is large enough to carry away comfortably? Or how portray the rollicking fun that is bound up in the heart of a Wheatear wooing his mate amidst the golden sand-hills on a May morning?

Nevertheless, it is worth while trying to get something definite. Perhaps erratic photography of this kind calls

for more concentrated effort than usual, as one has to keep one's eyes glued to the lens-hood for long periods while a bird plays near, and yet will not come within range.

The best months to work in are April, May and September, but one of the charms of the system is that any spare days throughout the year can be spent photographing birds, instead of confining one's energies to the



Fig. 2. PIED WAGTAIL GOING TO BATHE.
(*Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.*)

short period of the breeding season, when one has to work with feverish haste.

The Hooded Crow (Fig. 1), for instance, was photographed at 9.30 a.m. on February 24th. I placed a tent by a sheep which had been dead twelve days before I succeeded in securing the Hoodie. Unfortunately, that morning I only had four plates till the post came in, but as the policeman had worried me about the sheep, I thought I would try once more and think myself lucky if the Hoodie appeared at all. I might have exposed a dozen plates, for the bird came at 8 a.m. and fed at intervals for nearly

two hours. Having satisfied his own hunger, he spent some time worrying an immature Herring-Gull which also fed ravenously. He crept behind the Gull, and with the inherent love of mischief pertaining to the Crow family, he began tweaking the Gull's tail. Finally he maliciously seized the soft feathers beneath the tail and



Fig. 3. "COMMON SANDPIPERS CONSTANTLY RAN PAST."
(*Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.*)

pulled out a beakful. This caused the Gull to start aside with surprise and pain.

During the first week in May, 1914, I erected a tent by the banks of the Tay, nominally in order to photograph Goosanders. I failed to get them, though a female dived just in front of the lens once while I was changing a plate. By the time the plate was in, the Goosander was fifty yards away. However, as the spot chosen was a shallow reach with a shingle beach between it and the main stream, many species used it as a playing ground. A Pied Wagtail

(Fig. 2) pattered over the stones; Oyster-Catchers, Redshanks and Black-headed Gulls played there all day long. Common Sandpipers (Fig. 3) constantly ran past, while the Goosanders preened and sunned themselves just round the corner out of range. Some of the birds were nesting, but many of the Redshanks and Oyster-Catchers were still indulging in their beautiful courting display.

The courtship of a couple of Oyster-Catchers caused me much amusement. The hen pretended she had no follower, and she led her admirer a long walk alongside the river, holding her head high and stepping daintily (Fig. 4). He followed in her wake humbly, adoringly, wooing her with the most beautifully subdued, but clear, flute-like whistles. His dulcet tones were enough to cajole the heart out of any Oyster-Catcher, however proud. But she tripped unconcernedly to and fro by the water's edge, now and again stopping so suddenly and unexpectedly that her pursuer nearly cannoned into her, and both himself and his whistling were brought up short. When this occurred, he in turn assumed indifference, and receding a few steps, stood looking down stream (Fig. 5) until she elected to move on. This, I conclude, was all part of the science of flirtation as understood by the Oyster-Catcher. It was a beautiful game to watch in the brilliant sunshine, by the foaming river.

At noon daily, a Redshank flew from her nest on the uplands and fed feverishly for half an hour (Fig. 6). She always came to the same feeding ground, a narrow stretch of mud about fifty yards long. Another Redshank, evidently her mate, watched for her and called repeatedly if she lingered. As soon as she arrived he accompanied her to and fro, using all the dainty, alluring gestures of the courting display—dancing beside her with uplifted wings, his feet scarcely touching the earth, and “yodelling” continuously. But she was preoccupied and evidently considered such frivolities a



Fig. 4. "SHE LED HIM A LONG WALK."
Fig. 5. "HE IN TURN ASSUMED INDIFFERENCE."
(*Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.*)

thing of the past. Only when her hunger was appeased did she condescend to stand still for a few minutes and



Fig. 6. REDSHANK FEEDING.

(*Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.*)

exchange amenities. As he waited thus for her daily, evidently this male Redshank took little or no part in incubation.

ON INCUBATION.*

AN OBSERVATIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL PROOF OF THE
VALUE OF THE OVITEGOUS HABIT IN BIRDS.

BY

ERIC B. DUNLOP.

As the best means of ascertaining the value of the ovitegous habit to birds, I devoted some time during the breeding-season to watching the Herring-Gull (*L. argentatus*), which I had previously found normally incubated from the laying of the first egg. Various experiments were also made. All these observations and experiments are not given in the following pages, but sufficient evidence is brought forward to make, I believe, the value of the ovitegous habit undeniable.

On May 8th the first eggs of the Herring-Gull were noted, two nests containing single eggs: the breeding-place was on a small island. One of the nests was in full view of a blind which had been previously erected; soon after I had entered the blind and the boat had left, one of the birds belonging to this nest settled and stood about ten feet from it. An American Crow (*C. brachyrhynchos*) shortly after settled in a near-by tree and made a sudden swoop down towards the nest: the Gull rushed forward with upraised wings and drove him off, the Gull's mate coming up and assisting. After a while the Crow returned and flew past; the Gull ran forward as fast as it could and sat down on the nest and egg (it had retired a few feet from the nest and stood there after the first raid). The bird now incubated for a while and then returned to its former stand. Again the Crow flew near, and yet again the Gull ran forward and covered the egg. The Crow settled in front of the nest and the black one's mate also came up and settled behind. The Gull was very uneasy, calling continually; a raid on the egg was no

* For previous articles on this subject see Vol. IV., pp. 137-45, Vol. V., pp. 322-27, Vol. VII., pp. 105-14.

doubt intended, but the sitting Gull's mate rushed at one of the Crows with upraised wings and put him to instant flight: the other Crow was also driven off. The Gull continued to incubate the egg for most of the afternoon, though the bird left the nest for a short time now and again and sat near. This nest eventually held three eggs.

On another island where a blind had been erected, some time was spent on May 14th watching the birds belonging to two nests. The first nest held two eggs. The Gull stood near it for some time after the boat left. two Crows then came along: the bird at once covered the eggs. It sat some time and then went off, returning again shortly after.

The second nest held one egg (eventually both these nests held three). One of the Gulls, after standing near for some time after the boat left, covered the egg: it left it for a minute or so, more than once, but soon returned. Some time later the other bird came to the nest and covered it for a few seconds. It then went off, and the bird which had previously been incubating mounted it and coition ensued: therefore it is evident that the male was taking a share in incubation during the laying period. After a few moments a Crow flew over once or twice: the male called uneasily and then went to the nest and incubated. Later, the female went on to the nest and remained until a disturbance among the Gulls put her and her mate off in flight.

On May 16th these nests were again kept under observation. At the first nest one of the Gulls soon commenced to incubate after quiet had been restored: after a while its mate came and uttered the "challenge" call: the sitting bird at once left and the other walked on and incubated. The nest now held three eggs. Later the bird left the nest for a short time; a Crow settled near: both Gulls at once flew up to the nest and one of them soon went on. The Crow walked nearer to the nest, when the non-incubating bird at once flew towards it and drove it off. It was frequently noted that when

a nest was threatened by Crows, the non-sitting bird always hastened to the assistance of the incubating bird.

At the second nest, after one of the Gulls had settled near it, it stood there for a time. On a Crow flying past, the Gull ran towards its nest and almost at once settled down on it. It left it again, but a Crow flying over caused it to run on again. The Gull called in an agitated manner whilst the Crow was about. After one and a half hours the other Gull took up incubation. This bird remained on for the last hour and a half that I was in the blind. The non-sitting bird in each instance stood near at hand.

When I entered the blind at 2 p.m. the nest held two eggs: when I left at 5 p.m. it contained three. At about 4.30 I noticed the sitting bird was very restless, and I have no doubt that it was the second bird that went on that laid the egg.

With regard to the part taken by the male in incubation in the case of ovitegous birds, undue emphasis should not be laid on the point, for in the case of various ovinudous Limicoline birds the male shares the duties with the female.

That the Crows frequently did succeed in purloining Gulls' eggs was a matter of common observation, the shells of sucked Gulls' eggs being found on various occasions under trees frequented by Crows. Selection was evidently close, any carelessness on the part of Gulls being promptly penalised by the loss of eggs.

To determine just how close this selection was, I moved several nests of the Herring-Gull from their original sites and placed them in natural situations some little distance away; as birds return to the site of their nest and not to the nest as such, the eggs were deprived of the protection of the adults. I found that as soon as a Crow came near the unprotected nest, it was detected and the eggs immediately sucked.

It is not unusual for the Herring-Gull to construct an extra nest near the one containing the eggs. Such

an unoccupied nest was situated near the blind: it had probably been constructed by a pair which had eggs in a nest about four yards further away. This was certainly strongly suggested by the behaviour of one of the Gulls belonging to this nest. Into this unoccupied nest I put a clutch of three Gulls' eggs. As soon as quietness had been established, one of the Gulls came from the near-by nest to these eggs and touched them with its beak without doing them any harm. A Crow then flew down towards these eggs, but was driven off by the Gull that had come up to the nest, assisted by another which had a nest in the vicinity. The Crow, undiscouraged, tried again, but was driven off by the Gull that came first to the nest, and which had evidently taken the eggs under its protection. In a short space of time the Crow made two more attempts to gain the nest, edging gradually towards it, though apparently thinking of anything but the nest, the sly thief. At the second attempt the Crow with a quick thrust evidently pierced one of the eggs before he was driven off and pursued several yards by the Gull. The Gull on returning philosophically devoured the damaged egg itself!

Another Crow having arrived (probably the mate of the first), both made repeated attempts to reach the nest, but the Gull chased them off: most of the time it stood on guard about a yard from the nest, once standing on it for a short time.

Whenever a Crow ventured near, the Gull chased it off with upraised wings. However, whilst the Gull was chasing one Crow the other reached the nest and was there some seconds, helping himself to an egg; the Gull on its return drove the Crow off and ate the remains of the egg itself. For the rest of the afternoon the Gull was successful in its endeavours to guard the remaining egg, though the Crow made repeated attempts to reach it.

This shows clearly that the Gulls cannot protect their eggs by simply guarding them. The first Crow to reach the nest was only there an instant, but it pierced an egg,

though the Gull was certainly doing all it could to guard them. It is the actual covering of the eggs by the bird sitting on them that saves them, for with birds it is undoubtedly largely a matter of "out of sight, out of mind." This is clearly shown by the success achieved by the method of protecting eggs by covering them with down or vegetation, as Ducks and other species do. How effective the covering of eggs is was accidentally shown in the case of one of the Gulls' nests moved from its original site. It was soon found and one egg devoured. In the process the contents of the first egg was smeared over the other, and pieces of the vegetation forming the nest adhered to it. This egg was left untouched, though the egg-sucker had it under its eye while devouring the first, the accidental covering through vegetation adhering to the egg having saved it. The egg was not beneath the nest material, the leaves, etc., were merely sticking to its surface.

THE COVERING OF EGGS CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO THE OVITEGOUS HABIT.

Ducks, Geese, the Partridge, and some other species which lay conspicuous eggs, preserve them by covering them with down or pieces of vegetation. This habit may be briefly considered in relation to the significance of birds incubating from the laying of the first egg.

The case of the Canada Goose (*B. canadensis*) and White Pelican (*P. erythrorhynchos*) may be taken as an example. These birds lay white eggs of approximately the same size. The Goose makes its nest in solitude, sometimes hidden in the bush, but also frequently on the exposed shores of islands, and protects its eggs by covering them with down. If the birds did not cover the eggs, in all probability few eggs would be left to hatch, for the Crows take toll of the nests of this species as it is, probably finding them when the Geese are off feeding after incubation has commenced, for under these circumstances the eggs are not always covered.

The Pelican, on the other hand, is a most conspicuous bird, much more so than the Canada Goose. It lays in exposed situations and in close colonies, the nests frequently touching each other. Everything tends to place its eggs in greater danger than those of the Canada Goose. It does not cover its eggs with vegetation or down in order to protect them. Instead, I have found that the birds incubate from the laying of the first egg. That this is a purely protective habit is, I submit, beyond doubt.

On the same lines as the Canada Goose and Pelican, compare the Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax n. nycticorax*), which nests in colonies and sometimes on the ground, and the Double-crested Cormorant (*Ph. auritus*), which also nests on the ground (both of which in my experience incubate from the laying of the first egg), with Ducks, the coloration of the eggs does not differ greatly.

Or compare the Red Grouse (*Lagopus l. scoticus*), which frequently covers its eggs, with the Merlin (*Falco c. aesalon*), which incubates from the laying of the first egg.

A point worthy of mention is that the White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant and Black-crowned Night-Heron void the *jaeces* from the nest, the "whitewash" rendering its location still more conspicuous. This habit is not uncommon, though by no means general, among ovitegous birds, for they do not depend upon concealment for the safety of their eggs. Among ovinudous birds, which depend for protection upon the concealment of their eggs, I know of none which has this habit.

THE LACK OF DISCRIMINATION IN FEEDING YOUNG OF VARYING AGE.

In Vol. VII., pp. 105-14, I endeavoured to show that the great mortality amongst the young of certain species was directly attributable to the difference in age and size of

the young consequent on the ovitegous habit. I had then no observations bearing on the behaviour of the adults to the young in such cases. Whilst photographing the White Pelican, however, I was able to obtain some interesting data on the point. One such observation is as follows.

Some adult Pelicans were preening and washing on a point about a hundred yards away from the blind: one of these swam across to the shore near the blind and landed; the place of landing was evidently regarded by a Herring-Gull as its domain (it had young there), for it called loudly and made a rush towards the Pelican. The big bird snapped its beak and stood still. The Gull then took wing and flew over backwards and forwards, swooping at the Pelican each time it passed, the Pelican ducking. Several other Gulls joined in. Finally the Pelican, growing weary of his tormentors, made a rush, half flying and half running towards a herd of young Pelicans which were grouped near the blind. These young were evidently its objective from the first. As soon as the old bird began to approach, but an appreciable time before it reached the herd, two young birds started fighting together. They continued hard at it after the adult arrived, pecking at each other's beaks, etc., the old one standing quietly by and making no attempt to interfere. Finally the larger one (there was considerable disparity in size) beat the smaller off, and came back to their parent, which both young had obviously recognized at some little distance, and was at once fed. Almost immediately, however, the smaller followed and pecked viciously at the larger, whose head was now far down the parent's throat (this is the usual manner of feeding the young in this species) and in the circumstances incapable of retaliation. It then laid down by the feeding bird and also tried to get its beak down the parent's throat (at the same time that the larger one was feeding) with no success. When the larger had finished feeding, the smaller attacked it and then made determined efforts to get its

beak down the other's throat, in an attempt to get the food at second hand, as it had failed to get it at first. It had no success, however. It then went to the adult and secured a meal, but was not granted so long a feed, by any means, as the larger bird. Various other similar cases were observed. It was always the same, the adults showed no discrimination in tending to the requirements of the smaller young. It was therefore not surprising to find a heavy mortality amongst the young Pelicans.

In conclusion, it may be noted that I have found it to be the habit of the American Crow, Ring-billed Gull, Caspian Tern and Black Tern to incubate from the laying of the first egg.

GANNETS BREEDING ON BRESSAY.

BY

J. H. GURNEY, F.Z.S.

AN interesting extension of the breeding-range of the Gannet, if it is continued, is announced by Mr. John S. Tulloch, in *The Scottish Naturalist* for August (page 251).

We learn from Mr. Tulloch that early in May a few Gannets put in an appearance, and four nests were soon constructed on the Noup of Noss, on the east side of Bressay. Bressay is a small island on the east of the Shetland group, and as the Noup is stated by Mr. Clarke to be a precipitous rock six hundred feet high, these Gannets ought to be safe.

This new colony is of all the more importance, because none have been thrown out for a great many years either by the European or the American Gannets. This is said advisedly, for there can be little doubt that the settlement at Grasholm, although thought to be modern, is not so.

In the present case we cannot be sure from which Gannetry these birds came, but it is likely that they belonged to the small settlement in the Faröes, or to the Stack.

As the taking of young Gannets at St. Kilda has now entirely ceased for some time, it is remarkable that there should have been no attempts at new colonization before. About a thousand, however, are annually gathered on The Stack, by boats which go from Ness in the Lewes. Probably it is to be accounted for by the fact that vast numbers of young Gannets die every year. This cannot be disputed, although no doubt the majority of the young ones are so far reared as to get to sea. Of that anyone standing upon the Bass Rock at the beginning of September has ample proof, but three-quarters of them must perish in a few months' time. If it were not so, far more young ones in the black

plumage would be seen in winter, not on the English coast merely, but off France, Spain and Morocco, than is the case. Piebald Gannets in the plumage of the second year also would not be so rare as, comparatively speaking, they are.

If this new colony on Bressay is maintained, there will be six Gannetries in Scotland, and thirteen for the whole of Europe. As there are only two left in Canada—owing to incessant persecution in the last century—the total number will be fifteen. This is a very small total: in fact it is probably less than in the case of any other sea-bird which nests on islands, in large numbers, either in Europe or America.

NOTES

HABITS OF BROODING-BIRDS AND NESTLINGS AT NIGHT.

REGARDING my note on the behaviour of nestling birds at night (*antea*, Vol. VIII., p. 144), the following additional particulars may be worth recording. In 1915 I visited the following nests regularly after dark:—Two Blackbirds, three Song-Thrushes, three Robins, one Nightingale, one Hedge-Sparrow, one Yellowhammer, and one Chaffinch.

I found that in the case of both Blackbirds, two Song-Thrushes, the Nightingale and the Hedge-Sparrow, the parent bird roosted on the nest up to the time that the young flew.

In the case of one Song-Thrush, all three Robins, the Yellowhammer and the Chaffinch, after the young were half-fledged the old birds never roosted on the nest, nor near it, as well as I could see.

Regarding the curious spasmodic action of the young Robins described in my previous note, in 1915 I saw a similar action performed in all three nests under observation, though in one case it was not very marked. I also noticed it very strongly in the case of the Nightingale, and in a much less degree with the Chaffinch. In all the other nests the behaviour of the young birds was the same as by day.

MAUD D. HAVILAND.

TREE-SPARROW NESTING IN CO. ANTRIM.

IN July, 1915, when with the Belfast Naturalists' Field Club, I found a colony of Tree-Sparrows (*Passer montanus*) breeding in holes in the face of a cliff on the North Antrim coast, and on visiting the place again in August some of these birds were still there. With them were several House-Sparrows, but the majority of this colony was composed of Tree-Sparrows. The distribution of the Tree-Sparrow in Ireland is, so far as known, very much restricted. For many years it has been known to nest in co. Dublin, and in 1905 Mr. Warren recorded a colony in co. Mayo where, however, it is not stated that it bred. In 1906 it was found nesting in co. Londonderry, and in the following year in co. Donegal. The discovery of its breeding in co. Antrim proves an interesting addition to its range in Ireland.

NEVIN H. FOSTER.

HIGH MORTALITY IN YOUNG YELLOW BUNTINGS.

DURING July and August 1915 I have had under observation about a dozen nests of the Yellow Bunting (*Emberiza c. citrinella*), all built within three-quarters of a mile along a high road, about two miles outside Shrewsbury.

Although four or five eggs were laid in each nest, and in the majority of cases four young birds were hatched, yet in no instance did four birds reach a fully fledged condition. Most of the nests after a week from the time of hatching contained two birds, and in some cases only one. As a great number of motor cars pass along the road it occurred to me that the small number of birds reaching a fully fledged state is due to the action of the dust raised by these vehicles.

Perhaps it may be that the birds hatched in August are more weakly than those which come from earlier broods: but considering that in the same month I have found, in hedges removed from the road-side, several nests containing the normal number of young, I am inclined to think that the suffocating action of dust is responsible for such a small number of birds reaching a fully fledged state. A. MAYALL.

UNUSUAL NESTING-SITE OF CIRL BUNTING IN DORSETSHIRE.

HAVING heard during the last few weeks a Cirl Bunting (*Emberiza cirlus*) trilling out its song from the higher branches of a roadside elm, and having made several unsuccessful attempts at finding the nest, which I felt sure was not far off, I again visited the spot on August 18th, and after watching for about half an hour caught sight of a small bird flying to an isolated thorn-bush standing in a meadow adjoining the road-side. On reaching the bush and looking up I saw the nest, off which the female Cirl slipped away. The nest, which contained one young one and two addled eggs, was situated quite eight feet from the ground, a very unusual position, I should imagine, for a Cirl. The date may appear rather late to those unacquainted with the nesting-habits of this bird, but according to my own observations, nesting in August is quite customary: in fact, during the last few years I have found several nests containing fresh eggs during the first half of that month.

W. J. ASHFORD.

WESTERN LARGE-BILLED REED-BUNTING
IN SUSSEX.

A MALE Large-billed Reed-Bunting (*Emberiza palustris*) was shot at Filsham, Sussex, on January 6th, 1915. I

examined it in the flesh the next day, but am not able to say to which of the three subspecies it belongs, as I have no skins for comparison. H. W. FORD-LINDSAY.

[Mr. J. B. Nichols, in whose collection this bird now is, has kindly permitted me to examine it and I find that it is of the western form, *E. palustris palustris*.—H.F.W.]

LARGE INCREASE OF NESTING PIED FLYCATCHERS IN WESTMORLAND.

I AM glad to record that during the past five years the Pied Flycatcher (*Muscicora h. hypoleuca*) has largely increased as a nesting species in Westmorland. During the past summer of 1915 upwards of twenty nesting pairs were to be seen in one district, and in another district about a dozen, whilst in one garden belonging to a gamekeeper, five pairs nested within a stone's thrown of one another. H. W. ROBINSON.

EARLY NESTING OF REED-WARBLER IN CHESHIRE.

IN connexion with the records of early nesting of the Reed-Warbler (*Acrocephalus s. streperus*), given on page 48 of this volume, possibly the following may be of interest. On May 4th, 1913, I found an almost completed Reed-Warbler's nest built in the old reeds on the margin of Rostherne Mere, Cheshire; at that time the new reeds were not grown. On May 19th this nest contained four eggs. A. W. BOYD.

WESTERN BLACK-EARED WHEATEAR IN SUSSEX.

ON May 6th, 1915, I was shown an example of the Black-throated Wheatear in the flesh that had been shot the previous day at Hollington, Sussex. Upon examination it proved to be a male. H. W. FORD-LINDSAY.

[By the kindness of Mr. J. B. Nichols, in whose collection this bird now is, I have been able to examine and compare it and find it to be an example of the western form (*Enanthe h. hispanica*).—H.F.W.]

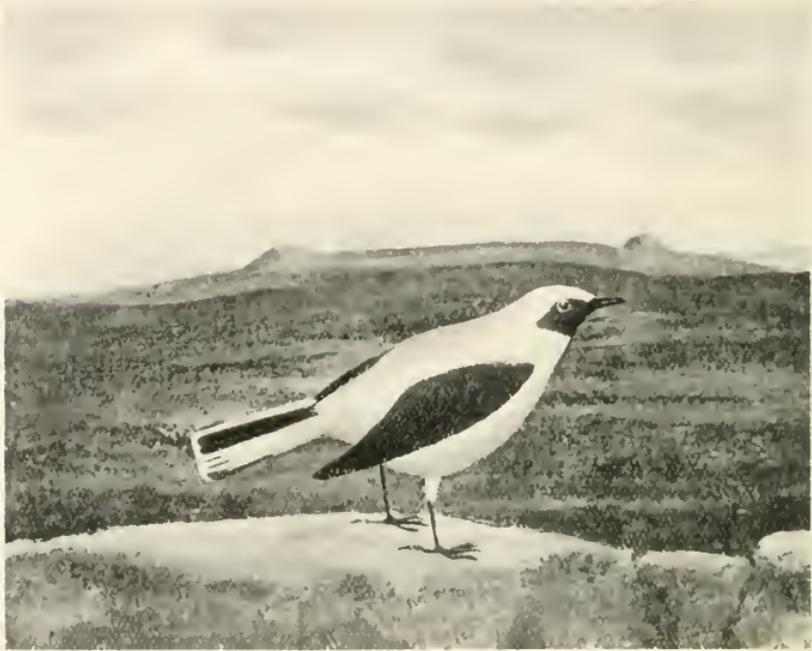
EASTERN BLACK-EARED WHEATEARS IN SUSSEX.

ON April 22nd, 1914, I saw in the flesh a female Wheatear, which was shot at Westfield, near St. Leonards, Sussex, on April 21st, 1914. I was not sure to which form it belonged, but Mr. Witherby has kindly examined it and decided it to be the Eastern Black-eared Wheatear (*Enanthe h. xanthomelæna*).

A male (with a white throat) of the same subspecies was shot at Pevensey, Sussex, on April 30th, 1914. It was examined by Mr. M. J. Nicoll. J. B. NICHOLS.

EASTERN BLACK-EARED WHEATEAR SEEN IN YORKSHIRE.

On June 6th, 1915, I met with a male Wheatear on the moor-edge of the Cleveland Hills, Yorks., about ten miles from the sea. I had the bird under observation for three hours



WHEATEAR SEEN JUNE 6TH, 1915, ON THE CLEVELAND HILLS,
YORKSHIRE.

(From a water-colour sketch by W. S. Mellicott, made just after seeing the bird, and from notes made on the spot.)

(from 1 to 4 p.m.), and for most of the time he was on a stone wall, occasionally flying to the ground when he spotted an insect.

In colour there was nothing on this bird but *pure* white and sooty black, with the slightest suspicion of brown in it. The bird was pure white all over with the following exceptions:—

Wings.—Black. *Throat*.—From just above the eyes and base of beak to about $\frac{3}{4}$ in. below base of beak, and from behind each eye, black. *Tail*.—Some central feathers black:

outer tail-feathers some black on lower portions, other portions white (it was not possible to see exactly the markings on each tail-feather). *Legs and beak*.—Black.

He was without doubt a more active and restless bird than our Common Wheatear and more of a percher: he was never on the ground for more than a second or two and did not run on the ground like our bird. He twice rested for a minute or more on a large stone on the wall top, crouching on his breast, not using his legs. I have never seen our bird do this. Once or twice he sang a shorter, sweeter, more guttural song than our bird. I had strong Ross binoculars and could see his markings very clearly, though he would not allow a closer approach than 15 yards or so. In reply to an alarm note a second Wheatear appeared for a short time on two occasions, the description of which is as follows:—

Crown, back of neck, back, very light stone-grey: *rump* white; *wings* brown, broad brown line *over ears and through and below eye to base of beak*. *Throat and breast* very light fawn. *Under-parts* white. *Tail*, brown and white, lower portion and centre brown, rest white. *Legs and beak* nearly black.

This second Wheatear was possibly a rather light-coloured male of the ordinary Wheatear. Although I visited the place twice within a week, I never saw the birds again. After examining the skins in the Natural History Museum, I am convinced that the bird first seen was a male of the Eastern race of the Black-throated Wheatear (*Eenanthe hispanica xanthomelæna*). Most of the skins showed some fawn colour, but there are one or two exactly like the bird seen by me.

W. S. MEDLICOTT.

RECOVERY OF MARKED HOUSE-MARTIN.

On June 29th, 1912, I marked an adult House-Martin (*Hirundo u. urbica*) at Waterside Farm, Ashton-with-Stodday, near Lancaster, with Ring No. 21454. The nest from which I then took it contained three adults with neither young nor eggs. On September 2nd, 1915, I again caught this bird in a nest at Tarnwater Farm, Ashton-with-Stodday, about one third of a mile as the bird flies from where I marked it in June, 1912. This nest contained four adults and one half-grown young, the other three adults escaping. Towards the end of the summer the parents of late broods of House-Martins are assisted in the feeding of their young by numbers of other adults (I have seen over a dozen assisting thus with

one brood), and judging by four being found in this nest they are evidently "housed" in return for their voluntary help. I replaced the ring with one numbered G676.

H. W. ROBINSON.

SOME HABITS OF THE GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER.

As it is stated in the *British Bird Book* (Vol. II., p. 333) that the Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dryobates m. anglicus*) is rarely seen on the ground, it may be of interest to record that on May 9th, 1915, I saw a male clinging to the side of the bank of a pool in Alderley Park, Cheshire. The roots of a poplar were embedded in the bank, but the bird clung both to the bank and to the root, hopping from side to side, and afterwards climbed to the level grass at the top of the bank and stood and hopped on that. On investigation I could see the holes in the bank made by the bird's beak, but the only foodstuff I could find was a small fly, whose species I am not entomologist enough to determine.

The same work also states (Vol. II., p. 321) that it is uncertain whether both sexes take part in excavating the nesting-hole, and (on p. 325) that of the courtship display we know practically nothing. I watched a pair at the nesting-hole in May, 1912, and distinctly saw both male and female excavating. During courtship the male chased the female continually round the trees near the nesting-site, and once I noticed him quivering his wings when near the female. Coition took place twice on the stump above the nesting-hole; during the act the male spread his tail out. Immediately after the second occasion, the male stood on the stump a little behind the female, and turned his beak towards her; she craned her head round until her beak touched his. Both male and female uttered a low, chiding note, like a Starling's, but harsher and louder; sometimes a noisier cry, like an angry Mistle-Thrush's.

It is also disputed whether the drumming note may be heard at all times of the year. On December 1st, 1912, a cold morning with snow on the ground, I heard and saw a female Great Spotted Woodpecker drumming at Alderley, Cheshire. I carefully noted that there was no red patch on the back of the bird's head.

E. W. HENDY.

BREEDING-HABITS OF THE LONG-EARED OWL IN SCOTLAND.

IN Mr. J. H. Gurney's interesting paper on the Long-eared Owl (*Asio o. otus*), he remarks (*antea*, p. 58) that this bird

"generally builds in a fir-tree—a spruce fir for choice." In the district with which I am best acquainted, viz., south, west and central Scotland, all the nests I have examined were in pine trees, in deserted nests of Magpies or Carrion-Crows. Wide, rolling country with strips of pines, where one might expect to find a Kestrel, is the typical home of this species. The nest usually contains eggs by the third week in March, and is generally scantily lined with dead pine needles. On two occasions I have found quantities of green pine needles, evidently freshly plucked, and dead fronds of "hard" fern. As incubation advances, a few feathers and some dirty-looking bluish-grey down are invariably to be met with. According to my notes, incubation lasts from twenty-five to twenty-seven days, and the young fly twenty-four days after hatching. The "cheeping" notes of the young Long-eared Owls differ from those of the Tawny Owl progeny, so that the experienced bird's-nester can distinguish the species after merely tapping the tree. The young of each species of Tit also have quite distinguishable "cheerings," a very useful help to identification in the case of a nest when the occupants are out of sight.

The Long-eared Owl is generally much attached to a wood, and returns yearly to nest, but seldom utilizes the same nest twice successively, though it may do so after some years. On April 8th, 1914, I put an Owl off a nest in a little pine wood which contained four highly-incubated eggs. On April 8th, 1915, I revisited the wood and found the Owl brooding on five eggs, again much incubated, in a nest on the tree next to that previously occupied. Occasionally, however, favourite woods are deserted for no apparent reason, and two or three years later the Owls return again to their old haunts. On one occasion I found a nest which was only a ruin of bleached sticks encircling a fork, the eggs being laid on the bare wood of the tree. JAMES CAIRNS.

BLACK-NECKED GREBE BREEDING IN IRELAND.

ON two occasions correspondents have told me that they have seen Grebes larger than the Dabchick, and smaller than the Great Crested Grebe, on some of the Irish lakes during the summer months, viz. Lough Erne and Killarney. As people are so easily mistaken, I made no further enquiry; however, on August 25th, 1915, I received from one of the western lakes a young Black-necked Grebe (*Colymbus n. nigricollis*), shot the previous day, with the wings so little developed that the

bird was incapable of flight, which leaves no doubt that it was hatched on that particular lake. I showed the specimen to the late Mr. R. M. Barrington, who agreed with me that this occurrence is strong evidence that this Grebe has bred in Ireland. I hope to make further investigation next season. I am aware that this species has been reported to have bred in Oxfordshire (*B. Birds*, Vol. II., p. 368), also in Norfolk and Perthshire. W. J. WILLIAMS.

[There is some evidence, but no proof, that the bird has bred in the counties above mentioned. On the page quoted by Mr. Williams it will be seen that a small number of pairs were found breeding in 1904 in a certain locality, which is now generally known to be in Wales, and we are glad to say that they still breed there. We may here remark that we have also had reports during the last few years of a Grebe, intermediate in size between the Great Crested and Little Grebes, breeding on a lough in western Ireland. Mr. Williams's announcement is of great interest.—Eds.]

INCREASE OF TURTLE-DOVES BREEDING IN LANCASHIRE.

As a breeding species, the Turtle-Dove (*Streptopelia t. turtur*) is extending its range northwards. A gamekeeper, who has resided in the Southport district of Lancashire twenty years, informs me that he first observed the bird eleven years ago (1904). It nested that year and has since been steadily increasing in numbers. This summer its characteristic notes have been heard in many of the woods of the district. In one small covert I saw six birds. J. FEW.

YOUNG COMMON SANDPIPERS SWIMMING AND DIVING.

On July 11th, 1915, I ringed three young Common Sandpipers (*Tringa hypoleuca*) on the East Cheshire Hills. They were nearly full fledged and could almost fly. The first one, when pursued, swam up stream; at first it used its feet only, but when the strong current tired the bird it employed its wings as well, flapping them on the surface of the water, and later, becoming exhausted, made use of them to climb upon a stone in mid stream. Once during my pursuit it dived and swam several feet under water. I am able to confirm Mr. J. G. Gordon's and Mr. Ticehurst's statements in *British Birds*, Vol. VII., pp. 23-4, that in swimming under water both legs and feet are used. The water was

clear, and I could see that small bubbles adhered to the bird's feathers while it was beneath the water, giving it a whitish appearance. I captured two other young, one in a rabbit hole at the bottom of a gorse bush, and the other in the middle of a stone wall. Both swam with the feet only when I put them in the water, but neither attempted to dive.

E. W. HENDY.

GREAT SKUA IN CARNARVONSHIRE.

WHILST watching seabirds from a rock at the foot of the Great Orme's Head on September 14th, 1915, my attention was attracted by their harsh cries to a party of Terns, which I soon discovered were being harried by a Great Skua (*Stercorarius s. skua*) a little way out. After having worried them some minutes, the Skua settled on the water, and the Terns disappeared. After resting for a few seconds the Skua rose and flew landward, towards the spot where I was concealed amongst the rocks. A few yards to my left a dozen or so Herring and Black-headed Gulls were, in their usual noisy manner, trying to catch some of the whitebait or other fry which every now and again leaped in little shoals above the surface of the water. The Skua, when only some ten or fifteen yards from the cliff, dashed after a Black-headed Gull which had succeeded in catching a fish. Up and down, now seaward, now landward, they both dashed, until at last the pursued yielded up its prize to the pursuer, after which it flew out to sea. I made a point of looking for the white bases of the wing-feathers. These were not only easily discernible as the Skua followed the Terns, but were seen to great advantage, both on the upper and under sides of each wing, when it chased the Gull. This is the second definite instance of the occurrence of the Great Skua in Carnarvonshire (*cf. B.B.*, Vol. VI., p. 163).

RICHARD W. JONES.

DEATH OF MR. R. M. BARRINGTON.—We greatly regret to hear of the sudden death of Mr. R. M. Barrington, of Fassaroe, Bray, the well-known Irish ornithologist, which occurred while he was driving his car between Dublin and his home. We hope to give some details of Mr. Barrington's life and work in our next number.

LETTERS.

BIRDS AND SHELL-FIRE.

To the Editors of BRITISH BIRDS.

SIRS,—May I add a few notes (based on a brief sojourn in Flanders in 1915) to Mr. Chubb's observations in your June issue? Articles in the Press have suggested that the fighting in France and Flanders would cause a widespread disturbance of bird-life. Personally, I doubt this very much, except along a zone at most three miles in width on each side of the firing-line.

Behind Ypres, things seemed quite normal, Larks, Tree-Pipits, Yellow Buntings and Common Whitethroats being the commonest birds observed in the fields. I spent two days in Ypres in July, at a time when it was being heavily shelled, and, except when a gun was fired very near them, the Sparrows, Greenfinches and Turtle-Doves in the trees on the ramparts seemed quite undisturbed; many Swifts were nesting in the ruined towers, and I counted sixteen used House-Martins' nests on one side of the Cloth Hall. I noticed the same thing elsewhere in the case of Swallows and Sparrows nesting in a smashed farmhouse half-a-mile behind the fire-trenches. Other birds I saw near Ypres ramparts included Pied Wagtails, Spotted Flycatchers, Common Sandpipers, and by the moat an *Acrocephalus* with an unfamiliar song which I could not identify. I saw another *Acrocephalus* singing in some turnips gone to seed near Hooge, but only got a glimpse of it. The wet meadows in the salient always seemed full of Cormorants at night, and in one wood close to Hooge there was always a chorus of birds at dawn (Chiffchaffs, Willow-Wrens, Wrens, Thrushes, etc.) in spite of the rifle fire on three sides, and I have heard Willow and Sedge-Warblers singing during an artillery duel.

Between the opposing lines birds were naturally scarce except Swallows, Swifts, stray Linnets, Pied and Yellow Wagtails, and Starlings (the great joy of our snipers when business is slack). I saw one pair of Tree-Sparrows nesting in a shell-torn tree between the lines, and once a Kingfisher appeared from nowhere and settled by a "Johnson hole" within five yards of our trench. In August at night I heard Curlew, Whimbrel, Green Sandpipers and Dunlins passing over the firing-line, and some Owl which I took to be a Little Owl.

ROYAL FREE HOSPITAL,
Sept. 5th, 1915.

J. K. STANFORD.

To the Editors of BRITISH BIRDS.

SIRS,—In April, 1915, we discovered a Song-Thrush's nest built on a branch of a tree which had been cut and placed against the front of the steel shield of an 18 pr. gun in order to conceal it from view. The branch was actually touching the shield. The nest was built and three eggs were laid in spite of the fact that the gun was fired occasionally. But then there came a day when the gun was fired very frequently and this proved too much for the birds' nerves. They moved to a presumably quieter neighbourhood.

FLANDERS,
September 19th, 1915.

E. F. DELAFORCE,
Lt. Col., R.F.A.



Lafayette, Phot.

Rev. M. Barrington

BRITISH BIRDS

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RICHARD MANLIFFE BARRINGTON,

M.A., F.L.S., M.B.O.U., M.R.I.A.

(PLATE I.)

No adequate idea can be given of the loss which the death of Richard M. Barrington has inflicted on Irish Natural History. His death through sudden heart failure when motoring home from Dublin on the afternoon of September 15th was to his numberless friends as startling a blow as it was grievous. Though in his sixty-seventh year, he lived a life of such strenuous activity as seemed to denote a thoroughly robust man, though he was himself well aware that he had begun to pay the debt imposed on him by his early exploits as an Alpine climber—particularly by his exertions in the summer of 1882, when in eleven days he ascended the Matterhorn, Jungfrau, Finsteraarhorn and Schreckhorn, with an equal number of high passes, totalling 84,500 feet.

The leading ornithologist in Ireland since Ussher's death, he had as an all-round naturalist been the central figure in the scientific circles of his native country ever since A. G. More, who had been his lifelong friend, passed away in 1895. Among the leading zoologists and botanists of the United Kingdom there were few whose friendship he had not won, and he had in a no less remarkable degree the confidence of the large circle of lesser naturalists and beginners who felt the force of his magnetic zeal.

Of an old family known to have settled in the Queen's Co. about 1564, Richard Manliffe Barrington was born at Fassaroe, co. Wicklow, on the 22nd of May, 1849. His parents were Edward Barrington, J.P., of Fassaroe, and Huldah Barrington, née Strangman. Edward Barrington, a peculiarly energetic and capable farmer, was remarkable for his interest in meteorology; one of his brothers was a botanist, and another founded the well-known Barrington Lecture Trust. Young R. M. Barrington grew up to develop in a marked degree all the scientific tastes

that had shown themselves in his father and both his uncles.

The love for nature—particularly, at first, for wild plants—grew up with him like an instinct. The beautiful natural surroundings amid which his childhood was spent had doubtless a strong influence on him in this direction, and an elder brother, of whom in after years he spoke with much gratitude, encouraged his tastes and helped him in various ways. At thirteen he had begun keeping a journal in which nature notes frequently occur; and in 1866 he began contributing occasional notes to *The Zoologist*, his first being a short note on the food of the Wood-Pigeon, which contains the characteristic statement that a bird of that species shot by him in the winter of 1865 “had 98 beech-nuts in its crop.”

Entering Trinity College, Dublin, in the year in which this note was written, he graduated there in 1870 as a Junior Moderator in Experimental and Natural Science. This was the last year in which Natural Science was tacked to another subject in the Moderatorship course, and Barrington was unfortunate in taking his degree a year before the change that would have enabled him to rely on his favourite subject alone. Called to the Bar in 1875, he soon found the work of a land valuer much more to his taste than daily attendance at the Four Courts. Thus even his professional work was always in great measure carried on in the open air.

An event that certainly had much influence on his life was the beginning of his acquaintance with A. G. More, at that time Assistant Naturalist in the Museum of the Royal Dublin Society. Barrington in his undergraduate years frequently visited the Museum, and was charmed at the interest which More manifested in all his inquiries. “I thought him,” he afterwards remarked, “the most delightful person I had ever met.” The tastes that the two had in common included both botany and birds, and from this time onward Barrington became a systematic explorer—so far as his leisure from

professional and farm work allowed—of the less known parts of Ireland, and particularly its islands, in search of birds and plants. He continued year after year at this practice, till in 1888 he was able to say in *The Zoologist* that “For nearly twenty years I have been visiting out-of-the-way islands on our western and southern coast, from North Rona to St. Kilda, and then southward to the Skelligs and Blaskets, not merely flying visits, but living on them for days and weeks at a time in the height of the breeding season. I have scarcely missed a year.” During these innumerable excursions he made no addition to the Irish fauna, but became wonderfully familiar with the habits of coast-frequenting birds. His visit in 1883 to St. Kilda is of interest in connection with the subsequent differentiation of the Wren of that island as a new species. Barrington in 1883 was unsuccessful in his attempts to obtain a specimen of the St. Kilda Wren, but his efforts were so persistent as to earn for him among the natives the sobriquet of the “Wren-Man,” by which name Professor Alfred Newton found him to be still remembered in the island many years later. Barrington mentioned to Seebohm in 1884 that the Wren of St. Kilda was worth looking after, and the discovery of the following year may have been due to this suggestion.

In 1882 began his systematic correspondence with the Irish lightkeepers on the subject of migration of birds—a subject in which he had long been much interested, as some of his previous writings show. The work, however, proved an infinitely greater tax on him than could have been foreseen, and his undertaking of it must therefore be regarded as the turning-point of his scientific life.

The Irish lightkeepers entered heartily into the scheme, and filled up the schedules sent to them every spring and autumn with, in many cases, surprising regularity, fullness of detail and—so far as their knowledge went—accuracy. But it soon became evident that the value to be placed on these observations would be very limited, unless

specimens were constantly forwarded to ensure correct identification of the various birds referred to. The earlier reports, for instance, bristled with notes of the passing of large numbers of "Wrens," "Flycatchers," "Tits," and "Linnets," though it was clear that only in a very small minority of the cases could the birds referred to under any of these names have been correctly described. When in 1886, at More's suggestion, the men were asked to corroborate their observations by the frequent sending of legs and wings of the birds found killed, the value of the results of the inquiry became immeasurably greater. But by the end of 1887 the British Association, under whose auspices the inquiry had hitherto been conducted, considered that enough expense had been incurred in the printing of the lightkeepers' voluminous reports, and so brought the series to a close just as its results had begun to look most promising.

This was a great disappointment to many ornithologists; and Barrington quickly resolved that, so far as Ireland was concerned, the inquiry and the publication of results should go on. From 1888 onwards the whole expense of the Irish Migration Reports was therefore borne by him alone.

The work so absorbed him that though, in 1890, he was associated with A. G. More, R. J. Ussher, and Robert Warren as the proposed joint authors of a new work on the *Birds of Ireland*, he soon found it advisable to withdraw his name from that undertaking and concentrate his ornithological attention on the migration schedules and specimens.

His large book on the *Migration of Birds as observed at Irish Light-stations* embodies the result—at least up to 1898, for the accumulation of facts and specimens went on after the publication of the book as unceasingly as before. Perhaps the chief feature of the book—as compared with other works on the same subject—is that by printing the lightkeepers' "Reports" in full, Barrington publishes all his data, so that no risk is incurred of

any—perhaps over-confident—statement of conclusions founded on those data carrying more weight with careful readers than an examination of the facts really warrants. As the evidence is so largely cumulative, this is an important merit.

