Nyctea nivea

1889 Maine

Nov. Coast. – "Snowy Owls are on the Maine coast" (M. Hardy letter Nov. 20/89)

Mass.

" Coast. "They are reported from various places along the coast. I know of at least a dozen that have been killed. Geo. O. Welch has had three sent in for mounting. The 'rage' for these Owls has gone by. They are now worth no more than any other Owl. We do not give over $1.00 for a bird in the flesh."
(M. A. Frazar in conversation Nov. 21/89)

Nov. & Dec. Maine Coast. – "I called on Crosby to-day. He fears (as I do) that the flight of Snowy Owls is over. So far I know of 21 taken. Fifteen came to Bangor mostly from Matinicus & Isle Islands. One was taken alive near Bangor last Sunday [Dec. 8] and is now in possession of Florentine Merrill of Holt & Merrill of Bangor. Six were offered in one lot from Milbridge, Maine"
(M. Hardy, letter Dec. 11, 1889)

1890 Mass.

Nov. 19-20 Gloucester & Manchester. – Frazar tells me a Snowy Owl was shot at Gloucester on the 19th and another at Manchester on the 20th. These are the first reported to me this autumn

" 28 Salisbury, N.H. Mr. Ricker found three to-day in Boston market. All came together from Salisbury N.H.

" " Maine coast. Mr. Hardy to-day called at Crosby's (in Bangor) and found that he had received six Snowy Owls within a few days (See notes in letter Nov. 29/90)

" 23 North Truro, Mass. – G. S. Miller saw one on open plains sitting on ground on knoll.

" 24 " " " One shot in same place where Miller saw his bird.

" 26 " " " " " By T. L. Sorrell. It alighted on stakes & fence posts & rocks. Shy

Nyctea nyctea

1890 Mass.

Nov.-Dec. "We have received about twenty Snowy Owls [in the last ten days]. Eight came in on Nov. 29, one Dec. 1st and four to-day [Dec. 2] I doubt if we have a heavy flight but in May." (Mr. A. Frazar Let. Dec 2/90)

On Dec. 3rd Frazar Bros. received four from Brant Rock.

Dec. 4th I visited Frazar Bros. Also a man who is employed at the Life Saving Station at Biddeford Pool, Me. He told me that he left the station Nov. 18th at which time the men attached to the station had killed 14 Snowy Owls. As nearly as he could remember the first was shot about the 11th. He has hunted these Owls for years and seems to be very familiar with their ways. As a rule they are easily shot, showing no fear of a man and allowing him to come very close. But if fired at and missed they become exceedingly shy. He finds them along the sea wall and beach ridges where they feed on rats & mice. One was killed about midnight this autumn by a member of the beach patrol. The men send their birds to the Boston Taxidermists. At present they are receiving about $2. each for them. Habits

Dec. 3 Cambridge. This evening at about sunset one was seen flying up Charles River past the gas wharf by A. Danielson. The Birds passed within 20 yds of the wharf.

" — Biddeford Pool, Maine. "We have a lot of twelve on the way to us at time of writing from Biddeford Pool, Maine" (Frazar Bros Letter Dec. 5-1890)

" 7 Kentville, Nova Scotia. "I had the good luck a few days ago to get a fine Snowy Owl. & my last." (W. L. Bishop Letter Dec. 7/90)

Nyctea nyctea

1890

F. B. Webster tells me (Dec. 10, 1890) that he knows of 62 Snowy Owls that have been taken in New England this autumn. This does not include any that Frazar Bros. have had. Flight of 1890-91.

Calais, Maine "Quite a number" taken last winter. Geo. A. Boardman letter Aug 11/90

1893 New England

On Nov. 17th Mr. M. Abbott Frazar gave me the following dates of specimens which have come to his notice.

Oct. 24	Biddeford Pool, Maine.	One shot & sent in flesh to F. "a very small dark bird"
" 30	Hubbard, N. H.	" " " " " " " " Received Nov. 1. date of capture guessed at.
Nov. 1	Isles of Shoals, N.H.	Two killed
" 8	Winthrop, Mass.	One "
" 10	Marblehead, "	" "

(About Dec. 1st I saw Mr. Frazar again when he told me that no Snowy Owls had come in since the last date above mentioned)

Dec. Maine

"I have had two Snowy Owls thus far."
(S. L. Crosby letter of Dec. 8 1893.)

"Crosby received nearly forty" this winter (Letter Marcus Hardy Feb. 23, 1891)

" 31 Cambridge, Mass. Late this afternoon a Snowy Owl was discovered sitting perched in the top of an elm behind Mr. Edwin Abbott's house on Garden St. A crowd of people quickly collected to view the great bird which, after awhile, flew away. Later it was seen directly opposite Mr. Bolles's house on Berkeley St. Young Gilman notes sons the bird says that it was a very dark specimen

1894

Jany 1 The Snowy Owl appeared this morning on Dirnacan St. opposite the Botanic Garden but a vandal shot at it bringing down a few feathers only when it flew off over the excavating grounds (Hoffmann)

Nyctea nyctea

1891

Jan. 30 A live bird sent by Chas. E. Hoyle of W. Millbury arrived this evening. It is a large, dark bird probably a female, and has been confined, so Hoyle writes, since November 25, 1890. It will allow me to scratch its head but threatens me with wide opened mouth making a blowing or flat hissing sound. It was captured somewhere in Mass. I believe.

March Wareham. – Mr. Outram Bangs tells me that a Snowy Owl has passed the entire winter here spending most of the time by day perched on the extreme peak of the mast of a small yacht which lies out of range of shore on a mud flat. Numerous attempts have been made to shoot the bird but no one has succeeded. Mr. Bangs repeatedly concealed himself in the cabin of the vessel and waited hours at a time for the Owl to return but it would not appear while he was there although he saw it repeatedly on its favorite perch when he was on shore. Preying on D. coronata

The deck of the vessel was strewn with the remains of Yellow-rumped Warblers which the Owl had taken there to eat and which he undoubtedly caught in a neighboring thicket where these birds always winter in large numbers. There were no remains of mice or of other species of birds.

Mr. Bangs also tells me that he had one of these Owls alive several years ago. It was put at first in a poultry house where there were about a dozen full grown Guinea-hens. The next morning it was found that the Owl had killed every one of them. It had eaten portions of one or two. It lived until June when it died suddenly, apparently on account of the heat. Killing Guinea hens. Unable to endure Mass. summers.

" 13 Biddeford Pool, Maine. One received to-day by Frazar Bros. They tell me that scattering birds have been coming in all winter. In all they have mounted 25 on orders and bought 60 in the flesh since last November. Wintering number recd. by Frazar

NOTES ON BIRDS IN CONFINEMENT.

Nyctea nyctea.

On January 30, 1891 I received from Mr. C.E. Hoyle a live Snowy Owl which was captured, I know not how, at Edgartown, Martha's Vineyard, November 25, 1890. It is a medium-sized, dark bird, apparently a female. At first it was dull and listless and allowed me to scratch its head without offering any resistence, although whenever I approached it it opened its mouth wide and made a blowing sound not unlike the "spitting" of a cat, but louder. It would not eat for several days, but after this took raw beef readily about every other day, perhaps half a pound at a time. It recovered health and spirits rapidly after the first meal; indeed soon became wild and fierce, flying about the cellar in which it was confined and, except when cornered, seldom permitting me to touch it. Even then it submitted to handling with very ill grace and at the most would only allow me to scratch its head for a few seconds after which it would fly again. Once as my finger was extended slowly it sprang upward, at the same time turning over backward, and thrust up its formidable talons, coming very near striking them into my wrist. It nearly always half opened its wings and held them partly extended for a moment before starting to fly, and this motion often accompanied a few steps taken on the cellar floor although it frequently moved several yards with closed wings. Its gait varied from a stealthy, crouching walk, which suggested that of a cat creeping on a bird, to a succession of awkward, bounding jumps with the feet held close together. Sometimes the two movements were combined or rather alternated. At others the bird would run several yards with quick, even, gliding steps. Its characteristic attitude, whether sitting on the floor, on a box, or on a pole stretched across a corner of the cellar several feet above the floor, was easy, careless, somewhat crouching, the back rounded, the head slightly raised, the plumage puffed out to such a degree that the apparent diameter of the body was nearly equal to its total length from bill to end of tail, the abdominal feathers covering the legs and feet. At frequent intervals the bird turned its head in one direction until its face was directly over its back, then , reversing the motion, moved it around on the other side until its eyes were again directed straight backward. This motion was slow and even like that of machinery. The eyes were always wide open, never reduced

NOTES ON BIRDS IN CONFINEMENT.

Nyctea nyctea.

to mere slits as with Scops and Asio . They were gentle, although somewhat solemn in expression. The bird winked at intervals of about half a minute. The plumage was never compressed so as to give the body the appearance of stick or stump as is the case with some of the smaller Owls.

Not infrequently, especially when hungry, my Owl became alert and animated, turning its head from side to side and "cocking" it up or down, each motion being as quick and decided as that of a Crow. One evening Mr. Bolles brought his pair of Barred Owls and placed them on a box just outside the wall of wire netting that encloses the corner where the Snowy Owl is confined. On seeing his visitors, which he did quickly enough, my bird at once swelled to nearly double his usual size, puffing out his plumage until he lost definite shape and proportions and resembled nothing so much as a mound of mottled white-and-black feathers. For several minutes he stood motionless, making no further hostile demonstration of any kind; then, by degrees he resumed his normal appearance, nor was the puffing out of the plumage repeated although we afterwards took him out of his pen and allowed the Barred Owls to approach him closely. They were shy of him at first and probably would not have gone very near him at all had we not driven all three birds about the cellar, when more than once, by mere accident, probably, one of the Barred Owls alighted within a foot or two of the Snowy. The latter now appeared to regard them with friendly indifference, a feeling which they reciprocated to some degree, although they were evidently a little afraid of, and to some extend curious about their big white cousin. The latter flew around the cellar (which was dimly lighted by a candle) very freely, avoiding with evident care all obstacles such as beams, the tops of boxes, barrels, etc. He moved his wings with powerful, rather rapid beats and did not sail at all. On alighting he struck his perch with precision and with much force, making a loud thump. A few flights exhausted him to such a degree that he panted incessantly for minutes at a time, with mouth wide open, his breath showing plaining in the frosty air. A little more exertion of this kind fairly prostrated him. His wings hung down and he gasped painfully, the sound of his labored breathing being audible forty feet away. We feared at first that he was dying and it was ten minutes or more before he fully recovered.

NOTES ON BIRDS IN CONFINEMENT.

Nyctea nyctea.

Bolles says that I feed him too much. The Barred Owls are only fed once a week and one of them has eaten nothing besides two mice in the last six weeks.

1891.

March 10.--- Receive another Snowy Owl through Frazar Bros. It comes from Deer Island, Boston Harbor, and has been in captivity for some time. Frazar tells me that its former owner has fed it largely on live rats which it catches and kills with great certainty and address. It is colored much like my first bird, but it is considerably larger and decidedly tamer, never flying when I approach and submitting its head to be scratched with evident pleasure, although it threatens and blows a little. I name it Aurora and the first bird Boreas.

It is curious how widely the two differ in many ways. Aurora, although apparently of gentler and more phlegmatic disposition than Boreas ,, is a bird of finer, more dignified appearance, assuming habitually the conventional attitude of a mounted Owl, and occasionally sitting so erect that the line of the back is nearly vertical. Her eyes also have a different expression, caused apparently by the fact that the pupils, although constantly contracting and dilating, are invariably smaller than those of Boreas.

The first meeting of these Owls was singularly uneventful. They hardly looked at one another, and neither showed the slightest interest, curiosity or fear concerning its new acquaintance.

March 14.--- The Owls having had nothing to eat for four days, I threw a dead Sparrow into their cage this evening just as it was getting dark. Aurora ogled it for a moment, oscillating her head after the manner of all Owls, then, opening her wings, gave a single powerful flap, at the same time springing forward and upward described a curve and came down squarely with both feet on the Sparrow. The distance covered by this leap was about four feet. Without further delay, the Owl standing on the Sparrow, body crouched, tail spread, and wings drooping, began to tear and crunch with her bill. She was interrupted, however, by Boreas who, uttering a succession of shrill, squealing cries very like those of a young Cooper's

NOTES ON BIRDS IN CONFINEMENT.

Nyctea nyctea.

Hawk, advanced slowly and stealthily, crouching so low that his belly brushed the floor, his glaring eyes, his bristling plumage, his whole attitude expressing intense yet sullen and suppressed rage. When near Aurora he stopped and the two faced one another precisely like a pair of game cocks their bills less than two inches apart. For a half minute they stood thus, both oscillating their heads, every feather of their bodies straightened. Then both birds snapped their bills simultaneously and rapidly, making a rattling volley like that of castenets, and the next moment they closed. For at least a minute I could make out nothing but a heap of feathers rolling over and over with four wings waving in the air or beating the floor. There was some further clicking of bills, but no vocal sounds. At length the compatants parted and Aurora, dignified, impassive Aurora, skulked off into a corner and cowered down with every appearance of abject fear. She still had the Sparrow, however, and must have held it fast during the entire battle. As Boreas, after looking for it on the floor, again advanced, Aurora turned tail and ran to another corner, carrying the Sparrow in her bill and making desperate efforts to swallow it whole. Finally succeeding in this, she atn once faced about and assumed her usual erect position regarding with calm indifference the still excited Boreas who, unaware that the prize had escaped him ambled about her with ludicrous solicitude peeping in under the loose plumage that half concealed her feet, and occasionally peeking at the batter. He soon became satisfied that there was no longer any hope, however, and gave up annoying her. This is the first occasion when I have heard either of these owls snap their bills.

During the "stalk" and afterwards when the wto great white birds stood facing one another, the spectacle they presented was highly dramatic, in fact actually thrilling. There was something devilish in the glare of the big yellow eyes, and the expression of the lowered heads and crouching forms. I was conscious of a creeping sensation in the neighborhood of my spine and of holding my breath for seconds at a time as I watched them. The battle, however, was a bloodless squabble and its denouement little short of absurd. After it was over and the Sparrow eaten, I threw in a mouse with a thread fastened to the head and drew it past

NOTES ON BIRDS IN CONFINEMENT.

Nyctea nyctea.

Aurora. She instantly pounced on it, and, holding it with both feet, crunched its skull in her powerful beak, but a moment later she left it and absolutely refused to touch it again, probably because it had been dead several weeks and was a trifle gamey.

March 15.--- The Owls restless and apparently very hungry, Boreas squealing a good deal through the day. About sunset I threw the heads and necks of three Canvas -back Ducks into the compartment. Aurora at once seized one and Boreas another, each retreating to a corner with its plunder and beginning to tear and crunch. Aurora, hearing Boreas thus engaged, left her own fragment, and, flying across the cage, pounced upon the Duck's neck that Boreas was eating and took it back to her own corner, dragging the bewildered Boreas half-way across the floor before he would let go. He submitted to this outrage meekly. To console him I gave him the third head, but in less than a minute Aurora had this also, collecting all three heads in one pile, set to work on them energetically. Boreas made no attempts to recover any of them, but stood aloof, every now and then giving vent to his feelings by s succession of shrill squeals. It is evident that he must have had another compat with Aurora and been worsted.

Besides the squeal, which I have thus far heard only from Boreas, these Owls utter occasionally, usually when flying, a rapid succession of rather musical squeaks the combined series resembling slightly the vocal twitter of the Woodcock. Boreas has also once given in my hearing a low gasping cry. They continue to "spit" when I approach them closely.

March 17 .--- Last night at ten o'clock I went down to see the owls. Boreas in his usual corner wearing a hungry yet cowed expression. Aurora in the foreground close to the wire netting sitting on the cellar floor precisely as a hen sits when covering a brood of chickens, the plumage puffed out but the body flattened on the ground. She looked moody and dangerous. As I had never seen her in quite this

NOTES ON BIRDS IN CONFINEMENT.

Nyctea nyctea.

attitude before, I feared something was the matter, but when I tried to scratch her head she struck at me most viciously with her bill, still hugging the ground. I then took a stick and pried her up, using some force, when behold!-- the mystery was explained, for, firmly clutched in her talons was the head and neck of a Duck, the last probably of the three which she appropriated four hours before, for the other two had disappeared. Evidently she was too satiated to eat it, but too greedy to let Boreas have it.

This morning I threw a Sparrow into the Owl pen. Aurora at the time was perched on one of the roosts six feet above the ground. She had eaten the last Duck's head and wore her usual serene expression, but almost as soon as the Sparrow touched the floor, she descended on it by a semi-spiral swoop and struck it with great force and precision. She then assumed the brooding position and sullen look already described.

I watched her several minutes, but she evidently had no intention of eating the Sparrow, so I left her. I fear poor Boreas will starve unless I interfere.

March 18.---- Gave the owls a pound of clear beef cut up into small pieces. Each ate all it could stuff down and then collected what it could of the remainder and "brooded" it for hours with eyes closed, feathers ruffed and a generally wretched yet sullen expression. Aurora robbed Boreas of his first piece but afterwards left him alone.

March 23.--- Gave the owls some beef, neither having had anything to eat since the 18th. Aurora greedy as usual getting much more than her share, but eating only a little and "brooding" the remainder. Apparently she was not hungry. Boreas very hungry, in fact, ravenous.

March 25.--- Aurora found dead in corner of cage this morning. No external marks of injury, but post mortem examination disclosed a quantity of watery pus, greenish yellow tinged with blood, filling the space between the skin and body on one side, from the base of the humerus to the thigh.

NOTES ON BIRDS IN CONFINEMENT.

Nyctea nyctea.

The body was plump, the internal organs all apparently healthy. Death probably caused by blood poisoning resulting from a gun-shot wound in the side. The existence of such a wound was not demonstrated, but one of the wing-bones showed a recently healed fracture indicating that the bird had been shot. The ovaries were distinctly granulated some of the ovules as large as number 12 shot. It now seems probable that this bird's tameness and sluggish, sedate behavior has been due, not to any normal peculiarity of temperament, but simply to the fact that she has been ailing ever since she came into my possession.

March 26.---- Put three spotted turtles and a garter-snake into the Owl cage. One of the turtles crawled directly towards Boreas who promptly pounced on it, striking it twice with great force, but failing to make any impression on its smooth shell from which the claws glanced as from polished marble. The bird was at first bewildered, then frightened, and afterwards flew whenever one of the turtles approached. At the end of one of his flights he alighted, quite by accident, directly on the snake, pressing it down under the soles of his feet, standing with his claws protruded and not grasping it. The snake, extended at full length on the floor, remained perfectly still for some time, then began to wriggle and twine about the Owl's legs. The latter again showed unmistakeable surprise and after a moment's hesitation, flew off. Nothing happened for the next fifteen minutes at the end of which I left the cellar. Returning an hour later, I found the snake gone, the Owl sitting on one of the perches regarding the turtles with evident distrust. I do not think he ate the snake, which probably crawled through the wire mesh and concealed itself among the barrels and boxes in the cellar. (The snake reappeared about two weeks later in the Owl's pen and was finally liberated in the garden.)

March 28.--- The turtles all alive and unharmed, but the Owl no longer afraid of them. I put a trap cage containing four live rats about one quarter grown on the floor in the Owl's favorite corner. The bird soon alighted near the cage and regarded it curiously, oscillating his head, but he did not attempt to pounce on the rats during the fifteen minutes

NOTES ON BIRDS IN CONFINEMENT.

Nyctea nyctea.

in watching him. I then went up stairs and returned an hour later. The cage had been dragged five or six feet from its original position and was tipped over. One of the rats was missing, the other three alive and showing no signs of injury. I killed them and put them together on the floor. The Owl quickly pounced on one, seized its head in its bill, and bit it repeatedly and savagely, making a loud crunching sound and apparently crushing the skull. He then took the head in his mouth and by a succession of vigorous gulps swallowed the rat whole. The other rats were quickly dealt with in a precisely similar manner.

May 15.--- Bird still in good health. Warm days do not seem to cause him any suffering whatever. The three turtles are still living in a tub in his pen. To-day I gave him a dead English Sparrow--- an old bird. He crunched the skull and then swallowed the bird whole, head first. I then gave him five young Sparrows about two-thirds grown , living. He pounced on them all in succession as they were put in one after another. The stroke of his foot seemed to kill them instantly. He ate all of them whole and the majority without first crunching the skull. A few weeks ago he picked a Sparrow(with his bill) rather carefully before eating it.

June 8.- Bolles took the Owl to-day. It is still in fine physical condition and does not seem to have suffered at all from confinement or warm weather (the thm. on ~~May~~ June 1 reached 88°). I can detect no change of color and the bird has not moulted a feather. I have not heard it make a sound of any kind since its companion died.

Nyctea nivea

1894

1895

Dec. 21 There has been no flight this autumn. Frazar told me to-day that he had not seen—nor heard of—a single specimen.

" Marshfield. "A friend shot a Snowy Owl at Marshfield a short time ago" (F. H. Brackett, Letter Dec. 30, 1895)

1896.

1897 Mass.

Dec. Early this month Mr. A. Frazar told me that there had been a rather heavy flight of Snowy Owls this autumn.

Maine. "Crosby has had 12 Snowy Owls sent in thus far" Manly Hardy, Letter Dec. 23, 1897.

Nyctea nyctea.

Mass.
1896.
Nov.

" The Snowy Owl I send herewith is the first one I received, killed Nov.12th. Had two from same place Friday last. Also received two birds from same place Nov.20th to mount.

I also bought one on Friday killed on Gov.Isl., Boston Harbor. It is in freezer and I will make it up for you. I saw three in the market Friday that came from coast of Maine. I have had calls for two pairs of eyes from Provincetown, and about a dozen in all told scattered from there to Grand Manan. So I have three for you to date and will try to get the other seven."

Letter from M.A.Frazar, Dec.1, 1896, Boston, Mass.

Tacoma, Washington.

1897.
Jan.

There has been a very large flight of Snowy Owls of which we got three and mounted them. The local taxidermist received thirty-eight."

Extract from letter from J.H.Bowles, Jan.12, 1897,
Tacoma, Washington.

Nyctea nyctea

1897-98 New England.

There was a considerable, but by no means very heavy, autumn flight along the coast and a few birds occurred inland. From November to February inclusive Mr. Abbott Frazar received nine specimens on "orders" for mounting. He bought a number of others and sent out a good many pairs of eyes. He has furnished me with a list of the "order" birds from which I take the following: (The February dates are especially interesting)

1897	Maine	(~~Beaumbunkport~~)	One bird received	Nov. 9	from F. M. Rass
"	"	(Saco)	" " "	" 29	" Mr. Edwards
"	New Hampshire.	(Bakeport)	" " "	Dec. 18	" G. E. Sanborn
"	Massachusetts	(Duxbury)	" " "	Nov. 19	" R. Comee
"	"	(Fitchburg)	" " "	Dec. 6	" E. F. Lewis
1898	"	(Brookline)	" " "	Feb 5	" S. L. Payson (1045 Beacon St.)
"	"	(Hull)	" " "	" 11	" Frank Reynolds

(Mr. Frazar afterwards wrote me that the bird received from Mr. Lewis was shot on the top of a barn at South Framingham by a farmer)

1897 Nov. & Dec. Maine

"Crosby has had 12 Snowy Owls sent in there for" Mr. Hardy letter Dec. 23, 1897

MANLY HARDY,

DEALER IN AND SHIPPER OF

RAW FURS AND SKINS.