One result of the inquiry was the formation of the interesting Fassaroe Museum, in which the rare birds received from lighthouses, and the legs and wings of the more common species, were arranged and preserved. As many as sixteen of the species represented in this collection (or eighteen if we include two that are suspected of having received some “assistance” on their passage) had not been proved to visit Ireland at all until the lightkeepers sent them to Fassaroe. The eighteen birds (bracketing the doubtfuls) obtained for the first time in Ireland through Barrington’s lighthouse correspondents are the following :—

Greenland Wheatear	Red-breasted Flycatcher
Lesser Whitethroat	[Black Snowbird]
Yellow-browed Warbler	Greenland Redpoll
Melodious Warbler	Little Bunting
Reed-Warbler	Lapland Bunting
Aquatic Warbler	Eastern Skylark
Pallas’s Grasshopper-Warbler	Short-toed Lark
Dartford Warbler	Shore-Lark
Woodchat Shrike	[Yellow-billed Sheathbill].

Though a few of these—such as the Woodchat—are represented in the collection by legs and wings, nearly all were sent entire, the lightkeepers having recognised them as probably rare enough to be worth preserving, and this in itself is no small tribute to the acumen developed in so many of the men by Barrington’s encouraging influence.

In 1896 came off the enterprising expedition to Rockall, originally planned by his friend J. A. Harvie-Brown and himself, and in great measure financed by them. Its ornithological results, though negative, were not unimportant, the hope that the island might prove to be a

nesting home of the Great Shearwater being proved groundless. In 1897 occurred an event of great importance in Barrington's life—his most happy marriage with Lena Gyles, daughter of Capt. G. Gyles, of Kilmurry, co. Waterford. An official appointment as Inspector of Management of Purchased Estates under the Land Commission, a few years later, considerably lessened the amount of time he could now give to ornithology, but he still responded with all his old zeal to as many calls as could be met.

His spare time was still given—though only in the form of hurried rushes—to visits paid with one or more of his ornithological friends to islands or other haunts of bird-life, and in these expeditions he particularly interested himself in promoting the work of the Irish Society for Protection of Birds, of which he was a leading member. In his home life he missed no opportunity of instilling lessons on natural history into his children's minds, and though botany was in general the favourite subject, it need not be added that the birds had a good "innings." The charming grounds of Fassaroe are breeding haunts of two such interesting birds as the Blackcap (very local in Ireland) and the Crossbill; and it afforded him a rare satisfaction during the present year to watch a pair of Crossbills at their nesting operations near his house, while some observations well worthy of record on the nest material used by the Blackcap furnished matter for his last communication to this journal, only a few weeks before his death.

It is pleasing to reflect that the last summer of his life must have been the happiest he had spent for many years, for on his release early in 1915 from the responsibilities of his Land Commission work, he was able to throw himself with a long unwonted freedom into his old studies, and in the course of one nesting season successfully looked up at their homes all the rarest Irish breeding birds—the Red-throated Diver, Red-necked Phalarope, Roseate Tern, and Common Scoter—besides finding a new Irish

colony of the Sandwich Tern, and being shown what looked like strong evidence (as recorded in the October number of this journal) of the nesting of the Black-necked Grebe in Ireland. He might well call this a "record" circuit.

Most of his zoological writings—except the volume on "Migration"—are short notes, and most of the later ones are records of lighthouse occurrences of rare birds. They afford no measure of the magnitude of the loss sustained to natural history by his death, which is nothing less than a disaster to the cause of science in Ireland.

C. B. MOFFAT.

FURTHER NOTES ON THE MOULTS AND
SEQUENCE OF PLUMAGES IN SOME
BRITISH DUCKS.

BY

F. W. SMALLEY.

I HAVE read Miss Jackson's article on the above subject (*antea*, pp. 34-42) with much interest, mingled with a certain amount of disappointment in that the authoress has not been able to enter more fully into this interesting matter. I hunger for more detail, and I hope at no very distant date to read a very full and accurate discourse on the moults of the several species of our British Ducks, for a more fascinating subject of research is difficult to find. Perhaps I may be allowed to enlarge upon the present paper and to give my own views on the matter, so far as they go.

Firstly, then, as Miss Jackson says, lack of material must be her present excuse for giving so general a paper. This "lack of material" is ever a source of trouble to anyone trying to work out the sequence of moults in any given species, and so perhaps the additional notes which I append, taken from material in my own collection, may tend to help.

Before proceeding I should like to state that I agree, on the whole, with everything Miss Jackson has written. We may differ, as will be seen further on, in certain details, but I agree on the whole. For example, I entirely agree with Miss Jackson over "colour-change not being due to re-pigmentation." I consider Mr. Millais wrong in supposing any change can take place in the feather due to "re-colouring," although I have, in my collection, certain birds which would at once be gladly seized upon by "colour-change" advocates as clear proof of their theory, but when examined carefully the apparent "colour-change" can only be attributed to direct moult.

With regard to a "spring moult" in female ducks, this, though perhaps previously unrecorded, has been

known to others besides myself for some years. I can testify to a "spring moult" in female ducks of the following species from examples in my own collection: Sheld-Duck (*Tadorna tadorna*), Gadwall (*Anas strepera*), Teal (*Anas c. crecca*), American Green-winged Teal (*Anas c. carolinensis*), American Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*), Wigeon (*Anas penelope*), Shoveler (*Spatula clypeata*), Pintail (*Dafila acuta*), Red-crested Pochard (*Netta rufina*), Ferruginous Duck (*Nyroca nyroca*), Tufted Duck (*Nyroca fuligula*), Scaup-Duck (*Nyroca m. marila*), Long-tailed Duck (*Clangula hyemalis*), Harlequin-Duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*), Steller's Eider (*Polysticta stelleri*), Common Eider (*Somateria m. mollissima*), Velvet-Scoter (*Oidemia f. fusca*), White-winged Scoter (*Oidemia f. deglandi*), American Scoter (*Oidemia americana*), Lesser Scaup (*Nyroca affinis*), also in the Andaman Teal (*Nettion albigulare*), and the Tree-Ducks (*Dendrocygna javanica* and *Dendrocygna guttata*).

The "nest down" moult in spring I find in the following species in my collection: Sheld-Duck, Ruddy Sheld-Duck (*Casarca ferruginea*), Gadwall, Wigeon, Shoveler, Red-crested Pochard, Ferruginous Duck, Long-tailed Duck, Harlequin-Duck, Steller's Eider, Common Eider, Velvet-Scoter, White-winged Scoter, American Scoter, and Andaman Teal. As more material is examined it will doubtless be found that the females of all the duck family grow a "nest down" in spring.

That a "spring moult" does not take place in the male I agree, such cases of "moult" in the spring being due to a delayed winter moult, chiefly to be noted in birds of the previous year, in such species as Shoveler and Wigeon, and of course in the Diving Ducks, many species of which do not attain their adult dress in their first spring.

One or two points seem to have escaped Miss Jackson, for example—no mention is made of the "intermediate" plumage of the adult male Shoveler, and the fact that in certain species of ducks the females have an "eclipse"

plumage, namely, in the Sheld-Duck, Wigeon, Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Velvet-Scoter, and Red-crested Pochard, and probably therefore in all the species of *Anatidæ*.

I do not quite agree with Miss Jackson when she writes of the "nestlings" of the surface-feeding ducks having the same general "colour pattern." Before me, as I write, I have the following "downy" chicks: Mallard, Gadwall, Teal, Garganey, Wigeon, American Wigeon, Shoveler and Pintail in surface-feeding ducks, and Sheld-Duck, Ruddy Sheld-Duck, Ferruginous Duck, Tufted Duck, Scaup-Duck, Common Eider and Velvet-Scoter amongst the sea-ducks, and all the several surface-feeding ducklings differ in "pattern"; no two species are alike by any means. The Mallard and Gadwall, for example, the latter with the additional spot at the base of the beak, the Teal with its very distinct head markings, the Garganey with its broad buff streak above the eye and characteristic black line through the eye, the Wigeon with practically a plain head pattern and chestnut face, and the American Wigeon with a distinct head pattern. The Pintail pattern is very distinct. Turning to the sea-ducks, here again patterns differ considerably in many cases, slightly but distinctly in others, as in the Sheld-Duck and Ruddy Sheld-Duck, the additional spot on the ear-coverts and the extra white spot between the shoulders in the former readily distinguishing it from the latter, in which these spots are wanting; but perhaps I am unduly labouring the point, as I ought to take Miss Jackson's statement: "It is interesting to note that nestlings of the different species have the same general colour pattern, though in some of the species the colours comprising the pattern are slightly different," as being simply a general statement, because the nestlings of the different species do bear a somewhat superficial likeness to each other as regards pattern.

I will now discuss Miss Jackson's detailed account of the moults in surface feeders. With regard to the adult males in "eclipse." Firstly, as regards the moult of

the central pair of tail-feathers. My remarks on these particular feathers must be read in conjunction with Miss Jackson's (*antea*, pp. 39-42).

PINTAIL.—I cannot call these feathers "mouse-grey": when they are first grown they are of a metallic greenish-brown colour with faint white edges; as stated they only extend one and a half inches or less beyond the rest of the tail. Before these feathers are cast they become "mouse-grey" and are considerably abraded.

WIGEON.—The "eclipse" central pair of feathers are broader and less pointed as stated. But they are brown in colour as compared with the peculiar silvery-grey, narrow, more pointed central pair of feathers in winter. In my collection No. 702 has not yet moulted either primaries or tail on August 26th. No. 2683 has moulted the rest of its tail-feathers, retaining the "eclipse" central pair on September 26th. and No. 993 has remoulted the "eclipse" central pair of feathers and grown the silvery-tinted winter pair on October 22nd.

TEAL.—I can, from material at my disposal, see no difference between the "eclipse" pair of central tail-feathers and those held in winter.

SHOVELER.—Eclipse pair brown with indistinct white edgings. Winter metallic-bronze feathers (exactly like the primaries in colour), with a clean, well-defined broad white edging.

DIVING DUCKS.

POCHARD.—Eclipse, brown feathers, edged white, with traces of a brown bar. Winter, grey-black unedged feathers, possessing a distinct silvery sheen.

LONG-TAILED DUCK.—The four central tail-feathers are moulted twice in the twelve months, the central pair are quite two inches longer during the period from the moult in April to being cast in July than they are after being grown again in the autumn-moult from October to April.

RESEMBLANCE OF ADULT MALE IN "ECLIPSE" TO ADULT FEMALE.

TEAL.—This depends on which adult female plumage the male is compared with. The male eclipse most resembles the adult female winter as regards under-parts; certainly not the adult female summer, and moreover the male differs from the adult female winter in having the feathers on and

around the vent barred (quite distinct feathers from the barred vermiculated feathers of the adult male winter in this region). The Teal is to me a puzzle, and I consider both sexes are dimorphic in pattern on the back, irrespective of age.

WIGEON.—The male in “eclipse” is much more rufous than the adult female winter or juvenile male. The dorsal feathers are distinct from those in the female, being much more distinctly barred with rufous-brown rather than double-spotted with pale brown or white. The flank feathers in the male are also much richer rufous than in the female, and correspond much more to the rufous flank feathers as seen in the female “eclipse” plumage.

SHOVELER.—Head and neck and upper-parts as in female adult winter: flank feathers of a different pattern. Rufous-tinted belly.

PINTAIL.—The male appears to be like the adult female on breast, belly and vent.

The Diving and Sea-Ducks in “eclipse” differ much from the females; indeed the Pochard in “eclipse” is very like what he is in full winter dress, but the head, although red, is duller and lacks gloss and the black breast-shield is nearly absent.

I hope at a near date we may be favoured with a much longer and more detailed account of the moults of the ducks from Miss Jackson. The subject is a most fascinating one to me, and if I may be allowed to presume to make a suggestion, it would be that each species be dealt with separately and fully worked out. In some species this will take a considerable time owing to the lack of specimens killed during certain months of the year, an experience I have suffered from with regard to the Long-tailed Duck, to name only one species.

NOTES ON THE GREAT NORTHERN DIVER.

BY

ERIC B. DUNLOP.

THE Great Northern Diver (*Gavia immer*) is best known in the British Isles as a winter-visitor, though in the Orkneys I have frequently seen it in summer, and it does not appear impossible that it may occasionally have bred there on some remote loch.

In Canada I was able to make observations on two breeding pairs, one having eggs, the other young, and also with the help of a blind to photograph the bird on her eggs. The nest with the eggs was composed of a mass of grasses, sedges and moss, heaped together on a submerged bank, which was about three inches beneath the surface of the water. It was at the margin of a small lake. This nest had undoubtedly been made by the birds themselves; the material would have filled a large washing-basin to overflowing. The bird was seen to pick up a piece of vegetation whilst incubating.

Whenever the bird was put off the nest she dived from it into the water with a splash, coming up some distance away and frequently swimming with the body submerged and only the head showing. On a close approach being made to the nest, both birds became bolder and occasionally came within about thirty yards, swimming on the surface.

After erecting the blind, it was left overnight, and the attempt to photograph the bird was made the following day. After waiting a considerable time the bird swam up to the nest and shuffled on to it. She then moved the eggs with the open beak, holding them between the mandibles whilst arranging them. Next she partially settled down on them, then got up and moved the eggs with the open beak again, and then finally settled down. One of the photographs shows the position assumed by the bird when arranging the eggs. I saw her come on to the nest on three occasions. Each time she swam and dived about until within thirty yards. She then dived

and came up some ten yards from the nest, finally swimming the remainder of the distance on the surface.

The second time she came on she again arranged the eggs with open beak; on the third occasion she moved them with the beak both opened and closed. She altered their position several times before she was satisfied, sitting on them in the intervals between re-arranging them. She also altered her own position on the nest.



Fig. 1. NEST OF A GREAT NORTHERN DIVER BUILT ON A SUBMERGED BANK.

(*Photographed by Eric B. Dunlop.*)

Another pair of Great Northern Divers settled on this lake, one shortly after flying off, while the other joined the pair near the nest. All three dived about and preened their plumage together. This toleration of a strange bird in the vicinity of the nest was interesting, but it did not last long, for one of the pair suddenly jumped straight up in the water, the body vertical, until it was all but clear of the surface, and with wings extended struck inward with them towards the interloper. The latter then took wing and departed.

A bird that flew directly over me carried the legs and feet extended behind the tail and pointed together in a

V-shape; the points of the toes appeared to be touching, and the webbing of the feet was closed, not spread.

The birds were frequently seen to lie on one side in the water with one leg out, preening their plumage, as ducks do. I also saw one when swimming on an even keel lift one leg an inch or two out of the water and wave it in the air behind it. It both closed and opened the web when doing this.



Fig. 2. GREAT NORTHERN DIVER SWIMMING LOW NEAR THE NEST.
(*Photographed by Eric B. Dunlop.*)

The nest of the pair with young was also found. It was at the margin of a small lake. The birds had apparently brought some grass together here also, but it was on land and not built up on a submerged bank. The shells of the hatched eggs had not been removed by the birds and were lying in fragments on the nest. The female swam about with the two young perched on her back. They were seated between the scapulars, and she kept turning her head round to them as she swam. On scaring her she dived, but on her coming to the surface again the

young swam after her and soon remounted. She lowered her back to assist them in doing so.

Subsequently, when the young were in danger whilst swimming, the female tried to draw attention to herself by jumping straight up till she was nearly clear of the water in an upright position, and also by rushing for a



FIG. 3. GREAT NORTHERN DIVER ARRANGING THE EGGS.

(*Photographed by Eric B. Dunlop.*)

few feet over its surface. The male now approached : he had previously kept at a distance. They both uttered their wild wailing cry. When heard together the male's was noticeably the deeper pitched.

This Diver has a great variety of calls. The usual wail can be heard at a considerable distance. I also heard it uttered in an undertone when the birds thought themselves alone. It could then only be heard at close quarters.



Fig. 4. GREAT NORTHERN DIVER INCUBATING.
(*Photographed by Eric B. Dunlop.*)

The alarm call, though similar, is shorter and more abrupt. The birds uttered it if disturbed in the vicinity of the nest. This call differs again from their flight call, which is frequently uttered by both birds together, and more or less in unison, as they fly round. The latter is higher pitched, longer, and more rapidly uttered, but all three have the same wild quality. I do not think they can be adequately rendered in syllables. Another call somewhat resembles the Curlew's usual cry. Yet another may perhaps be written "Oh-h," it is shorter than the others. A shrill-whistled "whee-whew" repeated several times was also noted. When calling to the young the female used a soft clucking note, very different to the usual wild wail.

On October 4th, 1914, on one of the large lakes of central Canada, I saw about seventy Loons in a close flock; they were no doubt on migration. They were keeping up a continual noise which closely resembled that made by Grey Lag-Geese when on the feed. On approaching them they dived and quickly scattered over the lake.

It should be added that, in referring to the bird photographed as the female, I had no proof that that was the sex. In the case of the bird accompanying the young, this point was ascertained with certainty.

THE MOULTS OF THE BRITISH PASSERES,
WITH NOTES ON THE SEQUENCE OF THEIR
PLUMAGES.

BY

H. F. WITHERBY.

PART I.

IN Volumes III. and IV. of *British Birds*, Dr. C. B. Ticehurst and I gave the results of our investigations into the moults and sequence of plumages of certain species. Since that time I have been going systematically through the British Passeres in order to discover their moults and unravel their various plumages and propose to give here the result of my investigations. I shall not describe at length the various plumages, but will simply point out as briefly as possible their more important differences.

Those who have studied the moults and plumages of any bird know that the great difficulty is to obtain for examination a sufficient series of specimens. One must minutely examine birds at all ages and seasons, and especially during the moults. In this connexion I have to record my grateful thanks to Lord Rothschild and Dr. E. Hartert, who have most kindly given me every possible facility in making use of the magnificent collection at Tring. I have also by the kindness of the authorities been able to consult, whenever necessary, the British Museum collection. Thus two of the three largest collections of bird-skins in the world have been available. But as a rule there has been a scarcity of moulting birds in these collections, and I have found my own collection invaluable in this respect, as I have for many years made a point of obtaining birds in moult. In this I have been greatly aided by Capt. H. Lynes and a number of other friends, among whom I am especially grateful to Messrs. A. P. Adams, H. S. Gladstone,

Major A. E. Hamerton, Miss A. C. Jackson, Messrs. N. H. Joy, W. H. Mullens, and J. H. Owen.

FAMILY CORVIDÆ.

Except for the Rook (*Corvus f. frugilegus*), which has a special moult of the face already fully described in these pages (Vol. VII., pp. 126-39), all the British species comprised in this family are so similar in their moults and sequence of plumages that they do not require separate treatment.

The adults of all the species have only one annual moult, viz. a complete one in early autumn. In some of the species such as the Rook, Jackdaw (*Colæus m. spermologus*), Nutcrackers (*Nucifraga c. caryocatactes* and *macrorhynchus*), and Chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*), this moult commences with the wing-feathers as early as May or June. The effect of abrasion and fading, even by the middle of the summer, is scarcely noticeable, except that the wings and tail become brownish and lose some gloss.

The sexes of all the species are alike in plumage.

JUVENILES are very much like the adults except for the loose texture of the body-feathers: in *Corvus*, *Colæus* and *Pyrrhocorax*, the juvenile is browner than the adult and has scarcely any gloss on the body-feathers and less than the adult on the wings and tail; in the Magpie (*Pica p. pica*) the black portions of the body-plumage are browner and the white portions more creamy, while the wings and tail are less brilliantly glossed; in the Nutcrackers the body-plumage is paler brown, the crown is less uniform, the feathers having pale shaft-streaks, the white spots on the mantle are smaller, and those on the under-parts not so pear-shaped and less sharply defined, the throat is whiter, the wing-coverts have more white tips, and there is less gloss on the wings and tail; in the Jays the fore-head and crown have smaller dark streaks.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The wing- and tail-feathers and primary-coverts of the juveniles are not moulted in the first autumn in any of the species. The body-feathers are moulted in all. The lesser and median wing-coverts are also moulted, but in some species the moult of these feathers is not complete. The greater wing-coverts are moulted entirely only in the Magpie, while in the Carrion-Crow, Rook and Jackdaw only the innermost greater-coverts are moulted, in the other species none are moulted. After the moult the first winter bird is like the adult, except that the wings and tail are browner and less glossy, a distinction which, although

scarcely noticeable in the autumn, becomes marked in the following spring and summer. After the moult of the second autumn they are indistinguishable from the adults.

FAMILY STURNIDÆ.

The two British members of this family, the Starling (*Sturnus v. vulgaris*) and the Rose-coloured Starling (*Pastor roseus*) have the same moults, the adults having one complete moult in early autumn (beginning with the wings in the Starling sometimes as early as June), and the juveniles have a complete moult into the first winter plumage.

STARLING (*Sturnus v. vulgaris*).

ADULTS.—The sexual difference in the adult Starling, although not very marked, is very interesting, the shape of the body-feathers in the two sexes being different. In the females the feathers are rather shorter and broader and not so sharply pointed, thus the buff and grey tips of the feathers are larger in the female, and give the bird a more spotted appearance in all stages of plumage than the male. In summer the adult male often has scarcely a trace of spots because the tips of its pointed feathers have worn off, while the female loses less of the spots owing to the more rounded tips of the feathers. The metallic colours of the female are also less brilliant, and, on the secondaries and greater wing-coverts, less extensive.

JUVENILE.—As is well known, the juvenile is brown without any metallic colouring. Sexes alike.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile plumage is completely moulted in the first autumn, and the birds become like the adults, except that the tips of the feathers are less pointed even than in the adult female, and consequently the first winter birds of both sexes are considerably more spotted than the adult female. After the second autumn moult they become indistinguishable from the adult.

ROSE-COLOURED STARLING (*Pastor roseus*).

ADULTS.—The female is duller pink and less glossy and has a shorter crest than the male. The difference in winter and summer is marked by reason of the pale brown tips of the feathers, which, in winter, when the plumage is fresh, obscure much of the metallic colours of the head as well as the rosy-pink of the mantle and back. As in many other birds the plumage when it becomes worn, although less perfect, is much more brilliant.

JUVENILE.—In colour this is brown, much like the juvenile Starling, but even in this plumage the feathers of the nape are slightly elongated. Sexes alike.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile plumage is completely moulted in the first autumn. The male then becomes much like the adult female, but rather duller, while the female is much browner than the adult female, and often has only a trace of pink showing on the upper-parts. After the second autumn moult the birds become like the adults.

FAMILY ORIOLIDÆ.

The adult of the Golden Oriole (*Oriolus o. oriolus*) which is the only member of this family on the British list, has one complete annual moult in autumn and winter (usually apparently from November to January, but sometimes as early as August). The effect of abrasion is scarcely noticeable. The sexual difference is marked, the body-plumage of the female, instead of bright golden-yellow as in the male, being golden-green on the upper-parts, ashy-grey faintly streaked with brown on the throat and breast and yellowish-white boldly streaked on the belly. Occasionally, however, females have the crown and rump bright greenish-yellow and the under-parts yellow with only faint streaks, but I have not been able to prove whether this plumage is due to age or individual variation.

JUVENILE.—Much like the adult female, but the feathers of the upper-parts and the wing-coverts have pale yellow tips, and the under-parts have less distinct streaks. Sexes alike.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile body-plumage is moulted in the first autumn (usually earlier than in the adult) but not the tail, wings or wing-coverts. After this moult the males become much like the adult female, but rather more yellow on the upper-parts and decidedly more yellow on the under-parts which are also less strongly streaked. The females are more olive on the upper-parts and less yellow and more strongly streaked on the under-parts than the adult female. Both sexes in this plumage have the wing-coverts distinctly tipped with yellow. Some males, which are much like the very bright adult females noted above, may be second winter birds, but I have not been able to obtain actual proof of this.

(To be continued.)



NOTES

SEA-BIRDS AND OIL.

In January 1914 Mr. H. G. Alexander noticed a number of Scoters in Romney Marsh, Kent, with their feathers so clogged with "oil and tar" that they were scarcely able to fly (*British Birds*, Vol. VIII., p. 241). In a subsequent letter, Mr. Alexander wrote to me as follows:

"I understood that the Scoters had first come ashore on the 9th or 10th January and they were abundant right from Pett to Dungeness. Some were able to fly about over the land. When I got to the shore on January 11th, I found a lot of both species (Common and Velvet-Scoter) walking about—or I might say stumbling about—the sands. Some were able to fly or flap along into the water, but I think most might have been caught. I met a man who had shot a good many fine adult birds of both species on the ponds near the county boundary; all had a good deal of oil in the breast feathers, but none, as far as I could see, in the wings. Some had so little oil in their feathers that it seemed surprising that it should have caused them so much inconvenience. The next day I walked all along the coast to Dungeness. I found any number of them in all stages of oiliness on the pools between Jury Gap and Galloway's. Some were swimming on the pools and dived a great deal whilst I was near; others stood dejected by the sides of the pools; possibly these were the furthest gone, but some of them were still capable of flight. None had at that time died of starvation. Two points are worthy of note. First, I noticed that the huge flocks of Scoters opposite Jury Gap were just as huge as usual, and many were flying about just as usual; moreover, though about half the oily birds were Velvet, I saw no Velvet in the flocks. So I thought it safe to infer that the oil had affected them much farther out and that there was none on the water near the shore. And to this I might add that I have seen Velvet in much larger proportionate numbers flying past Dungeness than in the flocks along the coast. In fact, I think they tend to keep further out than the Common Scoter. The other point is that I only saw Scoters in this condition, though there were plenty of Divers and *Alca* off the point. On the 13th there were still many on Rye shore, and on the 14th I found

them all along past Winchelsea and one even on the canal near Winchelsea."

Dr. C. B. Ticehurst writes to the *Scottish Naturalist* (1915, p. 307) that "during October 1914 numbers of Guillemots and Razorbills were found washed ashore dead and covered with sticky, dark, oily matter on the south Norfolk and north Suffolk coast."

Miss E. L. Turner wrote to me from Holy Island that she had seen in January and February, 1915, some Eiders and Common Scoters with their feathers (chiefly those of the breast and flanks) more or less clogged with this oily substance, but only one (an Eider) had been seriously affected by it.

Several observers give details in the *Scottish Naturalist* (1915, pp. 282-4) showing that in June 1915 a very large number of sea-birds (Guillemots, Razorbills, Puffins, and Eider Ducks) were found with their plumage clogged with this oily substance at the Isle of May and round the shores of Fife. The Misses Rintoul and Baxter, who found "hundreds of dead Guillemots, lesser numbers of Razorbills and Puffins, and eight or nine adult Eider, and one fluffy duckling," sent two of the Eiders to Professor Sutherland, who reported that the cause of death was starvation. The "oil" appears gradually to clog the feathers to such an extent as to make it impossible for the bird either to fly or dive, and it is thus unable to procure sufficient food to sustain life.

Lady Erskine, writing of Guillemots, states (*loc. cit.*) that "those we caught were dark brown all over, and the oil was so thick we could hardly separate one wing-feather from another." The same observer writes that the rocks were covered with a thick coating of the "oil," which was "like thick chocolate sauce, and six or seven inches deep in some crevices between the smaller rocks."

It is thus evident that a large number of sea-birds have been made innocent victims as a result of the war under the sea.

H.F.W.

CROSSBILLS BREEDING IN SUFFOLK.

It has already been recorded in the *Field* (17/1/14, p. 139) that the Crossbill bred in Suffolk in 1914, but there is a slight error in *British Birds* (Vol. VII., p. 301), in reference to this record, *i.e.* the keeper who picked up the young bird mentioned was not the same from whom I received the information, and I do not think my note in the *Field* conveyed that impression. In addition to the above record I received a very typical clutch of four eggs with the nest taken on

March 16th, 1914. There was also another pair close to this nest which evidently had a nest, but owing to the very bad weather a close search was impossible.

The breeding of the Crossbill in England, in 1915, has already been recorded from Norfolk by Mr. N. Tracy (*antea*, Vol. VIII., p. 289), which gives me additional pleasure in recording the breeding and attempted breeding in Suffolk. Owing to the war I was prevented from visiting the Crossbill district, but I advised my friends to keep a sharp look-out for nests, having already heard from them of the presence of birds in some numbers early in the year. On March 8th a nest was located which contained two young and two unfertile eggs; on March 10th a second nest was found with eggs, but unfortunately this nest was discovered by some boys and destroyed; from a third nest near by the young got off. My friends were of opinion that many more nests could have been located if we could have given our joint time.

My friend Mr. H. R. Tutt brought in to me on March 27th freshly-worked cones which he had found close to Croydon, from a district where Crossbills had previously bred.

The Crossbill has now bred in Suffolk for six years in succession, and I think from the records already given the bird should now be regarded as a resident species in England. Apparently from the remarks on this species in the last edition of the *B.O.U. List* it has not been, though the Committee must have had knowledge of the records. All the nests mentioned above were in Scotch pines and from 8 to 12 ft. from the ground.

P. F. BUNYARD.

LARK'S METHOD OF GATHERING FOOD FOR YOUNG.

In her article on "Wait and See Photography" in the last number of *British Birds*, Miss Turner made a very interesting observation concerning the manner in which a Sky-Lark gathers food for its young.

Having recently had a pair of Wood-Larks (*Lullula a. arborea*) under observation during the breeding-season, I have been fortunate enough with the aid of prism glasses to observe precisely the same thing happen, viz.: The bird collecting insects and depositing them in a small heap on the ground before gathering them up to take to the young.

This habit is perhaps peculiar to the Larks. I have certainly never noticed it with any other species, and should like to hear other readers' opinions on the matter.

W. J. ASHFORD.

NUTHATCH IN CARNARVONSHIRE.

As there appears to be but one record of the Nuthatch (*Sitta e. britannica*) occurring in west Carnarvonshire, it may be worth noting that I heard one calling for several minutes in Glynllifon Park, on September 5th, 1915, not far from the place where I heard one in August, 1914, near the village of Llandwrog. This locality, so far as I know, is the most westerly-recorded for the appearance of this bird in North Wales, as hitherto, for some unknown reason, it has not been found to frequent any part of the Lleyn peninsula.

S. G. CUMMINGS.

BROWN-BACKED WARBLER IN SUSSEX.

AN example of the Brown-backed Warbler (*Agrobates g. syriacus*) was shot at Westfield, Sussex, on May 7th, 1915. I examined it in the flesh the same day and found it to be a male.

H. W. FORD-LINDSAY.

[By request of Mr. Ford-Lindsay and Mr. J. B. Nichols, in whose collection the bird is, I examined and compared this bird and found it to be of the form above stated. The differences of the three forms of *Agrobates galactotes* are stated in Vol. IV., p. 310.—H.F.W.]

PROBABLE EASTERN BLACK-EARED WHEATEAR
IN LANCASHIRE.

MR. HERBERT MASSEY informs me that on March 29th, 1915, he saw a Wheatear close to Burnage, near Didsbury, Lancashire, which at first sight gave the impression of being black and white. It allowed him to get within about twenty yards, but was very restless, although it never flew very far away when followed up. The bird was in company with some Common or Greenland Wheatears. The following notes were made by Mr. Massey in his diary at the time. Crown, back and breast pure white; wings black; tail black and white; throat black; legs black. There was no yellowish tinge on the back or crown and the white appeared to be very pure in colour. The description agrees exactly with that of the bird seen by Mr. W. S. Medlicott on the Cleveland Hills in June, and there is, I think, little doubt that it was also an example of the Eastern Black-eared Wheatear (*Enanthe h. xanthomelæna*).

F. C. R. JOURDAIN.

NIGHTJAR DOUBLE-BROODED.

As affording clear proof that the Nightjar (*Caprimulgus c. europæus*) will rear two broods in a season in a wild state,

I may relate that on August 2nd, 1915, near Beaulieu, Hampshire, I found a hen Nightjar sitting on two eggs, and about three feet away the cock bird brooding a young one not quite in full feather. E. M. IMRIE.

[It has now been known for some years past that the Nightjar has reared two broods in the season in captivity, and the late date on which eggs and young have been met with furnishes strong presumptive evidence of its being double-brooded. (See note on this subject in *British Birds*, Vol. VIII., p. 117. Cf. also *Zoologist*, 1884, p. 7, etc.). The above note is the more welcome as it furnishes absolute proof that late nests are in some cases second broods and not late layings of birds which have lost their first nests.—F.C.R.J.]

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER FEEDING ON THE GROUND.

With reference to Mr. E. W. Hendy's note (*antea*, p. 124), it may be of interest to state that in late February or early March of last year (1914) Mr. R. Burnier and I saw a single adult Great Spotted Woodpecker feeding on the broad playing-grounds of Bradfield College. It was hopping about and prodding into the soft turf with its beak.

PATRICK A. CHUBB.

LARGE CLUTCH OF LITTLE GREBE'S EGGS.

While staying in the neighbourhood of Thursley, Surrey, during May, 1915, I found the nest of a Little Grebe (*Colymbus r. ruficollis*) containing seven eggs. This number, in my experience, is quite exceptional, the majority of full clutches I have examined consisting of four or five eggs. I have only once seen a completed clutch of six eggs.

HOWARD BENTHAM.

[Clutches of six are by no means uncommon in the case of this species, but sets of seven are much scarcer. Colonel W. V. Legge has recorded one from Essex, and others have been taken by Messrs. R. W. Chase, H. Noble, and the Rev. J. R. Hale. Similar sets have also been found in Hungary by Mr. R. B. Lodge, in Germany by the late H. Hoeke, in Spain by Major F. W. Proctor (2) and in Algeria by the writer.—F.C.R.J.]

SOCIABLE PLOVERS IN SUSSEX.

THREE Sociable Plovers (*Chettusia gregaria*) were shot near Winchelsea: the first on May 9th, 1914, is now in the Royal

Scottish Museum. the second, a male, on May 11th, is in my own collection, and the third, also a male, on May 18th was presented by Mr. W. H. Mullens to the Hastings Museum. These birds were examined in the flesh by Mr. Ruskin Butterfield.

J. B. NICHOLS.

[In July, 1914, Mr. M. J. Nicoll informed me that he had seen two Sociable Plovers in a field between Winchelsea and Snailham on Thursday, April 30th, and asked me to state this fact if they were subsequently recorded.—H.F.W.]

LITTLE STINT INLAND IN CHESHIRE.

ON September 10th, 1915. I saw a Little Stint (*Erolia m. minuta*) at Marbury Mere, near Northwich, Cheshire, on a spit of sand at the mouth of a brook which runs into the mere. On the following day, when I again visited the place, the bird was still there—on this occasion in company with a Dunlin.

J. MOORE.

LITTLE STINTS AND CURLEW-SANDPIPERS INLAND IN LANCASHIRE.

ON September 5th, 1915, at a sewage-farm a few miles to the north-west of Manchester, Mr. W. Whittaker and I found a single Little Stint (*Erolia m. minuta*) feeding in company with several Dunlins, and later, on the 12th, two birds of that species together with three Dunlins and a Curlew-Sandpiper (*Erolia ferruginca*). They were very tame, and afforded a favourable opportunity for comparison of size and feeding-habits with their larger companions. One Little Stint was distinctly more rufous than the other, and both birds frequently swam across the deeper puddles in their search for food.

A few Curlew-Sandpipers have been present on several occasions since September 12th, but we have not found the Stints since that date.

THOS. BADDELEY.

REDSHANK NESTING IN SURREY.

ON May 8th, 1915, I found a pair of Redshanks (*Tringa totanus*) breeding on a small tract of marshland in south-east Surrey. The nest was of the open type, there being practically no attempt at concealment, and I was able to watch the bird on to the eggs without much difficulty.

I observed a single bird in precisely the same locality on May 4th, 1912, and as a Redshank was also seen there by

another observer on April 24th, 1913, the birds have now probably established themselves in the neighbourhood.

HOWARD BENTHAM.

[Bucknill (*Birds of Surrey*, p. 312) in 1900 described this species as an occasional visitor on migration, occurring in spring and autumn and not resident.—EDS.]

ROSEATE TERN IN KENT.

A FINE example of the Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougalli*) was shown me in the flesh on August 27th, 1915, having been shot the previous day at Lydd, Kent. It proved to be a male in perfect adult plumage, the whole of the chest and under-part of the body being suffused with a beautiful rosy tint. Although there are two previous records of this bird being seen in Kent, this is the first example obtained in the county.

H. W. FORD-LINDSAY.

POMATORHINE SKUA IN CARNARVONSHIRE.

ON August 26th, 1915, a fine calm day, I watched a Pomatorhine Skua (*Stercorarius pomarinus*) in Carnarvon Bay by means of a powerful telescope. It was some distance out at sea, but I could make out that it was an immature bird in dark plumage, with the central tail-feathers well pronounced, giving the tail a somewhat wedge-shaped appearance, as the bird turned suddenly on the wing to stoop at a passing Gull.

S. G. CUMMINGS.

ABUNDANCE OF LAND-RAILS IN EAST SUSSEX.

NOT for many years past have there been so many Land-Rails (*Crex crex*) during the autumn migration as in 1915. From Pett eastwards there must have been hundreds wherever there was sufficient cover to hide these wary little birds. Over forty were shot during the cutting of a small piece of clover, and I should estimate that at least twenty a day were shot by the "lookers" on the marsh.

I only saw one specimen of the Spotted Crake (*Porzana porzana*), and this was shot on September 25th. Probably one or two more were obtained, and found their way into the "looker's" family stew-pot, which is responsible for the loss of many good birds.

H. W. FORD-LINDSAY.

REVIEWS

Report on Scottish Ornithology in 1914, including Migration.
By Evelyn V. Baxter and Leonora Jeffrey Rintoul.
Forming the July 1915 issue of *The Scottish Naturalist*.

NOTWITHSTANDING the war, this Report is well up to the high standard set by previous issues. It would indeed have been a misfortune had it been found necessary to alter its present extremely useful form.

The authors remark that there was a falling off in the number of rare visitors in 1914, especially in autumn, and this is put down not to a want of observers, but to the weather, which, at the periods of maximum migration, was not of the easterly type which is instrumental in bringing many species, except from October 19th to November 6th.

Nevertheless, 1914 produced in Scotland a large number of interesting migrants, and while most of these have already been referred to in our pages, a number have not, and to these special attention is drawn below.

The Report also contains a number of interesting notes on breeding, and a very large amount of information concerning the movements of the more common species.

CARRION-CROW (*Corvus c. corone*).—Two seen on April 19th in North Unst, and two on October 25th at Lerwick (Shetlands), where it is only an occasional visitor. One was reported from Swanibost (Outer Hebrides), on September 29th, besides those already mentioned (*antea*, Vol. VIII., pp. 176 and 196) as having occurred in the Outer Hebrides.

NORTHERN BULLFINCH (*Pyrhula p. pyrrhula*).—Bullfinches, probably of this race, are recorded from North Unst on October 27th and 28th, and at Lerwick on November 8th.]

LAPLAND BUNTING (*Calcarius l. lapponicus*).—At Fair Isle several between September 14th and 29th, one near Loch Stiapavat (Outer Hebrides), on September 27th.

SHORE-LARK (*Eremophila a. flava*).—Single birds at Fair Isle on May 7th, Oct. 23rd, and Nov. 2nd.

CONTINENTAL GREAT TITMOUSE (*Parus m. major*).—In addition to those already noted (*antea*, pp. 75 and 98), one is recorded as seen at Lerwick on December 7th.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE (*Lanius c. collurio*).—One or two at Pentland Skerries and at Fair Isle in June.

WAXWING (*Bombycilla garrulus*).—A few more records are given, the latest being on January 27th.

SCANDINAVIAN CHIFFCHAFF (*Phylloscopus c. abictinus*).—One identified from the Isle of May on November 3rd, and others thought to be of this race in Fair Isle in May and October, and at Lerwick on October 24th.

WOOD-WARBLER (*Ph. s. sibilatrix*).—One at Lerwick on August 22nd.

- BARRED WARBLER (*Sylvia u. nisoria*).—One at the Butt of Lewis (Outer Hebrides) on September 23rd.
- GARDEN-WARBLER (*S. borin*).—Migrants are recorded from Lerwick, Fair Isle and Pentland Skerries in May and June, and in August, September, and October.
- BLACKCAP (*S. a. atricapilla*).—In Outer Hebrides one at the Flannans on October 16th and some at Eoligaray between the 18th and 30th.
- LESSER WHITETHROAT (*S. c. curruca*).—Migrants are noted at the Mull of Galloway on April 30th, at the Pentland Skerries in May and June, at Fair Isle in June, September and October, at the Flannans on August 18th and October 14th, at Lerwick and the Isle of May in September and October.
- RING-OUZEL (*Turdus t. torquatus*).—At the Flannans a single bird on April 18th, and three on October 21st. The bird is a rare visitor to the Outer Hebrides.
- REDSTART (*Phœnicurus ph. phœnicurus*).—Further information is given regarding the nesting-record at the Butt of Lewis (*cf. antea*, p. 52). It is now stated that a Redstart and four fledged young were observed hawking for flies on July 20th.
- BLACK REDSTART (*Ph. o. gibraltariensis*).—A very unusual number are recorded especially in the autumn. Single birds at the Pentland Skerries on March 24th, 25th, 29th, 31st, April 17th, June 11th and 12th, October 21st, and several on the 23rd, and one to four up to November 5th: three or four at Fetlar (Shetland), on October 27th: one at Tarbatness (Ross-shire), on May 19th: at the Isle of May, one on April 30th, one or two on October 23rd and 31st. Others in Fair Isle have already been noted (*antea*, p. 75).
- REDBREAST (*Erithacus rubecula*).—Small numbers "doubtless of the Continental form" wintered at Fair Isle, Lerwick, and Pentland Skerries.
- CONTINENTAL HEDGE-SPARROW (*Prunella m. modularis*).—One is recorded by Mr. W. E. Clarke from the Butt of Lewis on September 22nd.
- HOUSE-MARTIN (*Hirundo u. urbica*).—In the Outer Hebrides, where it is seldom seen, one is recorded from Galson on June 15th and three on the 18th, and at the Flannans one on July 15th.
- SPARROW-HAWK (*Accipiter u. nisus*).—Single birds were noted at Lerwick in January, March, and April.
- GREAT CRESTED GREBE (*Colymbus c. cristatus*).—A pair nested and brought off young on Hirsell Loch, this being the first definite record of breeding in Berwickshire.
- STOCK-DOVE (*Columba oenas*).—One at Fair Isle on May 2nd and one at Pentland Skerries on the 3rd.
- GREY PLOVER (*Squatarola squatarola*).—Several are recorded from the Outer Hebrides, where it is rare, in September and October.
- LITTLE STINT (*Erolia m. minuta*).—One at North Unst on September 6th, and one at the Butt of Lewis on the 30th, the latter being the first record for the Outer Hebrides.
- BLACK-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa limosa*).—One near Inchtute (Perth) on August 14th and one on Morton Loch (Fife) on September 5th.
- WHIMBREL (*Numenius ph. phœopus*).—At Galson (Outer Hebrides) one was shot on January 31st and one on December 26th.
- LITTLE AUK (*Alle alle*).—In December, chiefly between the 10th and 20th, large numbers of Little Auks were driven ashore by an easterly gale all along the east coast, while a number were found inland and in the west of Scotland. H.F.W.

BRITISH BIRDS

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NOTES ON THE GREY PLOVER ON THE
YENESEI.

BY

MAUD D. HAVILAND.

THE Grey Plover (*Squatarola squatarola*) was the last of several interesting waders whose nests I found at Golchika on the Yenesei river in 1914, and with the exception of the Curlew-Sandpiper, it was the only species of which I was not able to photograph the bird at the nest.

In the field, the Grey Plover seems to stand midway between our Golden and Green Plovers. Its plumage and its poses at the nest, except for a certain lumpishness of attitude, are of the type of those of the Golden Plover; while in the colour of the eggs, and in some tricks of wing-craft, it resembles the Lapwing. Its voice in the breeding-season, too, has a ring of the alarm note of the Lapwing, although better observers might not admit this. Seebohm* describes the whistle as a plaintive "köp," and gives the call-note as a double "kl-eeep." He also syllabifies a third call as "kl-ee-köp," and says that it is uttered on the wing, and more seldom than the other two. I never heard any note except this latter one, which was uttered when the nest or young were approached, both when the bird was on the wing and also when it was running over the tundra. It might just as well be written "pee a weep," for although in *timbre* it is very like the call of the Asiatic Golden Plover, in form and phrase it is like that of the Lapwing.

The Grey Plover on the Yenesei, as seems, indeed, to be the case in all its recorded haunts, is much more of a marsh lover than the Golden Plover, and perhaps this is why it is rather scarce there. Mr. H. L. Popham

* *Siberia in Europe*, pp. 174, 175.

took four nests in 1895 at Golchika,* but in 1897, although he observed it in the same place, he recorded that there were fewer birds to be seen.† In 1914 I did not see the species at all until the night of July 11th, when I was shooting on the Golchika river about fifteen miles from the settlement. Here, in a green swamp about half a mile square, two pairs were nesting. The birds were very wild and vociferous, flying rapidly



NEST AND EGGS OF THE GREY PLOVER.
(Photographed by Miss M. D. Haviland.)

overhead, and then dashing violently downwards, to glance aside when almost touching the ground, in a way that recalled the "leap and wince" of the Lapwing over English fields. Mr. A. Trevor-Battye (*Icebound on Kolguev*, p. 432) describes how this Plover attacked a marauding Skua in this way. When thus rushing to and fro, with its pied plumage and headlong vehement flight, the Grey Plover looks curiously like a pigeon.

Long watching failed to discover a nest in this place, and from the birds' behaviour, I think that they must

* *Ibis*, 1897, p. 102.

† *t.c.*, 1898, p. 513.

have had young. Therefore I went a mile further down the river, and found another pair which were breeding on a wide piece of tundra sloping gently down to the water-side. These birds were fairly tame, but it took me a long time to mark down the nest. This was owing partly to the stupidity of one of the Siberians, who, contrary to my orders, shot at the hen bird, thus scaring her badly; and partly to the nature of the ground. Between the nest and the river bank, which afforded the nearest covert, lay a deep gulch of snow, and in order to cross this, the eye had to be taken from the spot whence the bird had just risen. As I was working alone, I was obliged to define the probable whereabouts with pegs, which took a little time, though not so long perhaps as mere searching would have done. The nest when found consisted of a *shallow* depression, lined with a few lichen haulms. Mr. Trevor-Battye, writing of the nests that he found on Kolguev (*op. cit.*, p. 432), says that the depression was a deep one, but it probably varies according to the nature of the ground in different places. The eggs were on the point of hatching. The female bird, which was much the tamer of the two, was in far finer plumage than her mate. I noticed this also in the case of a pair of Asiatic Golden Plovers, but whether as a rule one sex begins to moult earlier than the other I do not know. Messrs. Harvie-Brown and Seeböhm, writing of this species (*Ibis* 1876, p. 228), state that the males appear to have richer contrasts and that they retained the black longer than the females. The Grey Plover was of such unusual occurrence in the Golchika district that I have no data upon which to form an opinion in the matter. But I do not think that this was the case with *Charadrius fulvus*. Four skins which I obtained between July 29th and August 1st, two males and two females, show no difference. In fact one of the cocks is the palest of the four. Possibly skins obtained ten days earlier might better have demonstrated the difference, but I have none of that date.

During the second week of August I visited Och Marino, a dreary promontory about twenty miles further down the estuary. Here the Grey Plover had undoubtedly bred, for I spent a long time in watching a bird which showed much uneasiness at my presence, shamming injury first at one spot and then at another. I did not succeed in marking down the young, however.



NESTING-PLACE OF GREY PLOVER ON THE GOLCHIKA RIVER.
(*Photographed by Miss M. D. Haviland.*)

Indeed, by that date they must have been nearly full fledged.

As this species was so local and scarce on the Yenesei, I was not able to make many notes on its return migration. Like the Asiatic Golden Plover, it remains until rather late in August, for I saw a flock of about fifteen flying over the river on August 22nd, and saw a single bird on the sandflats with Dunlins and Ringed Plover on August 26th. These birds were probably migrants from the north. I think that the reason that the bird is so scarce in the middle of the estuary is the lack of suitable habitat, for except at such spots as Och Marino,

and the mouths of the Golehika and Mezenchyne rivers, the dry tundra comes right down to the mudhills that bound the river-bed. The flock that I saw may very well have been on passage from the unexplored tundras that lie nearer the sea around the Krestovskiy Islands or Dickson Harbour, or even from the Pyasina River, of which we know little except that its shores are level and swampy. A little evidence that the spring migration at least is down the course of the river is supplied by Mr. Popham, who saw about ten Grey Plovers at Vorogova (latitude 61°) on June 11th.* At first sight migration routes in Northern Asia, both for geographical and climatic reasons, appear simple compared to those in Europe, with its more variable meteorological conditions and infinitely more complex physical features. Nevertheless, from the scanty records that can be consulted, I venture to think that the route followed by certain species to and from the Yenesei delta, may turn out to be much more complicated than appears at first sight, especially during the spring migration.

* *Ibis*, 1898, p. 513.

THE MOULTS OF THE BRITISH PASSERES,
WITH NOTES ON THE SEQUENCE OF THEIR
PLUMAGES.

BY

H. F. WITHERBY.

PART II.

(Continued from page 151).

FAMILY FRINGILLIDÆ.

This family includes all the Finches and Buntings. The adults all have a complete autumn moult. Among the Finches only one—the Snow-Finch—has a spring moult and this is confined to the throat. A number of the Buntings, however, moult certain parts of the head, throat and breast in the spring. The effect of abrasion in the adults is very marked in most of the members of this family and in some cases greatly alters the appearance of the bird, the effect being that when the plumage is in the most worn, and therefore imperfect condition, it has, nevertheless, the most brilliant appearance.

The difference in the sexes of the adults is usually clearly defined and in some cases very marked, and only in a few species is there little or no difference (Goldfinch, Tree-Sparrow, Corn-Bunting, Little Bunting).

The juveniles are in some species very distinct from the adults (*e.g.* Hawfinch, Goldfinch, Crossbill, Lapland Bunting); in most cases they can easily be distinguished, and where they are much like the adult they resemble the female. The sexes of the juveniles are usually alike, but in some cases have well-defined differences.

The moult from the juvenile to the first winter is usually confined to the body-plumage, some wing-coverts and often some of the inner secondaries. A complete moult, including all the wing- and tail-feathers, occurs only in the House-Sparrow, Tree-Sparrow, Snow-Finch, Corn-Bunting, and East Siberian Meadow-Bunting.

The first winter and summer plumages are in some species like those of the adult and in others somewhat different. In the latter the male usually either resembles the adult female or is intermediate between it and the adult male,

while the female is usually duller than the adult female or intermediate between it and the juvenile.

HAWFINCH (*Coccothraustes c. coccothraustes*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in August or September. No moult in spring and scarcely any effect by abrasion.

The body-plumage of the female is paler than in the male, but the two sexes are more clearly distinguished by the outer webs of the secondaries and distal half of the primaries, which are fringed in the female with grey, and in the male with glossy purple and black.

JUVENILE.—The juvenile is very distinct from the adult, having a pale yellow chin and throat instead of black, and the rest of the under-parts whitish-buff, barred with brown on the flanks and sides, besides other less prominent distinctions. The outer webs of the wing-feathers distinguish the sexes as in the adult.

FIRST WINTER.—Except for the tail-feathers, wing-feathers and primary-coverts, the juvenile plumage is moulted in the first autumn and the birds then resemble the adults.

GREENFINCH (*Chloris ch. chloris*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in early autumn, sometimes commencing as early as May or June. No moult in spring, but abrasion makes the plumage in both sexes brighter and greener. The female is considerably browner and less green than the male and the yellow in the tail- and wing-feathers is less extensive.

JUVENILE.—Somewhat like the adult female but distinctly streaked on the upper and under-parts with dark brown and the wing-coverts reddish-brown. The sexes can be distinguished by the amount of yellow in the tail- and wing-feathers.

FIRST WINTER.—The juvenile plumage is moulted as in the Hawfinch, with the addition of two or three of the innermost secondaries. The birds then become like the adults.

BRITISH GOLDFINCH (*Carduelis c. britannica*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in August or September. No moult in spring, but abrasion makes the nuchal spot and under-parts whiter, and the white tips to the wing- and tail-feathers gradually become worn off. The male and female are alike.

JUVENILE.—The juvenile differs strikingly from the adult, as the head is greyish-buff streaked and spotted with brown and without any crimson and black. The rest of the upper-parts are like the head and the under-parts are spotted and

streaked. The inner secondaries have broad buff, instead of white tips, and the distal halves of the greater coverts are buff instead of yellow. Sexes alike.

FIRST WINTER.—The juvenile plumage is moulted as in the Greenfinch, but the birds can be distinguished from the adults by the small tips of the tail- and wing-feathers being buffish instead of pure white. These distinctive tips, however, become mostly worn off by the summer.

SISKIN (*Carduelis spinus*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in August or September. No moult in spring, but abrasion makes the plumage brighter and in the male the crown becomes almost uniform black. The female has no black on the crown and chin, is browner and more streaked on the upper-parts than the male, and has more streaks and scarcely any yellow on the under-parts.

JUVENILE.—Somewhat like the adult female, but browner on the upper-parts, distinctly spotted on the sides of neck and throat, and more streaked on the rest of the under-parts. Inner secondaries and wing-coverts tipped pale buff. (Only one specimen seen).

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile plumage is moulted as in the Greenfinch. The birds then become like the adults, but the male is more streaked on the mantle than the adult male, and the female has a browner head and mantle than the adult female.

TWITE (*Carduelis f. flavirostris*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in September or October. No moult in spring. Abrasion makes the upper-parts much darker except for the hind-neck, which becomes greyish; the pink of the rump becomes brighter owing to the wearing away of the buffish-brown portions of the feathers, and the streaks on the breast and flanks become more prominent. The female is like the male, but usually has no pink on the rump, though sometimes there is a faint tinge of this colour.

JUVENILE.—Very much like the adult female, but never with pink on the rump; the chin has indistinct streaks instead of being uniform buff, and the throat, breast and flanks are more strongly streaked than in the adult. Sexes alike.

FIRST WINTER.—The juvenile plumage is moulted as in the Greenfinch and the birds then become like the adults.

LESSER REDPOLL (*Carduelis l. cabaret*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in September or October. No moult in spring. Abrasion makes the pink very much brighter

and more extensive, but it should be noted that the amount of pink varies individually. The upper-parts become less tawny and more dark brown, with a greyish-white edging to many of the feathers. The female usually has no pink on the under-parts or rump, but very rarely there is a slight tinge of pink on one or other or both these parts.

JUVENILE.—Much like the adult female in worn summer plumage, but with no pink on the crown or elsewhere, only a little sooty-black on the chin and more spotted and streaked on the throat and breast. Sexes alike.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile plumage is moulted as in the Greenfinch. The male then becomes like the adult female, but almost always has some trace of pink on the rump and usually a trace on the cheeks, whereas this is more exceptional in the female. The female becomes like the adult female.

The moults and sequences are the same in the Mealy Redpoll (*C. l. linaria*) and Greenland Redpoll (*C. l. rostrata*). The juvenile Mealy Redpoll I cannot distinguish in coloration from the juvenile Lesser Redpoll, but the juvenile Greenland Redpoll (like the adult) has distinctly broader streaks on the upper- and under-parts. In first winter and summer plumage the male Mealy Redpoll has a little pink on the breast more often than in the Lesser Redpoll.

The moults of Hornemann's Redpoll (*C. h. hornemanni*) and Coues's Redpoll (*C. h. exilipes*) are the same as in the other Redpolls. I have not been able to see a juvenile of the first-named, but that of Coues's Redpoll is very much like that of the Lesser with slightly more greyish-white on the upper-parts and rather purer white on the belly; the rump is streaked and not uniform as in the adult.

The first winter and summer males, as well as the adult and first winter and summer females of both these birds, seem never to have any pink on the rump or under-parts and the latter are more buffish and not so white as in the adult male. It may be remarked that the pink of the under-parts and rump in the adult males is paler in these two Redpolls (especially in Hornemann's) than in the Mealy and Lesser.

CITRIL FINCH (*Carduelis c. citrinella*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in early autumn. No moult in spring. Abrasion has little effect but the mantle becomes slightly more striated, not quite so uniform. The female is less green on the crown, browner and more streaked on the mantle, greyer and not so yellow on the under-parts, and altogether duller than the male.

JUVENILE.—The juvenile is still browner and more streaked on the upper-parts than the adult female, the difference being very marked on the rump and upper tail-coverts, which are buffish-brown instead of yellowish-green: the under-parts are browner and more streaked and there is only a tinge of yellow on the belly; the innermost secondaries and all the wing-coverts are fringed and tipped with pale buff instead of green; the fringes of the tail- and wing-feathers and primary-coverts are more buff and less green. Sexes apparently alike.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile plumage is moulted as in the Greenfinch, after which the male can be distinguished from the adult male by its browner and more streaked mantle. The tail-, wing-feathers and primary-coverts being the same as in the juvenile, have the fringes less green and more buffish. Usually also one or two juvenile greater coverts with pale buff fringes remain and occasionally a juvenile buff-edged innermost secondary.

LINNET (*Carduelis c. cannabina*).

ADULT.—Complete moult from August to October. No moult in spring, but in the male especially abrasion greatly alters the appearance, which varies according to the amount of wear. In much worn summer males the mantle, scapulars, and wing-coverts become almost uniform chestnut, the blackish-brown streaks and buff edges of the feathers having worn off, the flanks become almost uniform chestnut-buff and the crimson on the crown and breast, which in fresh plumage is almost concealed by the buff tips to the feathers, becomes prominent. Moreover, the more worn the feather is the more brilliant the crimson becomes. The reason for this has been frequently explained and it is only necessary to say here briefly that in Redpolls, Linnets, Crossbills and Grosbeaks not only the tips and edges of the feathers wear down, but the radii also wear off and leave the rami more or less bare. The rami only are pink and the radii grey, so that the wearing off of the latter makes the pink appear much more brilliant. The female has no pink and is darker and less chestnut on the mantle and more heavily streaked than the male.

JUVENILE.—Much like the female, but with the chin and throat almost uniform buffish-white without decided dark streaks. The streaks on the upper-parts, breast and flanks, are also much narrower than in the adult female. The male even in juvenile plumage is more chestnut-buff on the upper-parts than the juvenile female.

FIRST WINTER.—The juvenile plumage is moulted as in the Greenfinch and the birds become like the adults.

SERIN (*Serinus c. serinus*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in autumn. No moult in spring. Abrasion makes the yellow parts brighter and the flanks more markedly streaked. The female is much less yellow and is more striated than the male.

JUVENILE.—In juvenile plumage both sexes have the upper-parts brownish-buff streaked with dark brown and the under-parts pale yellowish-buff streaked with brown except on the chin and centre of belly.

FIRST WINTER.—The juvenile plumage is moulted as in the Greenfinch and the birds then become like the adults.

BRITISH BULLFINCH (*Pyrrhula p. plicata*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult from August to October. No moult in spring and very little change by abrasion, except that the mantle becomes a purer grey in the male and greyer and less brown in the female. The marked difference in the sexes is well known.

JUVENILE.—Like the adult female but the crown brown instead of black, upper-parts browner, and under-parts more yellowish-brown than in the adult female. The rump and under tail-coverts are buffish, the innermost secondary is marked with brown instead of pinkish and the wing-coverts are browner. Sexes alike.

FIRST WINTER.—The juvenile plumage is moulted as in the Greenfinch and the birds then become like the adults.

SCARLET GROSBEEK (*Carpodacus c. erythrinus*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in autumn. No moult in spring. Abrasion in the male makes the carmine of the crown, rump and under-parts much more brilliant, but the mantle becomes browner as the carmine tips of the feathers wear off. The female, as is well known, is without pink and much streaked on the under-parts. In the adult male the greater and median wing-coverts are tipped with pink or pinkish-buff, forming a not very conspicuous double wing-bar. In the female, however, these feathers are tipped with pale buff and the wing-bars are thus conspicuous.

JUVENILE.—Both sexes are much like the adult female, but the upper-parts are darker and more streaked and the under-parts are more heavily streaked, while the tips of the wing-coverts are more yellowish-buff.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile body-plumage and median and lesser wing-coverts are moulted in the first autumn, but not the tail nor the rest of the wing. The male then becomes indistinguishable from the adult female, but the

first winter female is usually more streaked on the flanks and lower breast.

SECOND WINTER AND SUMMER.—Complete moult in autumn after which the male becomes like the adult male, but the carmine is not so brilliant, the mantle is mostly brown, the tips of the wing-coverts are paler pink. A few brown feathers often remain on the under-parts, and occasionally males in the second winter appear to be like the first winter, except that the fringes of the wing- and tail-feathers are pink and the lesser coverts are pink. The second winter female is like the adult.

The sequence of the plumages in this bird I have found more difficult to unravel than in any other Passerine bird which I have yet studied.

PINE-GROSBEAK (*Pinicola e. enucleator*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in autumn. No moult in spring. Abrasion has a curiously opposite effect in the two sexes. The male becomes more brilliant pink as in the Scarlet Grosbeak and Crossbills. In the female the pink colouring of the male is replaced by golden-yellow or reddish-gold, and this colour is confined to the tips of the feathers, which gradually wear away so that the golden colour becomes much reduced. This effect is very marked on the mantle, which becomes almost uniform greyish-brown in much worn birds.

JUVENILE.—Differs from either adult, the upper-parts being dark sepia with the feathers of the crown and rump tipped dull yellowish; throat and breast more yellowish-brown. The tail and wing-feathers and wing-coverts are fringed and tipped with buffish instead of pink as in the adult male, and yellow as in the adult female. Sexes alike.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile body-plumage and wing-coverts are moulted in early autumn but not the primary-coverts nor wing- and tail-feathers. The male then becomes like the adult female, but is usually more pinkish and less yellow-gold, the tail- and wing-feathers are browner, not so blackish, and their edgings and tips are duller and not of so pure a white. The first winter and summer female is of a rather paler yellow than the adult. The second winter male and female appear to be like the adults.

COMMON CROSSBILL (*Loxia c. curvirostra*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult July to November. No moult in spring. Abrasion makes the male more brilliant but has little effect on the female. The adult male in a wild state* is always, so far as my investigations go, red, though

* As in Redpolls and Linnets the red is replaced by yellow at the first moult in captivity.

it frequently has some golden or greenish-yellow feathers here and there on the upper- and under-parts. Dr. C. B. Ticehurst, however, states in a recent article, "On the Plumage of the Male Crossbill" (*Ibis*, 1915, pp. 662-9), that he has examined yellow and green-yellow adult males, but he states that this plumage in adults is of very rare occurrence. Presumably the yellow or green-yellow adult males examined were certainly wild birds, but Dr. Ticehurst does not state this. It is two years ago since I worked out the plumages of the Crossbill, and I have no recollection or note of having seen an adult male wild bird in yellow or greenish-yellow plumage, and I examined several hundred specimens, so that such birds must I think be so rare as to be quite abnormal. Very rarely Linnets and Redpolls in a wild state are to be found with the crimson replaced by yellow or yellowish-buff. There is great individual variation in the brilliancy of the adult male both in summer and winter. The female is yellowish-green, sometimes of a more golden hue and occasionally with a considerable number of feathers tipped with dull pink.

JUVENILE.—The upper-parts are dark brown, the whitish or buffish edgings to the feathers giving it a heavily streaked appearance; the under-parts are still more prominently streaked, as the whitish edgings to the feathers are broader. The male has a tinge of green on the upper-parts, especially on the mantle, and a few greenish-yellow feathers on the throat and breast, while the female has none of the latter and is browner on the upper-parts.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER. MALE.—The juvenile body-feathers and lesser wing-coverts are moulted from May to October, but not the tail- and wing-feathers, nor the primary-coverts, while most of the greater and median coverts are not moulted, and frequently a varying number of the juvenile body-feathers (especially on the breast and belly) are retained. After the moult there is much individual variation from a bird indistinguishable by the coloration of the body-feathers from a bright crimson adult male to greenish-gold, yellow, orange, and a mixture of all these colours. First winter birds may, however, always be distinguished by the greenish instead of pinkish outer edges of the wing- and tail-feathers and more clearly by the buffish tips of the unmoulted juvenile wing-coverts. These distinctions usually disappear in summer when the feathers are much worn. **FEMALE.**—Like the adult female except for the buff tips of the unmoulted juvenile wing-coverts.

After the second autumn moult, males and females become, so far as I can see, like the adults.

The moults and sequence of plumages in the Scottish Crossbill (*L. c. scotica*), Parrot-Crossbill (*L. pytyopsittacus*) and Two-barred Crossbill (*L. l. bifasciata*) appear to be the same as in the Common Crossbill. It may be remarked that in the Two-barred Crossbill the white tips to the inner secondaries and greater and median coverts are present in all plumages; in the adult male these tips are tinged with pink and in the female with yellow, in the juvenile and first winter and summer male and female they are smaller and tinged with yellow.

CHAFFINCH (*Fringilla c. cœlebs*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult commencing in July and sometimes in June. No regular moult in spring, but at that season feathers here and there on the body are often renewed. Abrasion has a considerable effect, especially in the male, the colours becoming purer and brighter owing to the wearing off of their buffish tips. The sexual difference is too well known to require mention. The under-parts of the male vary from a pearly-pink to a brownish-pink, but this is merely individual and not connected with age so far as I can discover.

JUVENILE.—Much like the adult female but browner on the upper-parts. The male has the mantle more chestnut-brown and the ear-coverts more buffish than the female and, as in the adults, the white on the wings of the male is purer.

FIRST WINTER.—The juvenile plumage is moulted from July to September except the wing-feathers, primary-coverts and tail-feathers. The birds then become like the adults.

BRAMBLING (*Fringilla montifringilla*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in August-September. No moult in spring, but abrasion produces a remarkable change in the upper-parts of the male and to a lesser extent in the female. The chief difference is in the crown and mantle of the male, the glossy blue-black of which is mostly concealed in fresh plumage by the long buff tips of the feathers. The effect of the wearing off of these tips usually begins to show in February or March, and by June or July there is scarcely a buff tip left, but individuals vary in the amount of wear. The female is much duller than the male, and its crown and mantle are dull brownish black not glossy blue-black.

JUVENILE.—Closely resembling adult female, but the white of the rump and belly tinged with yellow. Sexes alike.

FIRST WINTER.—The juvenile plumage is moulted in the first autumn, except the primary-coverts and wing- and tail-feathers. The birds then become like the adults.

SNOW-FINCH (*Montifringilla n. nivalis*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in autumn. Some feathers of the throat are renewed in March, otherwise there is no moult in spring. Abrasion makes the throat blacker, the head of the male purer bluish-grey and has other small effects. The female has the head browner than the male and the black of the throat less extensive, also the white of the primary-coverts and of the pair of tail-feathers next the central much more restricted.

JUVENILE.—Much like the adult female but the upper-parts browner, throat ashy-grey with only the bases of the feathers blackish, the tenth primary and white secondaries with black marks and a fringe of pale buff, and the tail-feathers with a fringe of buff. Sexes apparently alike.

FIRST WINTER.—The juvenile plumage is *completely* moulted in the first autumn. The birds then become like the adults.

HOUSE-SPARROW (*Passer d. domesticus*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult from August to October. No moult in spring. The effect of abrasion and the difference in the sexes is too well known to require comment.

JUVENILE.—Very much like the adult female. In the male the throat is more decidedly tinged with ashy-black than in the female.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile plumage is *completely* moulted in the first autumn. The birds then become like the adults, except that the male appears to have more white on the tips of the feathers of the chin than the adult male.

TREE-SPARROW (*Passer m. montanus*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult from August to October. No moult in spring, and abrasion causes little noticeable alteration. Sexes alike.

JUVENILE.—Much like the adult but duller, the feathers of the crown being smoky-brown with blackish tips, the mantle and wing-coverts less rufous, the throat, lores and ear-coverts more greyish-black and other small differences.

FIRST WINTER.—The juvenile plumage is *completely* moulted in the first autumn. The birds then become like the adults.

(To be continued.)

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS IN THE ROLL OF HONOUR.

WE have already had to deplore the loss on the field of battle of several ornithologists who had made a special study of British birds. In addition to these we regret to state that other well-known ornithologists have laid down their lives for their country. Although their bird-work was mostly done abroad and thus did not come within the scope of this magazine, nevertheless we feel that a tribute, however slight and brief, to their memories should here be given.

LORD BRABOURNE.—Wyndham Wentworth Knatchbull-Hugessen, third Baron Brabourne, was killed at Neuve Chapelle on March 12th, 1915. He was born on September 21st, 1885, and succeeded to the title in 1909. He entered the Grenadier Guards in 1910 and passed into the Special Reserve in 1911. Lord Brabourne had for some years been engaged in the study of South American birds, and at the time war broke out he was making collections of birds in Peru, whence he hurried home to rejoin his regiment. In 1910 he became a member of the British Ornithologists' Union, and in the same year commenced in collaboration with Mr. C. Chubb a work on the *Birds of South America*. In 1912 the first volume of this great undertaking was published, but no further volumes have appeared, and we fear that it will be impossible for Mr. Chubb to continue it alone.

CAPTAIN THE HON. GERALD LEGGE, second son of the Earl of Dartmouth, was mortally wounded at Suvla Bay on September 9th, 1915. He was born in 1882 and all his life was a keen naturalist, taking a special interest in wildfowl, which he had studied for a number of years, not only in the field, but also from a scientific point of view. At Patshull, his father's seat in Staffordshire, he reared a great many ducks of different species in a semi-wild state. Mr. J. R. B. Masfield writes as follows: "As an instance of his keenness in studying ducks I may relate that one day when I met him at Patshull he had just arrived from Northumberland, whence he had brought a nest of Teal just hatching out. By telegraphing forward to several stations *en route* he had secured a relay of hot-water bottles by means of which he had succeeded in keeping the ducklings warm. He gave me regular notes on the rarer Staffordshire birds, and especially

the ducks, which he noted at Patshull." Legge was a member of the British Museum expedition under R. B. Woosnam which explored with much success the Ruwenzori in 1906, while in 1909 he again went to Africa with Woosnam to explore the Kalahari Desert. In both expeditions valuable collections of birds were made. In the course of an appreciation in the *Field*, his friend J. G. M(illais) writes thus: "The rising sun, the beauty of a bird's wing, or a lovely flower were things before which he stood hat in hand, just as he held everything that was false or small of no account. . . . Such a man was at once ready to defend his country. He was last seen lying mortally wounded on the ground, and cheering on the men of whom he was so proud. That was Gerald Legge."

MAJOR C. H. T. WHITEHEAD was killed in action in France on September 25th or 26th, 1915. He was thirty-four years of age and was the seventh son of the late Mr. and of Mrs. Whitehead, of Deighton Grove, York. Four of his brothers are serving in the Army and one in the Navy. Major Whitehead served in the South African war. At the time of his death he was attached to the Highland Light Infantry, but his own regiment was the 56th Punjab Rifles, and it was from his excellent bird-work on the north-west frontiers of India that he was widely known to ornithologists. Mr. E. C. Stuart Baker in a letter to us writes as follows:—

"Whitehead fell leading his men in a charge, being shot dead on the very parapet of the enemy's trench, which was taken. In person Whitehead was a singularly charming character, intensely earnest in everything he did, persevering and thorough, and most careful in all his work. He discovered the new Thrush, which I had the pleasure of naming *Orcocincla whiteheadi* after him, and amongst other interesting discoveries he made were the breeding-haunts in the Himalayas of the Chinese Reed-Warbler."

His loss will be keenly felt by ornithologists and especially by those whose work lies in India.

RICHARD BOWEN WOOSNAM.—Second-Lieutenant R. B. Woosnam was killed while gallantly leading his men in an attack on the Turkish trenches in Gallipoli on June 4th, 1915. Woosnam was born on November 17th, 1880. He served throughout the South African campaign, after which he resigned his commission in order to pursue the better his taste for natural history. Woosnam was an experienced and

successful traveller and field-naturalist. He began in 1903 by a collecting trip in Cape Colony. In 1905 he accompanied Colonel A. C. Bailward on an extensive journey through western Persia and Armenia, and there made interesting collections of birds and mammals. In the following year he led with conspicuous success the Ruwenzori natural history expedition, organized by Mr. Ogilvie-Grant. In 1907 he again went to Persia, this time to the Elburz Mountains with Colonel Bailward. In 1909 he returned to Africa to explore the Kalahari Desert with one of his Ruwenzori companions, Gerald Legge, whose name is also in this sad list. In 1910 Woosnam was appointed game-warden in British East Africa, and he only recently returned to England in order to rejoin his old regiment, the Worcesters. He was a silver medallist and corresponding member of the Zoological Society of London and a member of the British Ornithologists' Union. All the collections he made are in the British Museum, and accounts of the birds with his field-notes have appeared in various volumes of the *Ibis* and in the *Transactions of the Zoological Society*.

NOTES

UNUSUAL NESTING-SITES.

THE following notes made in the district of Maryport, Cumberland, may be worth recording:—

STARLING (*Sturnus v. vulgaris*).—On May 3rd, 1912, I found a nest of a Magpie containing seven eggs of that bird and one of a Starling. All the eggs were fresh. Starlings frequently take possession of disused Magpies' nests in this district.

TREE-PIBIT (*Anthus t. trivialis*).—On May 27th, 1912, I found a Tree-Pipit's nest built about fifteen inches inside a rabbit-burrow. The nest contained six eggs. Rabbits were numerous.

DIPPER (*Cinclus c. britannicus*).—On April 27th, 1914, I found a Dipper's nest placed eighteen inches inside a Sand-Martin's burrow in the river bank at Dearham Bridge. The walls of this nest, which was cup-shaped, were built of dried grasses. The lining consisted of dead leaves. The nest, from which I flushed the sitting bird, contained four eggs, three of which were on the point of hatching: the fourth was added. Similar cases have recently been reported (*antea*, pp. 27 and 94).

WILLIAM J. ANDREWS.

FECUNDITY OF THE HOUSE-SPARROW.

LAST year I contributed some observations (*Brit. Birds*, VIII., p. 114) showing the amazing fecundity of certain pairs of House-Sparrows (*Passer d. domesticus*) occupying (much to my disgust) a number of nesting-boxes I put up, for the accommodation of better birds, in a wood adjoining my house. This year I have continued my observations and with still more striking results, owing largely to more frequent clearance of the boxes.

Thus, from one box (No. 1), I removed new nests containing eggs (varying in number from two to three) on six occasions between May 22nd and July 3rd: that is, within forty-two days—an average of seven days only between each clearance. From another box (No. 2), I removed new nests containing eggs (varying in number from two to five) on five occasions between May 22nd and June 24th: that is, within thirty-three days—an average of about six days and a half between each clearance. From yet another box (No. 13), I removed new nests containing eggs (varying in number from one to four) on three occasions between May 22nd and June 5th: that

is. within fourteen days—an average of rather less than five days between each clearance.

There were several other cases which were little less striking ; but, taking only the three cases cited, one finds it demonstrated that a pair of Sparrows is easily able, *in less than seven days*, not only to build a new nest outright and to lay in it a small clutch of eggs, but to repeat the performance several times in succession without any interval.

I cannot prove, of course, that, in each case, all the eggs laid in succession in any one nest were the product of one and the same pair of birds. It seemed clear indeed that they were not so ; for in some cases the eggs belonging to a clutch differed so widely that they can hardly all have been laid by one pair of birds. This was due, no doubt, to my constant clearances of the boxes (carried out at intervals of little more than a week), which must have incommoded the laying birds very seriously and have compelled them to lay hap-hazard in one another's nests. That they actually did this was clearly proved in the case of one box (No. 7) which, though unoccupied when examined on 29th May, was found only seven days later (on June 5th) to hold a nest containing *seven* eggs—evidently, from their different colouring and markings, the product of at least two and probably several birds. Again I ask : Need one wonder at the extraordinary abundance of the Sparrow ?

MILLER CHRISTY.

LAPLAND BUNTINGS IN SUFFOLK.

As the Lapland Bunting (*Calcarius l. lapponicus*) seems to have been rarely recorded for Suffolk, the following occurrences near Aldeburgh may be noteworthy. I saw one on September 22nd, 1911, two on October 4th, and quite a number on October 9th and 10th in the company of Larks and Twites. I also saw four or five throughout January, 1912, among the Snow-Buntings on the marshes. I was away in the autumns of 1912 and 1913 but obtained single birds on September 21st and October 3rd, 1914. Between September 25th and November 10th, 1915, I have seen single birds among the Larks almost every day I have looked for them, including a party of ten on October 22nd, and four on November 4th and 5th. I have always found this bird very wild and difficult to observe on the ground, but it may be easily identified on rising by its chattering note, and also by a single silvery note on the wing. It flies an immense distance when disturbed.

J. K. STANFORD.

GREY WAGTAIL BREEDING IN OXFORDSHIRE.

As nesting records of the Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla c. cinerea*) for Oxfordshire seem few and far between, it may be worth recording that on May 18th, 1913, near Godstow Bridge, my brothers and I saw a pair of Grey Wagtails which were carrying food in their bills and seemed very excited at our approach. We were unable to find the nest, but on the 19th at the same place I flushed a young one from under my feet which could only just fly.

J. K. STANFORD.

SCOTTISH CRESTED TITMOUSE IN EAST
ROSS-SHIRE.

WHILE observing birds in the extensive fir-woods of east Ross-shire in October, 1915, I was much interested to meet with a small number of Crested Titmice—at least four or five individuals and probably more. They formed part of a large travelling-flock consisting chiefly of Golderests, Titmice, mostly Coal and Long-tailed, with a few pairs of Tree-Creepers, etc. The familiar purring-note of the crested species at once attracted my attention, and with the aid of a glass I was able to obtain a good view of one individual feeding near the top of a large Scotch fir. Many large flocks of migrants were arriving on the north-east coast of Scotland at that time, the 18th of October, and it therefore seemed probable that these Crested Titmice were Continental visitors. To make certain of this point I shot one, but to my surprise it proved to be a typical example of the Strathspey bird (*Parus cristatus scoticus*).

The occurrence of this dark race of the Crested Titmouse in east Ross-shire is of considerable interest, as, with the exception of a recently-recorded instance of it having been found in Nairnshire, where it was probably nesting (Blackwood, *Scottish Nat.* 1915, p. 285), there appears to be no properly authenticated record of its occurrence outside Strathspey. It is true that in the collection of eggs in the British Museum there is a clutch of four eggs referred to this species and said to have been taken by J. Hancock in Ross-shire. These eggs once formed part of the Tristram Collection and were received with the Crowley Bequest. It seems likely that some mistake has been made by Tristram or Crowley in stating the locality to have been Ross-shire. The eggs are merely labelled "*P. cristatus*, J. H. 59" in Tristram's writing. The late Major W. Stirling, of Fairburn, a good field-naturalist and a keen oologist, never met with the Crested Titmouse in east Ross, and I myself, who

have constantly visited the same part of the country both in summer and winter, for many years past. have never previously observed the species, though well acquainted with it in Strathspey. The unmistakeable purring-note, something like that of the long-tailed species, would at once have attracted attention. It would therefore seem as though this hitherto very local bird had recently extended its range to the north-west.

W. R. OGILVIE-GRANT.

[With reference to the record in the *Catalogue of the Eggs in the Brit. Mus.* (V., p. 304), to which I called Mr. Ogilvie-Grant's attention at the November meeting of the British Ornithologists' Club, I am not aware of any evidence that Hancock himself ever collected in Ross-shire, although he took nests in Strathspey (see Hewitson, *Eggs of Brit. Birds*, 3rd Ed., Vol. I., p. 154). He accompanied St. John to the Findhorn Valley in 1850, and made the acquaintance of MacDonald, one of St. John's servants, who collected eggs for him for many years after. The eggs in the British Museum were almost certainly collected by MacDonald for Hancock. But MacDonald, writing from Ross-shire on April 4th, 1871, to Mr. J. A. Harvie-Brown, distinctly states that this species does not breed in East Ross or north of Inverness (see *Vert. Fauna Moray Basin*, Vol. I., p. 256). It should, however, be remembered that Robert Gray (*Birds of the West of Scotland*, p. 104) states that the breeding-places of the Crested Tit "appear to be confined to the counties of Moray, Ross and Inverness," but does not say on what evidence the statement rests. He also mentions instances of straggling Crested Tits being seen or shot in various parts of Scotland, but these may have belonged to other races, if genuine records.—F. C. R. JOURDAIN.]

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER SEEN IN KENT.

On the 24th September, 1915, I put a small bird out of a bush on Dungeness shingle, which looked as if it must be a Yellow-browed Warbler (*Phylloscopus superciliosus*). It was almost dusk at the time and I lost the bird without getting a very good view of it, though I once heard a note, like the ordinary Willow-Wren's note in general character, but sharper and much shriller.

Fortunately I found it again in the same bush the next morning and obtained a much better view. When first it flew out, almost from under my feet, the yellowish colour of the rump attracted my attention, and in consequence I wondered if it were really *Ph. proregulus*; however,

an examination of some specimens kindly lent me by Mr. Witherby convinces me that this is not the case. The eye-stripe was not very conspicuous, and the only time the bird gave me a good view of its wing the side-feathers covered most of the coverts, so that I did not see much of the wing-bars; but both these features, so far as I saw them, are in agreement with one or two of the specimens examined. The short tail and reguloid appearance were marked as the bird flew, but when settled it looked just like a small Willow-Wren. I heard the note again three or four times. The bird became rather difficult of access after I had put it up two or three times, and I had to leave it in order to catch the train.

Dr. N. F. Ticehurst mentions one or more occasions when this species has been observed in Kent, but no instance of its being obtained is recorded. H. G. ALEXANDER.

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER IN SUFFOLK.

ON October 12th, 1915, I shot a Yellow-browed Warbler (*Phylloscopus s. superciliosus*) in a garden at Aldringham, Suffolk, about a mile from the sea. This bird was in the upper branches of a large willow-tree, and attracted me on two occasions by its shrill single call-note, which it uttered repeatedly. In the *Ann. Scot. Nat.* (1910, p. 4) the Misses Rintoul and Baxter mention that a Yellow-browed Warbler was heard to utter a "loud ringing 'pee' audible a long way off."

Though this species has probably been overlooked, there is only one previous record for Suffolk, one being observed by the Rev. J. G. Tuck near Southwold on September 3rd, 1910. J. K. STANFORD.

NOTES ON A PAIR OF BLACK REDSTARTS IN DORSETSHIRE.

ALTHOUGH not altogether a rare bird, the Black Redstart (*Phœnicurus o. gibraltariensis*) is of sufficiently uncommon occurrence in Dorsetshire to warrant a few remarks.

For the sixth year in succession a pair of these birds have spent the late autumn and early spring at Blandford, frequenting the roof and walls of the parish church which, being but a few yards from my house, affords me excellent opportunity for observation.

They first made their appearance here—at least I first noticed them—on October 19th, 1910, when the male bird

attracted my attention while flying about the church walls, taking an occasional excursion among the tombstones after the manner of the Spotted Flycatcher. A few days later the female (easily distinguished by her duller garb) arrived and remained in company with her mate until the end of November, when they both left (the diminishing supply of insects probably causing them to seek a living elsewhere), to reappear for a short stay the following February and early March.

The same movements have taken place each following year with remarkable regularity, almost to a day, and it is interesting to note that the male bird arrives several days before the female.

One warm sunny day in the latter part of February, 1914, I had the pleasure, and perhaps rare experience in this country, of listening to the male uttering a faint but pleasing warble, which reminded one of the song of the Robin, intermingled with a suggestion of the Hedge-Sparrow's joyous notes, only in altogether more muffled tones, but distinctly audible at a distance of twenty yards. W. J. ASHFORD.

BLACK REDSTART IN HERTFORDSHIRE.

A BLACK REDSTART (*Phaniscus o. gibraltariensis*), a female or a male of the year, was feeding on the embankment of one of the reservoirs at Tring, on November 6th, 1915. At times the bird sought for food like a Robin on the sward which tops the embankment, but it fed mostly among the stones and made frequent little sallies into the air to snatch insects, rising sometimes five or six feet above the ground. Twice whilst I watched it, visits were paid to an adjacent orchard, but the bird was back again in a minute or two on the embankment, where it seemed to find the best hunting.

CHAS. OLDHAM.

CUCKOO'S METHOD OF OVIPOSITION.

ON June 26th, 1915, while out with a friend in a moorland valley near Delph, Yorkshire, we noticed a Cuckoo (*Cuculus c. canorus*) behaving in an unusual way. From time to time it would leave its perch on a tall tree and flap along towards a sloping bank about 80 yards away, where it attempted to alight. A pair of Meadow-Pipits (*Anthus pratensis*) mobbed it persistently on the ground, on one occasion striking it with such force as to make feathers fly. Two Swallows also

swooped repeatedly at it. Unable to alight, the Cuckoo would wheel round, and after gliding up and down the valley for some time, return to its perch in the tree. When at last it succeeded in alighting, it seemed to be struggling with something in the grass, and we fancied we could detect something in its bill, which it attempted to deposit at one spot, which was visited several times. The object was evidently accomplished at last after an unusually violent struggle, and after this the Cuckoo stayed away for some time. A hasty visit to the spot resulted in the discovery of a well-hidden nest of the Meadow-Pipit, with four eggs, which we did not stop to examine, as the Cuckoo returned, but after a few short flights it flew right away. On re-examination we found that three of the eggs were those of the Meadow-Pipit and were quite cold: the fourth was a Cuckoo's egg and was still warm. The nest was so placed that the egg could only have been inserted by the bill of the Cuckoo. We had the birds under observation from 5.45 to 6.30 p.m. and were struck by the easy gliding flight of the Cuckoo and the silence of the birds concerned: not a sound was uttered by either Cuckoo or Pipits during the whole time.

FRED TAYLOR.

[This account should be compared with Mr. A. H. Meiklejohn's account of a Cuckoo depositing its egg in a Robin's nest, in the *Zoologist*, 1900, p. 262.—EDS.]

THE GREATER SPOTTED EAGLE IN HEREFORDSHIRE.

On November 15th, 1915, a female Greater Spotted Eagle (*Aquila clanga* Pallas) in the immature spotted plumage as figured in Saunders's *Illustrated Manual of British Birds*, 2nd Edition, p. 325 (1899) was shot at Brinsop Court, Hereford, sent to the *Field* office by Mr. Hubert D. Astley, and subsequently forwarded to me in the flesh by Mr. J. E. Harting. Its large size indicated that it was a female and this conclusion was confirmed by an examination of the internal organs. The ovary was small and undeveloped, but the bird being still quite fresh the left oviduct was at once visible. The total length in the flesh was 28 inches, the expanse of the wings from tip to tip 66, the length of the wing 21, and the weight 4 lbs. 14 oz.

The occurrence of this fine Eagle in Britain is rare, only eleven examples having been previously recorded: nine in England, mostly in the southern counties, and two in co. Cork, Ireland.

W. R. OGILVIE-GRANT.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD IN BEDFORDSHIRE.

ON October 29th, 1915, an immature female Rough-legged Buzzard (*Buteo lagopus*) was caught in a stoat trap on the Woburn estate.

Rough-legged Buzzards are believed to have been seen here on several occasions in the last few years, but as this is fortunately the first that has been known to come to grief, certain identification was not possible. As this is an immature bird, it is probable that they are fairly regular visitors to this neighbourhood.

M. BEDFORD.

OSPREY IN CHESHIRE.

AN Osprey (*Pandion h. haliaëtus*) frequented Petty Pool, Sandiway, Cheshire, for a few days at the end of last month (September, 1915). The keeper tells me it stayed from the 24th to the 29th, and that he saw it fishing on several occasions. It was seen on the 25th by Mr. O. Wilkinson, and on the morning of the 29th I watched it for a considerable time flying about the pool, evidently with the object of fishing, from which, however, it was prevented by the unwelcome attentions of a pair of Carrion-Crows. As the bars on the tail were distinct, the bird was, apparently, immature. I visited the pool later in the day but did not see the bird again, nor can I learn of its having been seen since. It is interesting to note that of the few previous occurrences of this species in Cheshire, two have been at Petty Pool (*cf.* *Vert. Fauna of Cheshire*, Coward and Oldham).

J. MOORE.

TURTLE-DOVE USING NEST OF THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

ON May 19th, 1915, I discovered that a Turtle-Dove (*Streptopelia t. turtur*) at Edenbridge, Kent, had utilized last year's nest and was sitting on two eggs. As I visited the place some time in March and noticed the old nest in position, there can be no doubt that it had been merely patched up and used again.

H. H. FARWIG.

NEST OF GREY PHALAROPE.