Brewer, Me. 29 Nov 1890

~~Dear Sir~~

~~I did not intend~~
~~to trouble you so soon but a friend~~
~~writes me to know about Hoskins~~
~~pigmy owl can you tell me where~~
~~a description can be found or if~~
~~not can you tell him to distinguish~~
~~it from common kind of pigmy?~~
Was in at Sarsby's yesterday and saw 6
Snowy Owls — Jas killed 9 miles West
of Bangor and balance from Gotts
Island — Fox islands & Matinicus
Shooting they were spread clear across
from Mt Desert to off Rockland
among the 24 home outer islands
There is some thing singular about
the course these owls usual take
A diligent enquiry among my
fur collectors on the Gaspé Coast
failed to find any one who had

ever seen the bird - where it strikes
the coast. I do not know. I have
heard of it on Grand Menan but
never East of there. Very it probably
does occur accurred. - I have given
numbers taken at Petit Menan lights
& vicinity - but have yet to hear of
one being taken on our largest inshore
islands - like Mt Desert - Long Island
in Blue hill bay - the two Deer islands both
large - and the great island of Isleshore
or Penobscot bay Long Island - At the
same time I have of their being taken on
most of the extreme outer islands all
the way from Mt Desert to Rockland - On the
Duck islands - Spoltz - Isle au Haut
Fox & Matinicus - Very few come inland.
Why is it - they they are taken on the
small outside islands and not on
the larger inshore ones? I have watched
the habits of many birds and it is so very
strange - The great "Spy Owl", was also
taken on Isle au Haut & at Mt
Desert. Hoping this

M. Hall

Nyctea nyctea.

Fairfield, Maine.
1897.
about
Dec.15.

Mr.Manly Hardy wrote thus to William Brewster in regard to a Snowy Owl that he had recently heard of:

"Brewer, Maine, Jan.10, 1898.

Friend Brewster:-

xxxxxxxx Now as to Snowy Owl. I went to Crosby's to-day. The Owl is pure white in front. It has a few spots as large as very small peas of a light brown on the wings and a few larger ones on ends of primaries. It is finely mounted and by far the whitest Owl I ever saw taken in Maine, although I have two from Manitoba which are pure white all over. This bird belongs to John B.Murphy of City ~~Hall~~ Hotel, Waterville, Maine.

Very truly, Manly Hardy."

The following is from the owner of the Owl.

" Waterville, Me., Jan.17, 1898.

William Brewster,

Cambridge, Mass.- Dear Sir:-

I will sell the Snow Owl for ($50.00) have had an offer of ($40.00). The man that shot the Owl is in the town of Fairfield, don't know his name. The Owl was alive when I got him, and had him a day before he died. He is a fine looking bird. He was shot in Fairfield, Me. about four weeks ago.

Yours Respt.

John B.Murphy. "

Birds within Ten Miles of Point de Monts, Can. Comeau & Merriam

62. **Nyctea scandiaca.** Snowy Owl. — Very irregular in appearance; sometimes very abundant in winter, and sometimes not seen for several years. Mr. Comeau shot one May 17, 1882, and Mr. Gregoire Labrie killed one May 31, 1880. These are the latest dates at which they have been seen in this section.

Bull. N.O.C. 7, Oct. 1882, p. 23.

UNUSUAL ABUNDANCE OF THE SNOWY OWL (*NYCTEA NYCTEA*) IN NEW ENGLAND AND CANADA.

BY RUTHVEN DEANE.

Under a somewhat similar title I published a short article in the 'Bulletin' of the Nuttall Ornithological Club [1] in January, 1877. For two months prior to that date there had been a large migration of these owls through various parts of New England, though largely restricted to the seacoast. I have received information from different localities that another large incursion of Snowy Owls appeared this past winter, though the migration commenced considerably earlier than usual, the first being seen in October. While these owls are not regarded as rare visitors to

[1] Bulletin Nuttall Ornithological Club, Vol. II, No. 1, 1877.

fishermen have been living on them."

Nova Scotia.

Mr. Harry Piers of Halifax, N. S., advises me under date of March 21, 1902, that the Snowy Owls had not been reported as abundant around Halifax, and he had known of only about ten specimens having been received by the taxidermists.

New Brunswick.

Mr. George Y. Dalzell, keeper of the Swallowtail Light Station at Grand Manan, N. B., writes me under date of February 22,

Province of Quebec.

Sir James M. Le Moine of Quebec, writes me under date of February 19, 1902, that one specimen of the Snowy Owl was observed on his grounds, 'Spencer Grange,' which was very unusual, and that he had received a reliable account of six, which were seen and some of them captured at Compton, P. Q., about fifteen miles north of the Vermont border.

Mr. C. E. Dionne of Quebec, in writing under date of February 27, 1902, informs me that he has seen eleven Snowy Owls this winter, which were shot at or in the neighborhood of the city of Quebec. Out of four which he prepared, the stomachs of three were empty; the fourth contained a red-backed mouse and

Unusual Abundance of the Snowy Owl (Nyctea nyctea) in New England and Canada.

By Ruthven Deane.

about nine mice. I have examined the stomachs of over a hundred and have found invariably the remains of the two species above mentioned. The owls in some cases were nothing but a lump of fat. The migration began here on November 25, 1901, when the first was seen, and has continued at intervals to this date. The last birds are seen generally about the beginning of May, when they disappear entirely. This bird flies and preys by day as well as by night, but the greatest flights are by night. They follow the coast line, as a rule. In January of this year I saw over a hundred birds in one evening from seven o'clock to 10.30 P. M. They are rather shy birds and difficult to shoot, owing to their keen sight and habit of selecting some high point to alight upon, such as a large piece of ice or a rock. They seldom alight on green trees, but select dead stumps. Trappers take advantage of this habit and place steel-traps on stumps or other prominent places to which the owls fall an easy prey. They are considered a good article of food in this region, and the feathers also yield a profit. The Murre, not being a shy bird, is easily

Further Notes on the Snowy Owl in Ontario. — Since my letter of March 3, 1902, was published by Mr. Ruthven Deane, in his paper on the Snowy Owl, in the July 'Auk,' further information has made it evident that the migration in Ontario was a much more extensive one than I had at first imagined. During March the females disappeared and were replaced in April by the returning flight of light colored birds (males, as far as I was able to examine). A few remained about Toronto Marsh all through May, and a small light colored male was taken on June 7. It was in excellent condition and showed no trace of being a wounded bird.

Estimate of the number killed. — It soon became apparent that this migration was no ordinary flight as regards numbers, and as answers to my enquiries came in I saw that some other means of counting heads was necessary. I then had recourse to the number of artificial owl eyes used in Ontario during the migration. I was greatly helped by two facts; first, the almost total absence of Horned Owls from Ontario, or at least the territory affected by the migration, and was thus able to eliminate the possibility of many of the eyes being used for Horned Owls; secondly, nine-tenths of the eyes used by taxidermists, amateur or professional, in Ontario are bought from three firms in Toronto. In one case I went over all the orders and checked off the owl eyes; in another I got a careful estimate, and in the third I estimated the number from information as to the extra eyes imported to meet the demand. I found that not less than five hundred pairs of large owl eyes were sold in Ontario during this migration; and I believe the figure to be a low one, for not only were the regular sizes exhausted, but any yellow eye that could be made to do duty was used. From what I heard and saw I believe that less than half of the owls killed were mounted; and in going over the matter with Dr. Wm. Brodie I found that he too had concluded that one thousand was within the mark, though on different grounds.— J. H. FLEMING, *Toronto, Ontario.*

Auk, XIX, Oct., 1902, p. 400.

Early appearance of certain northern species at Ottawa, Canada — C. Eifrig, Ottawa, Canada.

The Snowy Owl (*Nyctea nyctea*) seems again to have given Ottawa a wide berth, whereas further south many are reported. I have seen only one thus far, which was shot about November 5 up the Gatineau valley, about 30 miles north. Mr. E. G. White reports another one having been seen near Pembroke. Auk, XXIV, Jan., 1907, p. 111.

Birds of Toronto, Canada, by James H. Fleming, Part II, Land Birds, Auk XXIV, Jan., 1907. p. 75.

148. **Nyctea nyctea.** SNOWY OWL.— Regular migrant, October to January, sometimes abundant. The years of unusual abundance, as far as known, are 1833, '37, '39, '53, and '62;[1] in more recent times the years are 1884, '88, '89, '96, and 1901. The flight of 1901–02 extended from December to April; a few specimens were taken in May, and one on June 7.[2]

[1] Canadian Journal, VII, 1862, 53.
[2] Auk, XIX, 1902, 281. 400.

UNUSUAL ABUNDANCE OF THE SNOWY OWL (*NYCTEA NYCTEA*).

BY RUTHVEN DEANE.

DURING the past winter of 1905–6, we have again been visited with an unusual abundance of Snowy Owls. I called attention to this flight in a short note published in 'The Auk' for January, 1906 (p. 100), but at that time I had been unable to obtain sufficient data on the subject. During December, January, and February I received records of some eight hundred specimens from localities scattered from Nova Scotia west to Nebraska and from Manitoba south to Missouri, showing that in this territory, at least, the flight had been quite general. As to the cause of these periodical incursions we have not much more information to enlighten us than we had during their abundance in the winters of 1901–2.[1] The weather during these visits has not been unusually severe and the temperature of the past season was one of marked mildness and considerably above the normal point in most localities. There seems to be little doubt that a scarcity of food must influence these southward movements. In some favorable localities, where in former years these owls were conspicuously represented, this past season but few, if any, have occurred. I have had to rely largely for my information upon the taxidermists who have received them for preservation, and to them I take this occasion to express my obligations, as well as to all others, for their kind assistance.

NOVA SCOTIA.

Mr. J. W. Bouteillier, Marconi Wireless Station, Sable Island, Nova Scotia, writes under date of April 6, 1906, as follows: "For the last three winters we have noticed Snowy Owls here in greater abundance than ever before. In the winter of 1902–3 there were

[1] "The Auk," Vol. XIX, July, 1902, pp. 271–283.

Another Large Flight of Snowy Owls.— Unusually large flights of Snowy Owls (*Nyctea nivea*) to and beyond our latitude, used to occur every eight or ten years, but it was only three years ago when great numbers visited Canada and the New England and Middle States. We are now taken quite unawares by another flight, which will possibly exceed in numbers that of the winter of 1902–03, as the migration has started somewhat earlier. I have not had opportunity as yet to canvass any extensive territory but I find more records for Illinois than in previous years. I have examined twenty-eight specimens so far (Dec. 9) received by two of our Chicago taxidermists, the earliest record being Oct. 31. Some of these specimens came from Cook and Lake Counties, Ill., Ironwood, Mich., and from a few localities in Wisconsin. On Nov. 17 I saw a specimen on the "Skokie" marsh, near Highland Park, Ill. After flying a few hundred yards, it alighted on the top of a large haycock where it remained for an hour. In Maine several have been taken near Bangor, and five were sent in to Portland Nov. 14, all taken on Richmond Island, off Scarborough Beach. Mr. M. Abbott Frazar of Boston, writes me under date of Dec. 2, that his establishment had received about twenty specimens, the earliest date being about Nov. 20. They came from different localities on Cape Cod. Mr. H. S. Hathaway of Providence, R. I., reports five as taken in that State on Nov. 16 and 18. About two thirds of the owls which I have examined were large dark females. Some of the males were in fairly light plumage, but none approached the pure white dress in which they are sometimes found.—Ruthven Deane, *Chicago, Ill.*

Auk, XXIII, Jan., 1906, p. 100-101.

Nyctea nivea

1883.

Chesuncook Lake, Maine.

Under date of May 15, 1884 Mr. Hardy writes that he has lately seen one of three Snowy Owls that were killed at Chesuncook L. in the winter of 1883.

Forest & Stream Vol. XXXV. - No 23
Dec. 25. 1890. p. 454.

SNOWY OWLS.

Editor Forest and Stream:

We have been having a regular epidemic of Arctic owls in this portion of the State lately. They have been seen in large numbers everywhere within a radius of at least thirty miles. They are wary birds, and seem able to see in the day time as well as anybody. However, some twelve or fifteen have been killed in this section, your correspondent getting two. Those killed averaged about 4lbs. in weight, and a spread of wing of about 5ft. Some were nearly all white, with a few gray or blackish markings on head and back. Others have considerable dark color above. Most of them were sold at prices from $1 to $3.50, the whitest birds bringing most money. Dealers say these birds in former years were worth $15 to $20, but this year the market is bearish, owing to their great plenty. They are the toughest birds I ever saw, because of the great mass of feathers upon them, it being nearly impossible to kill them outright. E. W. L.

PINE POINT, Me.

Maine (Jonesport) Nyctea scandiaca

1885

Nov. "Bowler received his first White Owl of the season this week. It came from Jonesport east of here; they usually come from the west." (Manly Hardy in letter of Nov. 19. 1885)

"Four Snowy Owls received last week. Will give date and number at close of flight" (E. S. Bowler in letter of Nov. 24. 1885)

Maine

Nyctea nivacea

I can add little to what is already known about the Snowy Owl except that the many specimens I have had were all in good condition and many very fat, showing that it is the lack of food that causes them to come south. I always found the female darkest. I know they feed on mink and ducks besides fish and rabbits.

-----Manley Hardy,--Letter of Sept. 14, 1883.

Nyctea nivacea

Bangor, Maine.

Arctic Owls were received here from the surrounding country (particularly from the coast) in extremely generous numbers early in the winter(about the middle of November especially). At this time more were received than the total of several preceding years. But lately none have come in, the supply apparently ceasing as quickly as it came on. The heavy snows that are reported from the northwest, may have extended across the continent into Labrador, and by rendering their living precarious may have driven them to us. This heavy snow idea, if true, might account for the appearance of both species of Owls, and also for the appearance(as reported to me by a professional taxidermist) of large numbers of Richardson's Owls.---(Letter of Harry Merrill, Jan 28, 1890.)

SNOWY OWLS, unusually thick, have already received five.—*E. S. Bowler, Bangor, Maine.*

O.&O. VIII. Jan. 1883. p. 3

NOTES FROM CALAIS, MAINE.—Snowy Owl.—A fine specimen of the Snowy Owl was killed at the mouth of the St Croix River last winter, but but as the possessor attached no value to the bird, it was destroyed. O.&O. X. June. 1885. p. 95.

Louis M. Todd

Birds of Dead River Region, Me. F. H. C.

82. *Nyctea scandiaca*, (Snowy Owl.) These Owls are reported as being frequently seen in winter near Kingfield. I have one instance on record; a specimen taken at Stratton, December 18, 1884, by N. G. Frink.

O.&O. XI. Dec. 1886. p. 177

"We also received three (Snowy Owls) from Seal Harbor, Maine, about the 20th"

O. & O. XV, Jan. 1890. p. 15.

Mr. Lewis M. Todd of Calais, Me., writing under date of February 23, 1902, states that the local taxidermist has had six or seven Snowy Owls sent to him for mounting, and that six more had been observed in a radius of some twenty miles.

Mr. Homer R. Dill, State taxidermist at Gardiner, Me., reports nineteen specimens of the Snowy Owl received up to February 18, 1902.

Mr. Manly Hardy of Brewer, Me., reports, under date of February 17, 1902, that a good many Snowy Owls have been shot and seen over quite an extent of country, one being seen some thirty miles north of Brewer. He also reports three other specimens which were shot at Biddeford Pool, Me.

Capt. H. L. Spinney, Popham Beach, Me., writes me under date of February 22, 1902, that while he had handled but three specimens himself he had learned of between thirty or forty which had been taken in the State. He speaks of the late date of their arrival on the coast of Sagadahoc County, as they were first observed about the middle of January, and his records of the past fifteen years show that they usually arrive early in November and are seldom seen after the first of December. He also states that the flight

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by Ruthven Deane.

which came to hand, states that two adults shot at Westbrook were extremely fat but their stomachs were entirely empty. One bird weighed four and a half pounds, the other one ounce less; and that a large dark female shot on January 31, 1902, also very fat, contained two *Microtus pennsylvanicus*, swallowed whole; a very light colored male, shot at Gorham, Me., on February 7, was extremely fat. This owl had only a small quantity of mouse hair in its stomach.

Mr. Frederick A. Shaw of Portland, Me., under date of Feb-

this winter extended further back from the coast than former records would show. Regarding their food, Capt. Spinney writes that they feed largely on small rodents. In November, 1897, one killed and ate one of his live decoy ducks, which at that time was close to the house.

Mr. John A. Lord, taxidermist at Portland, Me., writing under date of February 14, 1902, informs me that he had received thirty specimens between November 21, 1901, and February 5, 1902, and knew of about ten others being killed in the vicinity. Examinations of the stomachs showed about seventy-five per cent to be empty. Others contained mice, moles and shrews.

Mr. Leander White, keeper of the Cape Elizabeth Light Station, Me., reports, under date of February 27, 1902, that several of these owls had been killed in his neighborhood, the first being seen about the 27th of January, 1902.

Mr. J. Merton Swain writes under date of February 18, 1902, from Waterville, Me., that a great many Snowy Owls had been seen and the larger part were reported from the interior; that eight had been seen in Waterville and Fairfield. Mr. Swain states they were first seen about the middle of January, though Mrs. H. B. Bates, of Waterville, Me., sends me a record of a specimen that was shot there on January 2, 1902.

Prof. Leslie A. Lee of Brunswick, Me., writing under date of February 26, 1902, informs me that Mr. John Thompson, the local taxidermist, had reported the killing of five specimens within a few days of February 1, and another was also taken at North Anson, Me. on February 21, 1902.

Mr. Arthur H. Norton of Westbrook, Me., in writing under date of February 24, 1902, and in referring to a few specimens which came to hand, states that two adults shot at Westbrook were extremely fat but their stomachs were entirely empty. One bird weighed four and a half pounds, the other one ounce less; and that a large dark female shot on January 31, 1902, also very fat, contained two *Microtus pennsylvanicus*, swallowed whole; a very light colored male, shot at Gorham, Me., on February 7, was extremely fat. This owl had only a small quantity of mouse hair in its stomach.

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Winter Birds of Webster, N. H. by Falco.

Snowy Owl, (*Nyctea scandiaca*).

O. & O. X. Jan. 1885. p. 14

Winter Birds at Newton Highlands
Mass.

Dec 4
1916 Snowy Owl (Nyctea nyctea)
Mrs George H. Mellen
Auk XXXIV. Jan. 1917. pp. 92-93.

Notes on Birds about Brandon, Vt.

Two specimens of the Snowy Owl (*Nyctea scandiaca*) were also taken at the same time.*

* winter of 1880-1881. F. H. Knowlton.

Bull. N.O.C. 7, Jan. 1882, p. 64

Early Appearance of Snowy Owl.

A Snowy Owl, the first of the season, was received by Mr. F. B. Webster, October 20th. It came from Vergennes, Vt.

O. & O. XII. Nov. 1887 p. 191

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Ex O. Oct 12 & 11 Nov. 1887

Besides those birds which are resident with us, although of not less interest, yet we are especially given at this time of the year to the study of those which come among us only during the winter months, which gives us only a limited time to make ourselves acquainted with their habits. The most conspicuous among these visitors from boreal regions, is the Snowy Owl (*Nyctea nyctea*). Erratic in their movements one cannot safely say when they will or will not be seen. I can note three instances thus far this winter of their either being seen or captured. One was seen Nov. 13, but was not taken. One was captured Dec. 8, and the third was taken in the same locality and about the same time as the second. I have heard of others being seen but cannot vouch for the truth of the statement, except that so conspicuous a bird in regard to size and color would not easily be mistaken.

In comparing these notes with those of the two winters preceding I find that in 1888 and 1889 I have not a note on this owl, while 1887 and 1888 furnished me notes on six. In their migrations through this locality they seem to favor the lake shore and along the wooded banks of the stream.

Cornwall, Vt. C. H. Parkhill

O+O. XV. March. 1890. p. 43.

Abundance in autumn near Bryn.

Mr. N. Vickary of Bryn tells me that a good many years ago he received eighty Snowy Owls in the flesh during a single season, all shot near Bryn. They began coming in the latter part of Oct. and continued through Nov. & Dec. He has had few of late years & only one in 1889.

Nyctea nivæa

Mass (Northampton)

Nyctea scandiaca

1885.

Dec. 6 "Last Sunday I pursued without avail a fine White Owl. Once or twice I was almost near enough for the big gun. The next day a boy shot him." E. O. Damon - letter of Dec. 8th.

Mass.

Nyctea nivæa

1885

Nov. 9. - Webster told me to-day that he has already heard of four White Owls which have been killed or seen near Boston, this autumn.

Nyctea nivæa

Northampton, Mass.

I have had a great lot of Snow Owls sent in--most of them in November. Never had Owls before, and a warm winter.--
(Letter of E.O. Damon, Jan.23,1890)

Further Notes upon the Snowy Owl Taken at Gloucester, on Nov. 10.

Since the record of the capture of a Snowy Owl at Gloucester on Nov. 10, which appeared in the last number of the Ornithologist and Oologist, it has been reported that the specimen in question was an escaped bird which was captured in Iceland and brought to this port upon the halibut schooner, Arthur D. Story, Captain Joseph Ryan.

This schooner returned from the coast of Iceland about the middle of September, and if the report be authentic it is puzzling how so large a bird as the owl in question eluded observation for so long a time.

I have examined the specimen after it was mounted, and find the tail feathers are somewhat soiled and worn, as would be expected of a caged bird, but otherwise the plumage was in perfect condition.

The stomach contained the fur and parts of the skeleton of our common meadow mouse.

Harry Gordon White.

O. & O. XV. Jan. 1890. p. 14.

"Capt. N. E. Ernst has taken five Snowy Owls off Chatham, this season" O. & O. XV, Jan. 1890, p. 15.

From Eastern Mass, M.A. Frazar.

In October snowy owls commenced to arrive, and appeared in greater numbers than for several years past, about half a dozen coming under our notice from this immediate vicinity. As usual the flight lasted but little over a month, and by Christmas they had apparently disappeared; a late straggler, however, was brought in on Feb. 24.

How erroneous the common notion is that the southern migration in winter of extreme northern birds is caused by excessive cold weather in their native haunts. Take snowy owls for instance; whenever there is a noticeably unusual movement of these birds it always occurs before winter has really set in, and generally in October. The past winter has been one of the mildest known, and yet never before, as far as records show, have we had such a surprising visitation of northern species. In our opinion changes in temperature have an exceedingly slight effect in causing these unusual movements of birds. Severe storms, however, undoubtedly exert quite an influence, but this principally along the coast, where birds have but little shelter, and when once driven off shore find it difficult to return, and either get lost in the ocean or wandering aimlessly about finally fetch up on some foreign shore.

For. & Strm, April 24, 1890. p.268

Occurrence of Snowy Owls at Monomoy Island, Cape Cod.

A flight of Snowy Owls reached the Cape shores early in November, spreading as far south on the elbow as Monomoy Island. Four birds have been taken by the station men, the last one being shot on the evening of Dec. 16th. In one instance a man from the Monomoy station saw an owl on the high beach sitting nearly under the gunwale of an old overturned lefe boat. He made a wide detour so as to get the boat between him and the owl, but the bird had his weather eye open, as is usually the manner of some of the wreckers on this island, and got away before the man could get within gun-shot of him. A member of the B. B. Club shot at one in November, which was in very white plumage, near Inward Point, and although he hit the bird hard did not succeed in getting it. *J. C. Cahoon.*

O. & O. XV, Feb. 1890 p. 23

Mass.

Nyctea scandiaca.

1886 Heavy flight in Nov.

Since Nov. 12th when his first specimen was received Webster has had five Snowy Owls. Goodale has also received a like number. Most of these birds are said to have been shot near Boston, two of Webster's coming from Plymouth. He gives from $3 to $5 for them and sells them mounted for $20. & upwards the whitest birds being the most valuable. (Nov. 28)

Nov. 25. One seen by A. P. Chadbourne at Ipswich. It was sitting on a fence-post on the

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O. & O. XV, Feb. 1890 p. 23

top of the hill just beyond the mouth of Herring River. As I approached it turned its head slowly from side to side, and finally half-spread its wings as if to fly when he found, it started and flew a long distance over the marsh to another hill.

Winter Birds of Eastern Massachusetts.
H. K. Job.

November 25* brought the Snowy Owls, which were not uncommon during most of the winter, especially the early part.

* 1881 Boston & Vicinity

Bull. N. O. C. 8, July. 1883, p. 148.

Review for January. F. B. W. Boston.

We have not heard of a single capture of the Snowy Owl this season.

O. & O. 10. Feb. 1885. p. 32.

Boston. Review for Feby & March.
F. B. W.

We heard that two Snowy Owls were shot in this State during the Winter. A party in Quebec writes us but one was shot there in the last three Winters.

O & O. X. Apr. 1885 p. 64.

Boston Notes by F. B. W.

Towards the last of October it was whispered that an old friend had appeared, and another of the same family a few days later confirmed it, and by the 12th of November we recorded seven Snowy Owls as arriving at Boston; all, as near as I can ascertain, being killed in this State.

O. & O. X. Dec. 1885. p. 192

Winter Notes from Taunton, Mass.
J. C. Graham.

Our local paper gives an account of a Snowy Owl being taken in the eastern part of the city.

O. & O. XI. May. 1886. p. 77

Raptores, Bristol County, Mass.
Hilton B. Read.

Snowy Owl, (*Nyctea scandiaca*). A rare winter visitor of more or less regularity. Have seen a specimen in the flesh but once, that being in the possession of a hunter who secured it in Dighton, Jan. 30, 1882.

O. & O. XII. Aug. 1887 p. 118

Birds of Bristol County, Mass.
F. W. Andros.

Nyctea nyctea (Linn.), Snowy Owl. Winter visitant, very rare.

O & O. XII. Sept. 1887 p. 139

Snowy Owl seen at Crescent Beach, Mass., about November 25.

O. & O. XIII. Dec. 1888 p 191

Notes

C. G. Somers reports a White Owl at North Weymouth, Mass., about December 15.

O. & O. XIV. Jan. 1889 p. 14

Brief Notes

A specimen of the Snowy Owl was taken at Gloucester, Mass., Nov. 10th, during a north-east rain storm. This is, I believe, the earliest date of the capture of one of these birds in Massachusetts. Harry Gordon White, U. S. Fish Com., Gloucester.

We received a specimen from Plymouth, Mass., shot about the same time.

O. & O. XIV. Nov. 1889 p. 176

A Snowy Owl was shot while perched upon the chimney of a house in Northampton, Mass., Nov. 8th.

J. W. Jackson.

O. & O. XV. Jan. 1890. p. 15.

On Nov. 16th a pair of Snowy Owls were seen at the head of Ramshorn Pond, Milbury, Mass. Both were shot, but one escaped badly wounded. R. H. Holman.

O. & O. XV. Jan. 1890. p. 15

Brief Notes.

A Snowy Owl was taken, January 13, between Boston and Worcester; it also did not show high living. C. K. Reed, Worcester.

O. & O. XV, Feb. 1890 p. 29.

Snowy Owls have appeared in unusually large numbers; more than in any year since the remarkable flight some ten years since. E. P. Wonson reports several at Gloucester. We received seven in twenty-four hours, and every day we are notified by postals from all over the New England coast of their appearance. Now is the time for you to get one for your collection.

O. & O. XV. Dec. 1890. p. 186.

FINE SPECIMEN OF THE SNOWY OWL.—A most elegant specimen of the Snowy Owl was killed in Little Compton on Wednesday by F. W. C. Almy of that town. It measured five feet, seven inches from tip to tip of wings. It will be mounted by I. M. Thrasher, taxidermist.—[Fall River News.

O. & O. XV. Dec. 1890. p. 186.

Snowy Owls still continue to be reported.

O. & O. XVI. Jan. 1891. p. 15

Dec 15, Belchertown, Mass. A Snowy Owl was seen and shot at by a farmer this morning.

O. & O. XVI. Jan. 1891. p. 15

Cape Cod, winter of '90-'91

Snowy Owls did not come here very numerously, but four being taken.

F. L. Small.

O. & O. XVI. March. 1891. p. 42.

A publication just out of Boston refers to the flight of Snowy Owls, and says that usually the Boston taxidermists only have two or three stragglers in a season. We assure the writer that, while they have been unusually plenty this year, we have never failed to have more offered to us than we had real use for. If he had said they usually have from a dozen to thirty he would have been a little nearer.

O. & O. XVI. April. 1891. p. 62.

G. L. Kent, Belchertown, Mass., reports a Snowy Owl on March 2.

O. & O. Vol. 18, April, 1893 p. 61

I took a fine specimen of Richardson's Owl the 20th of February, the first I have ever seen here, although I have heard of such an Owl being seen.

Other bird life consisting of flocks of Snow Flakes, now and then a White Owl and a few Sharp-tail Grouse. *Elmer T. Judd.*

O. & O. Vol. 18. June. 1893 p. 94

A. M. Tufts of Lynn sent us three specimens in Dec. We also received three from Seal Harbor, Maine, about the 20th. W. R. M. Tortat, Atchinson, Kan., reports six specimens taken in his locality. O. & O. XV. Jan. 1890. p. 15

Snowy Owls

In Cape Cod records see under Maine. Another large flight of Snowy Owls. Ruthven Deane. Auk, XXIII, Jan., 1906, p. 100-101.

Brief Notes.

A large White Owl was seen near the barnyard at Wonson Farm, East Gloucester, Mass., Nov. 17. One of the boys shot at him twice, but failed to get him.

O. & O. Vol. 18, Aug. 1893 p. 119

Mr. M. Abbott Frazar of Boston, Mass., in writing under date of February 19, 1902, advises me that the flight of Snowy Owls was very much later than in former years, and that while he had not kept any records this season, the proportion of birds was not as great as in the recorded migrations of 1876 and 1892.

Mr. Owen Durfee of Fall River, Mass., writes under date of February 18, 1902, that the Snowy Owls were not nearly as abundant as in the winter of 1890–91; the capture of about a dozen birds, at various localities on the Rhode Island coast, had come to his notice, and that he had records of three which were taken on the south shore of Martha's Vineyard. Contrary to the observations of Maine ornithologists, Mr. Durfee states that this season all records have been made on the coast, while in 1890 they worked up the Seaconnet River and tributaries of Mount Hope Bay to a much larger extent. One large, heavily barred specimen, shot at Little Compton, R. I., on February 14, was reported by the local taxidermist to be very fat and the stomach full of rats.

Mr. John E. Thayer, of Lancaster, Mass., in writing me under date of February 17, 1902, says: "I have not heard of any unusual migration of the Snowy Owl in Worcester County. I think in Maine there has been a great many this season, and I am receiving frequent letters offering live specimens, especially from Wells Beach, Me. They were reported to have been caught in traps."

Unusual Abundance of the Snowy Owl (Nyctea nyctea) in New England and Canada. by Ruthven Deane.

Auk, XIX, July, 1902, p. 275.

Unusual records near Boston, Mass. —

Nyctea nyctea. One was seen March 5, 1904, at Squantum, Mass.

Francis G. and Maurice C. Blake, Brookline Mass.

Auk, [illegible], 1904, p. 392.

The Snowy Owl (*Nyctea nyctea*) **not generally Abundant in the Winter of 1906–1907.**—I think there has been no record showing an unusual abundance of this species for two consecutive years, and our experience shows that there is a lapse of from five to ten years between these noticeable invasions. In the winter of 1905–1906 we had an unusual abundance scattered over the country, but the present season has been devoid of any remarkable flight south into the United States, though in Manitoba they are reported as abundant as last year. In many sections of the Provinces, New England, and the Middle West, my correspondents who received numbers last winter, have had but few this season, and in some instances none.

The following eleven specimens received by Angell and Cash, taxidermists, Providence, R. I., will be of interest as they record complete data. They were received between November 3, 1906, and February 12, 1907.

Nov. 3, ♂, Newport, R. I.
" 5, ♂, Hope Island, Narragansett Bay, R. I.[1]
" 12, ♀, Fisher's Island, N. Y.
" 15, ♀, Monomoy Island, Mass.
" 15, ♀, New London, Conn.[2]
" 19, ♂, Monomoy Island, Mass.
" 21, ♂, Block Island, R. I.
" 28, ♂, Seaconnet Point, R. I.
" 28, ♀, New London, Conn.[3]
" 30, ♂, Norwich, Conn.
Feb. 12, ♀, Fisher's Island, N. Y.

[1] Contents of stomach, a gray rat, head digested, otherwise whole.
[2] Contents of stomach, rat fur and bone pellets.
[3] Contents of stomach, dark flesh and feathers of Black Duck.

The only place that I know of where white birds are at all common is the Canadian Northwest, and it therefore looks as if it was from thence that these birds came, via my 'Hyperlaken Route.'"

Mr. J. D. Allen, taxidermist, Mandan, No. Dak., writes under date of March 11, 1907: "The Snowy Owls have not been as abundant in this vicinity during the present winter, as they were a year ago. About twenty specimens have been sent to me, while last winter I received about thirty." Mr. Allen also states that some years ago there was a most remarkable flight of these owls throughout the State and that he secured over five hundred specimens, and the following year over three hundred and fifty. Since that time they have averaged from ten to forty during the winter season.

I am very much indebted to those who have kindly communicated their observations and should be glad to receive further records from any who may have observed this species within the past few months.—RUTHVEN DEANE, *Chicago, Ill.*

Auk, 24, Apr., 1907, p. 217-219.

In Rhode Island record see
Maine - Another large flight
of Snowy Owls - Ruthven Deane
Auk. XXIII, Jan., 1906, p. 100-101.

SNOWY OWL. Messrs. Southwick & Jencks write us: "We notice in February 'O. and O.' that F. B. W., reports not hearing of a single Snowy Owl this season. We had one sent in about November 1st, '84, that was shot near Newport, R. I. This is the only capture we know of, though have heard of some being seen." O. & O. X. Mar. 1885. p. 48.

(Nyctea nyctea) in New England
and Canada -

RHODE ISLAND.

Mr. Harry A. Cash, of Providence, R. I., writes me under date of February 20, 1902, that of the eighteen specimens sent to him for mounting, the first was received on January 7, 1902, and the last on February 10, 1902. Eleven were males and seven were females. These specimens were all taken on the Rhode Island coast, with the exception of two, these being collected at Mystic, Conn., and Nantucket. The stomachs of eleven were empty, the balance bearing evidence of dark flesh, probably of ducks and rats; in one stomach was an entire rat, two-thirds grown. One female was shot on January 21, 1902, at Pawtucket, R. I., from a duck shooter's stand, while pursuing a flock of ducks, and was killed over the decoys.

Mr. Simon Dodge, keeper Southeast Light Station, Block Island, R. I., writes under date of March 4, 1902, that he had seen three specimens of the Snowy Owl, which had been killed on the island between January 25 and February 15. by Ruthven Deane -

Auk, XIX, July, 1902, p. 276.

We have had five (5) Snowy Owls in already Nyctea nyctea
This is very early in the season for them here.
February being month when they generally come.
Respectfully yours
Angell H Cash
6.

Letter to W. Brewster -
Dec. 11, 1902
Providence, R.I.

The Snowy Owl (Nyctea nyctea) not generally abundant in the winter of 1906-1907.

Ruthven Deane, Chicago, Ill

Auk, XXIV, April, 1907, 217-219.

For R.I. records see under Massachusetts.

Conn. (Portland)

Nyctea nivea.

1885.

Nov. 20. "A Snowy Owl was killed here Friday afternoon. It was a beautiful specimen much whiter than anything I have. It has been shot at frequently for the past two weeks, flying from one side of the river to the other." (J. H. Sage in letter of Nov. 22 - 1885)

SNOWY OWL shot at Portland, Conn., about Nov. 18th and kept alive for some time. It was almost white.—*J. H. Sage, Portland, Conn.*

O. & O. VIII. Jan. 1883. p. 4

A SNOWY OWL was seen here on Sunday and followed across the river but not killed. —*John H. Sage, Portland, Conn.*

O. & O. VIII. Mar. 1883. p. 24

Winter Birds.

Owls were unusually abundant last winter & I mounted

one Snowy Owl. J. N. Clark. Saybrook, Conn.

O. & O. VIII. Oct. 1883. p. 80

On Dec. 4, J. M. W. surprised two Snowy Owls on Groton Long Boint, Conn., secured one. These make over sixty that have been reported to us in New England by persons with whom we are acquainted.

Tra, la la. 1890.

~~O. & O. XV. Dec. 1890. p.~~ 188.

Unusual Abundance of the Snowy Owl (Nyctea nyctea) in New England and Canada — by Ruthven Deane —

CONNECTICUT.

Mr. James H. Hill, New London, Ct., writes the following most interesting letter, under date of March 18, 1902: "Munnatawket or Fisher's Island, Suffolk Co., New York, lying at the east end of Long Island Sound, near the Connecticut shore, has had during the past months of December, January and February, one of the most noteworthy flights of Snowy Owls, no less than eighteen of these arctic visitors having been seen and fifteen captured, three alive and unhurt. Two of these lend an added interest to the Bronx Park collection of Raptores, the third cut with his sharp bill the 'gordian knot' and the twine that held him captive, and regained his liberty. The writer has been secretary of the Fisher's Island Sportsman's Club for over fifteen years, and during that period a few have been seen and captured, but never before have they been so numerous and in such fine plumage. The island seems to be particularly attractive to these snowy visitors, due no doubt to the fact that the Fisher's Island preserves are well stocked with game — pheasants, quail, English and Belgian hares, the hares, especially the Belgians, being very numerous and easily captured; and the owls seem to take very kindly to this bill of fare, as a full grown Nyctea, when hungry, makes short work of the best portion of his hareship. In fact, so surfeited do the owls get at times, that I have three records of their having been run down and captured alive. Other Raptores have suffered a similar fate, notably a fine Bald Eagle and a Golden Eagle, both captured on the island. The owls seldom annoy the feathered game."

Mr. John N. Clark of Saybrook, Conn., writes me under date of March 2, 1902, that there had evidently been a large flight of Snowy Owls again in New England. He states that two were brought to him one day, and a third specimen was shot the same day, all within a distance of ten miles on the Sound shore.

Auk, XIX, July, 1902, pp. 276, 277.

The Snowy Owl (Nyctea nyctea) not generally abundant in the winter of 1906-1907.
Ruthven Deane, Chicago, Ill.
Auk, XXIV, 1907, 217-219.

For Conn. records see under Massachusetts.

points of diversity, previously overlooked, have been detected, the most important being the much blacker tail of Eastern birds, and their decidedly shorter wing.

Upon the whole, the two forms seem to constitute two very strongly marked geographical races, which may be distinguished as follows: —

T. migratorius. — Wing, 4.85 – 5.35; tail, 4.10 – 4.60; bill, from nostril, .48 – .51; tarsus, 1.20 – 1.35; middle toe, .85 – .92.* Inner web of outer tail-feather with a distinct white terminal spot. Tail-feathers of adult male dusky black, with slight edging of plumbeus. *Habitat.* Eastern region, including the whole of Alaska, Eastern Mexico, and the eastern border of the Missouri Plains.

T. propinquus, Ridgw. (MSS.). — Wing, 5.35 – 5.60; tail, 4.60 – 4.70; bill, from nostril, .50 – .55; tarsus, 1.30 – 1.35; middle toe, .90. Inner web of lateral tail-feather with merely a narrower terminal edging of white, or with no white whatever. Tail-feathers of adult male dusky slate, without distinctly paler edges. *Habitat.* Western region, including eastern base of Rocky Mountains.

We find the character of blackish centres to the interscapulars in Eastern specimens to be too inconstant a feature to serve as a character. No specimens of the Western series are so marked, but many Eastern ones, otherwise typical, have no trace of these markings. It is a well-known fact that the eggs of the Western Robins average considerably larger in size than those of Eastern birds.

UNUSUAL ABUNDANCE OF THE SNOWY OWL (*NYCTEA SCANDIACA*) IN NEW ENGLAND.

BY RUTHVEN DEANE.

In a recent number of this Bulletin (Vol. I, p. 95), Mr. N. C. Brown gave some interesting notes respecting the variable abundance of birds at the same locality in different seasons. I do not think a more forcible illustration of his remarks can be cited than the recent great abundance of the Snowy Owl in New England. This bird is regarded as not a rare winter visitor to New England,

* Eight specimens.

Nyctea nivea

New England
Dec. 01, 1883

The experience of our taxidermists and collectors agrees with advices in my letters from various parts of New England that there are almost no Snowy Owls this season. Indeed Welch is the only observer who has heard of a single example & he knows of only one seen by Brown at Nahant, Mass. The winter is cold with deep snows. Barred Owls are also very scarce this wintering last year.

(over)

Manly Hardy writes under date of Dec. 26 "I have not heard of a single Snowy Owl being taken on the Maine coast"

Birds of the Adirondack Region.
C. H. Merriam.

119. **Nyctea scandiaca** *(Linn.) Newton.* SNOWY OWL.—This handsome species is of irregular occurrence in the Adirondack region in winter.

Bull. N. O. C. 6, Oct, 1881, p. 232

Bird Notes from Long Id. Wm. Dutcher

2. **Nyctea scandiaca** (*Linn.*) *Newt.* SNOWY OWL.—The entire absence from Long Island during the winter of 1883 and '84 of this Owl is noteworthy. During the winter of 1882 and '83 it was, on the other hand, remarkably plenty. None of my correspondents, about thirty in number, record a single individual seen. These Owls, being so much sought after for ornamental purposes, are watched for very closely by the professional gunners, and thus rarely escape being at least noted if they are not secured.

Auk, 2, Jan., 1885. p. 37.

OWLS. I notice considerable comment in the O. and O. on the rarity and abundance of Owls, this past Winter. In Ontario County, in the vicinity of Canandaigua, one or two Snowy Owls are usually noticed every Winter. One was shot in December, 1884, and a second was seen in January, 1885; both near Canandaigua.
C. H. Wilder, Hayland, N. Y.
O. & O. X. July. 1885. p. 111

Nyctea nyctea on Long Island, New York.— Snowy Owls have visited Long Island in considerable numbers during the past winter. I have heard of their being either seen or killed at several different places and four fresh birds have been sent to me from Montauk Point, obtained on the following dates: December 31, 1901, January 6, 1902, January 21, 1902, and February 6, 1902. It is several years since these northern visitors have been so abundant. — JONATHAN DWIGHT, JR., M. D., *New York City.*
Auk, XIX, April., 1902, p. 199.

Flatlands Bay, New York.

Nyctea nyctea. SNOWY OWL. Mr. Peavey has kindly informed me, and has permitted me to record the fact, that he took a very white specimen of this species on the shore of Flatlands Bay on Feb. 19, 1909. This is a rather later date of occurrence of this species than any previous ones which I have.

Auk 26 July-1909, p. 316.

Snowy Owl in Yates County, N. Y.— Several times in the past five or six winters I have been told of Snowy Owls (*Nyctea nyctea*) being seen on the hills west of Branchport, N. Y., but have never had actual proof of one being seen until Dec. 20, 1909, when a farmer shot and winged a heavily barred female. He kept it alive for over a week when it died and he brought it to me.— VERDI BURTCH, *Branchport, N. Y.*
Auk 27. Apr-1910 p. 207

Unusual Abundance of the Snowy Owl (Nyctea nyctea) in New England and Canada.

NEW YORK.

Miss M. R. Audubon of Salem, N. Y., in writing under date of March 3, 1902, states that a Mr. Roberson had seen a number of Snowy Owls across the mountains which divide Salem from Camden Valley and Dorset. One individual was feeding on some rodent, probably a muskrat, as one had been torn from one of his nearby traps.

Mr. Thos. W. Fraine, taxidermist, Rochester, N. Y., in writing under date of March 24, 1902, states that while during the flight of Snowy Owls which invaded the country in 1876, he received over forty specimens, during the past winter only two had been brought to him. The specimens which he examined in 1876, and which were captured along the shore of Lake Ontario, had been feeding largely on fish.

Mr. Elon Howard Eaton, Canandaigua, N. Y., writing under date of March 6, 1902, states that there has been no unusual flight of Snowy Owls in his locality. He states that the collectors and taxidermists report that they have received several, although not as many as in average years. One collector reported four, taken on the shore of Lake Ontario, and states that they were all collected about the 18th of November, the first heavy snow storm of the season coming at that time.

Mr. Wm. S. Johnson, Booneville, N. Y., writing under date of March 19, 1902, informs me as follows: "Snowy Owls appeared in this locality the latter part of December, the last one being seen the last week in February. During this time about twenty, to my knowledge, were observed; fifteen of this number were shot, ten of which were mounted by our local taxidermist. Of these ten only three were females. The stomach contents of five of them were sent to the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, and were found to contain the remains of the common meadow mouse (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*), one stomach containing the remains of six."

Mr. Thomas Rowland, taxidermist, New York City, under date of March 5, advises me that he had eight Snowy Owls sent to him, which were killed on Long Island, the first specimen being received January 10, 1902. He also states that he received several more of these owls from Canada.

by Ruthven Deane — Auk, XIX, July, 1902, pp. 277-278.

Unusual Abundance (Nyctea nyctea) in NEW JERSEY. of the Snowy Owl New England and Canada.

Mr. Turner Green, taxidermist, Jersey City, N. J., under date of April 3, 1902, informs me that a Snowy Owl was shot at Caven Point, N. Y., on January 1, 1902, after a severe storm. The stomach contained a short-tailed mouse. He also states that another specimen was seen about the same date at Bayonne, N. J. Careful enquiry among various sportsmen did not bring out any further records.

by Ruthven Deane. Auk, XIX, July, 1902, p. 277.

Unusual Abundance of the Snowy Owl (Nyctea nyctea) in New England and Canada. by Ruthven Deane.

MICHIGAN.

Mr. W. H. Kress of Elk Rapids, Michigan, writes under date of April 11, 1902, that he had received and mounted during the winter, twenty-eight specimens of the Snowy Owl, and enclosed a most artistic picture of fourteen of these striking birds. He states that they first appeared late in November, 1901, and that they had almost completely destroyed the quail and partridges in that section; the quail having been quite abundant before the inroad of the owls. One specimen, seen flying close to the ground, suddenly stooped and captured a rabbit. Mr. Kress informs me that at least fifty specimens were killed in the vicinity of Elk Rapids. Auk, XIX, July, 1902, pp. 282-283.

Nyctea nivea

1888 In nearly spotless plumage.

Apr. "I received a skin of a Snowy Owl yesterday which is pure white – as white as this paper – all over except one spot as large as a pea on end of tail and a few fine specks on tips of primaries."
(M. Hardy in letter Apr. 28. 1888.)
[The above specimen came through Northern from the West, either Dakota or Manitoba. – W. B.]

FEARLESS CRITICISM.—Gilbert White's accuracy and natural modesty made him state facts of which he was not absolutely assured in a hypothetical form. "I think," he says, "that White Owls never hoot." To this Rennie appends a note—"White Owls do hoot. I have shot one in the act." Waterton, who held a low opinion of the professor's practical knowledge, remarks, "As Mr. Rennie asserts that he has shot a White Owl in the act of hooting, I admit that that particular Owl did hoot, but no other White Owl since the world began ever did hoot."

O.&O. VIII. May. 1883. p 94

Nyctea nyctea.

See Pop. Sci. 1892. pp. 313-328 under Syrnium nebulosum

Ways of the Owl
Frank Bolles.

Minnesota.

An Owly Success.

The following is a series of owls collected by me last fall: Three Snowy,

O. & O. XIV. Apr. 1889 p. 57.

Albert Lanr.

6 Berkeley Street
Cambridge.

June 9th '91
2.30 pm

Dear Brewster:

The Snowy Owl came down here just 24 hours ago, having clipped his left wing before leaving the Museum. The smell of the oil from the feathers was rank. Thus far the proud bird has tried to catch the

cat, scaring her so that she keeps well away from him; has ruffled up all his feathers at Fluffy & Puffy and made them very much in awe of him; has allowed me to rub his head with a stick & my hand, and has shown marked preference for a haddock's head over meat food near by. He is now eating the fish head, and kept on eating while I was six feet from him on the cellar floor.