WITH regard to the screening of the eggs by some waders, Mr. Heatley Noble told me that nests of the Grey Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) that he found in Iceland were not screened in any way. I also understood from Mr. Noble that these nests, which were made in an open situation, were

slightly made, more like the nest of the Ringed Plover, while as can be seen from the photograph reproduced on page 13 *antca*, the nests that I saw on the Yenesei were solidly built of grass.

MAUD D. HAVILAND.

BLACK-TAILED GODWITS IN SCOTLAND IN SUMMER.

WHILE in the north of Scotland (in the Moray area) in June, 1914, a friend told me that a pair of Godwits had established themselves on a loch not far from his house: that "they were there when I started trout-fishing" (presumably some time in April), but that during the week then just past, only one of the pair had been visible. Naturally I felt some slight doubts, but on reaching the place (on June 26th) the correctness of the report was verified. A single Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) in full summer-plumage was almost at once descried feeding in some boggy ground adjoining the loch. On being disturbed, after circling round at some distance, it presently flew right over where we stood—five of us—and so near that our host shouted to ask if he should shoot it. That, however, was quite unnecessary, since I could distinguish every detail as clearly as though the bird were in hand, and had previously seen these Godwits nesting in West Jutland—as related in the *Ibis*, 1894, p. 339. There the Godwits were distinctly clamorous, whereas in this instance, so far as I could hear, the bird kept silent. I spent the afternoon at the loch searching the boggy ground in the hope of finding the second Godwit, but only the one single bird showed up. Other matters, followed by the outbreak of war, prevented further attention being paid to the Godwits: hence whether they actually bred there and fledged their young remains unproven: but no Black-tailed Godwits returned to the loch during the spring of 1915

ABEL CHAPMAN.

UNUSUALLY LARGE CLUTCH OF MOOR-HEN'S EGGS.

ON May 22nd, 1915, I discovered on a small pond in Surrey the nest of a Moor-Hen (*Gallinula ch. chloropus*) containing eleven eggs, which would appear to be an unusually large clutch.

H. H. FARWIG.

[I have a good many records of nests with ten and eleven eggs, but nests with thirteen, nineteen, twenty-one and twenty-six eggs are on record, so that it is evident that they sometimes lay in one another's nests.—F.C.R.J.]

TREE-PIBIT, PIED FLYCATCHER AND LESSER WHITETHROAT IN IRELAND.—Professor C. J. Patten states (*Irish Nat.*, 1915, p. 208) that the following birds rare to Ireland have recently been taken at lighthouses, viz., a Tree-Pipit (*Anthus trivialis*) on September 9th, 1915, at the Tuskar (Wexford), a Pied Flycatcher (*Muscicapa hypoleuca*) on September 17th, and a Lesser Whitethroat (*Sylvia curruca*) on the 19th at the Maidens lighthouse (Antrim).

FIELDFARE IN SCOTLAND IN JUNE.—The Duchess of Bedford notes (*Scot. Nat.*, 1915, p. 263) that a Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*) was shot at Cairnsmore, Palmure, on June 10th, 1915—a late date.

ALPINE SWIFT IN WIGTOWNSHIRE.—The date on which the Alpine Swift was seen in Wigtownshire by G. Holmes is now given (*Scot. Nat.*, 1915, p. 308) as July 30th, and not early in August, as stated in our previous note (*antea*, p. 95).

BLUE EGG OF CUCKOO.—Mr. E. P. Butterfield, writing in the *Zoologist*, 1915, p. 357, states that in early July he found a blue egg of the Cuckoo (*Cuculus c. canorus*) together with three eggs of the Hedge-Sparrow near Bingley Wood, Wilsden, Yorkshire. The egg was apparently identified as a Cuckoo's by its shape, size and texture, but it would have been more satisfactory if the weight had also been ascertained. It is a remarkable fact that while this type is not very scarce in some parts of the Continent, it is of extremely rare occurrence in the British Isles. Mr. P. F. Bunyard has a blue egg from a Hedge-Sparrow's nest in his collection, the history of which seems to be satisfactory, but though some evidence has been adduced in other cases, it is usually defective or unreliable.—F.C.R.J.

INCREASE OF LITTLE OWL IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.—Mr. W. Daws considers (*Zool.* 1915, p. 395) that the Little Owl (*Athene n. noctua*) is increasing in the Mansfield district, as he has heard of a fairly large number being shot and three have been sent to him "recently, the last on August 28th." The Little Owl was only recently noted as a breeding bird in the county (*cf. antea*, Vol. VII., p. 55).

LAND-RAIL BREEDING ON ST. KILDA.—Mr. W. Eagle Clarke in announcing that the Land-Rail (*Crex crex*) bred on St. Kilda in 1915, states that so far as he knows, the bird has not been mentioned as occurring there for the last seventy-five years (*Scot. Nat.*, 1915, p. 333).



LETTERS

NOTES ON THE MOULTS AND SEQUENCE OF PLUMAGES IN SOME BRITISH DUCKS.

To the Editors of BRITISH BIRDS.

SIRS,—Mr. Smalley's important contribution to the above subject in the November number of *BRITISH BIRDS* (*antea*, p. 137-41) has deeply interested me. I am glad that on the whole Mr. Smalley agrees with my statements on the moults of the ducks, and I hope in the following remarks to dispose of our apparent differences over certain details, which I will discuss in the order mentioned by Mr. Smalley in his paper.

In the first place, the author points out my omission of any mention of an "intermediate" plumage in the adult male Shoveler and of the assumption of an eclipse plumage by the females of certain species of ducks. Firstly, with regard to the Shoveler, I have not had the opportunity of examining any males in full eclipse and am therefore not in a position to make any statement as to the "intermediate" plumage in the adult, but I am of opinion that in most cases an "intermediate" plumage is assumed by the juvenile male before a plumage resembling that of the adult is acquired, but this point requires further investigation. Absence of material must again be my plea in failing to recognise the assumption of an eclipse plumage by the females of certain species: in the collections at my disposal, females in full wing and body moult in late summer and autumn were practically absent. I am much interested to learn that an eclipse is assumed and only wish Mr. Smalley had given some details about this important discovery.

My remarks on the nestlings of the surface-feeding ducks have, I think, been interpreted too literally by Mr. Smalley. They were only intended in a general sense, nor did I mean to imply that the nestlings of the different species were indistinguishable. I only wished to point out that, in my opinion, the underlying type of colour-pattern scheme was the same throughout the group, the pattern being modified in the various species by the addition or omission of some spot or line or the replacing of one colour by another.

As to the colour of the central pair of tail-feathers in the eclipse plumage of the male Pintail described by me as mouse-grey, my description was taken from a specimen obtained in autumn, the tail-feathers of which did not appear to be abraded. Mr. Smalley, however, has had the opportunity of examining these tail-feathers when first grown in, and his description is therefore the correct one.

In conclusion I should like to point out that my paper was only intended as a preliminary account of the moults of the particular species

referred to; lack of important material rendered it inadvisable to go into greater detail. I hope, however, in the future this difficulty may be overcome and that I may be able to deal with this intensely interesting subject with the fullness and completeness that it deserves.

ANNIE C. JACKSON.

SWORDALE, ROSS-SHIRE, *November 9th, 1915.*

THE SANDWICH TERN IN IRELAND—A CORRECTION.

To the Editors of BRITISH BIRDS.

SIRS,—I have to thank both the penetration and the courtesy of Mr. Robert Warren for having drawn my attention to a mistaken statement in my obituary article on Mr. R. M. Barrington in the November issue, to the effect that Mr. Barrington discovered "a new Irish colony of the Sandwich Tern" (*antea*, pp. 135-6) during the present year. I now find on inquiry that this statement was founded on a misapprehension arising out of one of Mr. Barrington's visits to a colony already known to exist. Mr. Warren had justly concluded that he would not have been left in ignorance of such a discovery had it been really made.

C. B. MOFFAT.

ENNISCORTHY, *November 13th, 1915.*

SKY-LARK'S METHOD OF GATHERING FOOD FOR YOUNG.

To the Editors of BRITISH BIRDS.

SIRS,—In answer to Mr. W. J. Ashford's note in the November issue (p. 154), I should like to say that I have only once seen a Sky-Lark (*Alauda arvensis*) collecting insects and laying them in little heaps. This was on the occasion referred to in my "Wait and See" article (*antea*, p. 103). It took place by the mere in Holy Island, Northumberland, during May, 1915.

E. L. TURNER.

HAMPSTEAD, *November 20th, 1915.*



REVIEWS

Thirty-five Years in the New Forest. By the Hon. Gerald Lascelles. (Arnold.) Illustrated. 12s. 6d. net.

LOVERS of the New Forest will read this book with the greatest interest, and when they come to the end they will wish—at all events if they are naturalists—that Mr. Lascelles had told us more. As Deputy-Surveyor of the Forest for thirty-five years Mr. Lascelles was, of course, in the best possible position to know or find out most events of interest connected with the wild life of that charming country. We confess to a great disappointment in finding little or nothing about the natural history of the Forest except in so far as it is connected with forestry or sport. Thus, in describing the regulations which he drew up for the keepers, the author mentions that previously rare birds and birds of prey especially were killed and if possible sold. We are deeply grateful to Mr. Lascelles for having altered all this, but we should have expected some exact information as to the effect of his endeavours to protect and care for the wild life of the Forest. He must be in possession of much interesting information about the breeding of such birds as the Buzzard, Honey-Buzzard and Montagu's Harrier during the last thirty-five years, and it is hardly satisfying merely to be told that had it not been for previous laxity the Honey-Buzzard "might have continued to be a far more regular breeder in the Forest than I have found it to be."

In the chapter on Shooting we are given a little information about Blackgame, but this is very indefinite, no dates being given as to when they became rare or when the various introductions of fresh stock were made, while the statement "for the last few years, the days when one encountered a blackcock or greyhen were few" leaves one in doubt as to whether they still exist in the Forest or not.

The author's passion for the chase is evidenced throughout the book, and his love of Nature peeps out here and there, but unfortunately his pen lacks descriptive power and only occasionally gives expression to the real spirit of the Forest. Nevertheless, every one keenly interested in the Forest will enjoy reading Mr. Lascelles's account of his "reign" there.

H.F.W.



Alfred Dresser

BRITISH BIRDS

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ASSISTED BY

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HENRY EELES DRESSER.

(PLATE 2.)

By the death at Cannes on November 2nd, 1915, of Henry Eeles Dresser, at the age of seventy-seven years, the ornithological world has lost one of its best known and most distinguished members.

Mr. H. E. Dresser was born at Thirsk on May 9th, 1838, in the bank founded by his grandfather. His father commenced life in London as a Baltic timber merchant, and owing to this circumstance H. E. Dresser's career was so shaped as much to assist and encourage his natural bent towards ornithology. After attending school at Bromley, near London, he went to Ahrensburg, near Hamburg, in 1852, and two years later to Gelle and Upsala. He went in 1856 to St. Petersburg and on to Finland, where he entered a timber merchant's office, and in 1857 and 1858 travelled through Sweden, Finland, and round the Baltic. It was on this occasion that his fame as an ornithologist first arose, for while on this journey he discovered a breeding-place and took with his own hands the young and an egg of the Waxwing (*Ampelis garrulus*), an account of which is given by Newton in the *Ibis* for 1861, pp. 102-104, being probably to this day the only Englishman who has done so. In 1859 he went to New Brunswick to manage a timber estate, returning home in 1860. He travelled much in Sweden, Russia, Finland, and Prussia in the next two years, returning to New Brunswick in 1862: and in 1863 ran a cargo for the Confederate States to Texas, which latter venture was the source from which sprang his article in the *Ibis* for 1865 "On the Birds of Southern Texas."

From 1864 down to 1870, when he embarked in the "Iron Trade" and established his offices at 110, Cannon Street, he travelled extensively in Spain, on the Lower Danube and in Russia, Austria, Hungary, Italy and the Balkans. These extensive travels and his knowledge of

various languages were of immense help to him in prosecuting his studies in ornithology, and his visits to most of the larger museums and intercourse with many famous ornithologists were invaluable to him for his great work on the *Birds of Europe*. This monumental book, with which his name will be associated for all time, was planned in conjunction with the late Dr. Bowdler Sharpe, and the first numbers were issued in their joint names from 1871; but on the appointment of R. B. Sharpe to be an assistant at the British Museum he had to give up the collaboration. Mr. Dresser brought the colossal undertaking to a very successful conclusion by himself in 1881 and completed a supplement in 1896. The work forms nine large quarto volumes, with 722 plates. In producing the work, which was indeed a great undertaking, it should be mentioned that Dresser received much assistance from the late Lord Lilford as well as the late Marquis of Tweeddale and other friends.

One of the greatest services H. E. Dresser rendered to science was due to his knowledge of Russian and other languages, for it enabled him, by publishing translations, to render accessible to ornithologists several most important papers.

He published two highly-valued monographs on the Rollers and Bee-Eaters, and also a number of articles on birds and latterly on rare Palæartic eggs. His *Eggs of the Birds of Europe* (1905-1910) is a very real and valuable addition to zoological literature, and its best praise is to say that while it completes and rounds off his *Birds of Europe*, it outshines it in many details. His *Manual of the Birds of the Palæartic Region* is undoubtedly a very useful help to students, but it cannot compare either in quality or usefulness with the larger work.

He became a member of the British Ornithologists' Union in 1865 and was Secretary thereof from 1882-1888. He was a skilful taxidermist, and in fifty years of ornithological activity made most important collections both of birds and eggs, which, together with the bulk of his

scientific library, are deposited in the Museum of Owen's College, Manchester. He had been in bad health for some years and his ornithological activity practically ceased entirely with the completion of his egg book in 1910.

He leaves a wife and son and daughter to mourn his loss. The whole ornithological world must feel the poorer and deplore deeply the death of H. E. Dresser, who was always most friendly and ready to assist a very wide circle of ornithological friends, and whose contributions to the science had and always will have the most far-reaching effect on its trend and objects.

ROTHSCHILD.

SOME BIRDS NEW TO THE BRITISH LIST.

MOUSTACHED WARBLER IN SUSSEX.

ON April 12th, 1915, an example of the Moustached Warbler (*Luscinola m. melanopogon*) was shot at St. Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex. I examined it in the flesh the same day, and found it to be a male in rather worn condition. After skinning, I sent it up to Mr. H. F. Witherby, who kindly identified it for me, as there was some doubt about it.

H. W. FORD-LINDSAY.

As this and the other birds recorded here are new to the British list, I append a description or diagnosis of each, and Mr. J. B. Nichols, in whose collection all these birds now are, has very kindly provided photographs of some of the specimens.

DESCRIPTION.—*Adult male and female. Winter.*—Fore-head, crown and nape black, each feather fringed chestnut-brown; mantle and scapulars chestnut-brown streaked black; back, rump and upper tail-coverts uniform chestnut-brown; narrow stripe from nostrils, over and behind eye white; lores and under eye black, feathers tipped whitish; ear-coverts black-brown; sides of neck chestnut-brown; chin, throat, centre of belly, axillaries and under wing-coverts white; breast, sides, flanks and under tail-coverts chestnut-buff varying somewhat in intensity (upper breast with varying number of narrow brown streaks); tail-feathers black-brown fringed chestnut-brown; primaries black-brown narrowly fringed on inner webs whitish and on outer pale brown; secondaries same but with more chestnut-brown fringes to outer webs; primary-coverts as primaries; greater and median coverts as secondaries; lesser coverts uniform brownish-black. This plumage is acquired by complete moult in early autumn. *Summer.*—The body-feathers are moulted Feb.-Mar., but not wings and tail. New plumage as winter. Abrasion makes crown more uniform black, mantle more clearly streaked and under-parts whiter, breast becoming white as throat and belly and faint streaks wearing completely away.

Nestling.—(Not examined.) *Juvenile.*—Like adult, but brown of upper-parts more tawny, less deep chestnut.

First winter.—Like adult. The juvenile body-plumage is moulted June-August but not wing- or tail-feathers.

Measurements and structure.—♂ wing 53-62 mm., tail 48-55, tarsus 19-22, bill from skull 12-14 (12 measured). ♀ wing 52-59. Primaries: 1st 5-8 mm. longer than longest primary-covert, 4th and 5th longest, 3rd sometimes as long but usually 1-2 mm. shorter, 6th 1-3 shorter, 7th 3-5 shorter,

2nd usually equal to 8th, occasionally as long as 7th or as short as 9th; 3rd to 5th emarginated outer webs. Bill line and compressed. Two or three short rictal bristles but no nasal bristles. Nostrils uncovered. Tail much rounded, two central pairs being longest and rest graduated, outermost 9-11 mm. shorter than central pair.

CHARACTERS AND ALLIED FORMS.—*L. m. mimica* (west Turkestan, Persia) is larger and considerably paler brown on upper-parts and whiter on under-parts. Superficially



MOUSTACHED WARBLER (*Lusciola m. melanopygion*).

Shot at St. Leonards-on-Sea on April 12th, 1915.

somewhat resembles Sedge-Warbler but crown is blacker, upper-parts more chestnut, eye-stripe whiter, under-parts more rufous-buff not so yellowish, bill is more compressed not so flat and wide, first primary is much larger and wing much rounder, tail-feathers more graduated.

H. F. WITHERBY.

OLIVACEOUS WARBLER IN SUSSEX.

Mr. G. Bristow, of St. Leonards, brought me in the flesh a Warbler which proved on examination to be the Olivaceous Warbler (*Hypolais p. pallida*). It was shot on May 20th, 1915, close to Holmhurst, on the outskirts of Hastings and St. Leonards. I am informed that on dissection it proved to be a male.

THOMAS PARKIN.

DESCRIPTION.—*Adult male and female. Winter.*—Whole upper-parts uniform pale brown; narrow stripe from base of bill and over eye creamy-white; ear-coverts and sides of neck very pale brown; whole under-parts including axillaries and under tail-coverts creamy-white, sides of breast and flanks tinged very pale brown; tail-feathers dark brown, inner webs very narrowly margined creamy-white and outer webs of outermost pair pale dusky (sometimes whitish); primaries and secondaries dark brown with inner webs



OLIVACEOUS WARBLER (*Hypolais p. pallida*).
Shot near St. Leonards-on-Sea on May 20th, 1915.

narrowly fringed white and outer webs fringed pale brown; all wing-coverts dark brown fringed and tipped pale brown as rest of upper-parts. This plumage is acquired by complete moult in July-Oct. *Summer.*—A complete moult (including wings and tail) takes place Jan.-March. New plumage as winter.

Nestling.—(Not examined.) *Juvenile.*—Like adult and only distinguishable by looser structure of feathers.

First winter.—Like adult. The juvenile body-plumage, median and lesser wing-coverts and innermost secondaries are moulted July-Oct. but not rest of wings or tail.

Measurements and structure.—♂ wing 64-68 mm., tail 50-55,

tarsus 20-23, bill from skull 12.5-14, width at base 4.75-6 (12 measured). ♀ wing 64-65. Primaries: 1st 3-7 mm. longer than longest primary-covert, 3rd and 4th about equal and longest, 5th sometimes equal but usually 1-2 mm. shorter, 6th 2-5 shorter, 7th 5-8 shorter. 2nd somewhat variable usually equal to 6th, sometimes between 5th and 6th or 6th and 7th, very rarely between 7th and 8th; 3rd to 5th emarginated on outer webs. Secondaries rather shorter than 10th primary, tips rounded. Bill broad and flat at base, somewhat pronounced ridge to culmen. A few rather stiff rictal and nasal bristles. Most of nostril bare of feathers. Tail fairly square, tips of feathers rounded.

Soft parts.—Bill dark brown, lower mandible flesh; legs and feet grey-brown; iris dark brown.

CHARACTERS AND ALLIED FORMS.—*H. p. opaca* (Spain, north-west Africa) has a considerably larger bill and is usually slightly more tinged with olive on the upper-parts. *H. p. reiseri* (southern Algeria) has a small bill and is considerably paler on upper-parts. *H. rama* is much like but has longer 1st primary and 2nd primary is shorter than 7th.

H. F. WITHERBY.

NORTH AFRICAN BLACK WHEATEAR IN SUSSEX.

A male Black Wheatear was brought to me in the flesh for



TAILS OF TWO MALE BLACK WHEATEARS.

Left hand—*Enanthe l. leucura*, Rye, Sept. 2nd, 1909.

Right hand—*Enanthe l. sycnctica*, Pevensy Sluice, June 7th, 1915.

examination by Mr. G. Bristow. The bird had been shot on June 7th, 1915, at Pevensy Sluice, Sussex. Mr. Witherby,

who has examined it, informs me that it is an example of the North African form (*Enanthe leucura syenitica*).

THOMAS PARKIN.

This bird, which Mr. J. B. Nichols has kindly lent me for examination, is a very typical example of the North African race of Black Wheatear (*Enanthe leucura syenitica* (Heuglin)). On comparison with the male of the two first British specimens, which were typical European birds (*E. l. leucura*), the differences are very marked. The North African bird is very decidedly more brownish-black, and the difference in the tips of the tail-feathers of the two birds is clearly shown in the accompanying reproduction of a photograph. It will be noted that in the European bird the black tips of the tail-feathers are narrower (and in this specimen are divided with white, though this is not always so), while in the North African form they are broader and unbroken.

In the females of the two forms the difference in coloration is better marked than in the males.

H. F. WITHERBY.

CAPE VERDE LITTLE SHEARWATER IN SUSSEX.

A female Little Shearwater was picked up at Pevensy, Sussex, on December 4th, 1914.

Another Little Shearwater (also a female on dissection) was caught at West St. Leonards, Sussex, on January 2nd, 1915, and kept alive for two days. Both birds were examined in the flesh at the time by Mr. H. W. Ford-Lindsay. Subsequently they came into my possession, and noticing that they were different to other Little Shearwaters in my collection, I sent them to Mr. Witherby for examination, and he pronounces them to be of the form inhabiting the Cape Verde Islands (*Puffinus assimilis boydi*).

J. B. NICHOLS.

Since the publication of our *Hand-List*, Mr. G. M. Mathews has shown (*Birds of Australia*, Vol. II., Part 1, pp. 63 and 70) that the Little Shearwater inhabiting the Cape Verde Islands is distinct from that inhabiting the other East Atlantic Islands and has named it *Puffinus lherminieri boydi* after the late Boyd Alexander, who obtained a series of specimens in the Cape Verde Islands and noted that they were different.

This being so, it would be better perhaps to alter the English name of *Puffinus assimilis godmani*, which has hitherto been called the Little Dusky Shearwater, to the Madeiran Little Shearwater, and to call the new bird the Cape Verde Little Shearwater.

With regard to the specific name of the latter, Mr. Mathews refers it to *P. thersinieri*, the forms of which, he states, differ from *P. assimilis* as a general rule by their dark under tail-coverts, dark inner webs of the primaries, distinct brownish hue of their upper-parts, usually longer wing and heavier bill. We, however, consider that these Little Shearwaters are geographical forms of one species and therefore call the bird in question *Puffinus assimilis boydi*. It can at once be distinguished from *P. assimilis godmani* by its under tail-coverts, all the longer feathers of which are blackish-brown with small whitish tips, instead of white with black or blackish outer webs as in *P. a. godmani*. The upper-parts are also distinctly more brownish and not so blue-black as in *P. a. godmani*. The inner webs of the primaries are also more dusky and not so white as in *P. a. godmani*, but this character varies somewhat in both birds. A small distinguishing character which should be noted is that in *P. a. boydi* the black-brown of the upper-parts extends over the lores, whereas in *P. a. godmani* the white of the under-parts extends more towards the crown in the loreal region.

In measurements, however, there is not much difference between the two birds, the following being the minimum and maximum measurements in millimetres of six males and six females of each.

		Wing.	Tail	Tarsus.	Middle toe and claw.	Bill from feathers.
<i>P. a. godmani</i>	♂	175-188	71-81	36-39	39-42.5	26-28
	♀	175-184	70-82	36-38	39-41	24-26.5
<i>P. a. boydi</i>	♂	180-190	73-86	36-39	40-45	24-26
	♀	181-191	75-83	35-39	39-42	25-29
Pevensy, Dec.						
4, 1914	♀	189	75	35	42	29
St. Leonards.						
Jan. 2, 1915...	♀	191	78	35	39	26

The two birds recorded above by Mr. J. B. Nichols have been carefully compared by Dr. Hartert and myself and they are typical examples of *P. a. boydi*. Mr. G. M. Mathews and Mr. T. Iredale, who have also kindly examined them, are in agreement with this opinion.

As the Cape Verde bird has only recently been differentiated it becomes necessary to see whether the previously recorded British examples of the Little Dusky Shearwater belong to this form or to the Madeiran and Canary Island form (*i.e.*

P. a. godmani). Mr. Nichols has kindly lent me for comparison the following:—male Lydd, Nov. 27, 1905, female St. Leonards, Oct. 27, 1911, male Pevensy Sluice, Nov. 15, 1911, and these are all typical *P. a. godmani*, as well as a specimen obtained at Lydd on December 27, 1913, and not hitherto recorded.

The one obtained in Ireland on May 6, 1853, and the one found dead near Bungay, Suffolk, in April, 1858, should be re-examined, but both appear to have been *P. a. godmani*, since Howard Saunders examined them and in his description of the species (*Manual*, 2nd ed., p. 744) he states that the under tail-coverts are pure white, the white extending over the lower part of the lores, the outer portion of the inner webs of the primaries white—all distinguishing characters of *P. a. godmani*.

The bird obtained near Bexhill on December 28th, 1900, was compared by Mr. W. R. Butterfield with Cape Verde examples (*Bull. B.O.C.* XI., p. 45) and stated to be like them, but at that time the differences of the Cape Verde bird were not understood, and as Mr. Butterfield gives no description it is impossible to say to which form this bird belonged.

The Little Shearwater found in the West Indies (*P. assimilis lherminieri*=*P. auduboni*, see Mathews, *Birds of Australia*, Vol. II., part I., pp. 69-70) is much like *P. a. boydi*, but is usually browner on the upper-parts and is larger, measuring: wing 200-206 mm., tail 88-94, tarsus 39-41, bill 29-30; the bill is also considerably stouter. An undoubted example of this form in the British Museum collection has on the label in Gould's writing (it was formerly in his collection) "said to have been killed in Devonshire, Mr. Whitely." Mr. Mathews (*Birds of Australia*, Vol. II, p. 59) takes me to task for not mentioning this in a note in *British Birds* (Vol. V., p. 253), but this record had already been disposed of by Howard Saunders (*Manual*, 2nd ed., p. 744) where it is correctly stated in reference to this specimen that "there is no confirmatory evidence, and Gould did not so much as allude to the supposed occurrence of the species in his 'Birds of Great Britain.'"

H. F. WITHERBY.

NORTH ATLANTIC GREAT SHEARWATER IN SUSSEX.

A Great Shearwater was washed ashore at Bulverhythe, West St. Leonards, Sussex, on March 14th, 1914, and was recorded by Mr. H. W. Ford-Lindsay as a male *Puffinus gravis* (see *Brit. Birds*, Vol. VII., p. 324). Directly I received

it I thought it must be some form of *Puffinus kuhlii*, and therefore submitted it to Mr. Witherby for examination with the result that it has proved to be an example of *Puffinus kuhlii borealis*.

J. B. NICHOLS.

The bird recorded above by Mr. J. B. Nichols has been carefully examined by Dr. Hartert and myself and we find that it is undoubtedly the same as the form of *Puffinus kuhlii* inhabiting the Canary Islands, Salvages, Madeira and Azores. As compared to the Mediterranean Great Shearwater (*Puffinus kuhlii kuhlii*) this bird has a much larger and more robust bill, and the white on the inner webs of the outer primaries does not extend beyond the under wing-coverts as in *P. k. kuhlii*, though this latter character is not quite invariable.

The North Atlantic form has, since 1905, when Dr. Hartert called attention to its differences, been called *P. k. flavirostris* Gould, but Mr. D. A. Bannerman has recently pointed out (*Bull. B.O.C.*, XXXV., pp. 118-121) that Gould's type was obtained south of the Cape of Good Hope and he found that birds from Kerguelen-land, which he considered typical *flavirostris*, differed from the North Atlantic bird in the size and shape of the bill and length of wing. So far as the character of the bill is concerned, we think Mr. Bannerman is right, as in the few specimens of typical *P. k. flavirostris* available it is distinctly more decurved along the culmen and more slender than in the North Atlantic form, which always has a very robust bill with the ridge of the culmen comparatively straight. The wing measurements, however, do not appear to differ much. As has been pointed out by Mr. Bannerman, and previously by Dr. Hartert, it is important in this Shearwater to compare males with males and females with females, as the males are larger, especially in the bill.

Mr. Bannerman named the bird breeding in the North Atlantic Islands *Puffinus kuhlii fortunatus*, but in Dr. Hartert's opinion it cannot be differentiated from the Great Shearwater which occurs off the coast of Eastern North America from August to November, but whose breeding-place is not known. This bird was named *Puffinus borealis* by Cory, in 1881. I have very carefully compared all the specimens in the British Museum collection and in my opinion Dr. Hartert's contention is perfectly justified, as the American birds appear to be exactly similar to those breeding in the Canary Islands, Madeira and Azores. There can be little doubt that they (or some of them) migrate to American shores as winter visitors. The name, therefore, of the form breeding in the

North Atlantic islands and of the specimen under discussion must be *Puffinus kuhlii borealis*.

It is interesting to note that the Cape Verde Islands are inhabited by a very small form of this Shearwater—considerably smaller even than the Mediterranean form.

The following are measurements of the various forms of *Puffinus kuhlii*.

		Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Bill from feathers.
<i>Puffinus kuhlii kuhlii</i> (Mediterranean)	♂	335-361		56-57	51-55
	♀	335-358*	♂♀ 126-140	50-53	45-51
<i>P. k. borealis</i> (Atlantic Islands)	♂	337-374	136-143	56-58.5	53-57
	♀	344-367	136-143	51-54.5	50-57
<i>P. k. borealis</i> (only 2 ♂) (American coasts) (St. Leonards, March 14, 1914)..	♂	360-378	135	57	56-59
	♀	355-360	130-137	52-54	51-55
<i>P. k. flavirostris</i> (Kerguelen. Sex un- certain (2 specimens)		345-350	139-140	54-59	50-51
<i>P. k. edwardsi</i> (Cape Verde)	♂	308-315	122-123	46-47	43-44
	♀	295	122	46	42

It should be noted that when exhibiting at the British Ornithologists' Club the Mediterranean Great Shearwater obtained at Pevensey on February 21st, 1906, Mr. W. R. Butterfield clearly differentiated between this and the Atlantic form so that there is no doubt that this bird was an example of *Puffinus kuhlii kuhlii* (see *Bull. B.O.C.*, XVI. p. 71).

H. F. WITHERBY.

GREY-RUMPED SANDPIPER IN SUSSEX.

Towards the middle of September, 1914, a couple of Grey-rumped Sandpipers (*Tringa incana brevipes*) were observed at Rye Harbour, Sussex. Both birds were eventually shot, the first, a male, on September 23rd and the second, a female, on September 27th. They were shown me whilst in the flesh.

H. W. FORD-LINDSAY.

DESCRIPTION.—*Adult male and female.* *Winter.*—Fore-head and extending in a rather narrow line above lores and over eye white; rest of upper-parts uniform ashy-grey, feathers with very narrow indistinct pale edges which are much more distinct on upper tail-coverts; lores dark greyish-brown;

* Probably wrongly sexed, caught on nest but probably ♂.

sides of head and ear-coverts whitish, streaked dark brown; under-parts white but upper-breast pale ashy-grey and sides and flanks darker ashy-grey; axillaries and under wing-coverts dark ashy-grey tipped white; tail-feathers uniform ashy-grey with narrow white borders; primaries blackish on outer webs paler on inner webs; secondaries ashy-grey with whitish bases; primary-coverts blackish with white tips becoming wider on inner feathers; greater coverts ashy-grey tipped white; median and lesser coverts uniform ashy-grey. This plumage is acquired by complete moult from July to Nov. and sometimes not complete in Dec. Upper-parts become rather browner and pale tips of feathers less marked as plumage becomes worn. *Summer*.—The body-plumage, most wing-coverts, inner secondaries and tail moult in Feb.-May. New plumage of upper-parts is much as winter but not so uniform, whitish tips of feathers being more marked on fore-part of crown, mantle, scapulars and wing-coverts, while upper tail-coverts have usually two parallel white bars at tip; sides of head and neck and base of throat thickly streaked, and breast, sides and flanks thickly barred with ashy-black; chin, centre of throat, lower breast, belly and under tail-coverts white (latter often with a few bars).

Nestling.—(Not examined.)

Juvenile.—Like adult winter but feathers of mantle, scapulars, back, upper tail-coverts, wing-coverts, inner secondaries and tail-feathers with spots of whitish at their tips; ashy of breast with a somewhat freckled appearance and flanks with indefinite bars.

First winter.—Much like adult but distinguished by whitish borders to median and some lesser wing-coverts and some scapulars and inner secondaries and remains of whitish notches on tail-feathers. *First summer*.—After moult which is as in adult appears to be indistinguishable from adult.

Measurements.—♂ wing 154-165 mm., tail 67-76, tarsus 32-35, bill from feathers on culmen to tip 36-40, from feathers on culmen to end of nasal groove 18-21.

Soft parts.—Bill blackish-brown, yellowish at base of lower mandible; legs and feet yellow tinged greenish; iris dark brown.

CHARACTERS.—*T. i. incana* (America) is rather larger and nasal groove extends further towards tip of bill: coloration in winter similar but breast darker ashy, in summer under-parts much more closely barred, including under tail-coverts. In general coloration *T. i. brevipes* much resembles Knot in winter plumage but that species has rump and upper tail-coverts white with black bars.

H. F. WITHERBY.

These new British species and subspecies should be added to the *Hand-List* as follows:—

LUSCINIOLA MELANOPOGON

130a. *Lusciniola melanopogon melanopogon* (Temm.).— THE MOUSTACHED WARBLER.

SYLVIA MELANOPOGON Temminck, Pl. Col. 245, fig. 2 (1823—*Campagna* near Rome).

Lusciniola m. melanopogon, H. W. Ford-Lindsay, Brit. B., IX., p. 197.

DISTRIBUTION.—*England*.—One. Male, St. Leonards-on-Sea (Sussex), April 12th, 1915 (*ut supra*).

DISTRIBUTION.—*Abroad*.—Breeds in south-east Spain, Italy, Sicily, and Hungary, probably in Dalmatia and Bosnia and perhaps in south France and Egypt. Hungarian birds winter in Greece. From Kirghiz Steppes and west Turkestan east to Persia replaced by an allied race, wintering in India.

HYPOLAIS PALLIDA

142a. *Hypolais pallida pallida* (Hempr. & Ehr.)—THE OLIVACEOUS WARBLER.

CURRUCIA PALLIDA Hemprich and Ehrenberg, *Symbolæ Physicæ* fol. bb (1833—On the Nile in Egypt and Nubia).

Hypolais p. pallida T. Parkin, Brit. B., IX., p. 198.

DISTRIBUTION.—*England*.—One. Male, near St. Leonards-on-Sea (Sussex), May 20th, 1915 (*ut supra*).

DISTRIBUTION.—*Abroad*.—Breeds in Balkan Peninsula from Dalmatia, Montenegro, and Bulgaria southwards; also in Greek Islands, Asia Minor, Cyprus, Crete, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Transcaucasia, Turkestan, Persia and Transcaspia, as well as Egypt and Nubia. Winters in Arabia and north-east Africa south to British East Africa.

174a. *Œnanthe leucura syenitica* (Heugl.)—THE NORTH AFRICAN BLACK WHEATEAR.

SANICOLA SYENITICA Heuglin, *Journ. f. Orn.*, 1869, p. 155 (El-Kab in Upper Egypt. Type examined by Hartert).

Œnanthe leucura syenitica, T. Parkin, Brit. B., IX., p. 200.

DISTRIBUTION.—*England*.—One. Male, Pevensey Sluice (Sussex), June 7th, 1915 (*ut supra*).

DISTRIBUTION.—*Abroad*.—Marocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Tripoli, chiefly south of Atlas, but in places nearly to Mediterranean. Only the type known from Egypt, so far.

324a. *Puffinus assimilis boydi* Math.—THE CAPE VERDE LITTLE SHEARWATER.

PUFFINUS LHERMINIERI BOYDI Mathews, B. Australia, II., p. 70. (1912—Cape Verde Islands).

Puffinus assimilis boydi, J. B. Nichols, Brit. B., IX., p. 201.

DISTRIBUTION.—*England*.—Two. Female picked up Pevensey (Sussex), Dec. 4th, 1914. Female caught West St. Leonards (Sussex), Jan. 2nd, 1915 (*ut supra*).

DISTRIBUTION.—*Abroad*.—Known only from the Cape Verde Islands.

326a. *Puffinus kuhlii borealis* Cory—THE NORTH ATLANTIC GREAT SHEARWATER.

PUFFINUS BOREALIS Cory, Bull. Nuttall Orn. Club, VI., p. 84 (1881—"Near Chatham Island, Cape Cod, Massachusetts").

Puffinus kuhlii fortunatus Bannerman, Bull. Brit. Orn. Club, XXXV., p. 120 (1915—Type, Canary Islands).

Puffinus kuhlii borealis, J. B. Nichols, Brit. B., IX., p. 203.

DISTRIBUTION.—*England*.—One. Male picked up West St. Leonards (Sussex), March 14th, 1914 (*ut supra*).

DISTRIBUTION.—*Abroad*.—Nesting Azores, Islands of Madeira group, Salvages, Canary Islands. Has occurred on coast of Portugal and is not rare in autumn (August-November) on coasts of Massachusetts, Rhode and Long Islands in North America.

TRINGA INCANA

397a. *Tringa incana brevipes* (Vieill.)—GREY-RUMPED SANDPIPER.

TOTANUS BREVIPES Vieillot, Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat., VI., p. 410 (1816—"Locality unknown." Type collected in Timor by Maugé, according to Pucheran, Rev. & Mag. Zool., 1851, p. 570).

Tringa incana brevipes, H. W. Ford-Lindsay, Brit. B., IX., p. 205.

DISTRIBUTION.—*England*.—Two. Male and female, Rye Harbour (Sussex), Sept. 23rd and 27th, 1914 (*ut supra*).

DISTRIBUTION.—*Abroad*.—Probably breeds in eastern Siberia and Kamtschatka, ranging through Sakhalien, Kuriles, Japan, China, Riu-Kiu isles, Malay Archipelago to New Guinea and Australia. Replaced in America by an allied race, wintering in Mexico and Oceania.

AUTHORS OF THE HAND-LIST.



NOTES

WHITE-WINGED LARK IN SUSSEX.

ON November 3rd, 1915, I saw, near Rye, a White-winged Lark (*Melanocorypha sibirica*) in winter-plumage, apparently a male. It was feeding in company with some Skylarks and I had the bird under close observation for twenty minutes. I was able to watch it from a distance of not more than six yards, and had an excellent view of it both flying and on the ground. The chestnut tint on the crown, the lesser wing-coverts and tail, white wing-bar and white under wing-coverts were very distinctive. The back was tawny-brown, the centres of the feathers being of a darker shade, the throat and breast were tinged with buff and there were indistinct rufous-brown spots on the throat, gorget and flanks. The rest of the under-parts were white. The bill was short, stout, and horn-coloured; the legs were yellowish-brown.

M. L. KLEINWORT.

[We congratulate Miss Kleinwort on her accurate and detailed description of the bird. This is the seventh example of the White-winged Lark recorded for the British Islands, all in Sussex and Kent.—EDS.]

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER BREEDING IN NESTING-BOX.

DURING the spring of 1914, the entrance holes of three Berlepsch nesting-boxes, suitable for Tits, were enlarged by Woodpeckers. These boxes were placed in a wood adjoining Epping Forest. On April 26th, 1914, I noticed a Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dryobates m. anglicus*) sitting in one of the boxes and was in hopes that the bird would nest there. However, soon after this, I found, to my disappointment, that the box had been interfered with, the lid having been swung round on one screw, leaving the nesting-hole completely uncovered. I abandoned all hope of the Woodpecker nesting in the box, which was left with the lid in the position just described. On June 9th, 1914, I happened to be carrying a ladder past the box, when it occurred to me to examine it, and on doing so I was very surprised to find a young Great Spotted Woodpecker fully fledged.

In the review of *How to Attract and Protect Wild Birds*, by Martin Heisemann, in *British Birds*, Vol. II., p. 172,

is the following statement: "We have never heard of Woodpeckers nesting in boxes in England as they do in Germany." Still further, a well-known naturalist who has had an extensive experience with nesting-boxes, stated in my presence this year that he had never heard of a Woodpecker nesting in a box in this country. In view of these statements it would be of interest to know what other records there are of this nature.

WILLIAM E. GLEGG.

STATUS OF LITTLE OWL IN WILTSHIRE.

THE first record of the Little Owl (*Athene n. noctua*) in Wiltshire in recent years was of one shot near Avebury, in November, 1907 (*Marlborough College Nat. Hist. Report*). No more were recorded till January 8th, 1910, when a pair was shot on the Hampworth Estate in south-east Wiltshire (*Brit. B.*, III., p. 375). On December 16th, 1911, Dr. H. P. Blackmore wrote that five had been killed during the previous six weeks within eighteen miles of Salisbury, and about the same time Dr. Hinton wrote that he had seen it near Imber. Four were obtained at Totterdown (near Marlborough) during 1911 and 1912 (*Marlborough College Nat. Hist. Report*). Mr. M. Vaughan saw it at Milton in 1913; and one of the keepers at Whiteparish saw one or two during that year. During the present year (1915) it has been seen by the keepers at West Woods (near Marlborough), by the keeper at Lydiard Millicent on October 14th, and Dr. Penrose tells me that he knew personally of three pairs *nesting* in the parish of Downton. Dr. Penrose's keeper thinks that it is supplanting the Barn-Owl, as one pair has got possession of a nesting-hole for many years occupied by a pair of these birds; and I have known of a similar case near Cambridge.

It will be noticed that all the above records are from the eastern half of the county, and that the bird is more firmly established in south than north Wiltshire. It is to be hoped that other notes on the distribution of this species will be forthcoming.

G. BATHURST HOXY.

DARK-BREADED BARN-OWL IN BERKSHIRE.

ON November 21st, 1915, a specimen of the Central European Barn-Owl (*Flammca flammea guttata*, *Brit. Ornith. Union List*, p. 128, *Tyto alba guttata*, *Hand-List of British Birds*, p. 109), was brought to Reading Museum in the flesh by Mr. Leigh, who had obtained it at Coley Park Farm, Reading. Though slightly lighter in colour than the typical German

bird, it is very much darker than a normal British Barn-Owl. The nape, crown and primaries are rich buff interfused with grey. The grey of the mantle is deeper and more extensive than in a British bird, and the white of the discs about the eyes is dusky, deepening to a brown ring around each eye. The entire under-surface is flushed with buff, extending beneath the wings, and there, as well as upon the breast, are the spots from which this species takes its name. The front of each thigh is washed with buff but unspotted. The mandible is horn-coloured, not white as in our home bird. Although the local taxidermist tells me he has not before handled so dark a bird, yet the five locally-killed Barn-Owls, which happened (sad to say) to be in his hands at the moment, presented an almost perfect gradation from the "White Owl," through an equally white form *with spotted breast*, and others with still more spots upon faintly, or more heavily-buffed undersides, to the bird I am recording.

H. M. WALLIS.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARDS IN NORFOLK.

THE Rough-legged Buzzard (*Buteo l. lagopus*) recorded by the Duchess of Bedford (*antea*, p. 187), was evidently not without companions, for during October and November, 1915, several have turned up in Norfolk and the north of Suffolk.

This is no longer a usual event in this part of England, for large birds of prey have certainly become less numerous since the Norwegian Government extended the practice of keeping them down by head-money. But from time to time, when October and November come round, a certain number of Buzzards still cross the sea.

On the present occasion the first announcement of Buzzards was on September 27th, when two were viewed by Mr. J. Vincent migrating in a high wind (north at 11 a.m., force 4, sea rough) at about three miles from the coast.

The next was on October 14th, reported by Mr. F. T. Roberts, and between that date and December 7th, twelve more were either seen by observers, or killed by gamekeepers. All of them were single birds, and with one exception they had not penetrated far inland.

We seem to have a visitation of Rough-legged Buzzards to the east of England every ten or twelve years. The last occasions on which they were rather abundant in Norfolk were in 1880, 1891, and 1910. Of these three migrations, that of 1880, if it had been fully recorded, would have been found to be the biggest.