I think that he is darker than in the winter. Seen from behind he is almost as dark as the Barred Owls.

He is in fine condition and likes my cellar.

A fair voyage to you.

Yr. sincerely
Frank Bolles.

Something about Owls
O. O. Ormsbee, Montpelier, Vt.

> Of the Snowy Owl, which is rare south of the fortieth parallel and west of the Rocky Mountains, thirty-eight stomachs were examined. Two contained game-birds, nine contained other birds, two contained Rabbits, and twelve contained Mice.

O. & O. Vol. 18, Oct. 1893 p. 138

2014. [*Snowy Owls.*] Editorial. *Ibid.*, No. 6, Jan., 1890 [,p. 29].—C. F. B. The Naturalist, Vol. II. 4.

Dec. 26 p. 449. 1846. *The Snowy Owl.* By L. S. Foster, C. P. Hubbard, and H. Ibid. & Stream. Vol. 33.

Dec. 12. p. 402. 1841. *Snowy Owl in Connecticut.* By John H. Sage. Ibid., & Stream. Vol. 33

Vol. 33. 1862. *Snowy Owls.* By T. F. C. and J. Y. C. *Ibid.*, Jan. 30, p. 23. For. & Stream. V

1855. *The Snowy Owl.* By Shoshone and S. C. Clarke. *Ibid.*, Jan. 16, p. 511. For. & Stream. Vol. 33

O and O. 332. *Notes from Maryland.* By Edgar A. Small. *Ibid.*, VI, p. 66.—On 7 species; includes Snowy Owl, Raven Pileated Woodpecker, etc.

1840. *Snowy Owl in Massachusetts.* By C. W. C[hamberlain?]. *Ibid.*, p. 405. For. & Stream. Vol. 33, Dec. 12. p. 402.

1028. [*Winter Notes.* By F. T. Jencks.] *Ibid.*, Snowy Owl taken at Newport, R. I., and Hawk Owls reported taken in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New Brunswick. (See also p. 34.) Rand. Notes Nat. His. II

426. *Snowy Owl* (*Nyctea scandiaca*). By J. G. Smith. *Ibid.*, p. 168.—On the prairies of Iowa; smaller and whiter birds in cold winters, darker and larger ones in warm winters. O. & O. Vol. VII

1384. *Snowy Owls in 1886-7.* By H. A. Kline. *Ibid.*, No. 25, Jan. 12, p. 485. For. & Stream. Vol. XXIX

545. *The Snowy Owl* [*at Algona, Iowa*]. By J. G. Smith. *Ibid.*, XVII, No, 3, p. 52. Amer. Field.

1260. [*Snowy Owls and Swans at South Haven, Michigan.*] By E. A. Lockwood. *Ibid.*, No. 6, Feb. 5, p. 128.—Ten Owls and two Swans taken in December. American Field. XXVII

115. *Does the Snowy Owl Breed in the United States?* By W. H. Ballou. *Ibid.*, XIII, p. 524, Aug. 1879.—Record of young taken in the "North Woods" of New York. Amer. Naturalist

1187. *Snowy Owl in Illinois.* By H. A. Kline. *Ibid.*, No. 18, Nov. 25, p. 343.—An early record—Nov. 13, 1886. For. & Stream. Vol. XXVII

Vol. 33. 1837. *Notes on the Snowy Owl.* By Osceola. *Ibid.*, Dec. 5, p. 384. For. & Stream. V

Dec. 5. p. 884. 1838. *Snowy Owls in Maine.* By W. D. U. Ibid. & Stream. Vol. 33, ~~Nov 28~~

Foster, L. S. The Snowy Owl. (Forest & Stream, Dec. 26, 1889.)

page 364. 1836. *Snowy Owl in Pennsylvania.* By W. K. P. Ibid. & Stream. Vol. 33, Nov 28.

1293. *Snowy Owl.* By A. A. A. *Ibid.*, No. 2, Feb. 3, p. 24.—At North East, Erie Co., Pa. For. & Stream, Vol. XXVIII

1867. *The Snowy Owl.* By A. H. P. Ibid. & Stream. Vol. 34 Feb. 6. p. 45.

1835. *The Snowy Owl in New Jersey in November, 1889.* By L. S. Foster. *Ibid.* For. & Stream. Vol. 33, Nov. 28. p. 364.

Brief Notes.

L. S. Foster, 35 Pine street, New York, writes that he would like full particulars relating to Snowy Owls taken this season. contents of stomachs, etc. We hope that our readers will assist him.

Capt. N. E. Gould has taken five Snowy Owls off Chatham this season. O. & O. XV. Jan. 1890. p. 15

Surnia
caparoch

Birds within Ten Miles of Point de Monts, Can. Comeau & Merriam

63. **Surnia funerea.** HAWK OWL.—Common in winter, generally appearing in November and not remaining later than February.

Bull. N.O.C. 7, Oct. 1882, p. 237

*See this Bulletin, Vol. VI, p. 240.

Early Appearance of Certain Northern Species at Ottawa, Canada.—Judging by the unusually early arrival of some of our northern wanderers, and the greater abundance of others this fall, there must be queer conditions prevalent to the north of us.

A Hawk Owl (*Surnia ulula caparoch*) was shot and bought to me October 9, and another was seen at the same time. At that time it was very mild here. Several more were brought to a local taxidermist.

G. Eifrig, Ottawa. Canadian Auk, XXIV. Jan., 1907, p. 110.

Birds of Toronto, Canada,
by James H. Fleming.
Part II, Land Birds.
Auk, XXIV, Jan., 1907, p. 75.

149. **Surnia ulula caparoch.** AMERICAN HAWK OWL.—Rare winter migrant of irregular occurrence, October 22 to January 10; I have the records of only three specimens since 1889, but there are several previous to this date.

A NEW FORM OF SURNIA TO NEW ENGLAND. — Two fine specimens of the Hawk Owl have recently been taken in Houlton, Maine, and have been mounted by Mr. Welch in his usual superior style. They are both males, and while one is in the plumage usually known as *Surnia hudsonia*, the other is in that distinguished by the separate name of *Surnia ulula*, and supposed to be exclusively Palæarctic. — T. M. BREWER, *Boston, Mass.*

Bull. N.O.C. 2, July, 1877. p. 78.

Maine — *Surnia u. funerea.*

1885

Nov. — "I have had but one Hawk Owl this fall as yet." (E. S. Bowler, letter of Nov. 24 - 1885)

Maine (near Bangor) — *Surnia funerea*

1885.

November — "Several Hawk Owls have been sent to Bowler lately". (M. Hardy in letter of Nov. 11)

Maine Surnia

Some twenty-five or thirty years ago Hawk Owls were abundant three ~~years~~ in succession, in October and November. They usually perched high, but would let one shoot at them until they were killed, even letting rifle bullets go through their feathers repeatedly without flying. I knew one to be speared with a manure fork on a manure heap close under a barn window.

------Manley Hardy,--Letter of Sept. 14, 1889.

Maine Surnia ulula caparoch

"I have seen Hawk Owls for forty years; but I have never seen two in the same day; nor any later in the day than four o'clok o'clock, p.m. I have seen them either flying or perched on dry trees or telegraph-poles. They always refused to fly when shot at. Once I saw one stand during nine discharges of rifle and shot-gun before he was killed. Though rather high for shot, they cut his feathers several times; twice rifle-balls caused him to turn nearly over. I have known another to stand five or six shots. The only one I ever saw hunting was chasing doves in a thick snow-storm. I watched him ten minutes as he came in sight from time to time through the thick snow. The doves finally escaped hhim. One winter a fine one was brought to me. A doctor have speared it out of his stable-window with a manure-fork while warming itself by the steam of the manure-pile. I have seem them from the first of October to the last of March, but never earlier or later."------ Letter of Manly Hardy, November 7th., 1889.

Rare Specimens at Bangor, Me.

HAWK OWL shot Oct. 28th,

O. & O. VIII. Jan 1883. p. 3

Boston Notes by F. B. W.

We received our first Hawk Owl, November 9th, from Maine.

O. & O. X. Dec. 1885. p. 192

BOSTON—REVIEW FOR JANUARY.—Hawk Owls, usually considered rare, have been quite plentiful from Maine to Minnesota. We have received many letters offering them for sale. Mr. Vickary, a well-known taxidermist of Lynn, Mass., reported one taken near that locality. We think that it must have taken a circular route, as we understand Mr. Bowler of Bangor has established a *dead line* across that section.

F. B. W.

O. & O. 10. Feb. 1885. p. 32

Van Buren, Aroostook Co. Maine.

Surnia ulula caparoch. American Hawk Owl.— One was taken at Van Buren, Aroostook Co., Maine, on April 16, 1906.

Auk 25, Apr 1908, p. 235.

Winter Birds of Webster, N. H. by Falco.

Hawk Owl, (*Surnia funerea*). Very rare; two specimens taken, and another seen.

O. & C. V. Jan. 1885. p. 14

For New Hampshire records see Auk, 2, Jan., 1885, pp. 108-9.
It is in this Vol. under Maine.

Hawk Owl (*Surnia ulula*). This Owl is certainly rare in this vicinity. One was collected during the winter of 1884, and this winter brings with it one, which was seen and well identified Nov. 2, 1889.

Cornwall, Vt. C. H. Parkhill.

O + O. XV. Mar. 1890. p. 43-44.

For mass. record see Auk, 2, Jan. 1885, pp. 108-9.
It is in this Vol. under Maine.

Mass

Surnia u. caparoch

One taken at Middleboro, Mass. Nov. 29, 1888.

Q Orn's Oct XIII, Dec. 1888 p.

Mass (Winchendon)

Winter 1886-7. Mr. Bailey shot three specimens in this town.

Surnia ulula hudsonica.

Surnia ulula hud.

Mass.

Williamstown, Mass.?

In the Museum of Williamstown College I have examined a fine Hawk Owl labeled "Williamstown, Mass.?" The query cannot be explained by the present curator Prof. Clarke.

Hawk Owl taken at Middleboro,
November 29.

O.&O. XIII. Dec. 1888 p 191

The Hawk Owl in Eastern Massachusetts.— Mr. Brewster's interesting article on *Surnia funerea* in the last number of 'The Auk' (Jan., 1885, p. 108) reminds me that I have in my notebook a record of an example which I have neglected to make public. This, perhaps, should be done, as it antedates, so far as I can learn, all previous records, when the year is certainly given, for Massachusetts.

The Hawk Owl is mentioned in Mr. Peabody's 'Report' of 1839, but merely in a general way—"seldom wanders into New England." It does not appear in Mr. Allen's 'List' of 1864, but is given in his 'List' of 1878, as 'very rare.' Mr. Babcock's specimen, noted in the 'American Naturalist,' 1869, was taken, as Mr. Babcock informs me, in 1862 or 1863.

In January, 1860, a neighbor called with the request that I would come and see a strange Owl he had just shot, and, being merely wing-tipped, had put in a cage with the view of making a pet of him. I found it to be of this species. His wing healed, and he became fairly tame, and on occasional visits I found he bore confinement well, and his good appetite made a constant demand on his keeper. This state of things continued more than a year; but in the spring of 1861, being exposed one night to a sudden fierce and cold storm, which beat into his cage on account of a change of wind, he was found the next morning dead under the perch. He was brought to me according to request, but his plumage, of course already injured by confinement, was in such a deplorable condition, from the soaking and filth at the bottom of the cage, that my courage was not equal to the occasion, and I reluctantly threw him away.—F. C. BROWNE, *Framingham, Mass.* Auk, 2, April, 1885. p. 220.

A Hawk Owl (*Surnia ulula caparoch*) **at Chatham, Mass.**—I am informed by Mr. Augustus W. Baker, of Chatham, Mass., that a Hawk Owl was shot at Chatham during the winter of 1883-'84. The specimen was not preserved, nor can the exact date be given, but Mr. Baker's intelligent and very accurate description of the bird, which he carefully examined, renders the record otherwise satisfactory and not in the least open to doubt. —J. A. ALLEN, *American Museum of Natural History, New York City.*

Auk, 2, Oct., 1885. p. 383.

Notes on Birds of Winchendon, Mass.
William Brewster.

Surnia ulula caparoch.—In the winter of 1886-87 Mr. Bailey shot three specimens, in that of 1887-1888 one. He thinks they occur regularly every winter.

Auk, V, Oct., 1888. p.390

From Eastern Mass, M.A. Frazar.

We also have the note of a hawk owl taken at Sandwich, Mass., on March 25 last.

For. & Strm, April 24, 1890. p.268

Surnia Fuldsonia -

Newton (?) Mass.
Nov. 1849

Mr. Arthur Smith - had a beautifully mounted Hawk Owl which was taken somewhere in the vicinity of Brookline, the winter in Newton
A man brought it to his door, dangling by the legs, and left it to be mounted but has never since called for it. The bird was perfectly fresh and its owner affirmed that he had just shot it, but Mr. Smith cannot remember the precise locality, if indeed he ascertained it at the time.

~~about the accett~~
Forestdale is in the town of Sandwich Ma and I saw the hawk owl* freshly mounted the 31st of March 1890 - It was killed about two weeks before, so Washburn told me. I hope you can get him as it is a pity to have him lost.

Yours Sincerely
Outram Bangs

* Specimen in possession of E. O. Fish by whom I think it was shot

Mr O. Bangs
Opened by mistake
Mr Washburn

Forestdale June 2 1890

Mr Washburn.

Dear Sir

I do not care about selling the Hawk Owl, but I would like to know what you would be willing to give me for it. and if I am willing to sell it for that I will let you know at once, and if not I will not answer. and then you will know that I do not like to let it go for what you offer.

Yours truly
E O Fish

59

The Hawk Owl in Massachusetts. — I found lately in the Bryant Collection in the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy two specimens of *Surnia ulula caparoch*. The label on one reads "Massachusetts, December 30, ♂," (No. 1524); on the other, "Massachusetts, ♂," (No. 1525). As no Massachusetts specimen has been recorded as taken on December 30, this bird is evidently unrecorded, and makes the thirteenth record for the State. The other specimen may be one of those already recorded of which we have no other data as to the capture. — REGINALD HEBER HOWE, Jr., *Longwood, Mass.* Auk, XIX, Jan., 1902, p. 80.

New Massachusetts Records for the Hawk and Great Gray Owls. — I have just secured for the Thoreau Museum of Natural History, at the Middlesex School, Concord, Massachusetts, a specimen of the Hawk Owl (*Surnia ulula caparoch*) shot in the Lake Walden woods on the border of Lincoln, Mass., in February, 1907, and one of the Great Gray Owl (*Scotiaptex nebulosa*) shot in the Hoar woods, in Concord, Mass., in December, 1906. With these I have also secured specimens of the Great-horned, Snowy, Short-eared, Long-eared, Barred, Screech and Acadian Owls, all taken in Concord during the past few years. These were shot by Henry C. Wheeler, a trapper and woodsman of Concord. This Hawk Owl makes, I believe, the fourteenth record for the State, and the Great Gray the eighteenth. A careful investigation into their capture leaves no doubt in my mind as to their authenticity. — REGINALD HEBER HOWE, JR., *Concord, Mass.* Auk XE. J 1908, p. 84.

American Hawk Owl (*Surnia ulula caparoch*) **in Rhode Island** — I am indebted to Messrs. Angell and Cash, taxidermists, Providence, R. I., for information regarding the capture of a male Hawk Owl at West Greenwich, R. I., Nov. 16, 1906. The stomach was empty. I think that this may be given as the first authentic record for this species in the State. The only previous citation would seem rather a doubtful record (Birds of Rhode Island, Howe and Sturtevant, 1899, p. 63) as follows: "The only record is of one taken by Mr. W. A. Aldrich (exact locality not known)."— RUTHVEN DEANE, *Chicago, Ill.*

Auk, 24, Apr., 1907, p. 219.

Some Birds of Lewis Co, N. Y,
C. Hart Merriam

"**Surnia ulula** var. **hudsonica**. HAWK OWL.—Dr. Kirley has two specimens, male and female, taken near Lowville, October 24 and November 16, 1877.

Bull. N.O.C. 3, April, 1878. p. 54.

Birds of the Adirondack Region.
C. H. Merriam.

120. **Surnia funerea** (*Linn.*) *Rich. and Swain.* HAWK OWL.—Rare and not known to breed.

Bull. N.O.C. 6, Oct, 1881, p. 232

Birds, Central N.Y.
Fowler, Wright & Rathbun

241. AMERICAN HAWK OWL.—(*Surnia funerea.*) (Linn.) Rich. and Sw. Mr. W. M. Beauchamp, of Baldwinsville, N. Y., writes us concerning this species as follows: "The first Hawk Owl I saw was shot between Auburn and Skaneateles in the Spring of 1850. It was on a Fast Day appointed by General Taylor. The bird was brought to me to identify. The second of which I have knowledge was shot in Cazenovia, N. Y., November, 1874; two were seen together. These are all I have knowledge of." **O.&O. VII, Jun. 1882. p. 183**

Dutcher, Rare Long Island Birds.

Surnia ulula caparoch. AMERICAN HAWK OWL.—This is a fine specimen of this very rare Owl, and was also secured from some of the local gunners at Bay Ridge. It was brought in the flesh to Mr. Akhurst who purchased and mounted it. He thinks it all of thirty years since the bird was secured. It is the only one that ever came to his notice or possession from Long Island.

Auk X, July. 1893 p **275.**

Surnia ulula caparoch.

The Great Gray Owls and Hawk Owls in St. Lawrence County, N.Y.
Auk, XII, April, 1895, p.181.
See under Scotiaptex cinerea.
William Dutcher, New York City.

Some Birds of Unusual Occurrence in Orleans Co., N.Y.

Surnia ulula caparoch. AMERICAN HAWK OWL.—Mr. David Bruce has a specimen in his collection which was taken near Holley a few years ago. Auk, XVI, April, 1899, pp. 193-6.
Neil F. Posson. Medina, N.Y.

Something about Owls.
C. O. Ormsbee, Montpelier, Vt.

Of the Hawk Owl, which, by the way, is seldom found as far south as the United States, but one stomach was received. That came from Quebec, and contained a Mouse.

Of the Burrowing Owl, which belongs exclusively to America and is found from Patagonia to Manitoba, thirty-two stomachs were examined. Three contained small mammals and the remainder contained insects.

O. & O. Vol. 18, Oct. 1893 p. 138

New Brunswick (Pt. Lepreaux) — Surnia u. funerea.

1878

Aug. 10 A company of four or five, apparently a brood of young accompanied by their parents, was met with on this date by the Bangs Bros. a mile or two from the Point on the road inland. They were continually alighting on the tops of the telegraph poles and were very tame but owing to bad luck in shooting the Messrs Bangs secured only one specimen. This they have kindly loaned me for examination. ~~The plumage of the head is~~ It is labeled "♀ young" and is in that patchy plumage usual among young Hawks and Owls

XIII. On the systematic name of the American Hawk Owl.

The aim of the present article is to show that the name *Strix funerea* Lin. is untenable for the American Hawk Owl, belonging properly to its continental European representative. Taking Linnæus's 10th edition (1768) of his 'Systema Naturalis' for our nomenclatural starting point we find on p. 93 of that work (Vol. I):

"*Strix funerea.*
7. S. capite lævi, corpore fusco, iridibus flavis. *Fn. svec.* 51 [1st ed. 1746].
Ulula flammeata *Frisch. av. t.* 98? *Habitat in* Europa."

This quotation needs no further comment in order to point out that the name belongs to the European bird and not to the American subspecies, and does not even include the latter. But not even those authors starting from the 12th edition (1766) are justified in applying this term to the American bird.

Two years after the publication of the 10th edition, Mr. Brisson, in his most admirable 'Ornithologia' (I, p. 518, 1760) described the latter as *Strix canadensis*. From his clear description Linnæus at once perceived that *Strix canadensis* was conspecific with his *funerea*. In the 12th edition, published six years after Brisson's work, the text was therefore altered accordingly, and reads thus:

"*Strix funerea.*
S. capite lævi, corpore fusco, iridibus flavis. *Fn. svec.* 75 [2d ed. 1761].
Strix canadensis *Briss. av.* I, *p.*, 518, *t.* 37, *f.* 2.
Habitat in Europa et America *septentrionali.*"

That Linnæus erroneously considered the American form absolutely identical with the one he had originally described as occurring in Europe only, does not make the name applied first to the latter, and subsequently to both, available for the former only, and *funerea* can, therefore, by no means be employed for the American Hawk Owl, neither by the advocates of the 10th edition nor by those favoring that of 1766.

It might from the above appear as if we were compelled then to use *funerea* for the European bird, but this is not necessarily the case. Linnæus in both editions, on the same page, described the same species under another name, viz., *Strix ulula*, and there is every reason for retaining this name, which has been in general use of late by both the 10th and the 12th edition parties, and is especially commendable for the European bird, since Linnæus himself never mixed it up with its relative on the other side of the Atlantic.

The first binomial name for the American Hawk Owl will be found to be P. St. Müller's *Strix caparoch** (not *caparacoch* as quoted by some authors), published in 1779, consequently being nine years older than Gmelin's *Strix hudsonia*. Both these names are based upon pl. 62 of Edward's 'Natural History,' and consequently equally pertinent, and Buffon's Caparacoch, quoted by both of them, is also founded upon the same plate and description.

The immediate source of Müller's account is Boddaert's 'Kortbegrip' (p. 112, 1772), and the lapsus of the latter in writing "Caparoch" in place of 'Caparacoch,' and giving the habitat as Europe instead of North America, reappear in Müller's transcription.

The Hawk Owls of Mr. Ridgway's 'Nomenclature' (p. 37) should, therefore, stand as:

407*a*. **Surnia ulula** (*Linn*). *Bp.* European Hawk Owl.
407. **Surnia ulula caparoch** (*Müll.*). American Hawk Owl.

The name of the latter is atrociously barbarous, but, however, in that respect is not worse than many others; and it will be found quite convenient, when we first have got used to it. It certainly is much more distinctive than *funerea*, and its sound is just as suggestive of the American habitat of its owner as would be

* *Strix caparoch* P. St. Müller, Suppl. S. N. p. 69 (1779).

279. *Bird Notes.* By J. M. Howey. *Ibid.*, VI, p. 13.—Capture of a Hawk Owl (*Surnia ulula hudsonia*) at Gorham, N. Y., Nov. 1875, and on the breeding of the Killdeer Plover (*Ægialitis vociferus*) and Indigo Bird (*Cyanospiza cyanea*) at Canandaigua, N. Y.

1951. *The American Hawk Owl* (*Surnia ulula caparoch*) *in Wisconsin.* By W. E. Carter. *Ibid.*, **Vol. II**, No. 2, May, 1889.—Nest and eggs said to have been found.

672. *Rare Specimens at Bangor, Me.* By E. S. Bowler. *Ibid.*, p. 3.—Hawk Owl, Rough-legged Hawks, Snowy Owls, etc.

Glaucidium
gnoma

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

by [illegible]

[illegible]

by Hoffman [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Hoffman said to

buy this land for

me but the owner

refused to sell it.

Description of the Nest and Young of the Pygmy Owl (*Glaucidium gnoma*).—During my absence from Fort Klamath, between June 9 and 24, 1883, one of my men accidentally found the nest of this Owl on June 10. It was in an old Woodpecker's hole in a live aspen, about twenty feet from the ground. The cavity was six or seven inches deep, and filled for about half the distance with feathers of various species of birds. When opened by me it contained four young, which I took to be about ten days old. They were feeding on a Chipmunk (*Tamias asiaticus townsendi*) which was still warm. One of the parents—the female—was also secured at the same time. The tree in which the nest was found stood in an open, exposed position, within ten yards of one of the butts of our target range which is in daily use. Although I searched carefully for pieces of the egg-shells I failed to find any.

The plumage of the young is as follows: Top and sides of head and neck dark ash, *unspotted;* rest of upper parts dark reddish-brown or brownish-chestnut; wings spotted with ochraceous; beneath white with reddish-brown along the sides and numerous longitudinal streaks of dull black on the breast and belly; an ill-defined band of dusky across the throat; sides of the throat pure white.—Charles E. Bendire, U. S. A., *Fort Klamath, Oregon.* Bull. N. O. C. 8, Oct. 1883, p. 242.

Something about Owls.
O. O. Ormsbee, Montpelier, Vt.

Of Pygmy Owl, rare east of the Rocky Mountains, but six stomachs were examined. None were were found to contain either poultry or game.

O. & O. Vol. 18, Oct. 1893 p. 138-9
From Fisher's Hawks & Owls.

Glaucidium gnoma.

I presume that it is not at all uncommon throughout the entire mountainous and timbered portions of the West; but from its small size and retiring habits, generally being perched in dense evergreen trees, it is not often noticed by the naturalist, and usually only by accident. I have taken it personally in the Blue Mountains in Washington Territory, and in several places in Oregon, but have never met with more than one at a time. My specimens were, with but a single exception, all found in or near the pine timber. While hunting Sage Fowl (*Centrocercus* [illegible] of either species were seen in the next five hundred feet, above which only *olivaceus* occurred. These heights were determined on several mountains by barometric observations, and the distinct range of the two species was very noticeable.

Myadestes townsendii.—A male taken May 3, and another seen two days later. A few were noticed in July and August in the mountains, where they probably breed. No song was heard. In flight and attitudes this species reminded me much of a Bluebird.

Turdus ustulatus.—Arrived about May 20, a few nesting near the Fort and in suitable situations in the mountains. Its loud, sweet song was frequently heard about sunrise and sunset, but the birds were shy and difficult to shoot. A nest found June 8, containing four fresh eggs, was in a dense willow thicket, and placed on a horizontal branch about two feet from the ground.

Turdus aonalaschkæ.—A female taken April 29. Not again seen until May 11, when after a few days of cold and stormy weather it was found abundantly. They were silent, and rapidly passed on to the north, being seen for about a week only. The basal half of the mandible varies from pale flesh color to a decided yellow, but this is irrespective of sex. [Four spring specimens (one taken April 29, the other three May 11) are well within the maximum limits of size ascribed to *aonalaschkæ* (their wing measurements are: ♂♂, 3.50, 3.55, 3.55; ♀, 3.23 inches), but their coloring is very much paler than in any of the California examples before me and, in fact, quite as gray as in average Colorado specimens of *auduboni*. —W. B.]

Merula migratoria propinqua.—Rare during the winter. Arriving March 7, it became common in three or four days. By the first of May many nests contained their full complement of eggs.

Hesperocichla nævia.—From various sources I learned that this bird was rarely seen in autumn, but that in March it was generally very abundant and tame, coming about the houses in the Fort as plentifully and as fearlessly as the common Robin. I saw none in autumn, and in the spring observed a single specimen only, a female, which I shot April 13, although at both seasons I kept a sharp lookout for the bird.

Sialia mexicana.—First seen April 4, and three days later was common in small flocks. Breeds about the Fort in greater numbers than does the next species.

Megascops
asio

B.F. = Barrett farm
K. = Kruger place
B.H. = Boll's Hill

Megascops asio.

1889

Aug. Cg. 6 ✱ - Cg. 7 ✱ - Cg. 18 ✱ - Cg. 28 ✱ (3 a.m.) - 1889

" 1 ✱ - 11 ✱ (10 P.M.) 13 ✱ (9.30 P.M.) - 14 (11 P.M.) cu-cu - 15 ✱ (9 P.M.) - 16 ✱ (9 P.M.) - 18 (cu-cu) - 19 ✱ 24 (8.30 P.M.) hem-hem - 28 ✱ (9 P.M.) - 29 ✱ (9 P.M.) Concord 1892

4 seen in oak, fire Bell's Hill - 25 ✱ - Buttricks at 8 P.M. (moonlight) 26 ✱ do. Concord. 1893.

Jany. Cambridge 17 Mount 28 - 1893 - Cg. 28 ✱ (Seen as well as heard, apparently near, clear, 5 P.M.) 1899.

April Cd. 9 in hole - Cd. 27 in hole. 1891.

March 1 ✱ (Near Manse) Concord. 1892 - 29 ✱ Kruger place. Concord 1898.

Feb. 28 ✱ (8-9 in tree near parsonage, 6 P.M.) Concord 1892 - C. 13 ✱ Washington elm (Hoffmann) 1894 - 15 Botanic Garden Cambridge C.A. Lathrop. 1899

May Martha's Vineyard 11 red ♀ on nest 5 fresh egg (Morris) - 12 red ♀ on nest 1 chick hatch. 1891.

June

July Concord 30 ✱ 1892 - M. asio? 20 (Cuckoo like note at night). Concord 1893.

" Milton 22 (11 P.M. Cuckoo note) - Concord 25 red bird (See aug. behind Bell's H. notes) - Cg. (Lindens) 26 making a queer calling sound (11 P.M.) - 1894

Sept. 7 ✱ (8 P.M. Bell's H.) - 8 ✱ (7 P.M. Buttricks) 9 ✱ (do) 16 (6.15 P.M. River) 20 ✱ (11 P.M. Buttricks) 24 ✱ (6 P.M. Buttricks) 25 (6 P.M. North Br.) Concord 1892

6 ✱ at 6.05 P.M. North Bridge - ten minutes before sunset 8 ✱ starlight but no moon. 10 P.M. clear. Concord. 1893.

Oct. Concord - 29 ✱ (daybreak) 1892 - Concord in village 26 10 P.M. 1893 - Cd. 27 fire Barrett's Bar at sunset. - Barrett's Bar - 1894 ? M. asio.

" 22 seen at evening on river bank at Barrett's Bar 23 ✱ Barrett's Bar Concord 1896

" Bell's Hill 8 ✱ (2 hours) 9 ✱ do. - K. 10 ✱ (day outlet) - B.F. 12 ✱ cu. - Bell's Hill near cabin 17 ✱ 20 seen at evening 21 ✱ 22 heard at evening 28 ✱ cu. 30 ✱ cu. Concord. 1898. Kruger's Pl. Concord 13 ✱ 1899

Nov. 19 ✱ North Bridge dwr. evening twilight Concord 1892 - 12 ✱ (daybreak) 13 (daybreak) cu-cu cu 1893 - Bell's Hill, Concord 22 ✱ walking in dark from cabin at 8 P.M. 1897.

Bell's Hill 4 21 ✱ P.M. Concord 1898

Dec. Concord 6 ✱ - 13 ✱ - 18 (red phase). 1891. - C. 15 ✱ Manse St. (Hoffmann) 1893 - C. Observatory grounds 8 ✱ picked up on the lawn one P.M. 5 P.M. 1895

" Concord (Monument St.) 4 red bird picked up dead - Concord 10 red bird found dead in yard 1898

The Garden,
Cambridge, Mass

Megascops asio

Carl = Charles E. Larson

1900 February 10' 8.30 P.M. R. Hayward Aug. 29'*

1901 February 24'* all the evening here and in the neighborhood W.D. 26'* in or close to the Garden from 7.30 P.M. to the early morning hours W.D. March 9'* 10'* September 9'* S.

November 18'* 21'* 23' red plumage in Flicker's box with head out of hole all day 29'

1902 March 5'* every in hourly in snow storm 17'* 10.30 P.M. July 28'* evening 29'* 9 P.M. 30'* before daybreak [31'* 7 P.M. Scudder's.] August 4'* (9 P.M.)

1904 February 24' about dusk (Carl.) on Mus. steps

1905 March 13' heard at intervals from 9.30 to 10.30 P.M. It gave only the rolling cry. I have heard it before during the past winter.

" (") 24 The rolling cry given at short, regular intervals, from 2 to 4 a clock. It is like (yet not wholly so) that of a Screech Owl. The tread seemed to be in one hundred. I am by no means sure that it is a Screech Owl. But if not that, what? It does not seem to have any cry but this.

" " Mr. Forbush afterwards told me that this is the love call of the Screech Owl & that it does not vocalize in flying. F. M. Chapman confirms this statement.

" August 10 2 wailing in Cambridge about 10.30 P.M. 11' wailing in Cambridge at 9 P.M. 12 2 wailing in in Cambridge at 1.15 A.M. (C.T.B.) 25'* C.T.B. 28'* (C.T.B.) Before daybreak

" September 9 hd. by C.T.B.

1906 February 21' seen in pear tree opp. the red cedar near center pond at 6 A.M. by Carl. Just before Carl saw it, another bird, perhaps a Screech Owl flew from near the pear tree over the pond.

" March 6'* heard about 4 A.M. by C. (Red & gray ♀) seen by W.B. in Garden 6.20 P.M. 23 (♂♀) in Catalpa tree at 6.20 P.M. 24' flying across the garden 26 (♂) seen by Karl. April 2 gray ♀ in catalpa, 6.30 P.M. 3' (6.30 P.M.) Karl

" May 16' (Carl) 17' (Carl) June 27 an ad. gray was found in the hall of the house this p.m. Carl & I caught it in a net and released it in the garden. July 31' (9 P.M.)

" August 2'* (8 P.M.) D

1907 May 13 About 7.30 P.M. Carl saw one about four feet above his head on a branch over the pond by the museum. He watched it for some time as it stretched its wings.

" November 21 About 4 P.M. one flew rapidly and plunged into the hole of the Flicker by in the jungle pursued closely by a screaming Jay. About 4.30 it appeared at the hole, where it was identified by W.B. who saw its ears. It popped out of sight very quickly as we drew near. W.D.

" December 17'* at 5 P.M.

1908 June 16'* heard by C. at daybreak 17'* do by E.R.S. 28'* at 9 P.M. November 7 a gray bird started from hollow branch of apple tree by back gate when branch was sawed off.

1909 January 4'* in jungle at 5 P.M. June 25'* at eve. July 1' in jungle mobbed by yelled Robins - 7.30 P.M. 26' wailing in jungle at 8 P.M.

" November 2 fresh appearance under catalpa. December 2 ♀ 1' uttering the usual wailing cry in kitchen over avenue about 5 P.M.

1910 April 22'* in catalpa tree 6.40 P.M. I was there in cherry tree & wailed July 1'* boys kick heard at 10 P.M. 11 beaten in pond. August 24'* in kitchen at 9 P.M. 26'* do.

1911 January 2 1' wailing at 6.30 P.M. March 2 red bird looking out by in jungle 5 P.M. 3 do 4 do 9-10 A.M. 4.30-5.30 P.M. 5 do 9-10 A.M. 4-6 P.M. 6 do in 10 A.M. 5-6 P.M. M. asio

" August 10' heard calling at eve. gray birds fretted in pond September 7' at 9.30 P.M. 8'* November 4' started from vine over museum door as I was entering at 8 P.M.

1912. March 8'* loon song hd. once - daybreak July 2 young bird hd. at eve. 3' ad. in catalpa by museum 3 juv. 4' ad. 4 juv. do 5-1 ad. in catalpa 4 juv. & ad.

(July) 7 4 juv. in garden 8' ad. 4 juv. } catalpa 1 juv. on ship & found at 2 P.M. 9' ad. 4 juv. 10' ad. 4 juv. 11' ad. 4 juv. 12 ad. 3 juv. 13' ad. 3 juv.

" 14 4 juv. 15 do. 16' ad. 4 juv. 17' ad. 4 juv. 18 4 juv. 19' ad. 4 juv. 20' ad. 4 juv. 22' ad. 3 juv. 23' ad. 3 juv. 24 3 juv.

" 25 3 juv. 26' ad. 3 juv. 27 4 juv. 29 3 juv. 30' ad. 4 juv. 31' ad. 2 juv. August 1' ad. 2 juv. 2 3 juv. 3 3 juv.

(August) 5 1 ad. 6' ad. 2 juv. 7 3 juv. scattered (1 ad. found 2 P.M.) 8' ad. 2 juv. 9 3 juv. scattered 11' juv. 12 3 juv. 1 ad.* at eve. 13 3 juv. 14' ad. 3 juv.

" 15 3 juv. 16' ad. 2 juv. 17' ad. 3 juv. 19' ad. 2 juv. 20' juv. 21 3 juv. 22' ad. 1 juv. 23' ad. 2 juv. 24' ad. 2 juv.

" 25 1 ad. 1 juv. 26' ad. 2 juv. 27 (3) juv. 28 (3) juv. 29' ad. 3 juv. 30 2 juv. 31' ad. 2 juv.

September 23 1 ad. in kitchen & 24 (Percy) 25 do 26 do. December 2'* heard at 9 P.M. by Percy.

Megascops asio

1888 (about) August — Philadelphia, Penn.

Dr. J. C. Merrill U.S.A. tells me (Apr. 4. 1889) that last summer a pair of Screech Owls brought out a brood of young in the grounds of Frankford Arsenal. What he took to be the old birds came every evening in the twilight to some woodbine over the piazza of his quarters where numerous English Sparrows roosted and perching in front of this would very now and then plunge in among the foliage and bring out a Sparrow which was instantly carried off, he believed to their young. When perching the actions of the Owl reminded him of those of a hawk moth. He has heard these Owls wailing in the trees in front of his house within the past week and thinks they are preparing to nest again in the old hole which is probably in one of several decayed maples in front of the house. Frankford Arsenal although ten miles from the heart of Philadelphia is shorn of its suburbs and is surrounded by a densely populated area with stores, thickly clustering houses and noisy streets.

Taking English Sparrows from woodbine at night

Breeding in the heart of a noisy city.

1889 April 1 — Wellesley, Mass.

R. W. Denton about April 1 visited the hole from which he took a set of eggs last year and found what he thinks was the same bird in it. There were no eggs. however,

Megascops asio

1889 Mass.

May 18 Rehoboth. Mr. A. C. Bent took a set of five eggs which, although far advanced in incubation, he managed to blow successfully. — Late nesting

Aug 6, 7 Cambridge. As I was sitting in my museum at about 11 P.M. on the 6th I heard the wailing cry of a female Owl five or six times. I rushed out but did not hear it again. The next morning at daylight a bird, doubtless the same, wailed for several minutes in the linden in front of my window. On the evening of the 7th at about 9 o'clock I again heard this bird. On going out I found that he was in the linden on the west side of my front gate. I got directly under him but of course could not see him. Although wagons & horse cars were rattling noisily past and some boys talking & shouting just across the street, the Owl continued his wailing cry for several minutes. Besides this cry he every now and then uttered a succession of rolling whistles (cu-cu-cu-cu-cu-cu-cu-cu cu cu cu-cu) all on the same key and uttered in very rapid succession. His wail began rather high and descended to the end. It had a weird, penetrating quality the voice trembling a little. It was ~~very~~ not unlike the whine of a shivering dog: perhaps of a puppy crying at a door of a cold night.

After a few minutes the bird flew to the linden by my chamber window & called there a few times. Less than fifteen minutes later H. M. Spelman coming down from the reservoir reported hearing the same Owl probably the same, in the oaks by the Dunbars'. Perhaps the bird is after English Sparrows. I have not heard one in Cambridge for ten years or more. The nights of the 6th & 7th were both clear with a good moon.

In my linden — At daybreak — ~~Notes~~ Indifferent to city noises — Notes — Moon

Scops asio

1889 Mass.

Aug. 17 Cambridge. At 8.30 P.M., the night clear and still but with no moon, a Screech Owl, doubtless the same bird that visited me on the nights of the 6th and 7th of this month, began wailing in the linden in front of my window. I timed his cry ~~sound~~ with a stop watch and found that it lasted with great regularity four-fifths of a second. The intervals between the wails were almost equally regular being four seconds. After a few minutes the bird moved to the linden by the gate and wailed there for some time. He left at 8.40. His wailing impressed me as before with a certain shivery, uncanny quality. He uttered the rolling cu-cu only once this evening. — In my linden; Length of wail; " " intervals

1890

May 4 Wellesley. — Mr. Winsford Denton found a bird sitting on five eggs which were far advanced in incubation. Next in a hole where he took a set of five eggs (now in my collection) in 1888. Early in the spring of 1889 (before it was time for eggs) he visited this nest and ~~found~~ the bird in the hole took her out and looked at her, then replaced her. She deserted and the hole was not again occupied that year. — Building a second year in same hole

Nov. 30 Lexington. — A. Danielson shot a red bird in bushes on the Bryant farm while beating for Partridges. It was started from the tree (a small birch) in which it had been sitting by either him or his dog and was shot flying. — Roosting in deciduous tree.

1891

March 25 Lexington. — Many traces of their recent presence in an old orchard near the Bryant farm. There were pellets under several likely holes and in one place a large collection of grinning skulls, loose teeth and bones of mice. In one of the holes were several tail feathers of Colaptes, in another a mouse (Arvicola) minus the head and in decidedly gamey condition. One hole had a little Owl's down clinging to the edges.

Megascops asio

1891 Mass.

April 9 Concord. Found a gray bird in a hole in an apple tree on the border of woods. The day was clear, calm and, for the season, warm. The Owl was crouching or rather lying flat at the bottom of the hole its "ears" slightly raised, its eyes half-open. Had it not been for the eyes and ears it would have looked exactly like a mat of feathers without shape. I watched it for some time and rattled this book about the outside of the hole but it remained absolutely still not even moving the eyelids. There were several pellets on the ground under the hole. On the 6th I examined all the trees in this orchard and found pellets under most of them. The hole in which the bird was seen to day was empty but there were pellets and excrement marks on the bottom. The bird had apparently been in several of the other holes. I did not disturb it to-day.

May 3 Wellesley. Mr. Winsford Denton took a set of four eggs far advanced in incubation from a nest in the same hole where he obtained a set of five fresh eggs April 22, 1888 and five badly incubated eggs May 4, 1890. The bird found on the nest this year, and in 1888 and 1889, was a red Owl. In 1890 there were five eggs in the nest early in May but no bird. Breeding in the same hole several one years.

" 11 W. Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard. Mr. W. Farrow saw a set of five fresh eggs which a Mr. Norris had just taken and blown. Mr. N. has robbed the same nest four years in succession getting 5 eggs each time. The bird has always been red. Every he has taken her to Cottage City, a distance of seven miles, and liberated her. ~~when~~ On both occasions she started straight for W. Tisbury and the nest was occupied the next year. The nest is in an old Flicker's hole in an oak. Breeding four years in same hole.

Megascops asio

1891 Mass.

May 12 West Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard. — Found a nest in a natural cavity in a small black oak which stood on a hillside near the middle of a small piece of oak woods. The entrance hole was on the west side of the tree at a height of about 8 ft. It was barely large enough to admit my hand and was a neat, almost exactly circular hole which looked as if it might have been knawed by a Squirrel, years ago. The bark had grown in around the edges (for the tree was living and vigorous) which were fringed with the fine under down of the Owl. The interior of the cavity was only a trifle larger than the entrance so that the Owl nearly filled it as she sat rather erect, with "ears" pointing nearly straight upward and eyes half closed, the top of her head only three or four inches below the entrance. She was in red plumage and looked very deep-colored but I found it impossible to take her out, owing to the small size of the hole. She made no resistance whatever, when I put in my hand ~~and~~ although in ~~fumbling~~ feeling about and beneath her I repeatedly touched her bill and twice got my fingers within her talons. I could feel one naked, ~~squirmy~~ hatched young which squirmed and wriggled as I touched it, and at least three eggs. There may have been another egg; I could not make sure. Before disturbing the Owl I could see an upright fringe or rim of oak leaves rising around her on at least two sides. As nearly as I could tell by feeling there was a rather substantial nest composed of these leaves. There were no pellets or cholkings beneath the hole nor any remains of birds or mice.

Nest with 1 young & 3 eggs.

Megascops asio

1891 Mass.

Dec. 6 Concord. – One began waiting in the pines which shade the avenue to North Bridge at 4.30 P.M. (sunset 4.12). the afternoon cloudy. There was a strong light at the time, however; indeed so far as I could see it was still broad daylight. The bird kept up its calling for about two minutes. *Waiting in broad daylight*

" 13 Since the 6th I have repeatedly visited the North Bridge avenue soon after sunset in the hope of hearing the Owl but without success until this evening when he began waiting at 4.45 (sunset 4.12). The evening was clear and mild and twilight was deepening at the time. I walked directly under the bird when he ceased.

" 18 As I was coasting at Ball's Hill to-day one of my men called me to look at "a fine bird" which "you can catch in your hand, sir". It proved to be a Red Screech Owl. It was perched about 5 ft. above the ground in a cluster of young oak sprouts to which nearly all the leaves still clung. These leaves matched the bird's coloring very closely. He sat stiffly erect, feathers drawn tight to the body, ears raised, eyes nearly closed precisely like the bird photographed by Spelman. I advanced my hand slowly and actually first stroked his furred feet, then released one claw from the twig using some force, and finally passed my hand lightly down over the entire length of his back. My companion tried the last experiment but so roughly and abruptly that the bird flew, voiding his excrement as he started. He was lost to sight at about 30 yds. & I could not find him again. There was one wet pellet of mouse fur & bones dropping under the tree. The bird did not flinch in the least while I was handling him. He seemed to me to be putting his whole trust in the protective coloring of the oak leaves. Would a gray bird have chosen such a roosting place? The day was cloudless & the oak in the full sunlight! *Extraordinary tameness of a bird sitting in a small oak among the russet leaves.*

Massachusetts.

Megascops asio. (no. 1.)

1891.

Oct. 25 Concord. In Mr. Derby's orchard I found in one hole the remains of a jumping Mouse evidently taken there by a Screech Owl.

Dec. 8 Concord. I heard a Screech Owl wailing in the pines which shade the avenue to the North Bridge. On pulling out my watch I found the time to be exactly 4.20 when the bird began. The sunset was at 4.12 according to the almanac, but although the sky was cloudy the light was good. Indeed it seemed to be yet broad daylight. The bird wailed steadily for two or three minutes.

Dec. 18 - Concord. While at Ball's Hill one of my men (Benson) called to me that he had found "a fine bird which you can take in your hand, sir". I rushed up to the top of the hill expecting to see something novel when I was shown a beautiful red Screech Owl, which was sitting erect, plumage drawn in "ears" raised, eyes reduced to narrow slit, in the middle of a clump of oak sprouts to which most of the leaves still clung. Hue matched the bird's coloring so closely that I marvel how the man happened to see him. After looking at him a moment I advanced my hand slowly and actually first clutched his furred feet, then released one of his claws from the twig (using some force) and finally drew my hand gently down over his back. Benson tried the last experiment but so roughly that the bird flew. It dipped down over the brow of the hill & we lost sight of it.

1892.

Feby 28 Concord. I was approaching the Simmons house when a Screech Owl began wailing, apparently

Massachusetts.

1893.

Megascops asio. (no. 2)

in the pines that shade the avenue, where I have heard one several times before this winter. Quickening my pace I was walking down Monument Street towards the entrance to this avenue when the bird came flying across the open field on my left and alighted in a large maple directly over my head. It sat very still and looked, against the sky, like a black ball about as large as one's fist. On the other side of the same tree I now perceived another small black ball, apparently the duplicate of the first. While I was wondering if it could be another owl the first ball opened its wings and flew across the triangular field to the large trees on the lane at the foot of the hill, flapping pretty rapidly & very steadily until near them when the wings were set and the line of flight inclined first downward and then sharply upward, the bird pitching upward at the last precisely like a Buteo when about to alight & again choosing a perch high in the tree. The next instant the other black ball followed and alighted again in the same tree with its mate for they were evidently a pair, just starting out on their evening hunt together. After the first few wailings which came from the direction of the pines both birds were perfectly silent. They looked rather large when flying and their wings appeared (as they really are) disproportionately broad especially at the ends. I could not make them out very well when the trees on hill formed the background for the light was dim, although

Massachusetts.

1892.