J. H. GURNEY.

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE IN YORKSHIRE.

IT may be of interest to record that I saw a White-tailed Eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) on the Cleveland Hills between Kildale and Great Ayton, on December 1st, 1915. My brother and I watched it for some time being mobbed by Hooded Crows.

P. M. HORSFALL.

MADEIRAN LITTLE SHEARWATER IN KENT.

A FEMALE example of *Puffinus assimilis godmani* was shot at Jury's Gap, Lydd, Kent, on December 27th, 1913, and was examined by Mr. H. W. Ford-Lindsay. I have omitted to record this specimen, which came into my possession some time ago.

J. B. NICHOLS.

KILLDEER PLOVERS IN SUSSEX.

ON November 12th, 1915, three Killdeer Plovers (*Charadrius vociferus*) were observed on the marshes at Winchelsea. Two were obtained the same day, and proved to be male and female. I examined them in the flesh and found them to be in very good condition. It is interesting to note that although there are some very large flocks of Green Plover on these marshes at the present time, the Killdeer were not associating with them.

I heard of the third bird being seen to-day (November 16th), when it was quite alone, and being very wild, has so far escaped the guns of the "lookers." H. W. FORD-LINDSAY.

ASIATIC GOLDEN PLOVERS IN KENT.

ON September 20th, 1915, I examined three specimens of Golden Plover that had just been shot on Romney Marsh, and found they belonged to the Asiatic species *Charadrius d. fulvus*. They proved to be one male and two females. The man who shot them stated that he had shot more and eaten them, and offered to send any wings still in the dust-hole. Four wings arrived, which left no doubt that these birds were also of the same species. I am sending one for examination.

H. W. FORD-LINDSAY.

[The wing is undoubtedly that of an Eastern Golden Plover; it measures only 165 mm.—H.F.W.]

REEVE IN STAFFORDSHIRE.

ON October 30th, 1915, an adult Reeve (*Machetus pugnax*) was shot on the Sewage Farm, Leek, Staffordshire, by Mr. T. Whittles, and is being preserved for the collection of Sir Vauncey Harpur Crewe, Bart. For former records of this species in Staffordshire see *British Birds*, Vol. VII., p. 261.

J. R. B. MASEFIELD.

GREATER YELLOWSHANK IN SUSSEX.

A SPECIMEN of the Greater Yellowshank (*Tringa melanoleuca*) was shot at Winchelsea, Sussex, on October 4th, 1915, and examined by me in the flesh the next day. It proved to be a female, and was in full plumage, the ashy-brown extending to the lower-back and rump. H. W. FORD-LINDSAY.

REDSHANK'S NEST WITH EIGHT EGGS.

ON May 9th, 1915, in company with two others, I visited a marsh on the Cumberland side of the Solway. This marsh is the breeding-haunt of a number of Redshanks (*Tringa totanus*). The first nest we found was a Redshank's containing eight eggs. Four of these eggs had undoubtedly been laid by one bird, and the other four by another. The nest, which was rather large and flat, was in no way concealed. When we were approaching the nest three of these birds rose and kept flying round us all the time we were in the vicinity. Is it possible that in this case there were two females and only one male? WILLIAM J. ANDREWS.

BROODING-SPOTS OF THE BLACK-HEADED GULL.

THE accompanying photograph is of one of three Black-headed Gulls (*Larus r. ridibundus*) which I examined during



the breeding-season 1915. Two were males, the other a female. The sex was proved by dissection. The males

were the larger birds, but as the following measurements will show, their brooding-spots were somewhat smaller in superficial area.

		<i>Two upper spots.</i>	<i>Lower spot.</i>
Female	...	2 × 1 inch.	2 × 1½ inch.
Male	...	2 × 1 inch.	1 × 1 inch.
Male	...	1¾ × 1 inch.	1½ × 1⅛ inch.

F. B. KIRKMAN.

MEDITERRANEAN BLACK-HEADED GULL IN SUSSEX.

On November 11th, 1915, when watching some ladies feeding a large flock of Black-headed Gulls from the parade at White Rock, Hastings, I noticed amongst the Gulls an example of the Mediterranean Black-headed Gull (*Larus melanocephalus*). The breast of the bird was of a very light pinkish-russet colour, and in great contrast to the pure white breasts of *L. ridibundus*. The quills were white, the first only externally margined with black, and what remained of the hood seemed of a more pronounced shade of colour than in the common Black-headed Gulls. These latter birds, as is the case with them in London, are wonderfully tame, and are a great delight to our winter visitors. I am glad to say that no shooting is allowed along the front at Hastings and St. Leonards, so that I hope this bird may be allowed to remain unmolested and not meet with the fate that unfortunately happens to any rare birds which visit this neighbourhood. There is nothing, I think, extraordinary in the appearance of this bird here, as in July last a party of six or seven of this species visited Rye and several were shot (*cf.* Vol. IX., p. 69).

THOMAS PARKIN.

THE BIRDS OF RENFREWSHIRE.—A very useful series of articles is contributed by Messrs. J. Robertson and T. Thornton Mackeith on this subject to the *Scottish Naturalist* (1915, pp. 124-7, 244-50, 268-75). The authors give a brief account of the status of each species in narrative form, but authorities for the statements are seldom quoted, so that it is difficult to say what is new in their list. We note the following, which seem to us of special interest. The *Blackcap* is rare, in marked contrast to the *Garden-Warbler*, which is common in suitable localities. Some interesting notes are given of the *Willow-Tit*, which is considered rare in the county as a breeding-species, though apparently rather more widely distributed in winter. A

Parrot-Crossbill mentioned as killed in Wemyss Bay in 1862 should be critically examined. There are few records of the *Jay* during the past half-century. Seven eggs found in June, 1904, in a decayed fir near Darnley Rifle Range were first identified as those of the Wryneck, but two of these eggs now in the Royal Scottish Museum are now stated to be those of the *Lesser Spotted Woodpecker*. The original record (*Ann. Scot. N. H.*, 1905, p. 244); it should be noted, was not deemed altogether satisfactory, presumably because the author did not himself see the eggs *in situ*, and it is still kept within square brackets in the present list. A second Renfrew record for the *American Hawk-Owl* (Greenock, December, 1871) has, we fancy, been discredited. A sudden diminution in the numbers of *Corn-Crakes* in the county in 1905, and a gradual revival up to 1914, when a further diminution was noted, are interesting facts.

OVERLOOKED RECORD OF SURF-SCOTER IN YORKSHIRE.—Mr. W. J. Clarke writes (*Nat.*, 1915, p. 339): “While hunting through some old records of the Scarborough Philosophical and Archæological Society, I came across the minutes of a meeting held in the Museum on November 16th, 1855, in which it is recorded that a Surf-Scoter, which had been shot at Filey, was exhibited by Mr. Roberts.” Mr. Clarke states that the late Alfred Roberts was at that time Curator of the Scarborough Museum and was well known as a careful and painstaking observer and reliable ornithologist, but we may add that he made curious mistakes at times, *e.g.* in the *Zool.* for 1885 he records the “American Scaup (*Fuligula maritoides* [sic])” from Scarborough, but according to the authors of the *Birds of Yorkshire* (II. p. 465) the bird proved on examination by John Hancock to be a female Pochard. It is also significant that a supposed Surf-Scoter recorded as shot at Gristhorpe, near Scarborough, on November 25, 1860 (*Zool.* 1860, p. 7274, and 1861, p. 7385), turned out to be a Velvet-Scoter (*Birds of Yorkshire*, II., p. 482).

BLACK-WINGED STILT IN DEVON.—Mr. F. B. Hinchliff notes (*Field*, 20.xi.'15) that he saw a Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*), on November 6th, 1915, in North Devon. He gives an accurate description of the bird and its characteristic flight; he flushed it four times and had clear views of it.



LETTERS

THE PLUMAGE OF THE CROSSBILL.

To the Editors of BRITISH BIRDS.

SIRS,—In the recent article (pp. 173-4) on the plumages of Crossbill, Mr. Witherby alludes to my paper on the "Plumage of the Male Crossbill" (*Ibis*, 1915, pp. 662-9) and *presumes* that the yellow or green-yellow adult males examined by me were *certainly wild birds*. I should have thought that anyone who had carefully read my paper could not fail to gather, since I made a special point of the *abnormality of the plumage of captive birds*, that the plumages as detailed by me *were* based upon wild birds. It is new to me to find one expected to say that one's accounts of plumages are based on *wild birds* (and even Mr. Witherby does not appear to think it necessary to say so except in the case of the adult Crossbill), for any conclusions based on birds in captivity are well known to be valueless. I should have thought, moreover, that evidence of subspecific rank could not be admitted on captive birds, and therefore I am very surprised to find that one race (*L. c. hispana*) was founded on five birds (including the type), all of which had been in captivity! (Hartert, *Vög. p. Fauna*, p. 119).

GROVE HOUSE, LOWESTOFT.

CLAUD B. TICEHURST.

[A yellowish plumage being normal in male Crossbills after moulting in captivity and the same plumage in wild adult males being apparently quite abnormal, it did not seem to me unreasonable to inquire if Dr. Ticehurst had made certain that the yellowish adult males he had examined had not been in captivity.

Although many writers on plumages have made use of captive birds as a basis for their conclusions (and unfortunately still do so), I did not for a moment suppose that Dr. Ticehurst had knowingly done so, but skins of birds which have been in captivity often find their way into collections and this fact is not always clearly indicated on the label.—H.F.W.]

SUPPOSED EAGLE-OWL IN AYRSHIRE.

To the Editors of BRITISH BIRDS.

SIRS,—Whilst out on a high moor here yesterday with four other guns for a final day at the Grouse, we were all surprised to see an enormous Owl coming across the moor low towards the butts, which were well hidden. It was snowing at the time and the wind was blowing from the north. From where I was in a butt at the one side of a small loch, the bird appeared to me to be the size of a Heron and not a whit smaller—dark, and flying laboriously at the edge of the loch—about sixty yards distant from me, but quite close to the next butt.

After the drive I asked the next "gun" to me if he had noticed the bird, and he replied that it flew quite close to him and settled for a second or so within easy shot, but that he never shot Owls on principle and so did not fire. He was sure it was an Owl and a very large one indeed. The next "gun," who has a good knowledge of all birds, was preparing to fire at it, declaring it to be as big as a Heron, there being no comparison between it and a Tawny Owl, with which bird he was familiar.

The other "gun" and the old keeper who occupied the two outer butts following, both described the bird as an Owl and the size of a Black-backed Gull, each saying, like the rest of us, that in the distance it was like a Heron in size and slow flap of wings. It seems a pity that the bird was not obtained, as I have no doubt it was an Eagle-Owl (*Bubo bubo*).

The weather has been most severe, north-easterly gales and heavy frost for the past month. When the bird alighted it was much smaller in appearance, as the "guns" remarked who were near, but when on the wing it seemed enormous.

E. RICHMOND PATON.

HARESHAWMUIR, BY KILMARNOCK, *December 5th*, 1915.

THE GREATER SPOTTED EAGLE IN HEREFORDSHIRE.

To the Editors of BRITISH BIRDS.

SIRS,—May I point out that this bird (see p. 186) was *not* shot on my estate, but was found badly wounded by my gamekeeper just within one of the boundary lines. A neighbour's keeper must have been the guilty individual, for I am the last person to permit or encourage the slaughter of rare birds, and my gamekeeper is very well aware of the fact. He kept the eagle alive for two days, when it succumbed to its injuries. The bird was an *adult* female.

HUBERT D. ASTLEY.

BRINSOP COURT, HEREFORD, *December 2nd*, 1915.



REVIEWS

Hill Birds of Scotland. By Seton Gordon, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U., pp. xii.-300. With 25 plates from Photographs. (Edward Arnold.) 12s. 6d. net.

MR. GORDON does not belong to the school of arm-chair ornithologists, who from the seclusion of the suburbs add to the long list of books on British birds. He has a good working knowledge of the Scottish Highlands east of the Great Glen, and moreover has not been content to pay brief visits during the spring or autumn months, but has explored the glens and corries of the Spey and Dee basins even in the depth of winter.

In the work now before us Mr. Gordon treats of twenty-four species which breed in this district, and so far as he writes from personal observation, his words carry considerable weight. We are glad to note also signs of a great advance on earlier works on the same subject. This can readily be seen by anyone who will take the trouble to compare the article on the Goosander in the same writer's *Birds of the Loch and Mountain* (1907) and that in the present work, for while the earlier paper contains several serious misstatements and errors, the later account is thoroughly reliable and trustworthy. Especially valuable are the field-notes on the habits of the various birds made from personal observation, such as the length of the fledging-period in some of the rarer species, and the vertical range in summer and winter of the mountain haunting birds. In dealing with those species whose breeding area in Great Britain extends considerably beyond the Scottish Highlands, such as the Kestrel, Woodcock and Common Sandpiper, it must be remembered that the author's remarks apply primarily to the district referred to above and are not necessarily true of the whole breeding-range.

The book, however, contains a good deal of second-hand information from various sources, frequently quoted without any clue as to its origin, which has by no means the same value as the author's own field-notes. In many cases this is merely prefaced by the words, "A story is related," or "It is said," while the statements thus introduced are occasionally a severe test to the credulity of the reader. The story of American origin which credits the Ospreys of a certain (unnamed)

district with playing a concerted practical joke on the Bald-headed Eagles, which had long persecuted them, by carrying skeletons of fish already eaten and then inviting pursuit, is scarcely worthy of reproduction in a serious book of ornithological studies. We cannot help feeling that it would have added to the real value of the book if the author had confined himself more strictly to those parts which are based on his own field-notes. The descriptions of plumage are of little practical value: what would be of much greater use would be concise notes pointing out the characters by which the bird can be distinguished in the hand and in the field from any other species with which confusion is possible. The notes on distribution are obviously imperfect. On page 36 it is stated that no bird has so wide a range as the Golden Eagle, "in fact it is met with almost throughout the world." One would scarcely guess from this that the bird is unknown in the Southern hemisphere, and has never been recorded from Central or South America, South Africa, the Pacific Islands or the Australian region. That this is due to mere carelessness is shown by the fact that Mr. Gordon rightly describes the Osprey as occurring throughout Europe and Africa as well as Asia, Australia and North America. The statement that it is met with in New Zealand is however erroneous. Similarly, in dealing with the Sandpiper, the range is given eastward to the Petschora, but as a matter of fact it breeds across Asia and even in Japan, while southward its breeding-area embraces not only the Caucasus as stated, but also the Northern Himalayas. Many other instances might be quoted, but these are sufficient for our purpose.

Nomenclature, fortunately, has but a small share in this work, but it seems scarcely consistent to raise the Red Grouse and the Dipper to the rank of species, while the Crested Tit is provided with a trinomial. Moreover, it is obviously incorrect to say that the Red Grouse is "the one and only bird which Great Britain, and more especially Scotland, can claim for her very own" (p. 137). We should say that the honours were shared, as far as Scotland is concerned, by the Scottish Crested Tit and the Scottish Crossbill, unless the island forms of Wren and Song-Thrush are allowed to participate.

The statement that the Dotterel is the only wader whose clutch never exceeds three is not accurate. The three clutch is of course normal, as it is also in the case of the Kentish Plover, and commonly in the Oyster-Catcher, but sets of four have been recorded, though rarely, for the first two

species, but more commonly for the third, while the Crab-Plover (*Dromas ardeola*) apparently lays only a single white egg!

The illustrations from photographs by the author are for the most part excellent, and add greatly to the interest of the work, but we should like to protest against the prevalent practice of removing young birds from the nest for photographic purposes, in many cases with disastrous results to the young brood.

Misprints and slips of the pen are not numerous, but on the first page we note "*Acquila*" for "*Aquila*" and the Spanish name for Eagle is not "*Aquila*" but "*Aguila*." Linnæus wrote *apricarius* and not *apicarius* as the specific name of the Golden Plover. We do not believe that there is any evidence of the occurrence of *Lagopus rupestris* in Scotland.

These are blemishes, but at the same time it is only fair to point out that they do not seriously detract from the value of the book to the critical reader. The real interest and importance of these studies lies in the fact that they are the work of a field naturalist, who has watched and studied the birds in all seasons and under all kinds of conditions, and as such we welcome it as a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the "birds of the Hill."

F. C. R. JOURDAIN.

BRITISH BIRDS

EDITED BY H. F. WITHERBY, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U.

ASSISTED BY

REV. F. C. R. JOURDAIN, M.A., M.B.O.U., AND NORMAN F.
TICEHURST, M.A., F.R.C.S., M.B.O.U.

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THE "BRITISH BIRDS" MARKING SCHEME.*

PROGRESS FOR 1915 AND SOME RESULTS.

BY

H. F. WITHERBY.

THE progress of the *British Birds* Marking Scheme during its seventh year has been much handicapped, as was only to be expected, by the war. Nevertheless, the number of birds ringed is highly satisfactory when due consideration is made for the number of our supporters whose time has been partly or entirely claimed by the all-prevailing needs of the war. We can only be the more grateful to those who have been able to continue to support the scheme, notwithstanding the extra duties which must necessarily fall upon all of us. The following are the grand totals of birds ringed :—

NUMBER OF BIRDS RINGED.				
In 1909	...	...	...	2,171
„ 1910	...	...	...	7,910
„ 1911	...	...	...	10,416
„ 1912	...	...	...	11,483
„ 1913	...	...	...	14,843
„ 1914	...	...	...	13,024
„ 1915	...	...	...	7,767
				<hr/>
Total	...	...	...	67,614
				<hr/>

As Dr. Moon, who headed our list last year, was unfortunately unable to do any ringing this year, Mr. F. W. Sherwood kindly undertook the ringing in the same district, and so successfully that he has also taken Dr. Moon's place at the top of the list with the splendid total of one thousand five hundred and thirty-seven. Mr. A. Mayall, who has reached over one thousand, Mr. Masefield eight hundred, and Mr. Bartholomew over five hundred, are all ardent supporters of the scheme and have eclipsed their last year's totals, and thus helped to

* For previous Reports see Vol. III., pp. 179-182, for 1909; Vol. IV., pp. 204-207, for 1910; Vol. V., pp. 158-162, for 1911; Vol. VI., pp. 177-183, for 1912; Vol. VII., pp. 190-195, for 1913; Vol. VIII., pp. 161-168, for 1914.

make up for losses in other directions. Mr. Robinson, has been able to ring over four hundred and fifty. Mr. Burnier has nearly reached the same total, and Mr. Hobbs over two hundred, while a number of others have ringed over one hundred each.

Following on the lines of previous reports, I propose to draw attention to some of the more interesting recoveries reported during the year. Firstly, among summer migrants ringed as nestlings, the following appear to be of special interest :—

	Ringed.	Recovered.
Redstart	.. Westmorland, 16/6/'15	Portugal, 1/10/'15.
Swallow ..	.. Cheadle, Staffs, 17/6/'14	Same place 19/5/'15.
..	.. nr. Birmingham, 10/8/'14	nr. Birmingham, 19/5/'15
..	.. nr. Glasgow, 29/6/'14	Skipton, Yorks, 23/5/'15.
Martin	.. Kinnelhead, 26/6/'13	Same place, 17/8/'15.
Sand-Martin	.. Alderley Edge, 16/7/'14	Mobberley, 8/6/'15. (about 4 miles)
Wryneck	.. Malvern, 29/6/'14	.. Same place, 23/4/'15.
Sandwich Tern	.. Farne Is., 15/7/'14	.. Portugal, 30/9/'14.
Common Tern	.. Cumberland, 25/7/'10	Lancashire, 14/8/'15.

Of these the Common Tern, which was found not very far from its birth-place five years after it was ringed, seems to me of exceptional interest, especially in a bird which undertakes such extensive migrations.

Among those species which are partial migrants, or rather of which certain individuals migrate, I have picked out the cases in the list below. Most of these show movements, and in all these species we have records of recoveries of other individuals which have remained in the neighbourhood in which they were hatched. The records falling in this class have great interest, and many more facts are required before we can decide the reason or reasons for such movements. All in this list were ringed as nestlings or juveniles. Amongst them the Robin in south Holland and the Song-Thrush in the southern part of Aragon are particularly noteworthy.

	Ringed.	Recovered.
Starling	.. Lines., 8/8/'13	.. Wilts, 30/10/'14.
Linnet	.. Kent, 29/7/'15	.. Basses Pyrénées 27/11/'15
Pied Wagtail	.. Notts., 17/8/'15	.. Landes, 1/11/'15.

		Ringed.		Recovered.
Song-Thrush	..	Lanes., 14/4/'14	..	Pontillado, Teruel, Spain 18/11/'14.
"	"	" 1/4/'14	..	Roscommon, 22/12/'14.
"	"	Northumberland, 1/5/'15	..	I. of Man, 15/10/'15.
Redbreast	..	Berks., 13/5/'12	..	Voorne, S. Holland, 11/'14
Lapwing	..	Sutherland, 10/6/'13	..	Limerick, 2/'15.
"	..	Ross-shire, 9/6/'14	..	Wexford, 25/12/'14.
"	..	" 3/7/'10	..	Same place, 4/'15.
"	..	Moray, 28/6/'10	..	Cork, 16/1/'15.
"	..	Ayrshire, 30/5/'14	..	Tipperary, 24/12/'14.
"	..	" 6/6/'14	..	Armagh, 25/12/'14.
"	..	Stirlingshire, 13/5/'10	..	Cork, 22/12/'14.
Redshank	..	Warwickshire, 22/5/'14	..	Cornwall, 29/1/'15.
Curlew	..	Lancashire, 3/6/'12	..	Kerry, 9/11/'14.
"	..	Yorks, 13/6/'14	..	Kerry, 28/3/'15.
Woodcock	..	Stirling, 5/5/'14	..	Galway, 9/1/'15.
"	..	Dumfries, 11/5/'14	..	Clare, 2/11/'14.
"	..	" 2/5/'12	..	Tipperary, 1/2/'15.
"	..	Kirkcubright, 23/4/'14	..	Down, 24/11/'15.
"	..	Cumberland, 6/5/'13	..	Same place, 7/1/'15.

The following Mallards ringed as adults in winter may be specially mentioned, as a number of others ringed at the same time and place have been recovered in the following autumn in the neighbourhood of the place where they were ringed.

		Ringed.		Recovered.
Mallard	..	Wigtown, 28/2/'14	..	Scania, Sweden, 14/11/'14.
"	..	" "	..	Friesland, Holland, 26/11/'14.
"	..	" 27/2/'15	..	Armaal, Sweden, 1/8/'15.

In last year's report I gave a summary (Vol. VIII., p. 164) of the movements of Lesser Black-backed Gulls, so far as the recoveries at that date could show. I then stated that the recoveries were not sufficient to allow us to base conclusions upon them, and the records we have obtained this year clearly demonstrate the truth of this remark. It is well to state that we are still in no position to dogmatize on the results, interesting as they are, and the fresh facts elicited during the year must lead us to the conclusion that there is still much to be learnt about the extent of the migrations of this species. The following details refer to birds ringed at the Farne Isles, and only those are mentioned which vary the summary given on page 164 of Volume VIII.

One was reported from co. Mayo in October of the same year, this being the first recovered in Ireland.

In England in the same year the latest date given in last year's report was Oct. 20th, but in 1914 we had Durham Oct. 20, Northumberland Oct. 27, 29, and Nov. 2.

On the West African coast we have a record of one recovered at St. Louis, Senegal, on April 18th, 1915, the bird having been marked as a nestling in August, 1914. This is some eight hundred miles or more further south than any previous record.

This year we have had some records for the first time from the Mediterranean, viz. : Straits of Gibraltar, Jan. 1915; Valencia, April 1915; Oran, Dec. 1914; and Sardinia, Nov. 1914, all having been ringed in August, 1914.

A brief summary of the ringed Cormorants which have been reported may prove of interest, as fairly large numbers have been ringed and a large proportion recovered.

Of those ringed in the Saltees in the south of Ireland, a good many have been reported throughout the following autumn and winter all round the Irish coasts, one as far north as Argyllshire and another in Ayrshire. Others have reached Cornwall and Devon, while six have been reported from France, viz. : Côtes du Nord (Sept.), Brittany (Aug. 31), Morbihan (Aug. 7 and Feb.), Finistère (Nov.), and one as far south as Portugal (Sept.).

A large number have also been ringed at the Farne Islands, Northumberland. A good many of these have been reported throughout the following autumn and winter from Northumberland and Yorkshire, and four reached as far north as Fifeshire. Others, on the other hand, have proceeded south and apparently right round to the western side, for we have had them reported during the autumn and winter from Kent, Isle of Wight, Devon, Cornwall, Glamorgan, Carmarthen and Lancashire. One was found dead in the following May near Leicester.

One has reached Brittany (Oct.) and another Galicia, north Spain (Oct.).

Fewer have been ringed in the Scilly Isles, and some of these have been reported from Cornwall and Devon, while one reached the Côtes du Nord as early as July 19th (ringed April 20th), two were reported from Finistère (Oct. and Dec.), and one from Galicia (Oct.).

The total percentage of recoveries up-to-date is 3.06, a very slight falling off as compared to the 3.3 of the two previous years. The present percentage is calculated on 1,835 recoveries out of the 59,847 birds ringed from 1909-14. The birds ringed in 1915 and the recoveries of these birds are not taken into account. The following is a table of some of the more interesting percentages of individual species.

SOME PERCENTAGES OF RECOVERIES.

Species.	Number Ringed 1909-14.	Number of these Recovered to date.	Percentages of Recoveries.
Starling	4,806	335	6.9
Greenfinch	1,500	18	1.2
Linnet	511	7	1.3
Chaffinch... ..	1,468	23	1.5
Sky-Lark... ..	841	6	.6
Meadow-Pipit	741	13	1.7
Pied Wagtail	407	12	2.9
Spotted Flycatcher	374	1	.2
Willow-Warbler	1,084	13	1.2
Whitethroat	197	2	1.0
Mistle-Thrush	340	13	3.8
Song-Thrush	5,143	80	1.5
Blackbird	3,058	103	3.3
Redbreast	1,688	58	3.4
Hedge-Sparrow	1,096	25	2.2
Swallow	2,978	26	.8
Martin	753	9	1.1
Sand-Martin	392	3	.7
Cuckoo	73	5	6.8
Sparrow-Hawk	51	8	15.6
Heron	105	15	14.2
Mallard	498	107	21.4
Cormorant	470	75	15.9
Shag	156	14	8.9

Species.	Number Ringed 1909-14.	Number of these Recovered to date.	Percentages of Recoveries.
Gannet	190	9	4.7
Wood-Pigeon	122	7	5.7
Lapwing	2,902	59	2.0
Redshank	193	9	4.6
Curlew	167	11	6.5
Snipe	145	11	7.5
Woodcock	313	37	11.8
Sandwich Tern	655	6	.9
Common Tern	2,917	72	2.4
Black-headed Gull	11,933	442	3.7
Common Gull	487	13	2.7
Herring-Gull	491	17	3.4
Lesser Black-backed Gull	2,104	90	4.2
Puffin	899	1	.1

NUMBER OF BIRDS "RINGED."

MESSRS. F. W. SHERWOOD (1537), A. Mayall (1042), J. R. B. Masfield (800), J. Bartholomew (509), H. W. Robinson (452), R. Burnier (443), T. C. Hobbs (230), Miss C. M. Acland (194), Mrs. Patteson (168), Messrs. F. E. Blagg (163), S. K. Barnes (152), E. de Hamel (138), Miss N. Taylor (129), Miss S. M. Heysham (124), Messrs. C. F. Archibald (111), W. Meech, Gamekeeper to Lord William Percy (96), Miss E. Mellish (89), Dr. N. F. Ticehurst (88), Miss M. D. Haviland (85), Miss V. E. Buxton (79), Messrs. H. W. Ford-Lindsay (79), T. L. Johnston (71), The London Natural History Society (W. E. Glegg, Hon. Sec.) (65), Messrs. J. S. Elliott (64), A. T. Wallis (60), T. Robinson (59), H. Whitley (59), R. E. Knowles (48), M. Portal (42), Miss M. H. Greg (40), Messrs. W. E. Suggitt (40), P. A. Buxton (39), J. Cunningham (33), W. S. Medlicott (32), T. A. Coward (31), A. G. Leigh (31), C. K. Parker (30), Miss B. A. Carter (27), Messrs. J. S. Allison (21), P. A. Burt (20), B. H. Fell (20), Smith Whiting (20), and many others who have ringed under twenty each.

	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13	'14	'15	Total
Rook	—	1	6½	35	23	5	45	173
Jackdaw	11	5	15	6	15	33	26	111
Starling	21	428	1109	1469	1133	646	914	5720
Greenfinch	28	100	208	439	381	344	190	1690
Twite	—	—	—	—	24	18	—	42
Redpoll, Lesser	—	8	—	19	45	22	1	95
Linnet	20	65	63	64	148	151	214	725
Bullfinch	—	8	16	18	22	20	29	113
Chaffinch	6	103	271	360	331	397	252	1720
Sparrow, House	8	109	85	60	175	17	7	461
Sparrow, Tree	17	49	24	33	27	14	7	171
Bunting, Yellow	4	13	31	127	41	32	47	295
Bunting, Reed	2	8	40	17	39	49	15	170

	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13	'14	'15	Total
Lark, Sky ...	1	20	39	138	390	253	328	1169
Pipit, Tree ...	14	26	19	38	27	42	4	170
Pipit, Meadow	27	32	75	120	318	169	183	924
Wagtail, Yellow	1	—	—	—	22	28	13	64
Wagtail, Grey	5	6	13	23	17	22	7	93
Wagtail, Pied...	12	29	42	100	114	110	93	500
Tit, Great ...	16	127	154	73	221	67	65	723
Tit, Blue ...	12	54	144	124	228	70	3	635
Tit, Coal ...	—	12	26	9	24	7	10	88
Tit, Marsh ...	—	25	3	3	17	1	3	52
Tit, Long-tailed	—	3	—	5	28	1	1	38
Jay ...	—	5	3	4	7	7	4	30
Wren, G.-crested	—	16	15	—	1	—	1	33
Shrike, R.-backed	2	15	13	9	8	14	14	75
Flycatcher, S.	23	65	64	54	84	84	78	452
Chiffchaff ...	2	16	5	5	14	9	—	51
Warbler, Willow	50	107	139	266	251	271	257	1341
Warbler, Wood	—	12	27	7	20	9	—	75
Warbler, Reed	—	4	10	14	60	37	1	126
Warbler, Sedge	1	4	12	21	43	—	4	85
Warbler, Garden	3	9	13	17	20	9	15	86
Blackcap ...	—	7	12	4	7	23	23	76
Whitethroat ...	22	53	33	21	43	25	40	237
Whitethroat, L.	1	19	5	15	20	8	23	91
Fieldfare ...	—	48	30	7	—	—	—	85
Thrush, Mistle	2	48	40	83	82	85	98	438
Thrush, Song ...	71	625	693	739	1197	1818	1131	6274
Redwing ...	—	7	20	4	5	4	1	41
Ouzel, Ring ...	—	—	9	22	20	22	—	73
Blackbird ...	83	505	421	448	626	975	499	3557
Wheatear ...	1	15	1	34	19	57	23	150
Whinchat ...	7	30	28	21	41	69	53	249
Stonechat ...	—	10	19	8	55	30	2	124
Redstart ...	1	15	35	26	31	42	40	190
Nightingale ...	—	11	4	—	8	4	7	34
Redbreast ...	41	217	322	282	355	471	249	1937
Sparrow, Hedge	18	117	198	226	268	269	228	1324
Wren ...	9	38	62	76	101	141	134	561
Dipper...	4	9	22	23	15	23	17	113
Swallow ...	113	463	594	421	653	734	896	3874
Martin ...	13	128	73	104	160	275	198	951
Martin, Sand ...	—	25	66	1	118	182	44	436
Nightjar ...	3	—	3	11	4	9	2	32
Wryneck ...	14	16	1	12	11	31	22	107

	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13	'14	'15	Total
Cuckoo ...	4	4	13	23	23	6	5	78
Owl, Barn ...	—	10	—	19	14	9	14	66
Owl, Tawny ...	—	13	6	18	7	13	17	74
Kestrel ...	1	—	5	8	—	10	10	34
Hawk, Sparrow ...	—	5	19	11	5	11	4	55
Heron, Common	14	13	22	30	24	2	1	106
Sheld-Duck ...	1	24	2	10	1	2	9	49
Mallard ...	11	20	139	52	200	76	42	540
Teal ...	1	21	3	1	22	10	25	83
Wigeon ...	—	3	1	—	2	11	38	55
Duck, Tufted ...	3	—	2	—	20	15	22	62
Cormorant ...	—	3	25	54	266	122	—	470
Shag ...	—	4	—	23	15	114	—	156
Gannet ...	—	—	—	—	134	56	8	198
Shearwater, Mx.	—	—	—	60	9	—	—	69
Wood-Pigeon ...	3	20	22	33	26	18	17	139
Dove, Stock ...	1	4	6	7	9	9	2	38
Dove, Turtle ...	1	11	11	—	10	4	11	48
Oystercatcher	7	16	8	6	10	31	6	84
Plover, Ringed	—	35	12	20	28	20	7	122
Plover, Golden	—	2	2	13	7	6	9	39
Lapwing ...	56	254	280	676	558	1078	444	3346
Sandpiper, C. ...	5	10	29	36	24	23	13	140
Redshank ...	5	19	12	68	28	61	27	220
Curlew, Common	14	10	34	55	15	39	9	176
Snipe, Common	1	23	21	34	22	44	6	151
Woodcock ...	6	10	68	57	83	89	32	345
Tern, Sandwich	57	79	24	22	203	270	—	655
Tern, Common	786	836	669	380	51	195	1	2918
Tern, Arctic ...	25	—	1	1	3	47	—	77
Tern, Little ...	—	31	13	85	35	9	—	173
Gull, B.-headed	417	1828	2949	2660	3915	164	—	11933
Gull, Common	—	184	248	27	11	17	—	487
Gull, Herring	5	117	48	178	82	61	—	491
Gull, L. Blk.-bkd.	12	137	62	122	454	1317	214	2318
Gull, G. Blk.-bkd.	1	8	13	1	2	53	—	78
Kittiwake ...	4	11	—	—	2	16	—	33
Razorbill ...	—	31	3	—	2	24	—	60
Puffin ...	4	15	12	108	207	553	—	899
Moor-Hen ...	—	34	23	24	39	34	65	219

NOTE.—Forty-four species, of which less than thirty individuals each have been ringed, are omitted from this list, as also are game-birds and those of which the identification was not certain.

NOTES ON THE LAPLAND BUNTING ON THE YENESEI RIVER.

BY

MAUD D. HAVILAND.

THERE is a polyglot Starling in this garden. Sometimes he rehearses a recitation from memory. At other times he improvises according to his fancy, and now and then he hits an unexpected nail on the head with remarkable success. Thus the other morning I awoke to a reiterated whine, a long shrill splinter of sound, that gave me an odd feeling of discomfort before I could follow the train of memories that it recalled. Then I remembered the alarm note of the Lapland Bunting (*Calcarius l. lapponicus*) on the Lower Yenesei, and the Starling's chance whistle brought up vividly the recollection of long rambles over the tundra, of which it was so frequently the accompaniment.

I first met with the Lapland Bunting at Dudinka, at the end of the forest growth, at the beginning of the great estuary. It was the third week in June, and the birds, which were just beginning to build, were in full song. At that time I had not read any description of the song: in fact I had never thought of this species as a songster at all, and was therefore able to form my own opinion as to the merits of its music, which opinion is here given for what it is worth. I venture to think that an ordinary observer need have less diffidence in touching upon the subject of bird-song than any other point in ornithology. The descriptions in most manuals and text-books are quite unrecognizable, except and when the ornithologist leaves the set terms of "shrill chirps," "pleasing warbling" and "trills of short duration" with which he obscures his subject and comes to representation and the shifts of daily speech. The human memory can visualize sights, but of sound it recalls not



YOUNG LAPLAND BUNTING IN FIRST (JUVENILE) PLUMAGE.
(*Photographed by Maud D. Haviland.*)

the sound itself but its effect on the listener. Therefore in the attempt to convey an impression of any music (including bird music) we must interpret what we hear rather than reproduce it, regarding its movement rather than its pattern. Those writers who have most truthfully described the song of birds—John Burroughs, Richard Jeffries and W. H. Hudson, for instance—have been successful just in so far as they have approached their subject as a work of art rather than as a museum specimen.

As to the song of the Lapland Bunting, I cannot agree with Hagerup, who says that “the song . . . is but short and of an extremely melancholy nature.”* Nor with Von Homeyer, who describes it as loud and excited. Naumann (*Naturgeschichte der Voegel Mitteleuropas*) says it is “an agreeable unusual song which seems made out of the lark’s and the linnet’s.”† The Yenesei Buntings might concede the Lark *motiv*, but I never heard them recall the Linnet. Wheelwright (*Spring and Summer in Lapland*) gives this song high praise. “While in the air the song is as rich and clear as that of any of our songsters, not so shrill as that of the Lark, but far sweeter and more varied, for in this song the clear flute-like note of the Corn-Bunting is blended with the varying strain of the Skylark, and I thought that I had never listened to sweeter melody.” This description, sympathetic though it is, gives the cheery Lapland Bunting almost more than his due. To my mind, the charm of the song lies not in what is sung, which is mediocre enough, but in the peculiar fresh and joyous way in which it is delivered. In pure music the Lapp Bunting cannot compare with the Red-throated Pipit, nor even with a good Snow-Bunting. The strain is like a waterfall of notes, and as the noise of pouring water consists of many sounds jumbled and crowded together into a torrent.

* *Birds of Greenland.*

† Quoted, as are the two preceding observers, in the *British Bird Book.*

so this Bunting can recall the song of the Shore-Lark, to which Seebohm compared it, and also the Snow-Bunting, but by a stretch of imagination one might pick



NEST OF LAPLAND BUNTING, BUILT UNDER A TUFT OF
MOSS IN THE GOLCHIKA MARSHES.

(Photographed by Maud D. Haviland.)

out half a dozen more. All the separate shakes and turns are interspersed with simple notes and musical sounds, and the whole is poured out so fast that the hearer has only the impression of a loud toneless gush of melody that bubbles out suddenly, and as suddenly ceases to flow. It is very pretty to hear in a country where singing voices are scarce, but I doubt if we should think much of it if we heard it from a telegraph pole in

Middlesex. It is the delivery that is so charming. The bird rises to a height of some forty feet, never to the lark-like heights of *Anthus cervinus*. As he ascends, the song is broken and laboured, and then, as if the effort was too great, he seems to give it up and parachute earthwards in a sort of transport of relief at rest after hard labour. When scores of birds are thus rising and falling over the willows on some sunny morning while the snowdrifts are melting all over the tundra, the effect is very beautiful; and it is not difficult to understand how these gay throaty outpourings of the Lapp Bunting have earned more than their share of praise.

On the Yenesei the season of song is very short, for the cock becomes mute soon after incubation has begun. In this he is unlike the Red-throated Pipit, which sings on well into July after the young are hatched.

While on the subject of song I may briefly speak of the other notes of this species that have come under my notice in the breeding-season. When the nest is approached, the alarm note is a long melancholy whine—*Wheee-ee*. The birds begin to fret when you are a hundred yards away, and all day the tundra rings with their protests in maddening monotony. There is something oddly ventriloquial in this sound, and I have sometimes looked for a Golden Plover on the horizon, only to find that the note was not softened by distance as I had supposed, but came from a Bunting at my feet. After the breeding-season, adults when disturbed rose with a sharp “Zip,” something like a Linnet, only more shrill. The young before migration banded together in flocks, and had then a call or alarm note that resembled the chirruping of a House-Sparrow.

The Lapland Bunting was a most widely-diffused species at Golehika, and was found in every environment, from the wettest to the driest. Down in the marshes the birds generally nested under the logs of driftwood; out on the tundra they bred under peat tussocks, or else beneath the dwarf birch scrub. The incubating bird

sat very close, and when flushed almost always feigned injury. In each case the nests were lined with feathers, though in some cases not more than one or two were used. I saw one nest which contained a Goose feather, so large that the bird crept under its upcurled tip in order to cover the eggs.



NEST CONTAINING HALF FEATHERED YOUNG, BUILT UNDER
A DRIFT LOG ON THE SHORES OF THE YENESEI.

(Photographed by Maud D. Haviland.)

My experience of trying to photograph the birds at the nest was a disappointing one. I chose a nest containing half-fledged young, but not a plate was exposed during a two days' wait. The birds flew round the tent incessantly, uttering their plaintive call, but even the pleading of their hungry brood would not lure them within range of the lens. The cock was bolder than the hen, but even of him I did not obtain a single negative. On the third day I moved the tent over to a Temminck's

Stint's nest about two hundred yards away. To my surprise even then the fussy Buntings could not let the matter rest, but continually mourned all day long, even though the Stint herself dozed on her eggs within six feet of the camera.

I was sorry not to study this Bunting's feeding habits close at hand, in order to find out whether the young were fed by regurgitation like the Bullfinch and Greenfinch: by live food like the Yellow Hammer, or in both ways like the Chaffinch. The nest, like that of the Greenfinch, was always foul, and as I never saw food in the bill of a bird which was feeding young, there is some presumptive evidence that the chicks were fed by regurgitation. The parents tended the young only for a short time after they left the nest. In this they differed from the Red-throated Pipits, which continued to feed their broods to within a week or two of the autumn migration. The fledgelings then flocked together, until little parties of six to ten birds were formed towards the end of July. These parties left the tundra and came down to the river side. They were fond of haunting the settlements, and in such situations they constantly reminded me of Sparrows. Their buff and brown plumage was not unlike the colouring of Sparrows at a glance, and their chirping while guzzling round the fish stations was distinctly Sparrow-like. They never associated with the Snow-Buntings which were common in the same surroundings at this time, and this seemed to me curious, for when on migration in this country this species will join flocks of other birds. The adult Snow-Buntings did not leave their broods, and birds of all ages might be seen feeding together. Meanwhile the old Lapp Buntings went apart to moult. Occasionally I saw a couple together during the first fortnight of August, but for the most part they seemed to live singly. It is only right, however, to say that the birds lie very closely at this time, and for each one that I flushed there may have been others lying undiscovered close by.

Birds flushed at this season would allow themselves almost to be trodden on before they would take wing, and when they rose they did so sluggishly. They left the marshes altogether at this time and were to be found chiefly up on the dry tundra where the slopes were covered with creeping birch and whortle.

Migration began about the 17th of August, by which date most of the young birds disappeared. Birds seen at the end of the month were almost all adults, and appeared singly or in pairs, never in flocks, but whether these were the birds which had bred in the district or were passengers from further north it is impossible to say. On September 1st after a prolonged south-easterly gale, I flushed about a dozen adult Lapland Buntings which were lying closely in the long cotton grass that fringes the beaches of the Yenesei. These birds, which at that late date must have been about to move southwards, even if they were not already on passage, were all solitary; and a few days later, when I noted the species for the last time at Nosonovsky Ostrov (200 versts to the south) each individual was by itself, unlike the Wheatears which were present in some numbers, and always in societies. These details may be worth recording as bearing out the statement made in the *British Bird Book* that this species is a solitary migrant, although it is also mentioned there that a flock of 40-50 was recorded from the Flammans in 1904, and one of 100 from Flamborough in 1893. Mr. Eagle-Clarke (*Studies in Bird Migration*, Vol. II., p. 55) remarks that at Fair Isle he has observed old and young migrating in company. I only once saw a Lapp Bunting in the "act of migrating"—that is to my knowledge, and that was on August 4th, when I noticed an adult crossing the Yenesei River from west to east about twenty miles below Golchika. It was passing with a bounding Linnet-like flight just above the tops of the waves, and not for the first time I realised the truth of Mr. Eagle-Clarke's observation as to the difficulty of picking up small birds at sea, for it was

almost two oars' lengths from the boat before I saw it. It does not sound a notable feat for a bird to cross a river, but it must be remembered that even at this point, two hundred miles from the sea, the Yenesei is more than two-thirds as wide as the Straits of Dover; it forms, in fact, a natural gateway to Asia, whose grandeur is only equalled by its solitude.

THE MOULTS OF THE BRITISH PASSERES,
WITH NOTES ON THE SEQUENCE OF THEIR
PLUMAGES.

BY

H. F. WITHERBY.

PART III.

(Continued from page 176).

CORN-BUNTING (*Emberiza c. calandra*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in September and October. No moult in spring, and abrasion has little effect except that the upper-parts become paler and more greyish and the under-parts white. Sexes alike.

JUVENILE.—Much like the adults, but the buff or buffish ground-colour of the upper-parts paler and the black-brown streaks broader and more prominent; the chin and throat are more uniform than in the adult and the wing- and tail-feathers and wing-coverts have well-marked margins and tips of buff.

FIRST WINTER.—The juvenile plumage is *completely* moulted in the first autumn. The birds then become like the adults.

YELLOW BUNTING (*Emberiza c. citrinella*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult from August to October. No moult in spring, but abrasion has a considerable effect especially in the male, whose crown and throat gradually become more uniform and paler yellow, the upper-parts more strongly streaked and the sides of the breast and flanks brighter chestnut. In the female the crown and throat both in winter and summer have much less yellow and more dark green than in the male, the flanks and breast are not so chestnut and the belly is paler yellow.

JUVENILE.—Somewhat like adult female but with no pure yellow on the crown and nape, which are yellowish-brown to pale buff or yellowish-buff streaked black-brown, rump browner and more streaked, under-parts much paler and duller yellow (sometimes greyish only tinged yellow) and the throat, breast and flanks with narrow blackish-brown streaks. The juvenile female appears to be not so yellowish on the crown and paler on the under-parts than the juvenile male. Some specimens do not bear out these distinctions, which

may therefore be due to individual variation; on the other hand, these particular specimens may have been wrongly sexed.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile body-feathers, wing-coverts and four inner secondaries are moulted from July to October but not the primary-coverts nor the rest of the wing-feathers nor tail-feathers. The *male* then becomes intermediate between the adult male and adult female, the yellow of the under-parts being not so brilliant as in the adult male, and the crown, ear-coverts and sides of neck more like those of the female. The *female* becomes intermediate between the adult female and juvenile male, the crown and nape having scarcely a trace of yellow and no green, being yellowish-brown streaked with black-brown: the throat and belly are much paler yellow than in the adult female and the breast and flanks are more streaked but not nearly so much as in the juvenile. After the second autumn moult the birds appear to become like the adults.

PINE-BUNTING (*Emberiza leucocephala*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in autumn. In February and March a partial moult takes place and this is apparently confined to the regions of the lores and ear-coverts and a few feathers of the white "bib." In the male the new feathers on the ear-coverts, centre of lores and a narrow line under the eye are white instead of buffish-white. In the female the same moult takes place, but there is little change in coloration either by this or by abrasion. Abrasion in the male gradually makes the centre of the crown pure white and the chin and throat uniform pinkish-chestnut. The chief differences in the female are that it has the whole crown streaked with blackish and only the bases of the feathers in the centre are whitish, the ear-coverts are brown and the chin and throat are pale buff spotted with dark brown with a little chestnut at the bases of the feathers, and there is a small creamy patch in place of the white "bib" of the male.

JUVENILE.—Much like the adult winter female but with only an indication of pale bases to the feathers of the centre of the crown, rump rufous-buff (less chestnut than adult) and streaked with black, rest of upper-parts more tawny than winter female, throat whitish streaked with black, breast and flanks tawny-buff streaked with black-brown, and the under tail-coverts in one specimen buffish-white with fine dark brown mesial streaks, in another specimen rufous.

FIRST WINTER.—The juvenile body-plumage and lesser and median wing-coverts are moulted in the first autumn but not

the rest of the wings nor the tail. After this moult the birds appear to become like the adults.

BLACK-HEADED BUNTING (*Emberiza melanocphala*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult from July to November or December. No moult in spring. Abrasion in the male (it has little effect in the female) makes the head entirely black, this colour being almost obscured in winter by the buff-brown tips of the feathers, the mantle also becomes uniform chestnut and the under-parts much brighter yellow. The adult female differs from the male chiefly in having the crown brown streaked with black, the mantle browner (not so chestnut) and more streaked and the under-parts paler and more buffish-yellow.

JUVENILE.—Differs considerably from both adults, the crown being sandy-buff with small streaks or spots of black, the rest of the upper-parts buff streaked with blackish and the under-parts pale buff. The tail- and wing-feathers have buff fringes and the inner secondaries and wing-coverts considerably broader fringes. Sexes alike.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile body-feathers, wing-coverts and inner secondaries are moulted in late summer (sometimes as early as June) or early autumn. The *male* is then apparently indistinguishable from the adult male. N.B.—Some males with brown feathers amongst the chestnut ones on the mantle and brownish ear-coverts may be first-summer birds, but adult males undoubtedly also sometimes have such feathers. The *female* differs from the adult female in having the crown browner and not so dark, the mantle brown not so chestnut, and the rump not so chestnut, the throat and breast pale buff with a tinge of yellow in the centre of the belly.

YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING (*Emberiza aurcola*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in early autumn. In April and May a partial moult confined to the head takes place. In the male the new feathers of the fore-head, lores, ear-coverts and chin are jet-black in place of the winter chestnut fore-head and yellow chin. In the female the crown becomes more chestnut than in winter and the chin buffish-white instead of yellow. Abrasion especially affects the male, the upper-parts becoming gradually almost uniform pinkish-chestnut, while the breast-band and dark streaks on the flanks become more prominent.

JUVENILE.—Resembling the adult female but the crown browner, the mantle more heavily streaked, the rump

browner and streaked, the breast brownish and streaked and the rest of the under-parts yellowish-buff. Sexes alike.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile body-feathers, wing-coverts and innermost secondaries are moulted in autumn but not the primary-coverts or tail-feathers nor the rest of the wing. After this moult the *male* becomes very much like a bright adult female, while after the spring moult its crown and chin never become so jet black as in the adult male. By abrasion the chestnut breast-band becomes more prominent than in winter, but is much narrower than in the adult, while the rest of the under-parts and upper-parts are more like the adult female. The first winter and summer *female* is paler and has more yellow on the under-parts than the adult female and the breast is finely streaked.

CIRL BUNTING (*Emberiza cirius*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in August and September. In March and April a partial moult takes place and this is apparently confined to the ear-coverts and a line above and below the eye. Abrasion has not a very great effect, but the colours become more uniform and brighter. While the female is duller on the upper-parts than the male it differs strikingly in its under-parts, which much resemble those of a first summer Yellow Bunting, but are more prominently streaked and of a paler and more buffish yellow.

JUVENILE.—Very much like a juvenile Yellow Bunting, but the edgings of the feathers of the upper-parts paler and the rump buff without the chestnut tinge. Sexes alike.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile body-feathers and wing-coverts are moulted in the first autumn but not the primary-coverts, wing- or tail-feathers. The birds then become like the adults and cannot be distinguished with certainty, though females with browner and more streaked upper-breasts and browner crowns (more noticeable in summer) are probably first winter or summer birds.

ORTOLAN BUNTING (*Emberiza hortulana*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in early autumn. No moult in spring. Abrasion has no great effect but the crown and nape and upper-breast become greyer and less green. The sexual difference is not very marked, the female having the crown tinged brownish, the throat more buffish-yellow, and the upper-breast less green and with dark spots or small streaks.

JUVENILE.—The whole upper-parts are buffish streaked with brown-black, the throat and sides of the head are whitish-

buff sparsely streaked and the breast is darker and more heavily streaked, while the flanks have fine streaks. Sexes alike.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile body-feathers, wing-coverts and innermost secondaries are moulted in September and October, but not the primary-coverts or tail, nor rest of the wing-feathers. The *male* then much resembles the adult female, but its crown is browner, its throat paler and its upper-breast greyer and more streaked. The *female* has a brown and streaked crown like the mantle, the breast is buffier and more heavily streaked and the flanks have fine streaks.

MEADOW-BUNTING (*Emberiza cia cia*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in early autumn. No moult in spring. Abrasion has little effect, but the crown and sides of the head and the throat become purer grey. The male and female are much alike, but the grey of the crown and throat of the female is not so pure and the dark streaks are browner, while the mantle, breast and belly are paler.

JUVENILE.—In the juvenile the crown is brownish-buff streaked with black, the rump is streaked, the ear-coverts are buffish-brown, the throat is buff and the rest of the under-parts rufous-buff streaked with black-brown on the breast and flanks.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile body-feathers and wing-coverts are moulted in early autumn but not the primary-coverts, tail- or wing-feathers. The *male* then becomes much like the adult female, while the *female* has a browner crown with only the bases of the feathers grey, the ear-coverts are buffish-brown, the throat and breast are heavily washed with buff and speckled with dark brown and the flanks are slightly streaked.

SIBERIAN MEADOW-BUNTING (*Emberiza cioides castaneiceps*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in September and October. From March to May there is a partial moult confined to the chin, ear-coverts, under the eye and lores. As there is no evidence of this moult in many specimens, it is possibly irregular in occurrence. Abrasion has little effect except that in the male the crown, mantle and breast-band become brighter chestnut. The female does not greatly differ from the male, but its upper-parts and the ear-coverts are browner and less chestnut, the throat is not such a pure ash-grey and the rest of the under-parts are paler.

JUVENILE.—This is difficult to distinguish from the juvenile of *E. c. cia*, but the tips of the median wing-coverts are buff instead of being whitish and the edgings of the wing- and central tail-feathers are rather more chestnut.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile plumage is *completely* moulted in the first autumn. The *male* then becomes like the adult male, but the *female* differs from the adult female in having a browner crown, buffer eye-stripes, browner and ill-defined malar stripes, greyish-buff throat and paler under-parts. The spring moult seems more regular than in the adult and the new feathers are more like those of the adult female.

RUSTIC-BUNTING (*Emberiza rustica*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in August. In April and May (sometimes March) a partial moult takes place and this is confined to the head and throat. In the male the new feathers of the crown, lores and ear-coverts are jet-black and a small patch of black appears on the chin, while the throat becomes whiter. Abrasion makes the breast-band, flanks and upper-parts more uniform chestnut. In winter the female has less black on the crown and ear-coverts than the male, and the mantle, wings and flanks are less chestnut, while the breast-band is less well defined. After the spring moult the head becomes much like that of a winter male.

JUVENILE.—Somewhat like the female on the upper-parts but the feathers with more rusty-buff edgings and those of the rump with dark centres and chestnut-buff edgings, the throat more streaked and the breast and flanks tawny and streaked with blackish-brown, the centre of the lower breast with blackish spots and the rest of the under-parts more buffish and not so white as in the adult. Sexes alike.

FIRST WINTER.—The juvenile body-feathers and wing-coverts are moulted in August but not the primary-coverts, wing- or tail-feathers. The birds then become usually indistinguishable from the adults.

LITTLE BUNTING (*Emberiza pusilla*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in late summer and early autumn. From February to April a partial moult takes place, this being confined to the lores, line over eye, ear-coverts, chin and throat. The new feathers are rather deeper rufous than in winter. Abrasion has not a great effect, but the black stripes on each side of the crown and the chestnut in the centre become more prominent and uniform. The female in summer when worn is very like the male.

but the stripes on the crown are more broken with brown and the rufous colour of the ear-coverts, lores and chin at all seasons is paler.

JUVENILE.—The upper-parts are heavily streaked with black, the feathers being fringed on the sides of the crown with chestnut, in the centre of the crown and the nape with pale buff, on the mantle, back and rump with yellowish-buff and chestnut; the lores, chin and ear-coverts are rufous-buff instead of pinkish-chestnut as in the adult, and the throat, breast and flanks are much more heavily streaked with black. Sexes alike.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—Moult as in Rustic-Bunting in July and August. Both sexes are then like the adult winter female, but the lores, eyestripe and chin are paler and less rufous. After the spring moult they become more like the adults, but the chin and throat are not so dark.

REED-BUNTING (*Emberiza s. schœniclus*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult from September to November. From March to May a partial moult takes place and this is confined to the chin, upper throat, lores, ear-coverts and usually the fore-head. Before this moult takes place abrasion has made in the male the crown, throat and ear-coverts much blacker than in fresh plumage, but the lores never become black before the moult. The new feathers in the male are entirely black except those of the malar stripes, which are white. Abrasion gradually causes the crown to become black, the back of the neck white forming a collar, the mantle blacker, the rump greyer and the under-parts whiter. The female moults the same parts as the male but apparently less completely, and the new feathers are coloured much as the winter ones. Abrasion makes the crown darker but never uniform black as in the male; in much worn females a narrow greyish-white collar appears and the rump becomes greyish but not so grey as in the male.

JUVENILE.—Much like the female but more boldly streaked on the upper-parts and the feather-edges paler, the sides of the throat, breast and flanks with short streaks and spots of black. Sexes alike.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile body-feathers and wing-coverts are moulted in August and September, but not the primary-coverts, wing- or tail-feathers. After this moult the *male* becomes like the adult male, but the feathers of the crown and throat have longer buff tips, there is less white on the feathers at the back of the neck, the ear-

coverts are browner and the feathers of the chin usually have no black. After the spring moult and when abraded the first summer male becomes difficult to distinguish from the adult, but the white collar is narrower and more spotted and the black does not extend so far down the breast. The first winter and summer *female* is rather browner on the crown and more streaked on the breast and flanks than the adult female and has no white on the back of the neck.

LAPLAND BUNTING (*Calcarius l. lapponicus*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in August. In April a partial moult takes place, this being confined to the lores, fore-head, ear-coverts, chin and upper-throat. In the male the new feathers in these parts are jet-black, while abrasion gradually makes the rest of the crown and the base of the throat uniform black, the band at the back of the neck uniform bright orange-chestnut and the mantle and rump much darker. The female in winter has much less black on the crown than in the male and the chestnut collar is scarcely noticeable, the black on the upper-breast and side of the throat is almost concealed by the buff fringes of the feathers and the streaks on the flanks are much narrower and chestnut-brown. The female moults in the spring in the same parts as the male but less completely. The new feathers on the sides of the head and throat have more black than the winter ones, but even when much abraded the crown is always streaked and the black feathers of the base and sides of the throat have some whitish tips.

JUVENILE.—The upper-parts are much like those of the adult summer female, but there is no trace of a chestnut band at the back of the neck, the throat is spotted with brown-black and the lower throat and upper breast are buffish-yellow with narrow streaks.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile body-feathers, lesser and median wing-coverts are moulted in August and September, but not the other wing-coverts nor the wing- and tail-feathers. The male then becomes like the adult male, but the chestnut neck-band has minute black spots, and in summer the crown and throat never become so uniform black as in the adult. The first winter *female* has very little black on the feathers of the sides of the head and malar stripe and the feathers of the upper-breast and lower throat have streaks of black and tawny instead of large dark centres as in the adult. After the spring moult the bird is like the adult except for these streaks on the breast.

SNOW-BUNTING (*Plectrophenax nivalis*).

ADULTS.—Complete moult in August and September. In March a partial moult confined to the chin, throat, ear-coverts and sides of the head. The new feathers in both sexes are much like the old but purer white, except those of the ear-coverts which in the male are buff instead of tawny as in winter and in the female less dark than in winter. Abrasion causes a remarkable change in both sexes, but especially in the male. The wide tawny fringes of the fresh autumn feathers almost completely conceal the upper portions of the feathers of the upper-parts besides forming a distinct tawny breast-band. In much abraded males in summer the tawny fringes become completely worn off and the bird's head, nape, and under-parts become pure white and its mantle and back almost uniform black, the rump usually white but sometimes black and white, the wings and tail also become black and white. The female in winter is duller buff, not so bright tawny on the upper-parts as the winter male, and the feathers of the crown, nape and rump have black centres, while the black portion of the feathers of the mantle is not so extensive as in the male. In summer it becomes streaked on the upper-parts, the feathers having large black centres and greyish-white and tawny fringes, the under-parts usually have remains of the tawny fringes especially on the flanks and sides of the breast. The amount of white in the tail and wing-feathers, primary-coverts and other wing-coverts varies greatly individually in both sexes and at all ages. Allowing for this individual variation the distribution of white in the wings is usually as follows :—

PRIMARIES—*Adult male*—white at base often extends beyond primary-coverts, 9th usually with only distal quarter black, 10th with only a black patch at tip of outer web. *Females and first winter male*—no white beyond primary-coverts, less white on 9th and 10th.

SECONDARIES—*Adult male*—pure white or with some small black marks at tips of outer webs. *First winter male and adult female*—more extensive brownish-black marks on outer webs. *First winter female*—most of outer webs and distal portions of inner webs brownish-black.

PRIMARY-COVERTS—*Adult male*—sometimes pure white but usually with black tips. *First winter male*—either all black or with the bases white flecked with dusky. *Females*—brownish-black.

GREATER COVERTS.—*Adult male*—white. *First winter male*—brownish-black tipped white with sometimes the central feathers dusky-white only flecked with black. *Adult female*—brownish-black tipped white. *First winter female*—with smaller white tips.

MEDIAN AND LESSER COVERTS.—*Adult male*—white. *First winter male*—median white, lesser black with buffish-white tips or white flecked with black. *Females*—median and lesser brown-black tipped with white.

JUVENILE.—The upper-parts are dusky-grey streaked with black faintly on the crown, nape and rump, more broadly on the mantle, which is also buff; under-parts dusky-grey and buffish-white; median coverts greyish-black with white tips; lesser coverts the same with greyish-white fringes. The rest of the feathers of the wing and the tail-feathers as in the first winter.

FIRST WINTER AND SUMMER.—The juvenile body-feathers, lesser and median wing-coverts are moulted in the first autumn but not the primary-coverts, greater coverts or wing- and tail-feathers. In winter the *male* is often (but not always) of a darker tawny colour on the upper-parts than the adult winter male; the feathers of the nape have small black spots which become more apparent in worn summer plumage; the feathers of the rump always have black centres but of varying size, so that in summer the rump usually becomes black but is occasionally white with black marks. The first winter and summer *female* has a darker nape than the adult female and often has black flecks on the pectoral band, while the secondaries and greater coverts have less white.

(*To be continued.*)

NOTES

FIRE-CRESTED WREN IN NORFOLK.

On August 4th, 1915, I saw a Fire-crested Wren (*Regulus ignicapillus*) in some fir-woods near West Runton, Norfolk.

The bird was rather larger than the Golderest, which is very abundant in the Runton woods. In appearance it was very similar to *cristatus*, but the crest was of a rich orange colour bounded on each side by a black streak. A black line passed through the eye; another ran from the nape to the beak; and between each black streak there was a white mark. The general colour above was olive-green, as in the Golden-crested Wren, and the under-parts were greyish-white.

I had a good opportunity of observing the bird, as it perched on a twig and allowed me to approach quite near to it without taking flight.

R. CRAVEN SYKES.

WESTERN BLACK-THROATED WHEATEAR IN SUSSEX.

A VERY fine example of the Black-throated Wheatear (*Euanthe h. hispanica*) was shot at St. Leonards, Sussex, on October 30th, 1915. I examined it on the following day whilst still in the flesh and found it a male of the Western form. The breast and back were of a yellowish rusty colour, and there was no frontal band of black.

H. W. FORD-LINDSAY.

BLACK REDSTART IN MERIONETH.

I RECENTLY received for identification from Mr. F. C. Rawlings of Barmouth the skin of a bird shot near that place on December 13th, 1915. It proved to be a female Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus o. gibraltariensis*). Since the publication of my *Vert. Fauna of North Wales* I have obtained two other records of this species on the Merioneth coast, three off Anglesey, and several observed by Mr. R. W. Jones in the neighbourhood of Llandudno. The earliest date of occurrence was August 23rd, and the latest March 24th.

H. E. FORREST.

SWALLOW IN HERTFORDSHIRE IN NOVEMBER.

It may be worth recording that on November 20th, 1915, a brilliantly sunny day, I watched a Swallow (*Chelidon r. rustica*) playing round St. Alban's Abbey, between 1 and 2.30 in the afternoon.

E. L. TURNER.

UNUSUAL FOOD OF GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER.

As the Great Spotted Woodpecker is usually regarded as insectivorous, the following particulars may be of interest.

In March, 1915, I established a bird-table outside my library window at Weybridge, and one of the earliest and most fearless visitors was a Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dryobates m. anglicus*). The food provided consisted of hempseed, Brazil nuts, porridge and coconuts; the Woodpecker came many times a day and consumed large quantities of porridge and coconut. Towards the end of June the visits were discontinued, and I did not see the bird again until the end of December, and it now returns daily. EDGAR SYERS.

LITTLE OWL IN STAFFORDSHIRE.

SINCE the reintroduction of this species into England, three records of its occurrence in Staffordshire have been recorded (*antea*, Vol. I., p. 339, and Vol. III., p. 307). I can now give two more records for this county. On December 31st, 1911, Mr. A. O. Worthington, of Maple Hayes, near Lichfield, wrote that on that date he saw a Little Owl in the park—"it was very tame, within fifteen yards of me, and gave me five minutes before flying away, pursued by small birds." On December 28th, 1915, another specimen in the flesh was sent to me, shot by mistake for a Woodcock! We have so far no record of this bird nesting in the county, that I am aware of. JOHN R. B. MASEFIELD.

STATUS OF THE LITTLE OWL IN STAFFORDSHIRE.

MR. J. R. B. MASEFIELD'S note does not give by any means a full or complete account of the spread of this species in Staffordshire since the first specimen was recorded near Newport, on the Shropshire border, in October, 1906. On November 5th, 1906, Messrs. A. G. and H. C. Tomlinson watched one for some time within a few yards, in a bush close to the Woodlands, Burton-on-Trent (*Field*, Nov. 10, 1906, and *Journ. D.A. & N.H.S.*, 1907, p. 128). This locality, though quite close to the Staffordshire border, is however in Derbyshire. Another was shot at Burton, March 13th, 1909, and sent to A. S. Hutchinson of Derby (*Rep. N.S.F.C.*, 1908-9, p. 71, *Brit. B.*, III., 307). One shot at Lichfield, Nov. 27th, 1909, is recorded by A. G. Leigh (*Brit. B.*, III., p. 307), while Mr. C. Moore reports one shot at Yoxall in 1910, and one seen at Hints, near Tamworth, Aug., 1911 (*Rep. N.S.F.C.*,

1911-12, p. 88). Mr. W. Wells Bladen reports one at Great Barr, March 29th, 1914 (*Rep. N.S.F.C.*, 1914-15, p. 84), and now two more are recorded above from Lichfield in 1911 and (apparently near Cheadle) in Dec., 1915 (*ut supra*); so that at least eight occurrences have been recorded. It is evident from the scattered nature of these records, which I have reason to believe are still very imperfect, that the Little Owl is now widely distributed over the county, and has probably been established some time as a breeding species, though up to the present nesting has not been recorded.

F. C. R. JOURDAIN.

EXTERMINATION OF THE GOLDEN EAGLE IN IRELAND.

FOR some years the Golden Eagle (*Aquila c. chrysaëtus*) has been on the verge of extinction in Ireland, and with the shooting of two during the year 1915, ornithologists must sadly conclude that this fine species has ceased to exist in Ireland.

In 1911, and again in 1912, the late R. J. Ussher undertook journeys to the west and north-west of Ireland to investigate the range of the Eagles in their last haunts. By personal observation, and searching inquiries and correspondence, he could trace but one individual in Mayo and one other in Donegal, while he was satisfied that the species was extinct in Kerry (see *Irish Naturalist*, 1912, pp. 120 and 181-182).

Unfortunately the Donegal bird was shot in that county during the spring of 1915, and the Mayo bird—an old female—was killed in the first week of November, 1915, as she sat asleep on a fence, having devoured a goose thrown out from a farm near Pulathomas, in her native county. It is reasonable to suppose, having regard to Mr. Ussher's minute investigations, that this Eagle was the last of her race.

At one time a very common bird in Ireland, it bred in most of the higher mountain ranges—some of its former eyries are now tenanted by the Peregrine Falcon—and its disappearance is chiefly due to the vigilance of keepers and to the widespread use of poisoned carcasses set for foxes. Collectors are not responsible, as Mr. Williams of Dublin informs me that no Irish specimen had passed through his hands for twenty-five years previous to the above records.

When Ussher published the *Birds of Ireland* in 1900 he prophesied the early extinction of the species, although he could at that time refer to "a few pairs still resident in the west." The former breeding range of the Golden Eagle in

Ireland embraced the counties of Kerry, Waterford, Tipperary, Galway, Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim, Fermanagh, Donegal, Londonderry, Tyrone, Antrim and Down, while in at least one cliff-face there still remain a few ancient weather-beaten nests, pathetic monuments of a noble bygone species.

C. J. CARROLL.

ROUGH-LEGGED AND COMMON BUZZARDS IN LINCOLNSHIRE.

As an autumn immigration of Buzzards is being reported (*antea*, p. 211) from the eastern counties, it may be of interest to add to the records that I saw, through field-glasses at short range, a Rough-legged Buzzard (*Buteo l. lagopus*) in north-west Lincolnshire on October 26th, 1915; and Mr. G. H. Caton Haigh saw a specimen of the Common Buzzard (*Buteo b. buteo*) which was shot on the north-east coast of Lincolnshire on November 18th.

F. L. BLATHWAYT.

COMMON BUZZARD IN CO. WICKLOW.

DURING the last week of November, 1915, a male Common Buzzard (*Buteo b. buteo*) was shot near Arklow, co. Wicklow. It was observed amongst the Wicklow Mountains throughout the summer—a most unusual time of year to find this species in Ireland, as, having ceased to breed in the country, it is now only an uncertain visitor from October to March.

C. J. CARROLL.

GLOSSY IBIS IN WILTSHIRE.

A GLOSSY Ibis (*Plegadis f. falcinellus*) was shot by the keeper at Burderop (near Swindon) in September, 1915, and has been set up by Paisey of Swindon. General Calley has kindly given me the following particulars: "My keeper saw it one morning, at the beginning of September last, in a grass field near a brook, within 100 yards of his house, and promptly shot it. I severely rated him for having done so. There was another seen, about the same time, at Draycott, near the camp, but I hope and believe that that escaped the usual fate of rare birds in this country." Draycott is quite close to Burderop.

G. BATHURST HOBY.

OIL-CLOGGED KING-EIDER IN KENT.

AN immature male King-Eider (*Somateria spectabilis*) was washed ashore at Dungeness, East Bay, Kent, on November 10th, 1915. I saw it soon after it had been picked up, and it was then covered with crude petroleum, which at this time again made its appearance on this part of the coast. There

were hundreds of Common Scoter, Guillemots, and other birds in various stages of incapacity owing to the oil. Some were dead, many had apparently little oil on them, but made no attempt to fly, while others were lying on the beach unable to get up at all. One curious thing about the severe cases has not been previously mentioned in the various accounts I have seen, viz., the effect of the oil upon the skin and feet of the birds. Upon removing the skin the oil seems to have penetrated to the flesh beneath, which is very moist, and decidedly oily. Regarding the feet, these are not affected whilst the birds remain at sea, as the oil is in a very thin layer on the surface, and the feet keep below this, but when the birds get into very shallow water in wading ashore, and also on the beach, which was covered in some places to the depth of half an inch, the feet become completely coated. The result is they soon begin to swell, and this goes on to such an extent that they crack and burst. Some that I examined were of an enormous size. Why these birds come ashore in such vast numbers in calm weather is no doubt due to the irritating effects of the oil, and the motive is to get ashore and on to the marshes with the idea of finding fresh water. I should like to thank Mr. Austin (the authorised watcher) of Lydd, on behalf of all interested in birds, for the trouble he has taken in putting some hundreds of these suffering birds out of their misery, and also making it clear to the fisher-folk all around that it was their duty to save the birds from a death by slow starvation.

The King-Eider was quite dead when found, and I should imagine that it had died at sea, as the whole of the body, including the head, was covered with oil, showing that it had been pitching about on the surface of the sea.

After a considerable amount of cleaning the oil was removed, and the yellowish-brown breast was disclosed, which was spotted and barred with black. The anterior point of the feathering on the fore-head, which reached to the nostrils, removed all doubt as to the identity.

H. W. FORD-LINDSAY.

THE IRISH EXAMPLE OF THE MADEIRAN LITTLE SHEARWATER.

ACTING on Mr. Witherby's suggestion (*antea*, p. 203) I have examined the Little Shearwater obtained in Ireland on May 6th, 1853, and now exhibited in the Dublin Museum.

The following characters—under-surface, including the under tail-coverts, of a pure white, which extends over the lower part of the lores, and outer portion of the inner web

of the primaries white, except towards the tip—taken from the description of *Puffinus assimilis* by Howard Saunders in his *Illustrated Manual of British Birds* (2nd ed., p. 744), and stated by Mr. Witherby to be distinguishing characters of *P. a. godmani*, well describe the Irish specimen. A close examination of the under tail-coverts shows that a few of the longer feathers have part of the outer web blackish.

It would thus seem to be the Madeiran Little Shearwater.

The measurements in millimetres are: wing 178, tail 75, tarsus 37, middle toe and claw 40, and bill from feathers 25.

A. R. NICHOLS.

WOODCOCK PERCHING.

THE habit of many of the Scolopacidae of perching on trees, posts, rails, &c., is well known. The Common Snipe constantly does this in the breeding season, especially in the evening, or when flushed from its nest, or where danger is close at hand. This habit of perching I have over and over again observed in the case of the Common Snipe, Redshank, and Common Sandpiper. The same thing has been also noted of the Wood-Sandpiper, Greenshank, Dusky Redshank, Bar-tailed and Black-tailed Godwits, Reeve, Curlew, and Whimbrel (see *British Birds*, Vol. III., pp. 59, 89).

But with the Woodcock, perching appears to be a very unusual habit, and the only reference to it I have been able to trace is in *A History of British Birds*, by Rev. F. O. Morris, who rather vaguely says (Vol. IV., p. 256): "A Woodcock has been seen at Newnham in Gloucestershire to perch on an oak-tree." I can now, however, give an undoubted instance that this is an occasional habit of this species. On December 18th, 1915, I was covert shooting with my friend, Mr. J. E. Smith, of Whiston Eaves, near Cheadle, Staffordshire, when his attention was directed to a small brown object perched on a rail at the cover side, some fifty yards ahead. At first it appeared to be a bunch of withered oak-leaves at the end of a twig, but as he drew nearer, the object, which he now saw was a Woodcock, flew away. Mr. Smith carefully marked it down higher up the wood, followed it up a little later on, flushed the bird from the spot, and shot it. There can therefore be no doubt as to the identity of the bird.

This is the first and only instance that either Mr. Smith or I have come across, personally, of the actual perching of the Woodcock. The bird probably jumped on to the rail to have a better look around to ascertain the cause of the noise made by the approaching beaters.

JOHN R. B. MASEFIELD.

CREAM-COLOURED WHIMBREL IN IRELAND.

A BEAUTIFUL cream-coloured example of the Whimbrel (*Numenius ph. phaeopus*), with legs and feet of pale lavender, has recently passed into my possession. It was shot at Lough Mask in May, 1915, and is in excellent plumage. I know of only one other "variety" Whimbrel, but Waders only very exceptionally assume abnormal plumage. C. J. CARROLL.

LAND-RAIL ON ST. KILDA.

ON page 189 *antea* an extract is given from *The Scottish Naturalist* in which Mr. Eagle-Clarke states that so far as he knows the Land-Rail has not been mentioned as occurring on St. Kilda for the last seventy-five years. I should like to mention that on June 9th, 1888, when I was on a visit to St. Kilda, a boy named Willie McDonald brought me in the flesh a freshly-killed Land-Rail which he had caught in a hole that day. Doubtless it was a newly-arrived migrant which was resting in the shelter of a slight hole or hollow on the hillside. It was on account of this specimen that Howard Saunders in his *Manual* recorded the Land-Rail as having been obtained on St. Kilda. I gave the skin to Mr. Harvie-Brown and it may possibly be still in his collection. ROBERT H. READ.

RECOVERIES OF MARKED BIRDS (*Aberdeen Inquiry*).—Mr. A. Landsborough Thomson gives in the *Scottish Naturalist* (1915, pp. 313-17, and 339-43) a "second Interim Report (1912-14)" of the "Aberdeen University Bird-Migration Inquiry." Here some very interesting records are given. Two *Starlings* ringed in Edinburgh in February and March, 1911, were captured in Norway, one at Nord-Trondhjem in April, 1913, and the other near Christiania in March, 1914. Another *Starling* ringed in North Wales in October, 1912, was captured at Svendborg, Denmark, in May, 1914. A *Song-Thrush* ringed as a young bird near Aberdeen in June, 1911, was reported from Arundel, Sussex, in January, 1912, while another ringed in Aberdeenshire in May, 1913, was killed at the Eddystone Lighthouse on February 27th, 1914. A *Sheld-Duck* ringed as a duckling in Hampshire, in July, 1912, was reported from Schleswig-Holstein in August, 1913. There are two cases of *Oyster-Catchers* ringed in Aberdeenshire as nestlings travelling to the west of Ireland in the following autumn. Three *Lapwings* ringed in Scotland and one in Yorkshire are reported from Landes, France, and Oporto and Guarda, Portugal, in the following winter. There are two very interesting *Herring-Gull* recoveries: both were ringed

in Aberdeenshire, one in June, 1912, which was taken in Heligoland in the following September, and the other, ringed in October, 1910, was reported from Thuringia, Germany, in June, 1913. We have referred only to a few of the most interesting items in the "Report," and those who are interested in the subject would do well to consult it. In his introductory remarks Mr. Thomson states that one of the necessary attributes of a species to make it a fit subject for ringing should be migratory movements of sufficient interest to repay close investigation. We do not, however, consider such a restriction necessary or expedient, as there are so many other points which may be decided by ringing; furthermore, ringing may prove that individuals of species supposed to be sedentary are not entirely so.—H.F.W.

HEIGHT AT WHICH BIRDS FLY.—In an interesting letter in the *Field* (4.12.'15, p. 936), signed "Tinnunculus," it is stated that "while flying on duty between Bethune and La Bassée at a height of 8500 ft. this afternoon (Nov. 26) I was astonished to see a flock of about 500 ducks, or geese, passing over Bethune at least 3000 ft. above the level of our machine. The wind was about 45-50 m.p.h. N.N.E. and the birds were travelling due south."

OIL-CLOGGED BIRDS IN LANCASHIRE.—Mr. G. Sanderson informs us that a number of birds (chiefly Common Scoter) came ashore between Blackpool and Lytham in January. Those he examined had their feathers more or less clogged with an oily substance similar to those already reported from the East Coast (*antea*, pp. 152-3). Mr. Sanderson has sent us some saturated feathers taken from the breasts of two of the victims—a Common Scoter and a Great Northern Diver.

FIELDFARE IN SCOTLAND IN JUNE.—We have already referred (*antea*, p. 189) to a note reporting a Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*) at Palmure on June 10th, 1915, and the Duchess of Bedford now states (*Scot. Nat.* 1915, p. 356) that the bird was examined and proved to be a female with well-developed eggs, "one with the shell forming and due to be laid in about four days."

THE ST. KILDA WREN.—Mr. W. Eagle-Clarke contributes an interesting article to the *Scottish Naturalist* (1915, pp. 291-6) on the plumages, status and habits of *Troglodytes t. hirtensis*. He gives detailed descriptions of the adult in fresh winter plumage, the juvenile, and the first-winter plumage. Mr. Clarke states that the bird is to be found in all parts of Hirta and that it also occurs on the islands of Soay, Boreray, Dun and Stack-an-Armin, being equally at home in the cultivated area, the hillsides, and the face of the great cliffs.

BRITISH BIRDS

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ON "WAIT AND SEE" PHOTOGRAPHY.

PART II.*

BY

E. L. TURNER, H.M.B.O.U.

IN March, 1915, I put up two tents by the mere in Holy Island, Northumberland, and spent many days between March and June watching and photographing the various species of birds which came there to feed.

During those weeks the aspect of the mere underwent a gradual change. After the winter rains it is a fairly large sheet of open water. By and by the bog-bean pushes up its sturdy stems, and the *equisetum* its forest of slender spires, until the visible water becomes a mere silver streak meandering through dense aquatic vegetation.

Almost all the water-fowl concentrate on this, the one and only permanent fresh-water pool on the island. By the time the birds have finished fighting for their mates and for territory, or for amusement and a sheer love of fighting, the silent rapid growth of plant-life has provided them with excellent cover for the concealment of their nests.

Of course, one's best chances of securing photographs are spoiled as soon as the vegetation attains even a few inches of growth. But the great drawback to this irregular photography lies in the fact that every locality chosen is sure to be dominated by one truculent bird who bullies all the rest.

After all, the land belongs to the birds. They are the rightful owners of the soil. No photographer can pitch his little tent anywhere without infringing the immemorial rights of some bird. The human intruder is more or less unmoved by the rightful owner's righteous indignation. He means to stay, and smiles a superior

* For Part I. see the October issue, pp. 102-8.

smile while the bird frets and fumes. But frequently the bird scores.

Day after day I tried to secure photographs of Redshanks dancing. Directly a couple came along and the courting display began, down dropped a particularly pugnacious Lapwing and drove them away. This Peewit seemed to lie in wait especially for Redshank and Ringed Plover. He took a fiendish delight in spoiling their romances by cutting short the rippling spring call of both species and interrupting their dances. These two waders



Fig. 1. THE LAPWING "IN AN ATTITUDE OF SPLENDID DEFIANCE."
(Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.)

cannot carry on their love-making quietly, their joyous cries are flung afar. The female Ringed Plover usually crouches while the male careers round her, but both the male and female Redshank dance and "jodel" together.

But one forgave the Lapwing a good deal—even the wrecking of one's photographs, because of his chivalrous devotion to his own mate. When she came down to feed or bathe, he hovered over her or mounted guard on the banks in an attitude of splendid defiance (Fig. 1). Any intruders, especially those of his own species, were at once driven off if they ventured near.

The Moorhen pursues the female in a much more furtive manner than is the case with the Redshank and Ringed Plover. Having selected the bird he intends to honour with his attentions, he drives her from the open water (Fig. 2) and then chases her up and down ditches, or through the tangled grass in the attitude shown in Fig. 3. The Moorhen's vagaries did not seem to annoy the quarrelsome Lapwing. He would stand on one leg, cock his head sideways and eye them tolerantly. Maybe he had



Fig. 2. THE MOORHEN: "HE DRIVES HER FROM THE OPEN WATER."

(Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.)

some respect for the pugnacity of Moorhens in general. At any rate, he was powerless to interrupt the display of both sexes which takes place on the open water (Fig. 4). This is a more or less noisy affair. When bringing the white tail-feathers into prominence they twirl round and round, and also circle round each other like giant rotifers.

It is curious how suddenly and violently antagonistic gregarious birds become as soon as the breeding-season approaches. There were forty-four Moorhens always peacefully feeding on the mere between October and early

April. But from that time onwards it was war to the knife. First of all there were fights for the females, and then frontier fights for the defence of the breeding-grounds. Each pair seemed to claim a few yards of frontage on the mere, together with the sporting rights (bathing and hunting), as well as a stretch of territory inland. These were most jealously guarded.



Fig. 3. THE MOORHEN: "CHASES HER UP AND DOWN DITCHES."
(Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.)

When two Moorhens come to grips, the ensuing struggle is no mere play. With feet closely interlocked, they hold on to each other until occasionally muscles and joints crack. A victorious bird will sometimes strive to drown his opponent before releasing him. Meanwhile there is much screaming and splashing, and the din of battle is such that the waterside is no place for a contemplative person.

On May 25th I watched two pathetic little Moorhen warriors, companions in misery, maimed and defeated, striving only to snatch a little food unobserved.

They hopped down from the fields, taking cover and crouching suspiciously every few steps. They seemed to like the shelter provided by my tent, and hid behind it when alarmed, every now and again peeping round to see if they were pursued. One bird was minus a foot, while the ligaments were torn right up to the thigh.



Fig. 4. MOORHENS DISPLAYING.
(*Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.*)

The other had one leg twisted outwards from behind the knee. Both were feeble and shrunken, and entirely lacking the dapper, self-satisfied air characteristic of Moorhens generally. They kept near me all that day, but I did not see them afterwards.

No Coots appeared on the Holy Island mere between October and February 4th, when seven arrived, and eventually three or four pairs bred there. With their



Fig. 5. A FAMILY OF COOTS.
(*Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.*)

arrival the peaceful character of the mere and its surroundings vanished at once. There are few noisier birds than Coots at all seasons of the year, and in the early spring they quarrel and shout all day long. It seems to amuse them, for their mutual animosities lack the real ardour which animates the Moorhens in their contests.

I watched a pair building on May 24th. When the nest was half finished, that day and the next, they worked in a very desultory manner. The male collected stuff which the female arranged from time to time. But long intervals were spent in playing about both in the water and on the banks. Coots always amuse me. They are very plebeian in their habits, and they bring up their young on old-fashioned principles. Any breach of discipline is punished with alacrity, especially greediness. I frequently saw the parents of the two youngsters in Fig. 5 chase an offender, seize it by the scruff of its neck, and beat it soundly with their wings. The loud squeaks which accompanied this chastisement were sufficient evidence of its severity.

RECOVERY OF MARKED BIRDS.

THE following have kindly sent in subscriptions towards the expenses of the Marking Scheme since the last acknowledgment was made: Miss C. M. Acland, Messrs. J. Appleby, J. Bartholomew, F. E. Blagg, P. A. Buxton, H. A. Cave, P. A. Chubb, J. Cunningham, Viscount Cross, Miss Carter, Miss M. H. Greg, Messrs. H. S. Greg, T. F. Greenwood, E. W. Hendy, Miss S. M. Heysham, Mr. T. C. Hobbs, Mrs. Hodgkin, Messrs. G. R. Humphreys, R. E. Knowles, J. R. B. Masefield, A. Mayall, Miss Mellish, Mr. J. Moore, Mrs. Patteson, Messrs. A. T. Wallis and H. Whitley.

JACKDAW (*Colæus m. spermologus*).—64959, adult, marked by Mr. R. Burnier at Bradfield, Berks., on Dec. 2nd, 1914. Reported by Mr. N. H. Joy at the same place on May 17th, 1915.

STARLING (*Sturnus v. vulgaris*).—41364, adult, marked by Mr. T. C. Hobbs at Gosforth, Northumberland, on Jan. 26th, 1913. Reported by Mr. J. R. Gillespie at the same place on Dec. 18th, 1915.

41342, marked as 41364 on Jan. 2nd, 1913. Recovered at the same place on Oct. 24th, 1914 (see Vol. IX., p. 19) and Dec. 12th, 1915.

84148, marked as 41364 on Dec. 15th, 1914. Reported by Miss J. K. Heimbs at the same place on Dec. 28th, 1915.

46221, 46325, 46736, 46524, adults, marked by Mr. W. E. Suggitt at Cleethorpes on July 30th, Aug. 9th, 23rd, and Oct. 14th, 1913. Reported from Mablethorpe, Sutton-on-Sea, Lincs., King's Lynn, Norfolk, and Hull, Yorks, in May and June, 1915.

15747, adult, marked by Mr. N. H. Joy at Bradfield, Berks., on Jan. 3rd, 1912. Reported at same place on Nov. 27th, 1915.

84099 and 84058, adults, marked by Mr. R. Burnier at Bradfield, Berks., on Feb. 12th and 22nd, 1915. Recovered at the same place on Nov. 27th, 1915.

83861, adult, marked as 84099 on Oct. 30th, 1914. Reported by Mr. W. B. Hedger at Hungerford, Berks., on Nov. 9th, 1915.

Z956, adult, marked by Mr. T. Robinson, at Oldham, Lancs., on Dec. 19th, 1914. Reported by Mr. T. Davies at the same place on Sept. 1st, 1915.

84466, nestling, marked by Mr. A. Mayall, near Shrewsbury, Shropshire, on May 20th, 1915. Reported by Mr. W. Burrow at Droitwich, Cheshire, in July, 1915.