Megascops asio. (no. 3)

it was not nearly dark night at the time (6 P.M.) I longed to follow them on this evening prowl but certain circumstances prevented. It is evident that these Owls (I did not know before that there was more than one bird.) roost regularly each day in the pines over the avenue to the Minute Man.

July 30 As we were passing back over the wooded ridge a Screech Owl began wailing within fifty yards or less on our left. It was probably perched on one of the dead trees along the edge of the neighboring sprout land. The locality is a mile or more from any farm.

Aug. 14 At a little before eleven a Screech Owl in the orchard near our house called cŭ-cŭ-cŭ-cŭ-cŭ at short intervals for several minutes.

Aug 17. For four or five nights past a Screech Owl has come about our house at 9 to 11 P.M. and uttered either its wail or the cŭ-cŭ-cŭ-cŭ-cŭ cry. It usually stays within hearing for ten or fifteen minutes, never much longer.

Sept. 7 Just as the moon was rising a Screech Owl began wailing on the further side of the river opposite my cabin. As nearly as I could judge the bird was somewhere in the marsh probably perched on some stake left by fishermen or hay-makers.

Copied from Journal.

Massachusetts. Megascops asio (no. 4)

1892.

Sept. 8 Concord. Not long after sunset and while it was still almost broad daylight a Screech Owl began wailing in the trees under the monument.

Megascops asio

1893 Mass.

Jan'y 17 Cambridge.- G. S. Miller Jr. saw a small Owl which he is quite sure was M. asio on Mason Street, this evening, in the twilight. In Cambridge

" 28 One seen early this afternoon on Linnaean Street near the Botanic Garden by a boy in Mr. Hoffman's school.

Feb. Batchelder tells me (Feb. 7th) that a Screech Owl is spending the winter near his place on Kirkland St. He hears him wailing every few nights in the trees about his house and he has been seen in the College yard. He wails on clear and cold or mild and rainy nights indifferently and B. cannot find that weather conditions affect his spirits in the least

Dedham

Mr. J. T. Clark says that two Screech Owls shot in Purgatory Swamp and brought to him for mounting on the 3rd were so emaciated as to be little more than skin, bones & feathers. The winter has been exceptionally cold but there have been no deep snows. Why should these birds have starved?

June Cambridge. Some men hunting for Gypsy Moths in the College Yard found a Screech Owl's nest in the Class Day Elm. The female parent was sitting on four young. The entire family were taken to Mr. Bolles who, after a few days, liberated the parent bird. Her mate (presumably) during the interim wailed constantly at night near Mr. Batchelder's home probably lamenting the loss of his spouse & young for he had been silent for weeks up to this time. During the preceding winter Mr. Batchelder had heard him frequently during stormy & cold as well as mild & pleasant weather. Nest in the Class Day Elm

Dec. 15 Cambridge.- Mr. Hoffmann heard a Screech Owl on Mason St. this evening. On Nov. 24th Mr. R. Deane saw one fly past the Museum Comp. Zool. at dusk. I have heard of others (or the same) birds seen or heard within the past months in this neighborhood.

Megascops asio.(?).

Concord, Mass. Strange cry.

1893. At about 10 o'clock this evening as I was sitting in the
July 20. house writing I heard through the open window in the direction of the Manse what I took at first to be a Cuckoo but on going to the window and putting out my head I got the sound more plainly a second time and at once recognized the fact that it was something quite new to me. There were five cooing notes given more rapidly than those of a Cuckoo but slower than those of a Screech Owl and all on the same key. The tone however, resembled that of the Owl when cooing and I suspect that Megascops was really the author of the sound which was repeated six or eight times in all, at short intervals. If it really was a Screech Owl it is the first that I have heard in Concord this year. I fear the long hard winter destroyed most of these interesting and useful birds.

Megascops asio.

Concord, Mass.

1893. Sept. 6. At 6.05 o'clock this evening, as I was walking up the hill from the boat landing, a Screech Owl began wailing in the pines at North Bridge and kept it up for a minute or more although the sun had not set (it was at least ten minutes high); indeed the tops of the trees in which the bird was sheltered were bathed in sunlight at the time. This is the first instance of the kind that has come under my observation.

Megascops asio

1894 Mass.

July 25 Concord. I was walking in the woods (second growth maples and oaks 20 to 25 ft.) on the back side of Bell's Hill this afternoon when a red Screech Owl started about 15 yards ahead of me and flew about forty yards alighting on a low branch on the further edge of the woods. I was surprised that it should have taken alarm so easily for I had been following a path and making practically no noise but my astonishment was still greater when, on taking only three or four steps further, I saw it bend forward and again take wing although the tree on which it had been sitting was nearly fifty yards off and the intermediate space so densely wooded that I could ~~scarcely~~ see the bird only through a small opening in the branches. It appeared to be quite as shy, in fact, as a Cooper's Hawk. Its flight, moreover, was quite as firm, swift and decided as that of a Hawk and as it passed through the trees it turned from side to side ~~to~~ as it avoided the branches with the greatest ease & skill. It was about 3 o'clock at the time and the sun was shining clear & hot. The light under the maples to be sure was dim & subdued but the perch which the bird chose at the end of its first flight was on the very edge of the woods and when it flew a second time it crossed a wide opening. I have never before seen a Screech Owl behave in this way.

A shy Screech Owl.

Megascops asio.

1896 Mass.

March 12 Cambridge. — At about 12.30 noon to day C. F. Batchelder heard a Screech Owl wailing in the Washington elm & presently discovered the bird looking out of the entrance to a hole on the west side of the tree near the top. The sky was clear at the time & the glare of the sun on the fresh fallen snow intense. Mr. B. also tells me that the Owls which nested in an elm in his house on Thickwood St. two years ago frequently wailed during the day. Indeed as he expressed it he used to hear them at all hours & during every kind of weather. — In hole in Washington Elm wailing on midday

1896-97 During this winter Olive Annie Lothrop frequently heard Screech Owls near the Botanic Garden ~~near~~ Dunstan Street. He also saw one killed (or rather brought down wounded) by a stone thrown by a boy — Dunstan St.

1901.

Nov. 23 Cambridge. — For several evenings past a Screech Owl has been heard wailing in the garden. At about 2 P.M. to-day Gilbert discovered what was doubtless the same bird ensconced within the bark covered box in the elm by the pond — the box which I made for the Flickers and in which the Cotton nested last year. The Owl, a red bird, was just within the entrance hole at which he showed his cat-like face with its drooping ears and partly closed yellow eyes. Here he remained perfectly motionless for the remainder of the afternoon apparently looking down with languid interest on some men who were rolling leaves near the foot of the tree. Indications are not wanting that he has already carried havoc among the ranks of the English Sparrows which frequent the garden. Indeed I have noticed for a week or more past that their numbers have been rapidly diminishing. I may add that the weather was cloudy & dark at the time the bird was seen looking out of the hole. — Takes possession of a Flicker's nest in the Garden.

Megascops asio.

Concord, Mass. In the Concord "lock-up".

1898. As I was passing the Concord jaol the sheriff came out

Dec.9. with a red Screech Owl which he had found dead only a few minutes before in one of the cells. One of the neighbors told me that she had seen the bird sitting at the window of the cell every day for a week or more past. Craig (the sheriff) thought that the bird must have come down the chimney and entered the cell through a hole leading into the flue where a stove had formerly stood. He gave me the bird which was somewhat emaciated and had apparently died of starvation.

Another red Screech Owl was picked up dead in Monument Street, Concord, December 4th by Charles Prescott. Will Bartlett showed me this bird the following day. It had a broken wing but showed no other signs of injury. It had a House Mouse in its throat, the tail and hind feet of this animal protruding just a little beyond the edges of the tightly closed bill. It is a mystery how the bird could have met its fate.

Megascops asio.

North Middleboro', Mass.

1897.

" Mottled Owl, 3 eggs, complete set, incubated some, hollow apple, 7 ft., Apr.13, 1897."

Extract from letter from H.K.Job, July 22, 1897,

North Middleboro', Mass.

Extract from some remarks on the plumage of the Little Screech Owl (Strix Asio) read before the Harvard Society of Natural History in 1852 by Henry K. Oliver Jr., Curator of Ornithology of the Society.

" X X X "About the middle of last June [1851] I saw a very young bird of this species in the possession of a gardener in Cambridge. It was one of three young ones taken from a hollow apple-tree in the vicinity of Fresh Pond during the last week in May. I was assured by several persons of the gardener's family that all the three birds were precisely alike in color - & that the color was - to use the words of the member of the family who seemed most interested in the matter - 'a little lighter than that Screech's nest' - pointing to a nest which was in the room.

When I first saw the bird referred to - the other two having died - it was of a uniform grey color - a little darker, I was told, than when first captured.

I purchased the bird in the last week in

June I took it to my room in Holworthy. At this time its plumage had become still darker, the ash-grey turning to a reddish tinge & the feathers losing gradually the downy appearance which they had at first.

Towards the last of August, I being then at the sea-shore — the plumage was of a uniform reddish brown, & the quills rather darker. But there was no appearance at all of distinct spots anywhere. At this time the feathers of the head & of the tarsi dropped off, leaving these parts entirely bare. Not long afterwards new feathers could be seen growing, and as they increased in growth, those upon the head were found to be light red, each one having a central black line. After a little time again, there appeared on the lower parts new feathers, nearly white in color, spotted with black & reddish brown.

The moulting continued until the last week in September when the plumage corresponded in every particular with Audubon's plate & description of the young birds at the time mentioned. The bird then appeared to have attained its full size.

I ought to have said that the quills [of wings & tail] were not cast in the moulting, but that they changed from ash-grey barred with brown, to light red barred with brown with black.

During the winter following the only change appeared to be a deepening of the red color."

(The bird died some time in the spring of 1832 & proved to be a female)

The skin given to Mus. Comp. Zoology by F.B. Olivier in Jan. 1837

Megascops asio.

GRUNDMANN STUDIOS,
194 CLARENDON ST.
BOSTON, MASS.

So Yarmouth Mass
July 16/00.

Dear Billy
I have just heard from Gilbert of your illness which certainly sounds serious - & which I hope is not as serious as it sounds -
I always connect Amorage with great anxiety & I shall be anxious about you till I know you are all right again - We were just on the point of writing you about coming here & wanted you to set a

date. Now we are so afraid you little Bob or Father can not come. Is it so bad as that? Would a day or two of rest here do you good? We have so far had a constant round of guests. & our present Mrs Barnard & Hayden (Artists) are dubbed by our summer friends "Stone's Boarding Ruffians" — because we go dutch treat on Excursions.

We have had some hot days but always a cool wind or a hurricane blow. This A.M. the thermometer

should stay 70° any hotter than much be boiling in the City — We have a pair of Redbird robs. which I bought young from some boys & have them all tame & they are very Fond of Flies & the Cross by the hour, going Rusty at night & Returning to roost by day — Their antics are very amusing & one of them Eats fruit, bread, — They both are very fond of fruit — but do not care for Meat — Hope you keep well & get enough to eat & Return home. Lovingly for Robert

Megascops asio.

GRUNDMANN STUDIOS,
194 CLARENDON ST.
BOSTON, MASS.

So Yarmouth Mass.
Aug 4/00.

Dear Billy –

I don't want to add to your troubles by telling you that Alice & myself are disappointed – much – at your want of judgment in trying to ascend a mountain at just this time. You should have done it Earlier in the season. Besides you make us feel sorry for your troubles – & that is really a serious grief to us. However there is always a look ahead. You can come again or give us a chance again

They Eat the leaves & moss of the Willow & I have seen it Ejected – They come to bird call – a whistle as near as I can make it to the bird note. Altogether they are a very amusing pets. & I hope will survive to provide for themselves.

Is it possible to send me word whether you can come? I do hope so – It would be so nice. & we can take the best of care of you –

With kindest regards from me & Alice's love to Mr B.

Your ever
William Stone.

Mr. O. Sir Yours
Willie our best regards to Mr Williamson

I should say, another time.
We will save you a place anytime & hope for better luck. You need not be the least concerned for us & we had no other in view to take your place so we can only regret the chance which keeps you away. We hope you will be well enough to go to Rumbaugh but of course this is entirely as it suits your convenience to open camp. If you go we will be glad to go with you. All well here.
The owls are a constant source of amusement. They fly strongly and are beginning to wander afar sometimes afield at night. I do not believe they hunt much for themselves yet though I saw one of them catch & devour a large horned beetle on our door step. They eat almost anything I give them - among wh were blackberries - peaches, bananas & bread. Though they are eager most for fresh raw meat. I can whistle them up at any time when they fly to my call in furious haste.
While at perfect liberty they are as responsive almost as a dog & so far have never failed to be found in the morning on the same old perch. I am evidently individually ~~known~~ very nigh. & they always give evidence of the presence of a stranger though without signs of fear. Animals are instantly recognized as enemies by their motionless elongation & elevated ears.

We have been much entertained by their youthful ~~of~~ instinct at hunting – pouncing on a stick, bunch of moss, & tearing with their bills. Toads have several times suffered a little – but the toad seems to have a means of defence in swelling up like a balloon & keeping absolutely motionless – Perhaps also they emit an acid juice for the owls always leave them after a little. I wish you could tell me what to do with them when we go. Will they savour or find for themselves? I begin to fear they depend on us a good deal for food though one I think finds something as he is never so hungry as the other. "Red top" is a glutton & they are both waxing strong & lusty – It is a pity you can not see them as they are very instructive & commonly amusing –

I will send this to Jaffrey but I don't quite feel sure of reaching you without delay –

Summer Birds of Sudbury, Ont.
A. H. Alberger.

373. Screech Owl. Occasional.

O. & O. XV, June, 1890, p. 87

13.

Summer Birds of the Cobalt Mining Region,
Nipissing District, Ontario.
by Frederick C. Hoebel. Auk XXIV, Jan 1907
p. 50.

13. **Megascops asio.** Screech Owl.— One bird of the reddish phase seen in a tamarack swamp near Cobalt Lake.

Birds of Toronto, Canada,
by James H. Fleming,
Part II, Land Birds,
Auk, XXIV, Jan., 1907, p. 74.

144. **Otus asio.** Screech Owl.— Resident, not uncommon, sometimes abundant in October and November; breeds (April 27, 1890, five eggs, J. Jackson). The red phase of plumage is rare, usually occurring for several years in succession and then disappearing.

Scops asio

Bangor, Maine.

This has been the greatest year for Owls of all kinds ever known. There have been years when there have been more Snowy or Barred or Hawk, but this year some of all kinds. At least 30 Snowy owls have been taken east of Kennebec in November and December. There have been more Richardsons than usual. Hawk Owls have not been plenty, and a pair of each of Long and Short-eared and and Scops Asio all of which were always very rare here. (Letter of Manly Hardy, Jan. 30, 1890)

Notes from Bangor Me.

One Mottled Owl was killed Oct. 8th, by the skillful use of a bow and arrow in the hands of a would be Indian. I remember but one other taken in this vicinity.

O. & O. VIII. Jan 1883. p. 8

Winter Birds of Webster, N. H. by Falco.

| Screech Owl, (*Scops asio*).

O. & O. X. Jan. 1885. p. 14

Breezy Point, Warren, N.H.

1895. Megascops asio

June 7. Examined a mounted specimen that in Warren and now in the possession of a local taxidermist in the village. The bird was in gray plumage.

Winter Birds of Southwestern Vt. 1885.

Screech Owl,
A. F. Johnson, Hydeville, Vt.

O. & O. X. Apr. 1885. p. 63

Summer Bds, Mt. Mansfield, Vt.

5. * Megascops asio. SCREECH OWL. — Common resident.

by Arthur H. Howell. Auk, XVIII, Oct., 1901, p. 340.

* Fide Mrs. Carrie E. Straw of Stowe, Vt.

Scops asio
1886 April 9th

Mass.- near Cambridge.

18 | Scops asio Nov. 8th E. Mass. 1886.

Mass. (near Cambridge) Scops asio

In hole

1886

Nov. 8 Found one in a hole in an apple tree in Belmont, the same hole where I got one last April. The bird taken to-day was in nearly intermediate condition between the red and gray stages. It acted in the usual stupid way making no resistance and seeming to be perfectly lethargic. The day was cold and windy.

Mass (Winchendon)

Rare but occasionally occurs and breeds
(Bailey)

Scops asio
Mass. (Belmont) Scops asio

In hole in warm day

1888

Nov. 14 Spelman & Batchelder took a gray Owl from the hole in the apple orchard near Prospect St. The day was clear and very warm for the season (Ther. over 60°) but there was a high wind.

Owls.-The number of Owls shot in Greenfield and vicinity since May. 1st 1884. are

six Screech, Owls. A number of Screech Owls have been seen about the town, One Screech Owl lives in a pigeon house on the main street, and can be seen sunning itself all through the day. Are Arcadian Owls common or rare this Winter?—*S. W. Comstock, Greenfield, Mass.* **O. & O. X. Mar. 1885. p. 47**

Birds of Bristol County, Mass.
F. W. Andros.

Megascops asio (Linn.), Screech Owl. Resident, common, Breeds.

O. & O. XII. Sept. 1887 p. 139

Winter Notes from Wellesley Mass
S. W. Denton

Seven Screech Owls (*Scops asio*), several of them being in the red phase of plumage have been taken here during December and January. They were found in holes in old trees or were shot in the evening, being lured within gunshot by an imitation of their note.

O. & O. XIII. July. 1888 p. 104

Birds Known to Pass Breeding Season
nr. Winchendon, Mass. Wm. Brewster

13. Megascops asio.* Not common.

Auk, V, Oct., 1888. p. 389

Brief Notes.

I secured a Red Screech Owl ♀, taken in the act of killing a full-grown Hen in its coop, at Sudbury, Mass., January 16.

A. W. Morse.

O. & O. Vol. 18, Feb. 1893 p. 31

Notes from Belchertown, Mass.
J. W. Jackson

Jan 24, 26 found a Red Screech Owl in woods, partly eaten by a fox.

O. & O. Vol. 18, Mar. 1893 p. 45

General Notes.

Summer Birds of Central Berkshire Country, Mass. ~~Francis H. Allen.~~ Ralph Hoffmann

13. Megascops asio. SCREECH OWL. — Young found in Stockbridge.

Auk XII. Jan. 1895 p. 88

Aggressive Screech Owls.— Mrs. John W. Ames of Cambridge has kindly given me permission to publish the following account of an interesting experience which she had with some Screech Owls at Concord, Massachusetts, in June, 1906. I give it in her own words as follows:—

"I came to Concord to the Manse on June 14. A day or two after my arrival I walked down the avenue after supper and as I stood near the gate an owl hooted and flew close by my head, and then, after a minute, flew back again. I thought nothing of it, until, a few evenings later, my cook came in much frightened and said she had been hit in the head by a bat. She had been about where I was when the owl flew past me, and her description of the sound it made seemed to make it more probable that it was an owl than a bat. A few days later she was struck again as she walked down the avenue, and both times the skin was broken in several places on the side of her head, and the blow was severe enough to be painful for some days. We soon heard from all our neighbors stories of how, as they passed our gate, the owl flew out and struck them, and almost every evening we could hear some signal of distress from the unwary passers-by, such as, 'Look out for the bird!' or 'What is it? Is it a bat?' One man, I was told, had his eyelids seriously cut.

"One evening as I sat in the house I heard what seemed to be an unusual disturbance among the owls, and I wondered if the young ones might be learning to fly. So I walked down about half way to the gate, with a friend, taking the precaution to put hoods over our heads. We stood there for a few minutes, listening, and then, as it was hot, I dropped back my hood. In an instant, with an angry cry, the owl struck me on the side of the forehead, leaving three or four scratches. I had no time to see the bird, but some days later I had a fairly good view of it, as it flew over me to an elm tree on the hill opposite our house. It seemed to me then to have the appearance and usual size of the Screech Owls which we see often about here.

"One evening, about June 25, a number of people came up, protected by baseball masks or hoods, to investigate the whereabouts of the owl's nest, which appeared to be in the clump of trees along the wall at the foot of the hill, and directly opposite our gate. Two boys in the party threw stones at the trees to start out the owls, and the bird showed off as usual, striking several persons in the head. But the next morning, Mr. Ferguson, who keeps a tub of water for his cow under the trees where the owls seemed to live, brought in the body of an owl which had apparently been drowned, as it was found in the tub. Nobody knows anything of the manner of its death and the boys, whom I questioned, said they did not, to their knowledge, hit any of the owls. But I could not help feeling that the poor bird had been struck by one of their stones, and fallen, stunned, into the water. Since then we have heard nothing of the owls except what appeared to be an unwonted crying of the little ones for the next week or two, and I supposed that they were hungry, for, though they could fly, they probably were not yet trained to find their own food."

I have some further notes concerning this family of owls from Mrs. Alfred Worcester of Waltham who, in company with several friends, visited the Manse on the evening of June 26. The party had provided themselves with fencing masks, which proved useful, as will appear from her account of the experience, which is as follows:—

Estes Park, Colo.

Otus flammeola. Flammulated Screech Owl.— One nest with female bird found and taken in Estes Park, June 15, 1903; now in Collection at the State Agricultural College, Fort Collins, Colo. Also one nest with female taken from same vicinity, June 18, same year, now in the Collection of the Hon. J. E. Thayer, Lancaster, Mass.

Auk 26, Jan-1909, p. 87.

Mottled Owl.—We have received a fine specimen just between the Red and Gray Plumage. It came from Barrington, R. I. Have had large quantities in past seasons, but none not readily attributable to Red or Gray.—*S. & J.* O. & O. VII. Apr. 1882. p. 114

WINTER BIRDS. Owls were unusually abundant last winter, and I mounted three Screech Owls, (two red and one gray),

J. N. Clark,
Saybrook, Conn.

O.+O. VIII. Oct. 1883. p. 80.

A Fishing Screech Owl.—I secured a Screech Owl Feb. 2, 1889, which was caught in a steel trap, the latter having been set in a spring, where there were a number of small fish. When found it was dead, having been drowned, and its legs were more or less covered with fish scales. The trap was at least four or five inches below the surface of the water, which seems to show that the Owl must have plunged into the water in order to have got caught. This is the only instance in which I have known this species to enter the water for the purpose of securing fish.* — WILLARD E. TREAT, *East Hartford, Connecticut.*

[*For a similar case see Bull. Nuttall Ornith. Club, Vol II, p. 80.—ED.]

Auk, VI. April, 1889. p. 189-190.

Engineer Daniels, on his trip from New York to Boston, while passing through Pomfret, Conn., had a Red Screech Owl fly in between the engine and tender. The bird lived only a short time.

O. & O Vol. 17, Aug, 1892 p. 121

Birds of the Adirondack Region.
C. H. Merriam.

117. **Scops asio** *(Linn.) Bonaparte.* MOTTLED OWL; SCREECH OWL.—Breeds and is not rare. Don't think it winters here.

Bull. N.O.C. 6, Oct, 1881, p. 232

Notes, Shelter Island, N. Y.
W. W. Worthington.

In regard to the remarks, "Experience with Screech Owls," I wish to say that I put three of them in a cage over night, and the next morning I found the weakest of the three killed and more than half eaten by his companions.—*W. W. Worthington.*

O. & O. X. May. 1885. p. 80.

Birds Tioga Co, N. Y. Alden Loring.

402. Little Screech Owl. Common in the winter. Lives on mice and small birds, and a farmer once told me that he caught one in his dove-cot which had killed a dove and eaten its head off.

O. & O. XV, June, 1890, p. 85

Cold Weather Notes. Stephentown, N. Y.
Benjamin Hoag

Screech Owls are very abundant; the bulk seen and reported are in the grey phase of plumage.

O. & O. Vol. 18, April, 1893 p. 58

MOTTLED OWL.—In examining a hollow tree occupied by one of these birds, (probably a male,) I found the headless bodies of a Robin and a Kingbird, which proves that it is not so harmless quite as represented.

(These birds must have been caught in the night when off their guard.—ED.)