- 43749, adult, marked by Mr. C. H. Braid at the Mull of Galloway Lighthouse, Wigtownshire, on Feb. 26th, 1914. Reported by Mr. F. Addison at Gretna, Dumfriesshire, on Nov. 26th, 1915.
- 80281, nestling, marked by Mr. H. Whitley at Primley, Paignton, Devon, on May 14th, 1914. Reported by Mr. E. P. S. Benny at Collaton, Paignton, on May 16th, 1915.
- 49910, nestling, marked by Mr. Miller Christy at Chignal St. James, Chelmsford, Essex, on May 22nd, 1914. Recovered at the same place on Feb. 24th, 1915.
- 49768, nestling, marked by Mr. B. Beetham at Barnard Castle, co. Durham, on June 28th, 1914. Reported by Mr. G. W. Jackson at the same place on Sept. 5th, 1915.
- 49949, nestling, marked by Miss C. M. Acland at Banstead, Surrey, on June 4th, 1914. Recovered at the same place early in June, 1915.
- 19202, nestling, marked by Dr. N. F. Ticehurst at Huntbourne, Tenterden, Kent, on May 18th, 1912. Caught (adult female incubating) at the same place on May 9th, 1915.
- LINNET (*Carduelis c. cannabina*).—BD3, nestling, marked by Mr. S. K. Barnes at Orpington, Kent, on July 29th, 1915. Reported by M. P. Tauzin at Sauveterre de Béarn, Basses Pyrenées, France, on Nov. 27th, 1915.
- CHAFFINCH (*Fringilla c. caelebs*).—H589, adult, marked by Mr. J. Bartholomew at Torrance, near Glasgow, Stirlingshire, on March 30th, 1912. Recovered at the same place in Dec., 1915.
- SKY-LARK (*Alauda a. arvensis*).—45115, nestling, marked by Dr. H. J. Moon at the Fylde, Lanes., on July 8th, 1913. Reported by Gunner E. Twist between Lytham and Blackpool, Lanes., in June, 1915.
- PIED WAGTAIL (*Motacilla a. lugubris*).—BM75, nestling, marked by Miss E. Mellish at Worksop, Notts., on Aug. 17th, 1915. Reported by M. C. Ducont at Soustous (Landes) France, on Nov. 1st, 1915.
- BRITISH SONG-THRUSH (*Turdus ph. clarkei*).—43980, nestling, marked by Dr. H. J. Moon at the Fylde, Lanes., on June 7th, 1913. Reported by Mr. F. A. Darrap at Birkdale, Southport, Lanes., on Jan. 16th, 1916.
- W403, nestling, marked by Mr. J. Bartholomew, at Torrance, near Glasgow, Stirlingshire, on June 29th, 1914. Recovered at the same place on July 9th, 1915.

44931, 48475, nestlings, marked by Mr. A. W. Boyd at Rostherne, Cheshire, on April 28th and June 8th, 1914. Reported by Mr. T. A. Coward at the same place in May and June, 1915.

18557 and 15572, nestlings, marked by Mr. R. O. Blyth at Skelmorlie, Ayrshire, on May 12th and 25th, 1913. Recovered at the same place on June 24th and Nov. 18th, 1915.

84184, nestling, marked by Mr. T. C. Hobbs at Riding Mill, Yorks., on May 1st, 1915. Reported by Mr. A. C. Teare at Bride, Isle of Man, on Oct. 15th, 1915.

5553, nestling, marked by Mr. H. W. Robinson at St. Mary's, Scilly Isles, on April 27th, 1914. Reported at the same place in Dec., 1915.

BLACKBIRD (*Turdus m. merula*).—83285, nestling, marked by the London Natural History Society at Nazeing, Waltham Cross, Essex, on May 9th, 1915. Reported by Mr. L. Gulliver at Napton, near Rugby, on Dec. 23rd, 1915.

18971, nestling, marked by Miss M. Greg at Styal, Cheshire, on May 14th, 1912. Reported by Mr. A. Upward at Wilmslow, Cheshire, on June 26th, 1915.

41562, nestling, marked by Mr. R. Burnier at Bradfield, Berks., on May 2nd, 1914. Recovered at the same place on May 12th, 1915.

81102, nestling, marked by Dr. H. J. Moon at St. Annes-on-Sea, Lancs., on July 2nd, 1914. Reported by Mr. H. Parkinson near Blackpool in Nov., 1915.

49518, nestling, marked by Mr. T. C. Hobbs at Gosforth, Northumberland, on June 14th, 1914. Reported by Mr. C. A. Cochrane at the same place on July 6th, 1915.

0347, nestling, marked by Mr. J. Bartholomew at Torrance, near Glasgow, on May 18th, 1913. Recovered at the same place on Jan. 9th, 1916.

15183, nestling, marked by Miss A. C. Jackson at Swordale, Evanton, Ross-shire, on June 8th, 1912. Recovered at the same place on May 11th, 1915.

REDSTART (*Phœnicurus ph. phœnicurus*).—AK81, nestling, marked by Mr. F. W. Sherwood at Leck, Westmorland, on June 16th, 1915. Reported by Mr. W. C. Tait near Niza, Portugal, on Oct. 1st, 1915.

BRITISH REDBREAST (*Erithacus r. melophilus*).—S281, nestling, marked by Mr. J. R. B. Masefield at Rosehill, Cheadle, Staffs., on May 26th, 1914. Recovered one mile away on May 12th, 1915.

N609, adult, marked by Mr. A. Mayall near Shrewsbury, Shropshire, on March 8th, 1913. Recovered at the same place on Nov. 28th, 1915.

HEDGE-SPARROW (*Prunella m. occidentalis*).—Y120, nestling, marked as N609 on June 29th, 1914. Reported by Mr. A. Kelsall at the same place on June 16th, 1915.

T576, adult, marked by Miss C. M. Acland at Banstead, Surrey, on Oct. 9th, 1913. Recovered at the same place in May, 1915.

AS82, nestling, marked by Mr. F. W. Sherwood at St. Annes-on-Sea, Lancs., on June 26th, 1915. Reported by Mr. J. Hesketh at the same place on Jan. 9th, 1916.

SWALLOW (*Chelidon r. rustica*).—X930, nestling, marked by Mr. J. R. B. Masefield at Cheadle, Staffs., on June 17th, 1914. Caught at same place on May 19th, 1915.

W406, nestling, marked by Mr. J. Bartholomew at Torrance, near Glasgow, Stirlingshire, on June 29th, 1914. Reported by Mr. D. Green at Skipton, Yorks., on May 23rd, 1915.

Z963, nestling, marked by Miss B. A. Carter at Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire, on Aug. 10th, 1914. Reported by Mr. C. Ratcliff at New Oscott, near Birmingham, on May 19th, 1915.

MARTIN (*Hirundo u. urbica*).—21454, adult, marked by Mr. H. W. Robinson at Stodday, Lancaster, on June 29th, 1912. Caught at same place on Sept. 2nd, 1915.

0510, nestling, marked by Mr. James Bartholomew at Kinnelhead, Beattock, Dumfriesshire, on June 26th, 1913. Caught at the same place on Aug. 17th, 1915.

SAND-MARTIN (*Riparia r. riparia*).—X656, nestling, marked by Mr. E. W. Hendy near Lindow, Alderley Edge, Cheshire, on July 16th, 1914. Reported by Mr. C. Dobell at Mobberley, Cheshire, on June 8th, 1915.

WRYNECK (*Jynx t. torquilla*).—Q976, nestling, marked by Mr. W. W. Lowe at Malvern, Worc., on June 29th, 1914. Reported by Mr. W. Edwards at the same place on April 23rd, 1915.

BARN-OWL (*Tyto a. alba*).—33197, nestling, marked by Miss C. M. Acland at Coulsdon, Surrey, on June 9th, 1912. Recovered about two miles away on May 30th, 1915.

KESTREL (*Falco t. tinnunculus*).—22520, nestling, marked by Mr. H. W. Ford-Lindsay at Pett, Sussex, on June 25th, 1915. Reported by Mr. J. Tanner at Bexhill-on-Sea on Sept. 30th, 1915.

COMMON HERON (*Ardea cinerea*).—12, nestling, marked by Mr. J. R. B. Masefield near Cheadle, Staffs., on May 28th, 1910. Reported by Mr. A. G. Cowie at Church Stretton, Shropshire, in Oct., 1915.

50211, nestling, marked as 12, on June 23rd, 1911. Recovered at Middlewich, Cheshire, at the beginning of 1915.

MALLARD (*Anas platyrhyncha*).—36682, adult male, marked by Mr. M. Portal at Leswalt, Stranraer, Wigtownshire, on Feb. 27th, 1915. Reported by Mr. O. von Mentzer near Armaal, Sweden, on Aug. 1st, 1915.

34835, adult, marked as 36682. Reported by Mr. J. A. Gilmour at Corsewall Point, Wigtownshire, on Jan. 4th, 1916.

36689, 36699, 34833, adults, marked as 36682 on Feb. 17th and 27th, 1915. Recovered near the same place on Sept. 18th, Aug. 22nd, and Oct. 4th, 1915.

36698, 34854, 34856, adults, marked as 36682 on Oct. 9th and 10th, 1915. Recovered at the same place in Nov., 1915.

TEAL (*Anas c. crecca*).—25805, adult, marked by Mr. M. Portal at Leswalt, Stranraer, Wigtownshire, on Feb. 17th, 1915. Recovered at the same place in Nov., 1915.

25813, adult, marked as 25805. Reported in the *Gamekeeper* on the River Vyrnwy, near Welshpool, Montgomeryshire, on Sept. 24th, 1915.

CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax c. carbo*).—100684, 100673, nestlings, marked by Miss A. Pease at the Farne Islands, Northumberland, in Aug., 1913. Recovered in Durham (Aug., 1915) and Haddingtonshire (Nov., 1915).

101675, 101669, nestlings, marked as above in Aug., 1914. Recovered in Leicestershire (May, 1915) and Northumberland (Nov., 1915).

50458, nestling, marked by Mr. H. W. Robinson at Melidgan, Scilly Isles, on May 19th, 1914. Reported by Captain Cassin, off Finistère, France, on Sept. 26th, 1915.

SHAG (*Phalacrocorax g. graculus*).—50484, 50561, 50528, nestlings, marked by Mr. H. W. Robinson at Melidgan, Menewethen, and Little Inisvouls, Scilly Isles, in June, 1914. Recovered at Scilly Isles (June, 1915) and in Cornwall (July and Oct., 1915).

GANNET (*Sula bassana*).—100029, adult, marked by Mr. J. M. Campbell at the Bass Rock, Haddingtonshire, on July 31st, 1913. Reported at Nieuport Bains, Belgium, about Jan. 13th, 1916.

- LAPWING (*Vanellus vanellus*).—80173, nestling, marked by Mr. A. Bankes near Fewston, Yorks., on June 15th, 1914. Reported by Mr. H. Stockdale at West Ardsley, near Wakefield, Yorks., on Sept. 4th, 1915.
81469, nestling, marked by Mr. E. W. Hendy at Alderley Edge, Cheshire, on June 29th, 1914. Reported by Mr. J. Steel near Knutsford, Cheshire, on Sept. 9th, 1915.
41583, nestling, marked by Mr. Hitt per Mr. M. Portal at Wark-on-Tweed, Berwickshire, on June 10th, 1913. Reported by Mr. J. Spraggon near Kelso, Roxburgh, in Sept., 1915.
14430, nestling, marked by Mr. J. Bartholomew at Torrance, near Glasgow, Stirlingshire, on June 14th, 1911. Recovered at the same place on Sept. 22nd, 1915.
44151, nestling, marked by Mr. G. W. Kerr at Skelbo, Sutherland, on June 10th, 1913. Reported by Mr. R. B. Ballingal, near Caherconlish, co. Limerick, in Feb., 1915.
- COMMON REDSHANK (*Tringa totanus*).—48607, nestling, marked by Mr. H. S. Greg at Hornby, Lancaster, in April, 1914. Reported by Mr. E. Jones at Silverdale, Lanes., on Feb. 12th, 1915.
- COMMON SNIPE (*Gallinago g. gallinago*).—13521, nestling, marked by Mr. H. Bentham at Elstead, Surrey, on May 13th, 1914. Reported by Mr. C. Goring at Wiston Park, Steyning, Sussex, on Jan 11th, 1916.
- WOODCOCK (*Scolopax rusticola*).—17235, nestling, marked by Mr. R. Stewart at Buchanan, Drymen, Stirlingshire, on May 4th, 1912. Recovered within a mile on July 30th, 1915.
16931, nestling, marked by Mr. J. H. Milne-Home at Langholm, Dumfriesshire, on May 1st, 1912. Reported by Mr. S. A. Russell near Antrim on December 25th, 1915.
17301, nestling, marked by Mr. G. R. Davies at Corsock, Kirkcudbrightshire, on April 23rd, 1914. Reported by the Earl of Roden at Castlewellan, co. Down, on November 24th, 1915.
- COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*).—20605, nestling, marked by Messrs. H. W. Robinson and F. W. Smalley at Ravensglass, Cumberland, on July 25th, 1910. Reported by Mr. W. Cardwell on the river Ribble near Lytham, Lanes., on August 14th, 1915.
- BLACK-HEADED GULL (*Larus r. ridibundus*).—Five, nestlings, marked by Mr. H. W. Robinson at Ravensglass, Cumberland, in June 1912. Reported in 1915 from Cumberland

(Nov.-Dec.), Cheshire (Aug.), Anglesey (Dec.), Kerry (Dec.).

Seven, nestlings, marked as above, five by Mr. Robinson and two by Mr. B. Pickard in May and June, 1913. Reported in 1915 from Cumberland (May and Dec.), Lancashire (April and Nov.), Denbighshire (May), Wexford (March) and Kirkeudbrightshire (Jan. 1916).

29516, nestling, marked by Mr. H. W. Robinson at Walney Island, Lancs., on May 29th, 1913. Reported by Mr. T. Latham at Egremont, Cheshire, on Aug. 14th, 1915.

29310, nestling, marked by Mr. A. W. Boyd at Delamere Forest, Cheshire, on June 17th, 1912. Reported by Mr. P. Hulme within two or three miles on May 16th, 1915.

22135, nestling, marked as 29310 on June 9th, 1913. Reported by Mr. W. Greaves at the Fly Flats breeding colony, near Halifax, Yorks., on June 5th, 1915.

28436, nestling, marked by Mr. A. Bankes near Corfe Castle, Dorset, on June 18th, 1912. Reported by Mr. A. H. Callaway at Tamerton Foliot, near Plymouth, Devon, on Dec. 20th, 1915.

60400, nestling, marked by Mr. P. A. Buxton at Studland, Swanage, Dorset, on July 9th, 1913. Reported by Mr. W. Skinner at Hamworthy, Dorset, on July 24th, 1915.

BRITISH LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus f. affinis*).—

33796, nestling, marked by Miss A. Pease at Farne Islands, Northumberland, on Aug. 2nd, 1913. Reported by Mr. W. C. Tait at Foja, near Figueira, Portugal, on Oct. 17th, 1915.

34771, marked as 33796 in Aug., 1914. Reported by M. L. Déjean near Concarneau, Finistère, France, about middle of July, 1915.

34394, nestling, marked by Mr. H. W. Robinson at Foulshaw, Westmorland, on July 6th, 1915. Reported by Mr. W. C. Tait near Oporto, Portugal, in Oct. 1915.

MOORHEN (*Gallinula ch. chloropus*).—65089, adult, marked by Mr. E. de Hamel at Tamworth, Warwickshire, on June 19th, 1915. Reported by Mr. H. H. C. Horsfall at Erdington, Warwickshire, on Nov. 6th, 1915.



NOTES



BIRDS AT DUNGENESS IN 1915.

IN addition to the Surf-Scoter and Yellow-browed Warbler already recorded, I think a few other birds that I have seen at Dungeness this year deserve a record. Probably some of the following occur regularly on this part of the coast at certain seasons, but as they have not yet been recorded on more than a few occasions, it seems advisable to give the exact data. As I have not been able to spend more than three or four consecutive days at Dungeness during 1915, I cannot add any information of value on the general course of migration.

On April 19th I saw a young Iceland Gull (*Larus leucopterus*) amongst the crowds of gulls, young and old, that haunt the shingle near the Hoppen Pits at all seasons. Whenever it flew its peculiar cry was even more noticeable than its "bleached" plumage. As I noted a year ago (Vol. VIII., p. 53), one or two birds of the species seem to winter in the district each year, according to Mr. Austen, the watcher; in further support of this, I saw a bird in immature plumage again on January 18th, 1916, and Mr. Austen told me he had seen one from time to time for some weeks; from his description of its plumage it was evidently the same bird.

My next visit was from June 8th to 11th, when all the Terns and other birds were busy breeding. It was especially surprising, therefore, to find quite a crowd of Terns collected on the point on the morning of the 11th, and amongst them one Black Tern (*Hydrochelidon nigra*). As I watched them fishing in a good-sized company just off the point, one suddenly came past me that appeared to have a blackish beak with orange or yellow base; however, I saw the beak for a very short moment only, and may have been mistaken. This bird refused to come close to shore again, but its shape was so distinct from the Common Tern, with which it associated, that I could easily pick it out whenever I looked for it. I strongly suspect that it was a Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*), though, of course, the evidence is not sufficient to form a definite record. Unfortunately this is not a species with which I am familiar. These were not by any means the only non-breeding species in evidence at that time.

From August 26th to September 1st the most interesting birds of the phase of migration then proceeding seemed to be Pied Flycatchers (*Muscicapa hypoleuca*) in the bushes, and Arctic Skuas (*Stercorarius parasiticus*) chasing the Terns off the point.

On the 30th I saw two unusual birds : in the bushes by the Hoppen Pits an Aquatic Warbler (*Acrocephalus aquaticus*) at very close quarters, and out at sea, flying down Channel a good way out, a Great Shearwater (*Puffinus gravis*). With regard to the former it may be well to add that on September 7th and subsequent days, in 1907, my brother, C. J. Alexander, and I saw two or three Aquatic Warblers in Romney Marsh (one of them at the Hoppen Pits) which, I believe, have not been recorded. This strengthens the suggestion of Dr. N. F. Ticehurst in the *History of the Birds of Kent* that the species may occur annually in the marsh ; and I may add that I have not spent more than a single day there in late August or September between 1907 and 1915.

The day before I saw the Yellow-browed Warbler, on September 23rd, a flock of fourteen Sooty Shearwaters (*Puffinis griseus*) flew close past the point, going down Channel. This flock contained one more than the flock I saw on October 20th, 1913 (Vol. VII., p. 226). From my own observations it would therefore seem not improbable that Shearwaters occur annually in these waters, possibly even in fair numbers. On the other hand, neither Messrs. Austen nor Tart, the watchers, seem familiar with these birds.

On October 27th I saw three Rough-legged Buzzards (*Buteo lagopus*) moving southward in circles ; I saw the pale bar across the upper side of the tail of one of the three as it turned. These birds at least met no untimely end in their passage across the country, for by the time they were lost to sight they were far away over the Channel. Two days previously I found the remains of a Great Grey Shrike (*Lanius excubitor*) which had apparently been dead two or three weeks.

H. G. ALEXANDER.

ROSE-COLOURED STARLING IN FLINTSHIRE.

By chance I came across the following note in the *London Journal* for September 21st, 1861 : " A Curious Bird.—Mr. L. Hughes, principal keeper of the Air Lighthouse, Flintshire, shot in his garden a few days ago a bird bearing evident peculiarities of the blackbird species, and of the ordinary size, but most curiously coloured. The bird bore a beautiful plume, about three-quarters of an inch long ; the tail and

wings were all of a jet black, and the remainder a beautiful flesh-colour."

Dr. W. H. Dobie in his *Birds of West Cheshire, Denbighshire and Flintshire* (1893), quotes from Mr. A. O. Walker's diary that a Rose-coloured Starling was "killed at Point of Air (circ. December), 1862, at lighthouse." This note is again copied by Mr. Forrest in his *Fauna of North Wales*. Considering how rare the species is in Wales, it seems probable that these two notes refer to the same bird, and the first is certain to be correct. September is a more likely month for the occurrence than December, and Mr. Walker's informant probably spoke from memory. T. A. COWARD.

LAPLAND BUNTING IN CO. DOWN.

A MALE Lapland Bunting (*Calcarius l. lapponicus*) was caught a few weeks ago (in January, 1916) at Killough, co. Down, along with a lot of Linnets and sent to Belfast, and is now in the possession of a well-known bird fancier of this city, where I had the pleasure of examining it.

WM. C. WRIGHT.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD IN BERKSHIRE.

A ROUGH-LEGGED Buzzard (*Buteo l. lugopus*) was killed near Wallingford in November, 1915, and sent to Mr. Topp, taxidermist, of Reading, on the 18th. Unfortunately it was not sexed.

A female Common Buzzard was trapped at Whitechurch (Oxfordshire) on or about October 19th, 1915.

HEATLEY NOBLE.

SPOONBILL IN DEVON.

ON January 7th, 1916, whilst travelling in the express to Plymouth, I saw a Spoonbill (*Platalca l. leucorodia*) on the mud-flats between Teignmouth and Newton Abbot. It was not far from the line, and shuffled away as the train passed, but did not appear greatly disconcerted thereby. I had a short but very clear view of the bird. It will be interesting to know for how long this visitor remained unmolested in that region. I fear it will scarcely have escaped destruction.

The only other example I have seen was in Northumberland on May 25th, 1904, and many gunners tried to get this bird, but I believe unsuccessfully. It was seen again on June 4th of the same year.

CATHARINE HODGKIN.

INCREASE OF TUFTED DUCKS IN
CO. TIPPERARY.

THE increase of the Tufted Duck (*Nyroca fuligula*) in co. Tipperary as a breeding species within the last few years has been very marked, but it has a parallel in many other parts of Great Britain.

In 1900, Ussher considered the appearance of a pair on Lough Derg during May 1899 worthy of record, but when I visited this lake in June, 1913, Tufted Ducks were in pairs everywhere and on the Tipperary side they were especially numerous. Around two small islands near Dromineer, more than fifty were riding on the water, mostly idling, their heads resting on their backs, with the bills pointing to the tails. Both ducks and drakes emitted loud calls. A few trees and stunted bushes of guelder roses grew on these islands, and the grass was long and abundant. Amongst this the ducks were breeding and I found many nests with eggs in various stages of incubation, while one brood of young recently hatched swam about, packed up so tightly together that they resembled a bunch of floating weeds, for which I, at first, mistook them.

Generally, near the occupied nesting sites, perhaps only a couple of feet away, a little pile of broken-up eggshells marked the spot where the young had been hatched the previous season.

During a long day spent on the lake, I only observed two pairs of Red-breasted Mergansers—a species once so common there that anglers offered rewards for their destruction. Great Crested Grebes were around some of the reed beds, but I failed to find any nests.

C. J. CARROLL.

ARCTIC SKUA SOARING IN PURSUIT OF TERNS.

EARLY in September, 1915, I watched an Arctic Skua (*Stercorarius parasiticus*) attacking some Common Terns in Blakeney Harbour, in a distinctly unusual manner. The Terns, gradually mounting to a great height in the air, were closely followed by the Skua, till they reached such an altitude that they resembled nothing so much as a flock of Rooks mobbing a Kestrel. Presently, soaring round and round and gradually moving inland, they vanished out of sight.

I have never seen a Skua chase Terns at any great height before, and Edward Ramm, the famous gunner, who was with me at the time, was as interested as I was in the sight.

CLIFFORD BORRER.

COMMON GUILLEMOTS BREEDING IN
CO. WATERFORD.

As the Common Guillemot (*Uria l. troille*) has not been known to breed in co. Waterford; it may be well to record that I discovered a small colony at the eastern end of that coast during 1915. C. J. CARROLL.

SHORE-LARK IN DEVON.—Mr. W. Walmesly White has sent us a detailed description of a bird which he saw on the estuary of the Otter in south Devon, first on November 17th, 1915, again on December 7th, and subsequently on several occasions until January 20th, 1916. Mr. White observed the bird very closely with binoculars and we consider that his identification of it as a Shore-Lark (*Eremophila a. flava*), and probably a female, is fully justified. On each occasion the bird was alone and was feeding among the tide-drift on the shores of the estuary.

GREY PLOVER, RUFF, LITTLE STINT, CURLEW-SANDPIPER, AND GREEN SANDPIPER IN RENFREWSHIRE.—We have several times drawn attention to Mr. J. Robertson's observations on waders seen at Balgray reservoir in east Renfrewshire (*cf.* Vols. V., p. 230; VI., p. 284; VII., p. 237). Mr. Robertson now records (*Scot. Nat.*, 1915, p. 357) the presence in the autumn of 1915 of a number of waders at the same place, which it should be remarked is an inland locality. The following are the most noteworthy considering their scarcity in the west of Scotland:—*Squatarola squatarola*, three September 30th, one October 2nd and 3rd; *Machetes pugnae*, one August 27th and September 5th and 12th; *Erolia ferruginea*, one September 12th, one or two 30th, and October 2nd and 3rd; *E. m. minuta*, two September 12th, three 30th; *Tringa ochropus*, one September 5th.

GREAT SNIPE IN ELGINSHIRE.—Mr. W. Ogg records (*Scot. Nat.* 1915, p. 357) that an example of *Gallinago media* was shot on the Spynie marshes, but no date is given.

ICELAND GULL IN ARGYLLSHIRE.—Mr. J. Robertson reports (*Scot. Nat.* 1915, p. 358) that an immature male *Larus leucopterus* was obtained at Inveraray on August 27th, 1915. The bird is always scarce on the west side of the mainland of Great Britain.



REVIEWS

British Breeding Ducks. By C. S. Meares. (Extract from the *Transactions of the London Nat. Hist. Soc.* 1914, pp. 48-69.)

THIS is a workmanlike paper on those species of Anatidæ which breed in the British Isles, and includes the Grey Lag-Goose and Sheld-Duck as well as the true ducks. It is systematically arranged and deals in turn with the food, range, breeding habits and eggs, down, etc. As the last section is based on Mr. Meares's own observations, it contains no data with regard to the Scaup or Long-tailed Duck.

We notice that Mr. Meares retains the name "flank feathers" for the small feathers which are generally interspersed with the down. This expression must not be taken literally, as he is careful to explain that the larger feathers which are sometimes present (and which do occasionally come from the flanks) are ignored. In describing the feathers in the Sheld-Duck's nest, he gives two types, *i.e.*, those with nearly black tips and those with chestnut tips, and states that intermediate ones are also often found. The chestnut-tipped feathers are obviously taken from the band round the upper-breast, and the black-tipped ones from the middle of the abdomen, but neither type can possibly come from the flanks. We have commonly found pure white feathers also among the down, and should say that three distinct types were present.

The fact is, that with the exception of Mr. Noble's useful paper in *British Birds*, and some scattered notes on the various downs, there is no really full and adequate treatment of this interesting subject. The published notes on the subject are not based on sufficient material, and hitherto no method of reproducing the delicate shades of colour in the various downs has proved satisfactory. The illustrations of feathers given in the present paper are very crude, but in one or two cases seem to be more typical than those selected by Mr. Noble. The nesting notes are good and are evidently the results of personal observation, and most of the information given is correct as far as we have tested it. There is no doubt as to the Scoter having bred in the Shetlands, though Mr. Waterston's observations have not been fully recorded. The first Irish nest was discovered by the late Major H. Trevelyan, and the first Scaup's nest was actually found by Captain R. Sandeman. The nesting of the Wigeon in Yorkshire can hardly be said to be proved, the recent records being due to

semi-domesticated birds, and we think that further evidence is desirable in the case of asserted breeding in Merioneth.

F.C.R.J.

British Birds. Written and illustrated by A. Thorburn, F.Z.S. With eighty plates in colour. $13 \times 10\frac{1}{2}$ inches. 4 Vols. £6 6s. net. (Longmans.) Vol. II. 1915.

WE have already described the general plan of Mr. Thorburn's beautiful book in our notice of the first volume (*antea*, p. 31). The book can certainly be commended to those who require a drawing-room or library book with beautifully drawn and well reproduced coloured illustrations of British birds at a moderate price. Many will no doubt object to the plan of grouping a number of species on a single plate, but it must be said that this plan has enabled the publishers to produce the book at a comparatively low cost, considering the excellent quality of the work. In this second volume the awkwardness of the grouping is not so marked, as the birds are for the most part larger, while the pictures of the Golden Eagle and Eagle-Owl, each occupying a single plate, are a great relief to the eye. Mr. Thorburn's drawings possess a beautiful finish and have a clean, bold effect, but his birds are perhaps rather too consistently brilliant and "spick and span." In this volume, for example, the female Red-footed Falcon is abnormally red, while the Egyptian Vulture is cleaner than any we have ever seen, and the back of the Buff-backed Heron is too bright. The iris of the young Gannet should not have been yellow; the Sky-Lark is an unusually red example, the crest-feathers of the Crested-Lark are not well depicted, and the characteristic dark patches on the sides of the breast of the Short-toed Lark are not well defined. Such details, however, are but small blemishes in a beautiful series of drawings.

H.F.W.

LETTERS

“WAIT AND SEE” PHOTOGRAPHY.

To the Editors of BRITISH BIRDS.

SIRS,—Miss E. L. Turner's diverting article on “Wait and See” Photography in the October issue of BRITISH BIRDS induces me to send the two enclosed prints.

When home on my last leave in November I spent a day on a large marsh in Bedfordshire, a favourite resort for Wild Duck. It has a broad stream running through it, and several temporary ponds in winter. Here I followed Miss Turner's advice and “sat in a tent



Fig. 1. A PAIR OF MALLARDS.



Fig. 2. TUFTED DUCK.

with a reflex.” Bird-photographers are continually grumbling about their bad luck, but once in a while one has a stroke of real good luck, and such was the case with me that day. First of all, the sky was cloudless. Secondly, there were Wild Duck there, any number. I put up my tent on a hillock looking down on to one of the small lakes, and there I waited for three hours.

Some of the ducks came into the neighbourhood of the tent, and soon I was able to make the exposure (Fig. 1). I had almost decided to go, for the noise of the focal plane shutter had frightened the birds up, but the weather was so fine and the life around so interesting that I changed my mind, and upon that followed the best stroke of luck that I have ever experienced in bird-work. I was watching some Lapwings and Rooks in a field behind me when I heard the arrival of a small flight of Duck on my pond. I turned carefully, and there saw some Tufted Duck, the first I have ever seen on this marsh. One of them actually came within two feet of me, taking a suspicious survey of my hide. My excitement was great when I released the shutter and saw the flock rise, and then thankful for having secured a photograph, I decamped.

WM. ROWAN.

ST. ALBANS, February 6th, 1916.

THE BIRDS OF RENFREWSHIRE.

To the Editors of BRITISH BIRDS.

SIRS,—Referring to the remarks (*antea*, pp. 214-15) on our paper published in the *Scottish Naturalist* (1915, pp. 124-7, 244-50, 268-75), we must point out that no Willow-Tit is mentioned by us. The Scottish form of the Marsh-Tit is included as a Renfrewshire bird. Thanks to the influence of *British Birds*, a local form of Marsh-Tit is now recognized in Scotland, though Macgillivray, when writing his great work, long ago unconsciously described some of its distinguishing features. But that this form is more closely related to the Willow-Tits than to the typical Marsh-Tit has, in our opinion, yet to be proved.

As to Gray's record for a second Renfrew example of the American Hawk-Owl (Greenock, December, 1871) we are not aware that this has been discredited. While we have great doubt that any American Hawk-Owl has been a genuine unassisted visitor to the British Isles (it is significant that none has been taken in Ireland) we must accept Gray's records, unless these can be shown to be erroneous, so long as the bird remains on the British list.

T. THORNTON MACKEITH,
JOHN ROBERTSON.

BURNDALE, KILMACOLM,

7th February, 1916.

[In their paper Messrs. Mackeith and Robertson refer to the bird (on pages 126-7) which we call the British Willow-Tit (*Parus atricapillus kleinschmidti*) as a Scottish form of Marsh-Tit. We do not, however, see any justification for this, as the same bird lives in England side by side with the British Marsh-Tit (*Parus palustris dresseri*), while a very nearly related form of our Willow-Tit (*P. atricapillus rhenanus*) lives in Holland, Belgium and France, side by side with a very nearly related form of our Marsh-Tit (*P. palustris longirostris*). This being so, these Willow-Tits cannot obviously be forms of the Marsh-Tit.

With regard to the Hawk-Owl, in Dresser's *Birds of Europe* in the article on the American Hawk-Owl (Vol. V., pp. 310-11), the writer states that Mr. R. Gray has written to him to say that the Greenock bird cannot now be traced (this is the 1868 specimen). "Mr. Boyd, however, has still some hope of being able to find him [*i.e.* the owner] out. He tells me that *another* specimen of the Hawk-Owl was taken in the flesh to the same shop a few months ago and that he saw and examined it. It was in very poor condition and as it had been left by a sailor, it was concluded that he had caught it on board some ship." This is evidently the 1871 bird: and we may add that Mr. J. Henderson was informed by a friend of his in Glasgow that about this time a bird was offered to him for sale by a sailor from a timber vessel who stated that it had flown on board in the St. Lawrence. Evidence as to its capture in Scotland appears to be entirely lacking and the record has been ignored, rightly we think, by Saunders and others subsequently. Perhaps Messrs. Mackeith and Robertson have some further information about this bird, which would remove the doubt which must at present exist regarding its authenticity as a British taken example.—EDS.]

BRITISH BIRDS

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ASSISTED BY

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ON "WAIT AND SEE" PHOTOGRAPHY.

PART III.

BY

E. L. TURNER. H.M.B.O.U.

PERHAPS the most interesting birds which came within range of my camera by the Holy Island mere were two Jack Snipe. We had flushed them several times from a certain spot, so on April 1st I put up a tent there.

The next day one came running past almost as soon as I entered the tent. It was intent upon feeding, rapidly thrusting its bill into the ooze in search of succulent morsels. As Jack Snipe are so small, it was some time before I could catch this one in a fairly open spot free from interfering grasses. It seemed rather greedy. At any rate it ate too fast, for by and by it sat in front of me and had a violent attack of hiccoughs. While this fit of indigestion lasted, the bird crouched in a hollow and seemed very unhappy. Having recovered from its temporary indisposition, the Snipe began to run about again in search of more food. It made little short dashes to and fro, frequently heaving its body up and down like a Sandpiper. This movement was not continuous, but intermittent.

While following the one bird round with my reflex camera, I suddenly saw a second Jack Snipe sound asleep on a stone about four feet away. The absence of the median line, one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Jack Snipe, is plainly seen in the sleeping bird.

Everyone knows that it is not easy to disturb a Jack Snipe. The rattle of my focal-plane shutter even failed to rouse the sleeper, nor did it alarm the first bird or interrupt his pursuits. Eventually the sleeping bird awoke, roused by a scarcely audible remark of his companion. After shaking himself, he stepped down from the stone and began to feed unconcernedly. Finally, both pattered out of sight, leaving the soft mud honeycombed by the innumerable probings of their sensitive bills.

The next day four of us crept up to the wall close to which the Jack Snipe had been sleeping. He was in the old spot, and again fast asleep. This was about eleven o'clock. I disturbed him in climbing the loose stone wall, and he did not return. After that, both birds kept to the east end of the mere. I last saw them on April 15th.



Fig. 1. JACK SNIPE: "ONE CAME RUNNING PAST."
(Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.)

They fed regularly every day from about 11.30 till 3 p.m.

All the birds frequenting the mere had their regular feeding hours. Roughly speaking, for most species (exclusive of duck) these were from soon after dawn till about 8 a.m. (during April and May) and from 11.30 till 3 p.m., and again for an hour before sunset. Every day, at 11.45, one Heron (and sometimes two) alighted at the east end of the mere and gradually worked westwards towards my tent. Sometimes the Lapwing mobbed them and drove them to the opposite side. Black-

headed Gulls also joined in this chase. But the feeding was not so good there and the Heron quickly returned.

In some lights, especially in strong diffused light, the grey Heron is almost indistinguishable from the grey water, for this reason, it is difficult to follow their movements for any length of time. They are exceptionally long-sighted and possess an extraordinary keen sense



FIG. 2. JACK SNIPE: RECOVERING FROM ITS TEMPORARY
INDISPOSITION.

(*Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.*)

of hearing. Herons are alive to the faintest sounds, and can detect slight movements which would escape the notice of many species of birds. The young bird in fig. 4 remained almost in the position in which he is photographed fully half an hour after I had dropped the shutter. He scarcely seemed to breathe, but stood still facing the tent as long as he thought fit.

It would sometimes take the Herons on the mere one and a half hours or even longer to walk within range of



FIG. 3. JACK SNIPE; ASLEEP AND AWAKE.
(*Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.*)

my camera. The Heron displays no vulgar haste over his meals. He is an aristocrat amongst birds and the incarnation of leisured ease. Yet when he strikes, it is with the rapidity of a swift rapier thrust. So, although the distance between the spot where the Herons alighted and my tent was short of two hundred yards, it took time to traverse this. I always kept one eye on the



Fig. 4. YOUNG HERONS STUDYING THE PHOTOGRAPHER.
(Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.)

lordly bird, and the other on less dignified feeders. If I happened to photograph anything passing my tent when the Heron was half-way along, he would pause for a moment, then slowly retrace his steps. When at a safe distance he would stand motionless, erect, and vigilant, and by and by advance again. With luck, and by refraining from photographing anything else, I could secure one photograph of the Heron a day.

When taking wing, Herons are a long time getting under way: long enough to enable the photographer

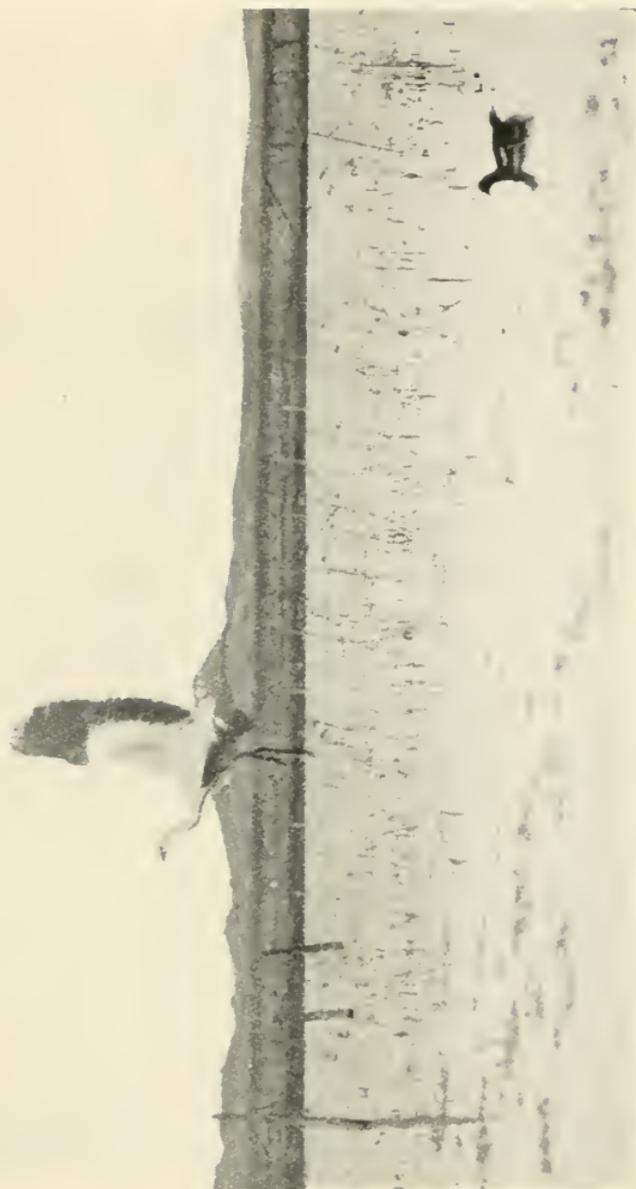


Fig. 5 HERON : THE "KICK-OFF."
(*Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.*)

to change his plate and get another shot, for several seconds elapse before the bird's legs, which are tense after the kick off, can be gathered up and thrust out behind. (Figs. 5. 6 and 7).



Fig. 6. HERON: SLOWLY RISING.
(Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.)

Many Jackdaws came down to bathe in the mere, but I did not succeed in getting good photographs of them. They generally chose a spot where cattle came to drink. I put up a tent there, but each time it was knocked down by a mildly inquisitive young bull.

One day a Jackdaw alighted on the tent when I was inside and investigated every inch of it outside. He clung to the sides and tried hard to get his head through my peep holes. Then he rained heavy blows with his



Fig. 7. HERON: GETTING UNDER WAY WHILE BEING MOBBED BY A BLACK-HEADED GULL.

(Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.)

beak all over the top, and I had to crouch down in order to avoid them. Meanwhile, he kept up a running conversation with himself and seemed extremely indignant about something. Curiously enough, the Jackdaw was mobbed and finally driven away by a pair of Terns.

MANX ORNITHOLOGICAL NOTES: 1914-15.

BY

P. G. RALFE.

THE following notes continue the Island's record in the article in *BRITISH BIRDS*, Vol. VII., pp. 313-15.

CHOUGH (*Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax*).—The site in the mine-working (*B.B.* 1912, p. 301) is still yearly occupied. The building illustrated in *Birds of the Isle of Man* (p. 314) having been demolished, its nesting-pair (probably) established itself about a mile higher up the same valley, in a group of ruined mine-buildings. In 1915 the nest was in a wheel-case at the end of the group, in a hole in one of the walls, some fifteen feet from the bottom, and only two or three from the top. On May 22 it contained four eggs easily seen from the opposite wall, but on going to photograph it on the 24th, it had been robbed and pulled out. This nest was rather slight: the hole was shallow, and singularly easy of access.

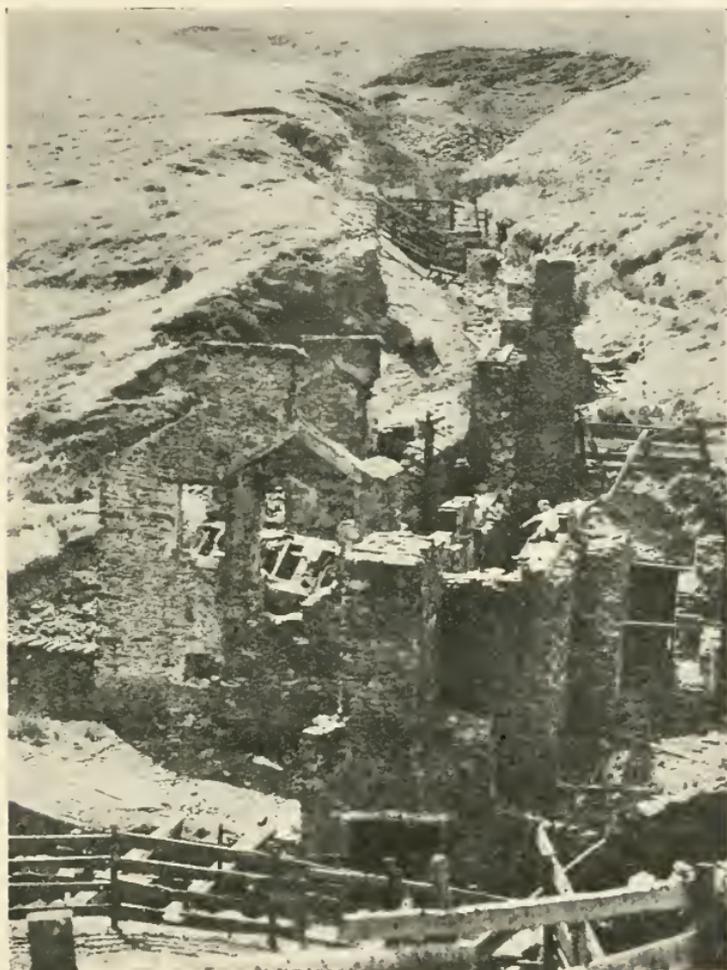
CROSSBILL (*Loxia c. curvirostra*).—The captive bird, probably of Manx birth, mentioned in *Birds of the Isle of Man* (p. 73) as taken near Ramsey in July, 1901, lived till September 3rd, 1915. During these fourteen years its plumage changed very little, Mr. Graves tells me, but it sang till about a year before its death.

MISTLE-THRUSH (*Turdus r. viscivorus*).—Mr. J. B. Keig has shown me another of this bird's curious Manx nesting-sites. In 1915 there was a nest at Ballacarn, Ballaugh, on the rail of a cart, one of a row standing in the farm-yard. It hatched out successfully. There are trees close to the spot.

REDSTART (*Phanicurus ph. phanicurus*).—On September 17th, 1915, Mr. F. S. Graves saw a specimen, female or immature, at Ballaquane, near Peel.

DIPPER (*Cinclus cinclus*).—In November 1915 one was killed by striking a telephone wire at the "Iron Bridge" in the town of Castletown.

SWIFT (*Apus a. apus*).—The Swift is so local in Man that it is worth mentioning that in 1914 and 1915 a small colony seemed to be established at the south end of the town of Ramsey.



CHOUGH'S NESTING PLACE IN RUINED MINE BUILDING, 1915.

(The nest is in the wall under the seated figure.)

(Photographed by T. H. Midwood).

BARN-OWL (*Tyto a. alba*).—In July 1914 a specimen of this rare Manx bird was obtained at Grenaby, Malew, and is now in the possession of Mr. J. C. Bacon, of Seafield.

REDSHANK (*Tringa totanus*).—Increasingly abundant on the Manx shores, now not only in the south. In May 1915 a pair was evidently nesting (though the nest was not found) at the Lagagh in Andreas, a patch of swampy ground surrounding the vestiges of an ancient fortification.

WOODCOCK (*Scolopax rusticola*).—Mr. T. Hadden reports a nest, which hatched out in 1915, in a new locality, the plantation at the head of Glenroy, near Laxey.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus murinus*). (See *B.B.*, 1914, p. 315).—In 1914 the nest was again found in the same neighbourhood, and on May 14th contained three eggs. One of the young birds was afterwards ringed by Mr. H. Storey.

LAND-RAIL (*Crex crex*).—Mr. Graves tells me that about the end of January 1915 a specimen was caught alive at Shenvalla, near Peel, and shown to Mr. C. Kay there.

A SISKIN COLONY IN CO. TIPPERARY.

BY

C. J. CARROLL.

A NUMBER of Siskins (*Carduelis spinus*), considerably more than sixty pairs, breed in the conifers growing on some elevated ground in south Tipperary. They do not favour the denser parts, but prefer to nest beside "clearings" near but not quite on the fringes of the woods: in trees overlooking avenues or in somewhat open straggling plantations. Scotch pines predominate, nevertheless the nests are more frequently built in spruces, occasionally in larches. They are usually from 40 to 60 feet up, towards the tip of a lateral bough even 16 feet out, but I have seen them beside the main stem of a spruce or only a few inches from it. As a rule they are exceedingly difficult to see from the ground. The birds, however, betray the situation by flying straight to the tree, alighting on the branch some distance from the nest and then creeping along until they reach it. The female does the building and carries all the materials, but the cock is most devoted and accompanies her on each visit, selecting a perch from which he can see her the whole time and immediately she has finished they go off together. While she is on the eggs he often sings in the same tree, always in the one position with his breast towards her as if the outburst were intended solely for her benefit. Siskins sing merrily every day up to about 2 p.m., after which they remain silent.

A few sets of eggs are found at the end of April; the majority, however, are laid in May and some birds—not many—have second broods in June or July.

The young are fed by both parents, who seem to go long distances in search of food. Indeed, during some violent thunder showers in 1912 three broods at least were drowned in their nests before the old birds could get back to save them.

By the winter the Siskins have all formed into little flocks, and together with Redpolls they wander through the country on the outskirts of their breeding territory. They do not come in again until the spring. An exceptionally early bird was back and singing on February 24th, but I have seen them still flocked on March 9th, and many do not return until the end of that month or later. I give below particulars

of twenty-three clutches of eggs examined in successive years :—

April	25.	4, 4 eggs, incubation began.
..	29.	4 eggs, clutch possibly incomplete.
May	2.	4, 4, 4 eggs, fresh.
..	6.	5, 4 eggs, fresh.
..	7.	4 eggs, fresh ; 5, 4 eggs, incubation began.
..	8.	5, 5 eggs, incubation began.
..	11.	2 eggs, clutch incomplete : 3 eggs, incubation began.
..	13.	5, 5, 5 eggs, fresh.
..	19.	5, 4 eggs, fresh.
..	20.	5 eggs, fresh.
..	28.	4 eggs, incubation began.
..	31.	5 eggs, fresh.

Nests : in spruce, 12 ; in Scotch pine, 8 ; in larch, 3.

As the habits of Siskins seem to differ according to the locality, it must be understood that these notes refer strictly to the Tipperary colony.

[Reference may be given to the notes on breeding habits of the Siskin which appeared in Vol. III., pp. 188, 300 and 330.—EDS.]

ROBERT WARREN.

FEW men have during a long lifetime pursued the study of our home birds with more devoted zeal than the veteran Irish ornithologist Robert Warren, who passed away at his co. Cork residence, Ardnaree, Monkstown, on the 26th of November last, at the age of eighty-six.

Born at Cork on the 22nd of March, 1829, he spent the earlier years of his life chiefly at the family home, Castle Warren, co. Cork, where the tastes that afterwards distinguished him quickly developed. Exploring the haunts of sea-birds along the southern coast and on the neighbouring islands, he and his younger brother Edward soon acquired a knowledge that rendered their help valuable to William Thompson, who was then collecting material for his work on the Natural History of Ireland. A conversation with Thompson on the subject of Gulls took place during a visit to the Belfast Museum about the year 1846, and led to more special attention being paid by the brothers to these birds. This attention was rewarded early in 1849, when an Iceland Gull shot in Cork Harbour proved their first important prize. From 1847 to the end of 1851, Warren kept up an active correspondence with Thompson, many of whose letters to him are still preserved, and show high appreciation of the value of the younger naturalist's notes. Much of the matter of Warren's communications—up to the close of 1850—is embodied in the three volumes devoted to birds in Thompson's work.

Early in 1851 the Warrens left their Cork residence and settled in Sligo, on the shores of Killala Bay; and it is with his work at the ornithology of that region—previously almost a *terra incognita*—that Robert Warren's name has come to be most largely associated. In the first spring spent in his new home he had the double good fortune to shoot the first White Wagtail obtained in Ireland, and to find that the shores of Killala Bay were frequented by considerable numbers of the Sandwich Tern—a species not at that time known to have any other Irish breeding-station than Rockabill, off the Dublin coast, where it had been discovered only the year before. In the autumn that followed, another welcome discovery was made, a great migration of Skuas—*Stercorarius parasiticus* and (as afterwards proved) *S. pomarinus* also—being observed by his brother and himself on a series of wild October days passing over Bartragh Island and the Moy estuary, along a route that was shown by continued

investigation to be followed annually by these migrants, though the birds were only visible when rough weather obliged them to fly low.

For fifty-eight years from this date he resided at Moyview, giving all the time that his pre-occupation as a busy farmer allowed to his much-loved field pursuits. In 1875 he made the unexpected addition (for so westerly a station) of the Pied Flycatcher to the list of Irish birds; and it was chiefly due to his vigilance that the Spotted Redshank and the Glaucous and Iceland Gulls were ascertained to visit Ireland with much greater frequency than had been supposed. In knowledge of the habits of shore-birds generally, he acquired a proficiency far ahead of most of his brother-naturalists, and A. G. More deservedly wrote of him to a correspondent (in 1893): "Mr. Warren knows the Gulls better than any one else in Ireland." He frequently undertook exploring expeditions through different parts of the western provinces, and reported results to the Royal Irish Academy, besides contributing many notes (chiefly on birds) to scientific journals.

When the decision to bring out a new standard work on Irish birds was arrived at in 1890, it was proposed that the four leading ornithologists of Ireland should be entrusted with its preparation; but the withdrawal of two through More's death and Barrington's election to proceed independently with his Migration inquiry, left the actual responsibility to Ussher and Warren, whose names appear on the title-page as joint authors of the book. As is well known, the writing of *The Birds of Ireland* was almost wholly the work of R. J. Ussher, Warren contributing only the chapters on the White Wagtail, Surf Scoter, Spotted Redshank, Greenshank, Bar-tailed Godwit, and Sandwich Tern. But it is unnecessary to say that the amount of material contributed by Warren in the voluminous notes he placed at his friend's disposal was such as amply to justify the retention of his name as joint author.

As one who had contributed so largely to both the standard works on Irish birds—works separated by an interval of half a century—Warren occupied a unique position among the naturalists of his native country, and his friendship was much prized by all who possessed it. His robust constitution and active outdoor habits kept him to an advanced age in full possession of the health and strength that he had enjoyed since boyhood, and when well over seventy he would still walk for miles with a rapidity that sometimes taxed the energies of comparatively young companions. His conversation

was animated and highly interesting, whether on birds, men, or books—for he was an eager reader, though caustic enough in his comments on “theorists” and “doctrinaires” whose treatises he was apt to dismiss with the word “bosh.”

Giving up his farm at Moyview in 1909, he returned at the age of eighty to his native county, where he passed the last six years of his life—his last western exploring tour being taken in 1911 in the company of his attached friend R. M. Barrington along the North Mayo coast. His death—which occurred only ten weeks after Barrington’s—was the result of an accident sustained in his own house. His activity of mind and keen interest in ornithology remained unabated to the end.

C. B. MOFFAT.

NOTES

SWALLOW RINGED IN LANCASHIRE AND RECOVERED IN CAPE PROVINCE.

IT will interest readers of *BRITISH BIRDS* to learn that I have just received the following letter:—

SALEM,

NEAR GRAHAMSTOWN, C.P.,

SOUTH AFRICA.

To Witherby,
High Holborn, London.

February 6th, 1916.

SIR,

This morning I picked up here a dead Swallow and noticed a piece of metal bent around one leg just above the foot. This I took off and straightened out. On one side was a number 82620, on the other side was inscribed as near as I could make out, "Inform Witherby, High Holborn, London." I am therefore sending this in the hope that it will reach its destination, and prove of interest.

Yours faithfully,

S. GEO. AMM.

The bird referred to was a Swallow (*Chelidon r. rustica*), ringed as a nestling by Mr. F. W. Sherwood at Lytham, Lancashire, on July 3rd, 1915.

This is the third Swallow ringed under the *BRITISH BIRDS* Scheme which has been reported from South Africa. The first was ringed as an adult at Rosehill, Cheadle, Staffordshire, on May 6th, 1911, by Mr. J. R. B. Masefield, and was caught at a farm near Utrecht, Natal, on December 27th, 1912, and was kindly reported by Mr. C. H. Ruddock (Vol. VI., p. 277). The second was ringed as a nestling at Skelmorlie, Ayrshire, on July 27th, 1912, by Mr. R. O. Blyth, and was caught at Riet Vallei, Orange Free State, on March 16th, 1913, and kindly reported by Mr. A. C. Theron (Vol. VII., p. 167).

This third instance, two or three hundred miles further south and, like the others, in the eastern half of the continent, is extremely interesting, and makes it possible to state that, in any case, some of the Swallows which breed in various parts of the British Isles winter normally in the extreme south-east of Africa.

We tender our grateful thanks to Mr. Amm for informing us of this interesting event, and we must congratulate Mr. Sherwood on having ringed a bird which has been proved to have made so remarkable a journey.

H. F. WITHERBY.

CROSSBILL NESTING IN SHROPSHIRE.

EVER since the invasion of Crossbills in 1909-10, a few of these birds have haunted a certain fir-clad hill about six miles north of Shrewsbury. In the spring of 1914, and again in 1915, nests were actually built there, but in neither case were any eggs laid or broods reared, so far as is known. This year, however, Dr. Buckle discovered a pair building a nest on January 31st. He visited the place again on February 10th, and on climbing to the nest—a matter of no small difficulty—found it contained three eggs, which the female was covering. The nest was at the extremity of one of the upper boughs of a fir-tree, and was made of larch twigs at the base, but mainly dried grass at the sides; the lining was of feathers (from a poultry-yard near by) and dead leaves of the wood-rush (*Luzula sylvatica*). This is the first authentic record of the nest and eggs of the Crossbill being found in Shropshire.

H. E. FORREST.

[For a previous record of a nest in Shropshire, see Vol. VI., pp. 371-2.—EDS.]

GREAT GREY SHRIKE IN KENT.

ALTHOUGH the Great Grey Shrike (*Lanius e. excubitor*) is a fairly regular winter visitor to Kent, only three spring occurrences are mentioned by Dr. N. F. Ticehurst in his *Birds of Kent*. It may therefore be of interest to record that I saw an example at Tunbridge Wells on March 17th, 1916.

S. KENDALL BARNES.

EARLY NESTING OF THE WREN.

ON February 9th, 1916, near Callerton, Northumberland, I flushed a Wren (*Troglodytes t. troglodytes*) from a nest which contained one egg. The nest was new, almost wholly exposed and placed about eighteen inches above the ground in a thorn hedge which runs round a wood. The hedge at the point where the nest was placed is well sheltered and close to a colliery.

On revisiting the spot on March 12th in the hope of seeing the nest contain young, I found that it had been removed.

ISAAC CLARK.

BREEDING-HABITS OF THE WRYNECK.

THE following notes of observations made by me on some Wrynecks (*Jynx t. torquilla*) in a garden at Orpington, Kent, may be of interest. In 1913 the Wrynecks arrived on April 15th, as the year before, and almost immediately

started to look at a nest-box eight feet up in a birch tree. They laid seven eggs between the 1st and 10th of June, four of which hatched between the 18th and 22nd, and the young flew on July 12th. In 1914 the Wrynecks were first seen on April 13th, and nested in the same box as the year before. Eight eggs were laid about the beginning of June and hatched on the 20th, while the young flew on July 10th.

Previous to laying in the nest-box the old birds had spent their time between another nest-box and boring a hole in an old stump about five feet high and two feet thick. The hole was started where a piece of bark had fallen off, and was about two and a half inches high, two inches broad, and became six to nine inches deep after three weeks' work. At this time the wood was hard, but rotten, and during the whole operation the stuff removed was like coarse sawdust. I saw no small bits of wood. After the occupation of the nesting-box in the birch tree I saw no Wrynecks at the hole in the stump, so presume that the birds were the same.

In 1915 the bottom of the nesting-box in the birch had become rotten, and some grub had eaten the floor partly away, and in the corner there was a small hole. On May 6th I caught an adult Wryneck in the box and ringed it. They did not, however, breed in the box, but having deepened the hole in the stump which they had started in 1914 to about eighteen inches, the hen laid there ten eggs about the end of May, nine of which eventually hatched. It should be noted that there was no hole or beginning of a hole in the stump when the birds started to bore into it in 1914, but, as already stated, a piece of the bark had dropped off. The wood, though rotten, was quite hard in 1914. In 1915 it was softer, but I had considerable difficulty in enlarging the opening enough with a saw to get at the young to ring them. The hole was just large enough to admit the hand, and it went down straight for over a foot, but at the bottom there was a cavity rather larger than one's fist, but not large enough to accommodate the young without some of them having to sit on the others.

It may be noted that two of the young ones were much smaller than the others, and that one of these remained in the nest a week longer than the others. There was also always one small one in the nest-box broods.

I should be much interested if anyone could give some information regarding the food of the young. The old birds always brought the same kind of food, and never once in the hundreds of times I watched them enter the boxes did I

ever see it vary. It had the appearance of a pinkish-buff sort of mash, like the crushed inside of fir-bark.

S. KENDALL BARNES.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD IN HAMPSHIRE.

AN adult Rough-legged Buzzard (*Buteo l. lagopus*) was caught in a trap at Leckford, near Stockbridge, Hampshire, early in January, 1916.

FRANCIS E. BLAGG.

WIGEON DIVING.

THAT the Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) cannot be regarded ordinarily as a diving duck is, of course, certain. All the testimony we have is to that effect. Saunders says (*Manual*, p. 426. 1889) that "although it does not dive for food," it can do so when wounded and pursued. Dresser declares (*Birds of Europe*, "Wigeon," p. 6. 1876) that "when feeding, it never appears to dive, but stretches down with its neck." Neither Seebohm (*Brit. Birds*, III., p. 540. 1885) nor Millais (*Brit. Surface-feeding Ducks*, 1902) gives any hint that the bird ever dives. Yet one may doubt whether it does not do so more commonly than is usually supposed.

Within the last two years I have kept, pinioned in a pond in my garden, several pairs of Wigeon caught in a decoy on the Essex coast; but, being ducks which feed largely on grass, they will persist in scrambling out of the pond to feed on the grass on the lawn, where they fall a prey to the foxes at night. As a result, I have now only one single female left.

On several occasions, I have watched either this bird or another female (now gone) diving in the pond. Thus, on or about June 15th, 1915, I saw her dive (considerably to my surprise) at least twice, in fairly quick succession, remaining under water for at least two or three seconds on each occasion. Again, as recently as February 13th, 1916, I saw her dive right under, three or four times, once more in fairly quick succession, remaining under water, I estimated, quite five seconds on each occasion. These later dives were made all at the same spot, where the water was eighteen inches or two feet deep, and were undertaken apparently to secure some kind of food which had there sunk to the bottom. On both these and the earlier occasions, the act of diving seemed to be quite easy and natural and to require no premeditation.

MILLER CHRISTY.

[Lord Lilford (*Birds of Northamptonshire*, p. 166) says of the Wigeon: "These birds do not habitually procure their food by diving, although they are very expert in the art."—

EDS.]

GREEN SANDPIPERS IN CO. TIPPERARY.

THE following occurrences of the Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*) around Fethard, Tipperary, have come under my personal observation: One on September 21st, 1904, and another later in the same year; one on December 10th, 1906; one on April 11th, 1908; one on August 29th, 1909; one in August, 1911, and one on August 11th, 1914. C. J. CARROLL.

QUAILS IN COS. TIPPERARY AND WATERFORD.

THE Quail (*Coturnix c. coturnix*) has become so rare in Ireland, that the following records are of interest.

In the spring of 1905 several arrived near Ardfinane, south Tipperary. A brood of young flushed in the beginning of July could only fly some yards. A few birds had been noticed there during many seasons, but once they did not come for five or six years, and since 1905 none have been seen or heard.

On May 8th, 1913, a Quail rose at my feet as I was walking through a grass field within a stone's throw of the coast near the eastern end of co. Waterford.

C. J. CARROLL.

EXTENSIONS OF THE KNOWN RANGE OF THE SCOTTISH CRESTED TITMOUSE.—Mr. W. R. Ogilvie-Grant has recently recorded (*antea*, p. 182) the occurrence of *Parus cristatus scoticus* in October, 1915, in east Ross-shire. The presence of the bird in a firwood in Nairnshire between Loch Loy and the old bar of Findhorn, where it seemed to be breeding in May, 1915, has also recently been recorded (*Scot. Nat.* 1915, p. 285) by Mr. G. G. Blackwood. As the range of the bird so far as known hitherto is so extremely restricted, any record proving an extension, however slight, is of course of great interest, more especially when evidence of breeding is adduced.

The publication of these records has induced Mr. W. Berry to publish (*Scot. Nat.* 1916, p. 68) his observations on the subject. Mr. Berry explains that he has kept silent because he wished to see the species established in the localities in which he found it. Mr. Berry's object was most laudable, but we see no reason why it should not have been achieved in the same way, as we should hope it has been now by the omission of exact localities. We welcome Mr. Berry's records as they are of considerable scientific importance, in that they add to our knowledge of a bird which has as restricted a range as any local European form.

Mr. Berry states that on May 16th, 1910, he came across the Crested Tit in the locality in Nairnshire mentioned by Mr. Blackwood and also in another locality further east: that he knows of them in two distinct localities in the lower reaches of the Findhorn Valley, one he discovered on May 24th, 1910, and the other in September 1915.

Again, in north-east Inverness-shire, Mr. Berry observed the bird on September 14th, 1907, and some miles away from this spot he saw them again in September 1911, and has seen them several times since.

Further, in east Ross-shire he first discovered the species in October 1910 and saw the birds again in the same place on May 12th, 1911, and several times subsequently. On April 5th and May 11th, 1912, he saw them in another locality in east Ross, several miles distant from the first, and here he has observed young scarcely able to fly. On June 16th, 1912, he saw Crested Tits some fifteen miles from the last locality, making in all three places in east Ross-shire. One of these localities Mr. Berry thinks was the same as that recorded by Mr. Grant.

From Mr. Berry's extremely interesting observations it is evident that the westward extension of range of the Scottish Crested Tit is not so recent as the two former records made it appear, if indeed it is recent at all.

RED-BREADED FLYCATCHER AND SHORE-LARKS IN ORKNEY.—Mr. J. Bain records (*Scot. Nat.* 1916, p. 23) from Swona, Orkney, a *Muscicapa p. parva*, on October 7th, 1915, and two *Eremophila a. flava* on the 16th.

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLERS IN ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.—Mr. J. Bain records (*Scot. Nat.* 1916, p. 23) the presence of a *Phylloscopus superciliosus* on Swona, Orkney, on October 6th, 1915. Mr. J. G. Thomson (*t.c.*, p. 24) obtained one on October 8th and saw two others on the 9th at Pentland Skerries, and Mr. G. W. Russell records (*t.c.*) that one was procured at Lerwick, Shetland, on October 18th.

ICTERINE WARBLER AND TREE-PIPITS IN IRELAND.—Professor C. J. Patten contributes to the *Zoologist* (1916, pp. 41-53) a lengthy account concerning the occurrence of an Icterine Warbler at the Tuskar Rock on September 2nd, 1914 (*cf.* BRITISH BIRDS, VIII., p. 271). In the course of these remarks we note that Professor Patten states (p. 51) that Mr. Glanville, the light-keeper at the Tuskar, has sent him "evidence" to show that the Tree-Pipit has occurred there annually since 1912, when Prof. Patten first discovered it there. No further details are given, but we may note that

we have already referred to records for the autumn of 1913 (*cf.* Vol. VII., p. 236).

SONG-THRUSH FEEDING ON FLOWERS.—In our last volume (p. 245) we drew attention to some observations on a Black-bird feeding on daisy flowers and a Thrush feeding its young with the same flower. Mr. J. K. Nash, who made the latter observation, now states (*Scot. Nat.* 1916, p. 23) that in 1915 he saw a fully-fledged young Song-Thrush being fed by its parent with the flower-heads of the meadow-rush (*Luzula campestris*) in the Edinburgh Botanic Garden.

BEE-EATER IN SHETLAND.—Mr. G. W. Russell states (*Scot. Nat.* 1916, p. 24) that a *Merops apiaster* (apparently a female) frequented the neighbourhood of Lerwick from July 4th to 11th, 1915.

VELVET-SCOTER in CO. ROSCOMMON.—Mr. J. ffolliott Darling records (*Irish Nat.*, 1916, p. 31) that he shot an immature male *Oidemia f. fusca* in Hodgson's Bay, Lough Ree, on December 27th, 1915. The bird is very rarely found in Ireland.

“THE RELATION OF THE OYSTERCATCHER TO ITS NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.”—This is the title of a long series of papers by Dr. J. M. Dewar, published in the *Zoologist* during 1915. In his conclusion the author states that the “general results of the inquiry point to the mud-flat in winter and the drift-river valley in summer as optimum habitats within the areas under observation. . . The Law of Territory is shown to be valid for the Oystercatcher both in winter and in summer. . . . The necessity of conserving the food-supply for the exclusive use of the settlement, by the maintenance of territorial rights, is supported by observations made at one winter station, where the food-activities of the settlement were found to strain the reproductive powers of the shellfish of the area.”

MIGRANTS AND MOULT.—Following their paper on moult in birds when actually on migration, to which we have already drawn attention (Vol. VIII., p. 245), Miss L. J. Rintoul and Miss E. V. Baxter now contribute some interesting notes (*Scot. Nat.*, 1916, pp. 5-11) on birds moulting in their winter quarters. To the same journal (pp. 29-38), Dr. C. B. Ticehurst also contributes a paper entitled “Notes on Migrants and Mould.” A perusal of these three papers shows that, not only details of moult, but also the problem of the period of the moult of migrants in relation to their movements is a very interesting one and well worthy of systematic investigation.

BRITISH BIRDS

EDITED BY H. F. WITHERBY, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U.

ASSISTED BY

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ON "WAIT AND SEE" PHOTOGRAPHY.

PART IV.

BY

E. L. TURNER, H.M.B.O.U.

ON May 27th, 1915, I found two rain-water pools close together in a hollow between the sand-hills at the Sneuk End of Holy Island. One pool was circular and shelving, similar in size and shape to a downland dew-pond. The upper pool was considerably larger, and irregular in outline. Between them there stretched an oblong level strip of silvery greensward. I put up a tent by each pool and went to one or the other nearly every day between May 26th and June 2nd.

The smaller pool and a large slice of the greensward were dominated by a sturdy Ringed Plover. His attitude in Fig. 1 was characteristic of the bird. He spoilt my chances again and again. There is no doubt that birds fight best in their own territory. This small but determined bird cleared the field of all intruders. Even the Sheld-duck acknowledged his rights and gave way before his spirited onslaughts. Undoubtedly, also, territorial laws are recognised by birds, and *right* as often as *might* governs their social relations.

Two stones in the pool were favourite "dressing" places for Terns, Lapwings, Stock-Doves and other smaller birds. Twice a day an Eider Duck alighted with a tremendous splash, sending the swirling water right over the stones. Unfortunately she was shy of the tent, and after a hasty drink and a splash or two she always flew away to continue her ablutions in the upper pool. When I put up a tent there, she found some other quiet corner in which to bathe unobserved. Hitherto I did not know that Eiders frequented fresh water. This duck was nesting close by.

A Common Tern was particularly fond of standing on one of the stones and talking to his own reflection. But, unlike Narcissus, he did not fall in love with himself, as

he was assiduously courting another Tern between whiles. Perhaps this necessitated a frequent visit to nature's mirror, in order to make sure that his appearance was correct in every detail.

Fig. 4 shows a Common Tern on a windy day playing a game beloved of Terns. This consists in hovering



Fig. 1. A STURDY RINGED PLOVER.
(Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.)

over the water, with tail upturned, then dropping down, dipping their breasts in the little curling eddies. This beautiful action is repeated time after time, and apparently has nothing to do with catching food. It is just sheer fun.

It was the Sheld-drake I really waited and watched for day after day, but I could not get them. Now and again



FIG. 2. EIDER DUCK BATHING.
(*Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.*)

I succeeded in getting a long-distance shot at individual birds—mostly ducks, coming down to bathe. The two pools were the Sheld-drakes' favourite haunts and the level greensward their leking-ground. Here some fifteen

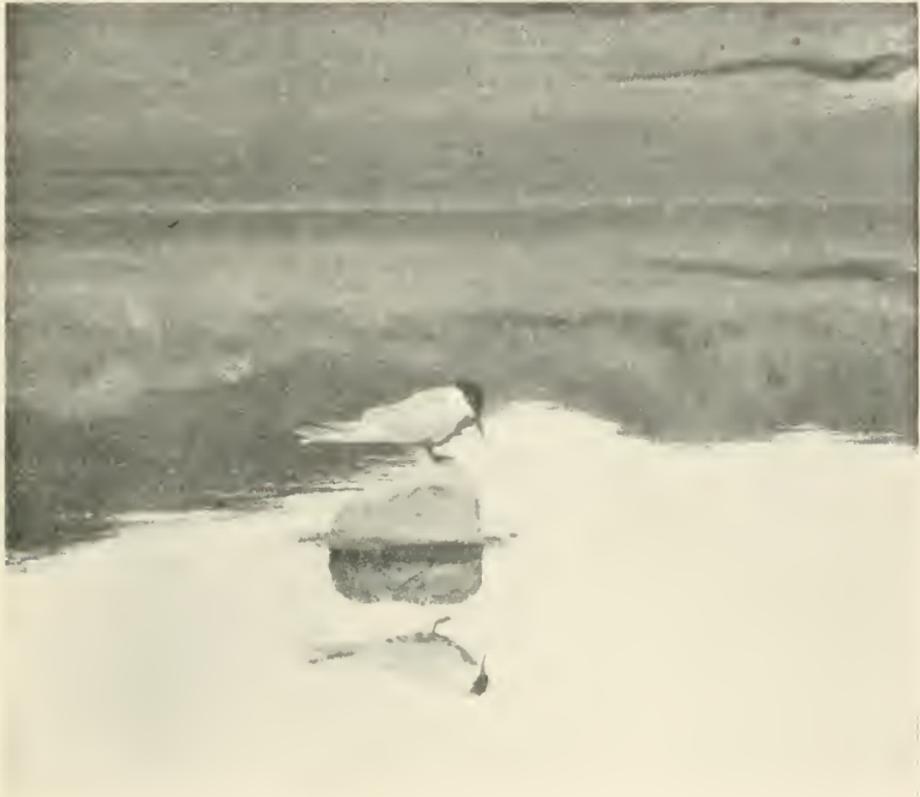


Fig. 3. COMMON TERN REFLECTING.
(*Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.*)

drakes met daily for play, or they bathed in little companies, morning, afternoon and evening. For the sun beat down on the hot sand all that week, making frequent bathes a delightful necessity. After bathing they ran about in the shimmering heat, or dozed in the hot sunshine until it was time for another plunge. But these Sheld-drake parties always managed to keep just beyond the range of my camera.

Sheld-duck began to arrive at Holy Island on February 3rd. Courting began on April 10th, and the first brood of young was hatched on June 4th. Their courtship is noisy. The drakes dash across the water at each other, stretching out their necks and uttering a hoarse "kak, kak, kak," rapidly repeated. Rival Sheld-drakes show no great vindictiveness. These mimic battles raged on



Fig. 4. COMMON TERN "PLAYING" ON A WINDY DAY.
(Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner.)

the mere all day for a week or so. After pairing, the duck and drake fly about together, or play in the water, or sit on the low-lying rocks by the sea, amusing themselves until the ducks begin to sit. Isolated pairs seem content with each other's society, and the drakes sit about in solitary grandeur all day while their mates brood. But at Sneuk Point, where numbers breed, the drakes seemed to indulge in regular organised games, and were more or less gregarious.



Fig. 5. SHELD-DUCK JUST ALIGHTED.
(*Photographed by Miss E. L. Turner*).

Unlike most species of duck, Sheld-drakes are not clumsy on land. They assembled on their leking-ground about 11 a.m. and 3 to 4 p.m. The hot silence of the sandhills would suddenly be broken by the sound of their wings. As they drew near, their soft call-note "S'osthieu, S'osthieu, S'osthieu," uttered in unison by a number of birds together, was like the sighing of the wind in the reeds. Perhaps only two or three would come at first, but by and by the numbers increased. Soon the silver-grey sward was alive with these brilliant drakes. Some bathed and then sat apart preening themselves. Others began to play at once. They tilted with lowered heads, out-stretched wings and arched necks. The preliminary steps were slow and stately, but gradually the pace quickened. When close together, the wings were raised and arched, yet pressed close to the body. Then the neck was suddenly thrust out horizontally, and the drake which first got his thrust home would throw up his head vertically. This seemed to signify that he had scored a point. He then moved his head rapidly up and down with sinuous twists of the neck, so that the latter looked like a series of loops.

Sometimes these combats took the form of duels, but frequently there was a general *melée*, when it seemed as if "Everybody had won and all must have prizes." The entertainment was entirely lacking in hatred or any uncharitableness.

It was a beautiful game to watch and in addition very amusing. The Sheld-drake's upper mandible curves upwards. When the brilliant red bill is wide open, as the birds rush squealing at each other, their whole expression is irresistibly funny.

If they came within the Ringed Plover's territory, he made frantic dashes at the drakes, and they good-humouredly waddled farther off.

Towards sunset they took wing again and each went away alone and circled near the place where his mate was brooding. The drake then called softly—"Kek.

kek, kek," until the duck joined him, when they went off to feed.

After sundown many beautiful things happen by the meres, and also by the inland pools left by the receding tide. These cannot possibly be photographed. One evening thirty Lapwings assembled in one pool at Sneuk End and paddled about in the then very shallow water. A week's hot sun had rapidly dried up the pools, and in the shallower parts the Lapwings' feet were barely covered.

They stood solemnly each on one leg, conversing in low tones. It seemed as if the twilight and the lengthening shadows had a subduing influence upon even the Lapwing's irrepressible spirits. In the misty gloaming, they looked twice their natural size. Immobile as statues, only their long shadows seemed alive, as the faintest possible breeze ruffled the pool and made the shadows dance.

Another evening, about eighty Curlews met together by a shallow pool left by the receding tide in a sheltered bay on the mainland. They came in from all the countryside in little flocks, like Starlings going to roost. One impudent Dunlin tripped into the midst of this solemn assembly. Several Curlews just turned and stared haughtily at the intruder; it was not long before he came to the conclusion that this was no place for him, so he fled.

It is sidelights on wild life such as these that make the "Wait and See" method so obviously worth while. You never know what may happen next. Sometimes the inevitable disappointments of chance work make you wish you had never been born. But the remembrance of the grey days and the gold remains. The grey days by the mere, and the golden days amongst the sandhills, and the blue days at sea. These are priceless memories. Why one ever burdens oneself with a nerve-racking camera I have never yet been able to discover!

THE MOULTS OF THE BRITISH PASSERES,
WITH NOTES ON THE SEQUENCE OF THEIR
PLUMAGES.

BY

H. F. WITHERBY.

PART IV.

(Continued from page 248.)

BLACK-HEADED BUNTING (*Emberiza melanocephala*) *supra* p. 241. *Correction.* The juvenile plumage is *completely* moulted, including the wing- and tail-feathers, at the first autumn moult. Dr. C. B. Ticehurst has very kindly pointed out to me that a specimen in the British Museum collection, which has still some juvenile feathers upon it, is moulting its wings and tail. I have examined this specimen, as well as a female which is certainly in first winter plumage and has still remains of sheaths on the primaries, so that specimens in moult in other collections which I had examined were probably not in a sufficiently advanced stage to show the wing and tail moult which certainly occurs. I am much indebted to Dr. Ticehurst for enabling me to make this correction.

FAMILY ALAUDIDÆ.

Although the British species in this family belong to six genera they all have the same moults. The adults have a complete autumn moult, and the young also all have a *complete* moult in their first autumn. There is no spring moult at any age. It is not therefore necessary to describe the moults of each species separately, but the sequences of plumage may be briefly referred to.

Before proceeding to do so, I should like to mention an interesting point which concerns all the species. This is that in the juvenile plumage the first (bastard) primary is considerably larger, *i.e.* longer and usually broader and less pointed, than in the first winter and subsequent plumages.

The only other species of the British Passeres which, so far as I know, moult their juvenile wing- and tail-feathers in the first autumn are: *Sturnus vulgaris*, *Pastor roscus*, *Montifringilla nivalis*, *Passer domesticus*, *P. montanus*, *Emberiza calandra*, *E. melanocephala*, *E. cioides*, *Ægithalos caudatus*, *Panurus*



1st Primary of Skylark
Left-hand juvenile,
right hand adult
(nat. size).

biarmicus. In these the first primary is markedly larger in the juvenile of *Panurus biarmicus* than in the adult, as Dr. Hartert has already pointed out (*Vog. pal. Fauna*, Vol. I., pp. 403-4). I find a similar but less marked difference in *Passer domesticus*, *P. montanus* and *Ægithalos caudatus*; there is a slight difference in *Sturnus vulgaris* and *Montifringilla nivalis*, but I can find none in *Pastor roseus* and the three species of *Emberiza*.

WHITE-WINGED LARK (*Melanocorypha sibirica*).

ADULTS.—The female has the fore-head and crown much browner and less chestnut than the male, the chestnut of the wing-coverts is paler, the spots and streaks on the throat and breast are heavier than in the male, and the outer pair of tail-feathers have a dark streak at their tips. Abrasion in this species, especially in the male, has a noticeable, though not very marked, effect, the chestnut of the crown and lesser wing-coverts becoming more uniform and brighter and the chestnut on the sides of the breast more prominent.

JUVENILE.—Differs markedly from the adult, the feathers of the upper-parts being darkish brown with creamy-white margins, the tail- and wing-feathers and wing-coverts are brown with even margins of pale cream with an inner line of black-brown, the upper-breast and flanks are spotted with dark brown, the bases of the feathers of the crown and lesser wing-coverts have a pale rufous tinge.

BLACK LARK (*M. yeltoniensis*).

ADULTS.—The difference in the sexes and the effect of abrasion is very marked. Briefly, the male in winter is black, which is almost obscured on the upper-parts and flanks and partially on the throat and breast by buffish-white fringes to the feathers. These fringes gradually wear off until in summer the bird is almost entirely black. In the female the feathers have dark brown centres and buffish fringes and the lower breast and belly are white instead of black. By the summer abrasion of the fringes has made the brown centres of the feathers show through to a varying extent according to the amount of wear.

JUVENILE.—Much resembles that of *M. sibirica*, but is darker on the upper-parts, and the wings and tail are like the adult female *M. yeltoniensis*, but more evenly margined with buffish-white, the feathers of the flanks instead of being spotted are dark brown with creamy-white tips, the feathers of the belly have pale brown bases.

SHORT-TOED LARK (*Calandrella b. brachydactyla*), CRESTED LARK (*Galcrida c. cristata*), WOOD-LARK (*Lullula a. arborea*), SKY-LARK (*Aiandu a. arvensis* and *cinerascens*).

ADULTS.—In all these species the sexes are alike and the effect of abrasion is very slight.

JUVENILES.—In all the species the juveniles differ from the adults in their spotted appearance. the feathers of the upper-parts having buffish-white tips, and those of the wings and wing-coverts and tail having even margins of buffish-white. The dark streaks on the throat and breast in the adults of the Sky-Lark, Wood-Lark and Crested Lark, and the dark patches on the sides of the breast of the Short-toed Lark are in the juvenile more broken up and spot-like, this being especially noticeable in the Short-toed Lark.

SHORE-LARK (*Eremophila a. flava*).

ADULTS.—The female has less yellow on the fore-head than the male and the yellow of the chin and throat is duller, the black on the crown and throat is more restricted, the feathers of the "horns" are shorter, the nape and hind-neck are less pink and the rest of the upper-parts are more prominently streaked. The difference in the sexes becomes more marked in summer when abrasion of the tips and fringes of the feathers has made the yellow and black in the male purer and more uniform, while the crown of the female becomes only spotted with black, the nape of the male becomes a purer pink, while that of the female is much browner as well as being streaked.

JUVENILE.—Differs markedly from adults, whole upper-parts being blackish-brown, each feather with a buffish- or yellowish-white spot at the tip, the wing-coverts are the same with a broader margin of buffish-white, the wing and tail are evenly margined with buffish-white, the chin and throat are pale yellow somewhat faintly spotted with dusky, the breast and flanks are dusky black-brown, the feathers being fringed and tipped with yellowish- or buffish-white.

(To be continued.)

CHARLES STONHAM, C.M.G., F.R.C.S., M.B.O.U.
1859-1916.

THE ranks of British ornithologists have been further thinned by the death of Charles Stonham, which took place at his residence, 4, Harley Street, W., on January 31st last.

Charles Stonham was the eldest surviving son of T. G. Stonham, of Maidstone, and came of a family long connected with that town. He was educated at King's School, Canterbury, and electing to follow the medical profession, entered University College as a student and became F.R.C.S. in 1884. In 1887 he was appointed surgeon to the Westminster Hospital, and in 1899 became senior surgeon of that institution, which appointment he held till his death. Of his professional ability it is here sufficient to say that he was one of the most brilliant operators of his day and a surgeon of high and well-merited reputation.

In 1882 Stonham had been attached to the staff of Cetewayo, the deposed King of Zululand, on his voyage from South Africa to this country, and he was again destined to visit that continent. In 1895 he had joined the Middlesex Yeomanry as medical officer, and when during the South African War the Imperial Yeomanry Field Hospital was embodied, Stonham was appointed to command it and received the C.M.G. and an honorary majority for his services in the campaign. Some years later, on the introduction of the Territorial system, he was commissioned to raise a mounted field ambulance, which was in due course attached to the London Mounted Brigade. The brigade was duly mobilised at the outbreak of the present war, and in April, 1915, Stonham proceeded to Egypt.

There he was promoted to the rank of colonel, and held the office of surgeon-consultant to the forces, and there he contracted the illness from the effects of which he came home to die

Stonham will be best known to ornithologists as the author of the *Birds of the British Islands*, 5 vols., 4to, London, 1906-11, a work which he undertook both from his deep interest in the subject and as an outlet for the indomitable energy which even the stress of a busy professional career was unable to subdue. The book achieved a popular success, but it cannot be said to have added much to our knowledge of the subject, and it would be idle to pretend that Stonham ranked high as a scientific ornithologist: a keen and painstaking field-naturalist he was, and an ardent lover of Heaven's free air and the wild life of the countryside. Where, however, he did excel was as an oologist, and had his inclination led him to produce a book on the eggs instead of the birds of Great Britain, his knowledge of the subject and the remarkable series of eggs which he had personally obtained and added to his collections would have been of real importance. During the last eighteen years of his life Stonham had, in addition to his eggs, formed an extensive collection of British birds, and these he bequeathed to his old school at Canterbury.

As a man, Stonham was a striking personality, tall of figure, lean and saturnine of appearance, of a fearless and outspoken honesty, and the possessor of a biting tongue: he hesitated not to speak of men and things as he found them: of enemies therefore he did not lack, nor did he of very many friends, and those of us who were privileged to know him well, knew him for a man of the kindest nature, true as steel, and with a heart of pure gold.

W.H.M.

NOTES

FIRECREST IN BEDFORDSHIRE.

WHEN watching for birds on April 1st, 1916, from an observation hut which I have had built for that purpose at Woburn, my attention was attracted by a bird with a very white eyestripe in a bush some twenty yards away. I had only a momentary glimpse and was much puzzled to know what it could be at this time of year. I did not see it again for an hour, when it reappeared within two and a half yards of my window and I identified it at once as a Firecrest (*Regulus ignicapillus*). The orange crest was raised as if displaying to a female on the same bush, about a foot below him, but unless she is very much more like the Goldcrest than he is, she did not belong to the same species.

There can be no question of confusing this bird with the Goldcrest, once one has seen the conspicuously broad eyestripe, but the black lines above and below the white were also noticed. The bird seemed slightly larger than the Goldcrest, of which there were many about, but this may have been because he was ruffling up his feathers for the benefit of the little lady below him. M. BEDFORD.

CHIFFCHAFFS IN IRELAND IN FEBRUARY.

A CHIFFCHAFF (*Phylloscopus collybita*) was reported to me by Mrs. Hoffe, who heard it at Arklow (Wicklow) on February 12th, 1916, and by Miss Macartney-Filgate, who heard it at Lowtherstone, Balbriggan (Dublin) on February 15th and 16th. Both are competent observers. CHARLES W. BENSON.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD IN HERTFORDSHIRE.

AN adult female Rough-legged Buzzard (*Buteo l. lagopus*) was shot by a farmer near Hitchin, Hertfordshire, on March 3rd, 1916. It was sent to me in the flesh and will shortly be added to the bird collection in the Letchworth Museum.

W. PERCIVAL WESTELL.

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE AND ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARDS IN LINCOLNSHIRE.

AN immature example of the White-tailed Eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) was trapped on February 9th, 1916, by a keeper on Manton Warren, not far from the Scawby gull-ponds. The bird had been seen in the neighbourhood for a few days previously.

A Rough-legged Buzzard (*Buteo l. lagopus*) was shot in the same locality on November 12th, 1915. I have examined these specimens, which were exhibited, both under wrong names, in aid of the Red Cross Society, in an inn not far from the place of their capture. The keeper informed me that a pair of Buzzards (presumably *B. lagopus*) were haunting the district about the end of last March, and on April 11th I saw a Rough-legged Buzzard mobbed by Lapwings on Scotton Common, a few miles to the south-west of Manton Warren. (See also above, p. 252.)

F. L. BLATHWAYT.

POCHARD BREEDING ON THE WELSH BORDER.

IN view of the fact that no nest of the Pochard (*Nyroca f. ferina*) has been recorded in North Wales, the following is of interest. Mr. Norman Gilroy tells me that early in June 1915 he found two nests on Whixall Moss, the marshy tract of country shown in the photograph facing page 272 of my *Vertebrate Fauna of North Wales*. The spot is almost exactly on the borders of Flintshire and Shropshire. When first seen the ducks were on a small pool close to Bettisfield station, but when disturbed flew southwards across the canal. The moss on the south side is a soft morass, with pools here and there, the water in which is practically continuous with that of the canal. It was on one of these water holes that a few days later Mr. Gilroy found two Pochards' nests, one containing nine and the other eleven eggs. It has nested two or three times in Shropshire, but this is the first actual proof that it does so in North Wales.

H. E. FORREST.

QUAILS IN CO. DUBLIN.

WITH reference to Mr. Carroll's note (*antea*, p. 302) my observations of the Quail at Balbriggan, co. Dublin, during the last fourteen years are confined to three years—May 20th, 1905, June 28th, 1907, and June 20th, 1913. As I have been absent usually for the months of July and August, it may perhaps have occurred more frequently.

CHARLES W. BENSON.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD IN FIFE.—Miss E. V. Baxter and Miss L. J. Rintoul record (*Scot. Nat.* 1916, p. 68) that an injured *Buteo l. lagopus* was found under telephone wires about October 22nd, 1915, between Largo and Colinsburgh. The bird recovered and was eventually released.

HONEY-BUZZARD IN BERWICKSHIRE.—Mr. T. G. Laidlaw states (*Scot. Nat.* 1916, p. 69) that an example of *Pernis apivorus* was shot in the district of Duns about the middle of July, 1915.

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