Shelter Island Notes.

O. & O. VII. Oct. 1882. p. 167

same depth as the *dentàta*, their stomachs contained only the *Nucula limàtula*, *Fusus córneus*, *Nàtica triseriàta* and *Nassa trivittàta*. The specimens of the *planus* were taken at Cape Ann; but the distance of forty miles, between Cape Ann and Provincetown, would not account for this shell not being found in both fishes. The two species, it is seen by the above remarks, are similar in their voracity; but one of the principal characters of the *dentàta* is its uncommonly large mouth, while the mouth of the *planus* is very small. So that if the N. *thraciæformis* should be found in the stomach of the *planus*, they will probably be immature shells. During the ensuing season, I contemplate laying before the Society a paper upon the habitats of some of the mollusca of our waters; as, during my ichthyological investigations, undertaken in behalf of the State of Massachusetts, I have been enabled, by examining carefully our fishes, to ascertain the depths at which several of them are usually found—and in what species of fish we may expect to find certain species of mollusca.

Note. Misled by Mitchill's description of the specific characters of the *Pleuronectes planus*, I supposed the Platessa taken at Cape Ann, to be that fish Having satisfied myself since, that it is a new species, I would propose for it the name of P. *ferruginea*.

Specific characters. Body smooth; right side of a reddish slate color, with a great number of irregularly formed ferruginous spots. Mouth small; lips tumid. Lateral line making a high arch over pectorals.

This species more nearly resembles the *Platessa limanda* (L.) than any other fish. From that, however, it differs in being smooth; in having its teeth closely set together; and in the length of the pectoral fins compared to the length of the head, they being in the *ferruginea* much shorter than in the *limanda*. A minute description of this species will appear in the Ichthyological Report prepared for the State.

Owls.

Screech

Owls have been quite common, and one in the red plumage was reported as seen, but not taken. One was brought me in the Fall of 1884, which, while referable to the gray phase rather than the red, yet was considerably tinged with reddish.

H. H. Wilder, Wayland, N.Y.

O. & C. X. July. 1885. p. 111

100

The Color Phenomena of the Little Screech Owl.

Much has been written, more has been said, and more than both combined has been the unexpressed speculation in the minds of nearly all American ornithologists on the still mooted and undecided color phenomena, occurring in the Little Muttering or Screech Owl. I have thought much on the subject in days that are past and gone when I was active as an ornithologist and whenever I would chance to see one of these stupid, grewsome little birds, my first observation always would naturally be,— its color.

Not long ago an incident occured which enabled me to make some pretty accurate observations and deductions on this point. This spring, I think it was toward the latter part of May, I went on a brief visit to my old home in Wayne County, calling on my old friend Mr. J. B. Purdy, together we went for a stroll in some neighboring woodland. Following my friend close in a thicket, well guarded from the direct rays of the sun, were discovered several young of the foregoing species. They were just able to leave the nest and were perched on the lower branches of small bushes but a few feet from the ground. I think four of the young were discovered in all, and all were in the gray phase of coloring. Soon our attention was directed to a peculiar low cooing sound, alternating with the sharp snap, snap, of the beaks of the parent Owls, made apprehensious by our close proximity to their young. Our immediate thought was to discover the old birds, and determine also their color. With small trouble they were found, as soon they came quite close, uttering all the while, that wired coo, coo, coo, snap, snap; first one bird, then the other. I noted no variation in the warning note of the male and female. Both were in the gray phase. Soon one of the birds flew to a stub hard by and dodged into a small natural cavity near the top and there it sat, its head alone visible and although it soon ceased its cry, never for a moment did its eyes wander from us, wondering, perhaps, in its dumb instinctive way, what the probable results of our discovery would be regarding the ultimate safety of its offspring.

Soon a flock of small birds, Tanagers, Nuthatches, Gnateatchers, etc., collected about this stub, where the Owl sat so statue like, and set up a great din, seeking no doubt, to frighten the "squaller" away. Not daring to offer any direct violence, I thought of the simile it presented to human birds; the early settlers. those brave, hardy men, who, braving and daring all, went westward and established themselves at Boonesborough, and, not withstanding the continued threatenings of the savage hordes who swarmed in the unbroken woodlands Those dusky men who feared not to plunge deep into the vast solemn solitude of the mighty forest, but, brave and savage as they were, they have, one and all, succumbed to the unresisting advance of enlightment and civilization. First the red man, than the white man, white man forever.

The Owl was but one; the small birds were many, but the Owl was wise, was fortified, and as well might the Indians have hoped to dislodge Boone and his sturdy followers by shooting wooden and reed arrows at a strong log lodge, as the small, noisy birds to dislodge the Owl. He may have been vexed and worried at their attempts, but the idea of capitulating never entered his head, probably.

The above observations may throw some light on this subject. Some have regarded the variation due to sex alone, some to age, others to seasons of the year or locality, while others claiming, and I believe rightly, that it is simply the nature of the bird. Some to be gray, some to be red, although Mr. Purdy informs me of all the young he has ever examined, all have been gray. I once took six young Owls of this species from the nest, and all were gray. They were yet in the downy plumage. Why there should be a deposit of pigment in some and not in others, is to us a mystery, as is many another fact occurring in nature.

I should be pleased to see in the columns of this valuable medium the results of other observers' observations and their theories, for by individual testimony much of a valuable nature may be added, and by this we may be able more readily to arrive at precise and definite conclusions. I see a certain gentleman of Washington, D. C., is making some direct and scientific experiments, seeking a solution that way. My wish for him is success.

W. C. Brownell, M. D.

Morrice, Mich., June 17, 1892.

Early in July, we mailed notices to all whose subscription expired. Many have responded promptly. We find that there are still quite a number to hear from.

Auk, XIII, Oct., 1896, pp. 321-5.

EVIDENCE SUGGESTIVE OF THE OCCURRENCE OF 'INDIVIDUAL DICHROMATISM' IN *MEGASCOPS ASIO.*

BY ARTHUR P. CHADBOURNE, M. D.[1]

THE common Screech Owl and some of its varieties are typical examples of dichromatism, which may be defined as the occurrence of two distinct phases of color *in different individuals* of the same species, entirely independent of age, sex, or season. It is evident that "the occurrence of two distinct phases of color" *in the same individual*, if "independent of age, sex, or season," must constitute an *individual*, as distinct from the *specific* form of dichromatism. The following account of a pair of Screech Owls shows that 'individual dichromatism' probably occurs in this species, though it is doubtless infrequent, and possibly found only under artificial or even diseased conditions.

Two Screech Owls (*Megascops asio*), said to have been taken from the same brood late in the spring of 1894, were sent to me about Nov. 1, 1894. Both birds were in typical gray plumage, but a minute examination of the feathers was not made at the time, as the possibility of a change in phase had not been thought of, though, as an intermediate between the red and the gray plumage was wanted, it is safe to say that any reddish tint would have been noticed if present. The two Owls were in full autumn dress except for a few downy feathers near the so-called ears.

The Owls were put in a large box cage, with the front of wire netting; and a hole at one side opened into a second box, thus making a dark retiring place, that was never used. Six times each week they were given all the raw beef or sheep's liver that they wanted; but the seventh day they fasted. Fresh water for drinking and bathing, and also gravel were put in the cage daily; while in addition dead guinea pigs, and occasionally live mice, were to be had in the 'animal room' at the Medical School, where

[1] Read at the meeting of the Nuttall Ornithological Club, March 4, 1895.

AN EXAMPLE OF APTOSOCHROMATISM, AS INFLUENCED BY DIET, IN *MEGASCOPS ASIO*.

BY FRANCIS J. BIRTWELL.

IN THE following pages I shall attempt to detail an account of a very remarkable example of color change without moult or feather loss (Aptosochromatism); but unfortunately the results

feather after it has assumed the mature condition. Under the circumstances, therefore, the incompleteness of the present paper will kindly be overlooked.

Anyone who has read Dr. Chadbourne's article (Auk, Oct., 1896, and Jan., 1897) upon this subject must have felt keen disappointment at the untimely death of the Owls upon which he was working, and it was largely to carry on the unfinished work, that I at once availed myself of the opportunity presented when some excitable Blue Jays betrayed to me the hiding place of a pair of Screech Owls, March 30, 1898.

The birds were readily taken home and introduced into a shed in which boxes were placed for sleeping and a small cedar tree for perching. The larger bird was in the extreme light gray phase of coloration, the smaller Owl being in the bright red condition. Only the gray bird lived, the other one dying twelve days later. On Dec. 30, 1898, another red bird was captured and placed with the first, but was promptly eaten, so I made no further attempts to obtain another. Both red birds were easily handled, but the marks of the bill and claws of the gray bird were present invariably upon my hands after each interview. By stroking the bird's head, however, I could cause it to close both eyes and fall into a state of apparently perfect oblivion from which the plucking of specimen feathers rarely aroused him, thus enabling me to make frequent and careful examinations of the plumage.

I endeavored to promote as natural conditions for my bird as possible — kept him in the loosely built shed at all times when the weather conditions could be as favorable for my purpose as possible, gave him a mouse or a Sparrow at frequent intervals to regulate him, and gave fresh water for drinking and bathing.

The Singing of Birds. E. P. Bicknell.

Scops asio. Screech Owl.

The Screech Owl shows a very perplexing irregularity through the year in the use of its strange quavering cry. This much is plain from my records, which, however, are not sufficiently full to give a clear reading of the larger facts. But that the bird is noisy or the reverse with some reference to the time of the year there can be no doubt. The late summer, far more than the spring, seems to be the season when its cry is most frequent and most regular from year to year. Usually, after a considerable time of silence, it begins to quaver in July or in August, thence continuing off and on until winter. But there is no great regularity about this; simply my notes through a series of years cover all this period, and the bird is to be heard in one or more of the autumn months every year.

I am not without scattering records of having heard it in winter; but it is virtually a silent bird from December or earlier until March or later.

With some uniformity it is to be heard for a short time in late March or early April; but I have not a record for late April, May, and June.

Auk, 2, July, 1885. p. 260-261.

Mass. (Wellesley) APR 22 1888 Scops asio

1888 Nest & 5 eggs.

April 22 S. W. Denton & Bros. took a set of 5 eggs just a shade incubated. The nest was in a dead white pine about 25 ft. above the ground. The tree had been struck years ago by lightning and before dying the bark had partly closed around the cleft in the trunk. In the cavity thus formed and only about 2 inches below the bottom of the opening were the eggs. There was no nest the eggs lying merely on pieces of decayed wood. The bird flew from the hole as D's brother was climbing the tree. The tree stood on the

20 Snowdon Howland reports a Screech Owl laying a perfect egg while kept by him.

Owls in Confinement.

O. & O. VII. Oct. 1882. p. 163.

Birds of Dead River Region, Me. F. H. C.

80. *Scops asio*, (Screech Owl.) A solitary individual of this species, amused himself by his tremulous cry near the hostelry at Kingfield. Mr. Freeborn has a set of their eggs taken "from a decayed apple tree in New Vineyard." None of these birds were seen or heard in the dense evergreen forests.

O. & O. XI. Dec. 1886. p. 177

New Eng. Raptores. Number Eggs in a set. F. H. Carpenter.

Screech Owl, (*Megascops asio*).
27 sets of 4

O. & O. XII. Oct. 1887 p. 168

Collection of Raptores Eggs. J. P. N.

Screech Owl, 3-4, 3-5, 4-6, 10 51

O. & O. XV. Apr. 1890. p. 56

Raptores, Bristol County, Mass.
Hilton B. Read.

Screech Owl (*Scops asio*). A common resident of our county and regularly breeds, choosing some convenient hollow tree, without regard to its proximity to the habitation of man. One instance has came under my personal observation, of a pair of *Scops*, who annually bred in a hollow elm tree, in the front yard of a farmer's house, and to which members of the family would often ascend, by means of a ladder, and gaze upon the enterprising brood of owlets. The nest complement is usually four eggs, which differ from the foregoing only in being smaller in size. Nearly all are familiar with the two phases of plumage—red and grey—of this bird which cannot be attributed to either age or sex.

O. & O. XII. Aug. 1887 p. 118

egg of a green of white hair near the thorn of a branch in-hand.

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O.&O. XII. Aug. 1887 p. 118

going to have a good time shooting White Herons, (as they are called here), let me say that he will probably fail. And to illustrate let me give an account of a hunt for them I took a short time ago. After a long and somewhat difficult search, I at last discovered one. Now that Heron was not standing on a log by the side of a creek waiting to be shot. He was out in the center of a large prairie where there was no opportunity of getting within gunshot. He was fully a half mile away, and to all appearance he would stay there. Now I have the conceit to consider myself a pretty good sneak (for bird hunting) and I set to work to crawl up to him. There was not a spear of grass on the whole plain to hide behind, or anything else for that matter, but finally I *did* succeed in getting a single tuft between him and myself, and then began what would have appeared to a looker on, the attempt of an elephant to approach a flea behind a needle. Bear in mind I was crawling on hands and knees, inch by inch, in black mud, varying from three inches to a foot in depth. That Heron was fully a half mile away when I started, and after two hours' hard work I had actually got within two gunshots of him, and was just beginning to think how nice that skin would look in my cabine when away he went for parts unknown. I was scarcely disappointed, not expecting to get him in the first place, but I intend visiting a place where large numbers of these birds roost every night, and then hope to get at least one good specimen.

My Experience with Screech Owls.

BY C. W. R., WASHINGTON, D. C.

In May, 1883, I found a Screech Owl's nest in a hollow limb, about thirty-five feet from the ground. It contained four young, about a week old, which I carried home to raise as pets. The young were covered with white down, and, when found, were lying on a bed of decayed chips. About the nest were pieces of mouse skin, the feathers of a Towhee, and some gray pellets.

The Owls were placed in a small box on a bed of sawdust, and were fed on raw meat. They soon grew large enough to hop on the top of the box, where they would sit and blink, and stare, by the hour. It soon became necessary to remove them to better quarters, so a large cage was built in the shed, where they devoted themselves to hopping from one perch to another, all day long, for the first few days. One day one of the Owls found his way through the bars of the cage, and flew to the floor. An old hen with chickens came in presently, and recognizing him as an enemy, went for him and killed the poor Owl in a as an arrow and noiseless as a floating feather, he struck out for the intruder, knocking him over on the ground. For a moment it was a confused heap of chaff and owls, then they parted and looked each other squarely in the eye, then *Scop* with one wing drawn out before his head advanced sidelong to renew the attack. Not wishing to provoke hostilities further I removed *Asio* from the enclosure, and right glad was he to come.

The young *Scops* are at this date, Oct. 27, just commencing to come out in red plumage, having a number of feathers so streaked on their back and wings. As I should have previously mentioned incubation occupied in this case only twenty-two days. I have never heard of these owls breeding in captivity before, yet if they or any other species have done so, a record of such would be appreciated by—*F. H. Carpenter, Rehobeth, Mass.*

Snow Buntings and Pileated Woodpeckers.

During a tramp over the mountains north of this place early in October I saw large flocks of Snow Buntings (*Plectrophanes nivalis*) and was informed by a "native" that they were to be found all through the spring and summer. Strong circumstantial evidence in favor of their breeding there, if he told the truth—and I have no reason to doubt it. It is certainly cold enough out there, even in mid-summer to suit the most Boreal bird of my acquaintance. I also saw two Pileated Woodpeckers, (*Hylotomus pileatus.*) I think they were wanderers, for the land has been pretty well cleared by fires and loggers. I never saw but one of these birds alive before. It was in the beginning of last winter, near Dover, Del. There had been a "freeze" the night before and all the small puddles, and a good many of the big ones had a pretty thick coat of ice. While walking near a creek I heard something pounding on the ice, and then an angry "squeal" unmistakeably a bird's. A

minute. They had now acquired a soft gray coat of feathers. The remaining three were placed on a limb of a tree one morning for exercise, and the smaller and weaker one of them, who had not yet learned to fly, fell from the limb and hurt himself. He was wrapped in a strip of cloth and put in a box alone, and when seen half an hour later, he had swallowed about two inches of the rag he was wrapped in, and seemed bent on swallowing the rest. It was cut off, for he would not, or could not, let go. After taking this medicine he pined away and—was as well as ever in a few days, and better, for he began to pick up, and was soon as strong as the rest.

It was now July, and I noticed a few red feathers pushing their way through the gray ones, and it was not long before they were clad in the red or mottled plumage. The Owls suffered a great deal from the hot weather, and were panting all day long, so I got a tin pan full of water and set it in the shed, then set the Owls on the edge, and they went in and enjoyed themselves. They always wet themselves completely through, and were unable to fly for some time after. After a bath they would go to a sunny spot and sit there, with their wings spread and their eyes half closed. They also took sand and sun baths, and would sit in the sun with their wings extended for some time.

One morning an Owl was missing, and the following day another, and nothing was heard of them afterwards. The remaining one was removed with his cage to a shady place in the open air, but he preferred the shed in the day time. When allowed the freedom of the shed at night he did not molest the chickens, nor did he get in their way himself, but if a lighted candle was taken in there after dark, he would put it out with his wings. He would pounce on live mice and birds that were brought to him, always being sure to get his claws about the throat of his victims. I generally found him in a certain corner behind some boxes, in the day time, where he would remain undisturbed until evening. He liked grass-hoppers, especially the large ones, of which I used to get him a large number. When placed before him alive, he would stand erect and gaze at the hopper for some time, then he would go prancing around it, stamping his feet, seemingly to get a favorable position to pounce from, and suddenly come down on it with both feet, as if it was something that would require all the strength he could muster. He always tore off the legs of the hoppers, and the wing and tail feathers of birds.

One day he was found in his favorite corner looking rather worn out, and the cause was explained next day by his throwing up a pellet in which was a *nail one and three-fourths inches long.* He was never in a hurry unless after something, or something was after him. He paused after everything he ate, and every swallow he took while drinking. Whenever he saw a cat or dog, he would make off in the opposite direction in short time. He did not seem to be troubled at all by the light, and would look at Buzzards and Chimney Swifts, following their flights with his eyes. It was amusing to see him pounce on red ants. He would watch one and wait until it got some distance away, then run after and pounce on it, after his manner of pouncing on grass-hoppers. He seldom got the ant, but a clawful of dirt instead. He would nibble at the dirt and then drop it to see where the ant had gone, then after it again. He went through the queerest notions when looking at anything; would bob his head first to one side and then the other, then draw it forward and backward, while all the time the pupil of his eye would grow large, then small. I kept him through the Winter, and the following Spring he disappeared. O.&O. X. May. 1885. p. 75-

as an arrow and noiseless as a floating feather, he struck out for the intruder, knocking him over on the ground. For a moment it was a confused heap of chaff and owls, then they parted and looked each other squarely in the eye, then *Scop* with one wing drawn out before his head advanced sidelong to renew the attack. Not wishing to provoke hostilities further I removed *Asio* from the enclosure, and right glad was he to come.

The young *Scops* are at this date, Oct. 27, just commencing to come out in red plumage, having a number of feathers so streaked on their back and wings. As I should have previously mentioned incubation occupied in this case only twenty-two days. I have never heard of these owls breeding in captivity before, yet if they or any other species have done so, a record of such would be appreciated by—*F. H. Carpenter, Rehobeth, Mass.*

O.&O. VIII. Dec. 1883. p. 93-94

Snow Buntings and Pileated Woodpeckers.

During a tramp over the mountains north of this place early in October I saw large flocks of Snow Buntings (*Plectrophanes nivalis*) and was informed by a "native" that they were to be found all through the spring and summer. Strong circumstantial evidence in favor of their breeding there, if he told the truth—and I have no reason to doubt it. It is certainly cold enough out there, even in mid-summer to suit the most Boreal bird of my acquaintance. I also saw two Pileated Woodpeckers, (*Hylotomus pileatus.*) I think they were wanderers, for the land has been pretty well cleared by fires and loggers. I never saw but one of these birds alive before. It was in the beginning of last winter, near Dover, Del. There had been a "freeze" the night before and all the small puddles, and a good many of the big ones had a pretty thick coat of ice. While walking near a creek I heard something pounding on the ice, and then an angry "squeal" unmistakeably a bird's. A

THE MOTTLED OWL IN CONFINEMENT.

BY C. J. MAYNARD.

[The following interesting account of this bird was sent me for insertion in my "Birds of North America," which I have in preparation. As it throws considerable light on the disputed question of the color of the bird's plumage in the first year, I send it to the NATURALIST, hoping that it may bring out, from other observers, new facts in relation to this species. In presenting it, I will briefly say that I have found two other birds in the first year's plumage which were decidedly gray; but these are the only instances that I have noticed, although I have examined a great number of specimens. Whether we have two species of *Scops*, or whether the young of *S. asio* are sometimes gray in color, sometimes red, remains still uncertain. My owu opinion is that the last hypothesis is the most correct. — E. A. SAMUELS.]

ON June 15, 1867, I observed some boys around a small owl which was perched on a stick. On closer examination I found that it was a young Mottled Owl (*Scops asio* Bonaparte). It was staring about in a dazed manner and seemed half stupefied. I easily persuaded the boys to part with it for a trifle, and took it home. I should judge that it was about two weeks old. It was covered with a grayish down. I put it in a large cage, and gave it some meat which it ate, but not readily, for it seemed frightened at the sight of my hand, and at my near approach would draw back, snapping its beak after the manner of all owls. It soon grew tamer, however, and would regard me with a wise stare, as if perfectly understanding that I was a friend.

In a short time it would take food from me without fear; I never saw it drink, although water was kept constantly near it. Its food consisted of mice, birds, and butchers' meat, on which it fed readily. I kept the bird caged for about two weeks, during which time it became quite tame, but would not tolerate handling, always threatening me with its beak when my hands approached it. As the wires of its cage broke its feathers when moving about, and as it hardly

NOTES ON THE SCREECH OWL.

BY P. T. COOLIDGE.

I.— A YOUNG SCREECH OWL IN CAPTIVITY.

ON June 5, 1902, I obtained a young Screech Owl (*Megascops asio*), which had been found two or three days before in a road in Cambridge, Mass. A brief description of the bird at the beginning of its period of captivity will give some idea of its age. Its total length was about seven inches, of which about one inch was tail. The whole plumage was remarkably soft and fur-like; the facial disk was not very clearly defined, and the ears were merely certain areas in the scalp plumage the feathers of which could be erected at will. At the end of the first week of captivity, the owl could fly well. Before acquiring this accomplishment, when put in some position of precarious footing, like the slippery arm of a chair, he could move most easily by crawling, sometimes clinging with his bill parrot-fashion. On the floor he would patter away as nimbly as a sandpiper.

The first evening he was as tame as a hungry robin nestling. He would perch willingly on one's finger, and would allow himself to be stroked. But when he first saw me the next morning, his gentleness had all disappeared. Hissing, and snapping his bill, he swayed from one foot to the other, and held his wings off from his sides and ruffled his feathers so that he was fully six inches wide. His hiss, in particular, was about as terrifying as a gentle puff from an empty atomizer. This performance was repeated but once or twice during the eleven weeks of his imprisonment with me. Thinking the bird might be hungry, as he had been given nothing the night before, I tried as soon as possible to feed him with liver. He protested much, by a rather musical chattering, especially at my attempts to force morsels down his throat.

The cage which the owl occupied during the summer was a box eighteen inches high, twenty-five inches long, and twenty-two inches wide, one side of which was covered with "cellar window

Scops asio

Concord Mass.
October 16. 1880

My friend Mr. D. C. French tells me that while superintending the picking of some apples this morning he discovered a Screech Owl sitting among the leaves. One of the pickers placed a ladder on the branch & gently mounting to the spot took the bird in his hand.
It was fully grown, seemed perfectly healthy.
I have never before known an authentic instance of such tameness in this

Mass. (Middlesex County)

Scops asio

1886 Roosting in hole.

April 9 This afternoon I visited an orchard in Belmont where Spelman took a Screech Owl from a hole several years ago. At the foot of the tree immediately beneath the hole were fifteen pellets all within a circle of about two feet diameter. Upon climbing to the hole and looking in I spied at the bottom a red Scops sitting very erect, its ears raised, its eyes closed tight. I poked it gently with a stick but it would not move, open its eyes, or click its bill. I then pushed down my handkerchief having heard that Owls can be drawn out in this way. It

could not be made to turn it. Finally a friend with me at the time thrust down his arm and drew the bird out. At first it opened its eyes a little and then closed them tightly again. It made no resistance with either bill or claws and only once tried to escape. I stroked and rubbed its head and it seemed soothed and pleased. I even handled its bill and partially opened it without eliciting any threatening response. It lay in my hand quietly and showed no signs of fear or anger. (I noticed that its heart did not palpitate). In short it seemed to be quite indifferent to what fate had in store for it. Its plumage was wonderfully rich and perfect. On spreading its wing I noticed that the lining had a fine silky sheen that glistened in the sunlight. Pellets composed of mouse fur & bones; no feathers. Two pellets in hole in a stump of nest. Two pellets under another hole in a neighboring tree but could find no other birds. Day clear, still & warm.

Special.

The Imperial Bill Woodpecker. Since I reported the discovery of this species here the following has been brought about. Mr Lance shot the bird on Friday morning & brought it to Baton Rouge Friday evening. Mr Lance's friends heard of it & offered him $5 for it. He refused. Saturday morning he sent it to the Museum. Mr Lance shot the bird in the swamp near Brusher's Creek, Pointe Coupee Parish.

Thos. D. Burns, Baton Rouge, La.

pp. 353–356. That even international jealousy should "question its origin" surpasses belief. HENRY W. HAYNES.

Boston, Feb. 16.

Science Feb. 24. 1893 vol. XXI. No. 528 p. 107

Birds in Severe Cold Weather.

DURING the recent severe cold weather, as one of the high-school students was on his way through the belfry of the building to hoist the weather signals, he discovered a small bronze owl perched above one of the windows. It had evidently been drawn thither by the heat from the chimneys and pigeons which frequent the ventilators. On being captured by the janitor, on the day following, the bird made no resistance. It was put into a cage, to be kept for the zoölogy class. It lived but one brief day, and it was found to be emaciated and evidently died of weakness and sheer exhaustion. The taxidermist who stuffed it said that it was only one of a large number recently brought to him as victims of the cold spell. Many were found frozen in barns, and had been driven by the cold from the woods to the city.

Large numbers of snow-birds, crows, as well as English sparrows, were hovering about grain elevators, the glass works, and other similar buildings for warmth and food all through the cold period. The gathering of birds about warm chimneys, etc., in such large numbers was something unusual.

E. R. WHITNEY.

Binghamton, N.Y.

THE MOTTLED OWL AS A FISHERMAN. — On November 29, 1876, I took from a Mottled Owl's hole (*Scops asio*) the hinder half of a Woodcock (*Philohela minor*). Within two weeks after I took two Owls from the same hole, and on the 19th of January last I had the good fortune to take another. After extracting the Owl I put in my hand to see what else there was of interest, and found sixteen Horned Pouts (*Amiurus atrarius*), four of which were alive. When it occurred to me that all the ponds in the vicinity were under at least two feet of snow and ice, I could scarcely conjecture where the Horned Pouts could have been captured. After visiting all the ponds, I found they had most probably been captured in one fully a mile away, where some boys had been cutting holes through the ice to catch pickerel bait. The Owl probably stationed himself by the edge of the hole and seized the fish as they came to the surface. What a busy time he must have had flying thirty-two miles after sixteen Horned Pouts! I may also state in this connection that I once found the ground under a Great Horned Owl's nest (*Bubo virginianus*) literally strewn with fish-bones. — A. M. FRAZAR, *Watertown, Mass.* Bull. N.O.C. 2. July, 1877. p. 50.

THE SCREECH OWL.—Noticing the item in April O. and O. by R. J. Tozer, "Woodpecker and Owl" and his query: "Do Screech Owls often attack a bird as large as the Red-headed Woodpecker?" reminds me of a little circumstance occurring to one of my neighbors—he is a reliable and very observing man, especially of birds. He found one of his hens under the roosting place one morning dead, killed by a mink he thought, but was unable to make any discoveries pointing to the detection of the depredator. The following night, just at dusk, his attention was attracted by a great commotion among his fowls in the roost. Hastening there he found one of the hens on the floor apparently in a death struggle. He perceived something attached to her neck which he supposed to be a weazel, the light being too indistinct to distinguish. In desperation he seized the thing in his hands and found it to be a small Screech Owl with its claws firmly fixed in the neck of the hen just back of the head, so firmly that he had considerable difficulty in disengaging them. In a moment the owl lay beside the dead hen, and the contrast was so remarkable that scales were brought into requisition and weights determined. The hen was a great fat five pounder—but the owl was a poor little attenuated starveling and only weighed four ounces.

If any one imagines a Screech Owl destitute of muscle let him try a "grip" with one—I think once will suffice for the most skeptical—I have had experience. I once observed a Golden-winged Woodpecker making an excavation in a decayed oak near me—watched its completion—assisted the entrance a little with my knife and secured the eggs. Passing the spot the succeeding spring I put my hand in the nest, and finding a lot of feathers, I was about to remove them when something with points like a needle and power like a vice closed on one of my fingers, the two points seemed to go from opposite sides of that finger till they met in the middle with a power and rapidity too great to describe. I let go of that fellow quicker than he was willing to let go of me, and haven't cared to try another grip with an owl since.—*J. N. Clark, Old Saybrook, Conn.*

O. & O. IX. May. 1884. p. 61.

In answer to the query by R. J. Tozer in April O. and O. would say that I have repeatedly found portions of Flickers in the holes frequented by Screech Owls and presumed it to be their work. Is it not for this reason that the Pigeon Woodpecker often chooses a tree that has two holes leading into the cavity? I have more than once discovered a Flicker in a hole and had him escape by going out through another. A Screech Owl once ate the heads off three Quails (dead ones) devouring all, even to the bills, which I found by dissection. I also found the remains of a Jay in a cavity in a tree. The Screech Owl is a powerful little owl and doubtless can make it uncomfortable for larger birds than Flickers and Red-heads.—*F. T. Jencks.*

O. & O. IX. May. 1884. p. 61.

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My Experience with a Screech Owl.

BY W. H. PRESBY, EAST CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

Several years ago it was my good fortune to have as pets, several of the feathered tribe that are usually considered anything but desirable for cage birds. Thinking that an account of some of them might be of interest to the readers of the "O. and O." I have concluded to give you first, my experience with a little Screech Owl that was captured one morning in the early Autumn by a friend, who found it roosting in a thick clump of Alders by the side of a river, where he had evidently been overtaken by the daylight and concluded to camp for the day. At the report of the gun he tumbled headlong into the underbrush, and my friend was considerably surprised on going for his prize, to find him "sitting up" and looking as calm as if nothing had occurred to disturb his morning nap. But with all his calm exterior, it was only after quite a lively encounter that he was finally captured and stowed safely away in a capacious coat pocket. On arriving at the house we made a most careful examination of our little prisoner, but were unable to find the slightest trace of shot marks on either plumage or body, and finally concluded that he had been only stunned by the report of the heavily loaded gun, the contents of which had passed safely above him.

We placed him in a large granary, that was lighted only by one small window, and allowed him to come and go at will among the bins that were plentifully stocked with mice. Here he lived for several weeks, apparently well pleased with his new mode of life. He chose a certain place in one corner of the granary, to which he always retired, and remained throughout the day, but on the approach of twilight he would sally out on his search for game. During the time he was confined in the room, I never knew him to eat anything aside from what he captured himself, although bits of fresh meat were furnished him every morning. He seemed to delight in sitting on the floor of the bins, and watching the holes through which the mice would pass from one bin to another. When disturbed he would resort to his favorite place in the corner of the granary, and there remain stamping his feet, snapping his beak, and presenting the most perfect picture of uncontrollable anger.

He would after a few days allow me to rub the top of his head with my finger, but would never permit any further attempt at familiarity.

One morning in October, I fastened a strong cord to one leg and tied him to the limb of a tree in the orchard, giving him plenty of cord to reach the ground at pleasure. About nine o'clock the following evening, having occasion to pass through the orchard, I discovered a second Owl sitting on a dead limb that projected above the top of an adjacent tree, and immediately returned for a gun, but on returning a few minutes later the visitor had flown. I waited quite a long time for him to return, but finally concluded he had left the vicinity for good. I visited my captive, who was busily engaged in making a supper of some

(Editor's Note)

A pair of young Screech Owls, the first installment to our private menagerie, were in our possession barely twenty-four hours before the male "ate up his female mate."

O. & O. 15. July, 1890. p. 112.

Something about Owls.

C. O. Ormsbee, Montpelier, Vt.

Of the Screech Owl, common throughout the entire temperate zone, and the best known of all the Owls, two hundred and fifty-five stomachs were examined. One contained a Pigeon, thirty-eight contained other birds, ninety-one contained Mice, and one hundred contained insects.

O. & O. Vol. 18, Oct, 1893 p. 138

856. *Screech Owls in a Chimney.* By J. L. D[avidson]. *Ibid.*, p. 46. For. & Stream. XXII

241. *Dichromatism in the Screech Owl* (*Scops asio, Bp.*). By the Editor. *Journ. Cincinnati Soc. Nat. Hist.*, pp. 52, 53.—Of 56 specimens 32 were red, and 24 gray. Jour. Cincin. Soc. N. H. 1882

Young Oologist. 1558. *From Georgia.* By T. *scops asio* and *Ampelis cedrorum.*

768. *Screech Owls Breeding in Confinement.* By F. H. Carpenter. *Ibid.*, pp. 93, 94. O. & O. Vol. VIII

1079. *A Screech Owl Attacks a Plymouth Rock Rooster.* By S. L. Davison. *Ibid.*, Mch. 19, p. 145. For. & Stream. XXIV

147. *Owls.* By S. B. Buckley. *Ibid.*, XV. p. 104.—"Screech Owls", inhabiting a Wren-box, and capture of a Snowy Owl (*Nyctea nivea*) near Austin, Texas. For. & Stream

200. *Screech Owl* [*Scops asio*] *in Confinement. Ibid.*, XVIII, No. 6, pp. 106, 107, March 9, 1882. For. & Stream.

fresh meat I had provided for him, and returned to the house. The next morning what was my surprise, on going to the orchard, to find my pet lying on the ground under the tree, dead, and with the scalp completely torn off his head. He must have been killed very soon after I left him the previous evening, as he still retained in his beak a small piece of the meat he was eating when I made my evening call. The cause of his death is still as great a mystery to me as ever, although I have always believed it was caused by his own relatives.

When I reported the death of the Owl to my friends they immediately suggested "the cat" as the culprit, but, in my experience, I have never yet seen a cat that showed any disposition to interfere in the slightest with any member of the Owl family. And besides, as the bird was eight or ten feet from the ground, it was practically out of the way of those prowling marauders. It is a well known fact that several species of birds will torment and sometimes kill their maimed or feeble fellows, and who shall say that this also may not be one of the characteristics of the great family of the Raptores. O. & O. X. Apr. 1885. p. 61-62.

Notes on Birds of the Sea Islands.

BY WALTER HOXIE, FROGMORE, SO. CAR.—PART IV.

The Kingbird, (304,) is a very common S mer resident.

The Grey Kingbird, (303,) has been taken o on Ladies' Island in May, 1868.

The Great-crested Flycatcher, (312,) com Summer resident.

The Pewee, (315,) common in Winter.

The Wood Pewee, (320,) rare in the migrati

My record of the Flycatchers is very im fect, but a friend informs me of the occurr here of Trail's Flycatcher, (325*a*.)

The Least Flycatcher, (326,) Small Green-e ed (324,) and Yellow-bellied, (322.) I have n identified the last four. Others might perhap added to the list but I have an innate preju against shooting Flycatchers.

The Chuck Will's-widow, (353,) very comm

The Whip-poor-will, (354,) I have only ta once in March.

The Night Hawk, (357,) common.

The King Fisher, (382,) rather common and casionally breeds.

The Yellow-billed Cuckoo, (387,) is commo the Spring but rare in the Fall.

The Black-billed Cuckoo, (388,) common b Spring and Fall. A few breed. This seems t the stronger bird of the two, with a more so ern breeding range.

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Bubo virginianus

Bubo virginianus.

1886
July 15 3 - 28 1/* * Hooting.
Aug 29 1
Sept 5 1*

July 15 A young bird of full size, but with traces of the downy plumage about the head, was brought me by a man who said he shot it in the woods between Concord and Lincoln. There was another young one with it and an old bird was also seen sailing about overhead. It was a ♀

" 28 Heard one from Fairhaven Cliffs in the woods to the eastward towards Walden. It hooted twice shortly after sunset.

Aug. 29 A second young bird from the same brood as that of July 15th was brought me this evening, having been killed only a few hours. It was a ♂ in nearly full autumnal plumage the only remnants of the downy stage being on the crown. Its stomach was crammed with the remains of insects (most of which seemed to be the legs and fragments of the shells of large beetles. There were no particles of meat, neither bones, hair or feathers. The gunner who shot this bird said that it uttered a squealing cry (which he imitated and which sounded not unlike that of my Gos.-hawks), that it was very shy, and that the old birds which were with it were so very wary that he found it impossible to shoot them. He has seen the family several times since July 15, always in nearly the same place. This young bird had the irides of as deep a yellow as adults.

Feeding on insects.

Cry of young.

Sept. 5 Saw hooting about sunset (5.45 P.M.) in the woods on Lee's Cliff at Fairhaven. Hoot unusual, hoo-hoo, hoo-hoo-hoo, hoo-hoo-hoo, hoo

Bubo virginianus

1889 Mass.

Nov. 5 Marblehead. – Mr. W. Faxon found a Great Horned Owl in a thicket of alders on Marblehead Neck. It was in the midst of a flock of Dend. coronata. It allowed him to get within about 30 yards when it would fly to the other side of the thicket.

On Marblehead Neck in an alder thicket

1891

April 24-25. – Concord. – As I was passing the grove of lary white pines on the river bank opposite the Cliffs at about 7.30 P.M. a Great-horned Owl began hooting. I answered and after a few more hoots he flew directly over my canoe and alighted in the belt of trees (wild apple & maple) at the Cliff landing. He soon returned to the pines and then went back to the landing again crossing the river six times (three times each way) in all always passing directly over me at a height of about 100 feet. Although it was a rather dark night at the time I could see him distinctly against the star-lit sky, a great shadowy form, the wings very broad, the head big. He flapped a few times at starting and sailed the remainder of the distance descending to the low trees at the landing by a succession of undulations thus ~~~~. I could have shot him easily enough as he passed over me but it was too dark to see him when perched. His hooting was at regular intervals and I answered him each time. I have never succeeded in calling one of these Owls before.

Bird comes to imitation of its hoot.

At about 8 P.M. my companion (Bolles) and myself returned to this pine grove and prepared to camp for the night. The noise which we made in landing started the Owl hooting and a large fire which we soon built seemed to attract him for he came out into the trees near the edge of the grove (we camped just outside on the meadow) and hooted during most of the time (an hour or more) when we were eating supper and preparing

Bubo virginianus

"In a Main St. window in Pawtucket (Mass.) there is a live Cat Owl which was caught above the Diamond Hill Reservoir last week. One of the residents of that vicinity was in the woods with a Gordon Setter when the Owl attacked the dog, catching it by the throat. The Owl succeeded in killing the dog but its beak or talons were caught in the dog's hair and its capture was easy." – N. Y. Times Dec. 28, 1890 – from Providence (R. I.) Journal.

Killing a dog!

1898 Mass.

Mar. 21 Concord. At 5 P.M. one began hooting in the direction of Prescott's pines keeping it up for 10 or 15 minutes. [Journ.].

Mar. 23 Concord. At about 6.30 P.M. one hooted a dozen times or more in the direction of Holden's Hill. [Journ.].

1906 Mass.

March 4 Millis. – Set of 2 eggs, only very slightly incubated, taken from nest in white pine by B. S. Willard. The bird flew from the nest when W. was climbing the tree & was not again seen

Taunton. – Set of 2 eggs taken by Arthur C. Bent.

April–Nov. Concord. – For the first time since I have known the Bell's Hill region intimately a whole spring, summer & autumn have passed without my seeing or hearing a Great Horned Owl there. Mr. Forbush who lived in one of my cabins from June 1 to November 1 has had a similar experience. This negative evidence is conclusive to my mind that the birds are really gone. The reason is, I think, that Lawrence early last winter cut down about one quarter of the old white pine woods where the Owls has been accustomed to find for 30 years or more

No birds seen or heard this year.

Bubo virginianus.

1901 Maine

Aug. & Sept. Lake Umbagog.. Mr. O. A. Lothrop who has occupied my camp at Pine Point since June tells me (on Sept. 9th) that the "honking" Owl (which I now believe to be a Bubo virginianus) has paid several recent visits at night to the woods on or near this point. — The "honking" Owl visits Pine Point after nightfall Umbagog fish

1902 Mass.

Oct. 23 Concord.- A Bubo hooting in Lawrence's pine woods by the river at 5.30 P.M. gave these notes with unvarying regularity:- Hòo, hoo-hòo-hòo, hoo-hòo, hòo — Hooting notes

" 24 One in the big elm in front of the Barrett farm house woked Gilbert and me about 3 a.m. It hooted at short, regular intervals for some five minutes giving the normal hòo, hoo-hòo, hòo, hòo.

1904

April 17 Concord.- One hooting in Prescott's pine woods at 4.20 P.M. (the afternoon was clear with bright sunshine and fresh north-west wind). This bird uttered the following notes: Hòo, hòo-hoo-hòo, hòo-hoo-hoo, hòo — Hooting in bright sunshine Hooting notes

Occasionally there was a short, additional, introducing note thus Jo-hòo, hòo-hoo-hòo, hòo-hoo-hoo, hòo.

" 21 A Bubo was caught last month in a musk rat trap set on Everett Mason's farm. I have feared that it was one of my breeding birds but I heard them both at the same time this evening on Pine Ridge engaged in a spirited and most impressive serenade. One of them regularly said "hòo, hoo-hòo, hòo, hòo" to which the other replied "hòo, hòo-hoo-hòo, hòo-hoo-hoo, hòo." At length one bird uttered seven hoots, all exactly alike & given rather slowly, thus:- hoo, hoo, hoo, hoo hoo, hoo, hoo. These notes (which I have never heard before) were almost immediately repeated and then quickly followed by hòo, hòo-hoo-hòo, hòo-hoo-hoo, hòo, evidently from the same bird — Hooting

Bubo virginianus.

1891 Mass.

Apr. 24-25 Concord. — the canoes for the night. By moving slowly and
(No. 21) silently we walked nearly under him several times but the snapping of dry twigs invariably alarmed him and sent him to the interior of the woods. As nearly as we could make out he perched high in the pines among the densest foliage. Although he frequently flitted from branch to branch and from one tree to the next as we could tell by the sound of his voice we did not once catch so much as a glympse of him.

The night was clear, still and cold thin ice forming on the meadow. A nearly full moon rose at about 8.30 P.M. I was awake at frequent intervals and for considerable periods at time. As nearly as I could ascertain the Owl hooted steadily from moonrise until daybreak. After it became light he ceased for a time beginning again at 4.25 and hooting for just 15 minutes stopping finally a few minutes before sunrise.

During the first part of the night (up to midnight certainly) there was only one bird hooting. The form of his cry during this period was invariably hoo, hoo-hoo-hoo, hoo, hoo. The tone was soft and cooing - very like that of a Dove. The ~~best~~ voice was low and subdued and seemed to come from a distance even when the bird was nearly overhead. Not once did it approach in strength and volume the hooting of the Owls at Umbagog which can be distinctly heard at a distance of a mile on a still night. The bird to-night could not certainly have been heard 1/4 of a mile away. The duration of the sound was very regularly 2 seconds, the intervals between the hoots 10 to 15 seconds.

Towards morning but long before daybreak another Owl came into the grove and both birds hooted alternately

Bubo virginianus.

1891 Mass.

April 24.25 (No 3) Concord - from neighboring trees. The new comer's hoot was invariably hóo, hoo-hóo, hóo, hóo. Perhaps, as I have hitherto supposed, this form is characteristic of our bird and the six-syllabled form of the other but if I am not mistaken the first bird to-night gave both forms not alternating them but changing from the six-syllabled hoot to the five-syllabled shortly after midnight and using the latter form after that until I fell asleep. Of course the other bird may have begun hooting at this time and the first bird become silent but I think this was not the case. One thing is sure viz that only the two birds were not hooting together during this period. Hooting at night.

After we had gone to bed in the canoes and our fire had died down the Owl came into the outer pines almost directly over our heads and hooted in them for the remainder of the night, changing his position slightly from time to time. We talked, laughed and hooted at him without causing him to cease or retire into the woods but when one of us got up and moved about he would go back a few trees returning soon after all had become quiet again.

We searched the woods for pellets but found neither these nor any other signs of the birds save one feather. There were two large nests of sticks in the grove but both looked like old Crows' nests and there were no pellets under either. Nevertheless I can explain the boldness of this bird and his persistency in hooting so long near us only by the supposition that his nest and young were somewhere in this grove. Occasionally he gave a single long-drawn hoo but this was the only sound besides the full hooting. A Partridge drummed all night within 200 yds. of the Owl! Partridge drumming near the Owl.

Massachusetts,

1892.

Bubo virginianus. (No. 1)

May. 18. Concord. At 9.15 P.M. a Great Horned Owl began hooting in the pines on Ball's Hill. The sound seemed to come directly through the logs of my cabin as I sat inside.

Oct. 17 As we entered the Holt I discovered a large bird perched in the tall white ash (now leafless) on the eastern bank near the top of the tree. In form an attitude it looked much like a Red-tailed Hawk, sitting erect with its attention fixed on the meadow beneath, but I noticed at once that its tail was shorter and more pointed than that of a Buteo and as we got nearer I saw through my glass its erect ear tufts for it was a Great Horned Owl. I stopped the boat within 30 yards of the foot of the tree and we looked at the fine bird for nearly a minute taking turns with the glasses and talking in ordinary tones I also made a good deal of noise with the oars There was literally nothing between us and the Owl which, indeed, must have watched us from the time we entered the Holt He must also have heard any sound we made for the air was damp and there was no wind whatever. At length I struck the side of the boat sharply with an oar and the bird spreading an imposing breadth of wing glided off swiftly with the gloom sailing on set wings saving a few slow yet powerful wing strokes at starting. He went in the direction of Hubbard's Hill and was doubtless the same bird

Massachusetts,

1892.

Bubo virginianus (no 2).

which the crows have mobbed there several times this autumn. I cannot understand why the Great Horned Owl should be so much tamer at night than in the day time. This Holden's Hill bird was as shy as a Bittern when I last saw him in his Chestnut woods near noon of a bright day although a horde of Crows were beating him at the time. It was nearly dark this evening when we found him in the old white ash on the meadows.

Oct. 30 Concord. At the foot of the hill we stopped to look at a fine tall pine and were standing nearly under it talking when a Great Horned Owl flew from one of its lower branches (a dead branch) and flapped swiftly and silently off through the trees. I have rarely got so near one of these Owls in the day time. No pellets or other signs under the tree.

Bubo virginianus.

North Middleboro', Mass.

1897. " 1897, Mar.8. Two eggs in last year's nest of Red-tail. Yellow Pine, 37 ft.

" Apr.14. Nest robbed in tract where I searched for them last year, in Red-tail's nest I robbed last year! Abundant signs around."

Extract from a letter from H.K.Job, July 22, 1897, North Middleboro', Mass.

Add to the above:-

"1897, Apr.12. Two young in last year's nest of Red-tail as other pair. White Pine, 70 ft. "

Maine

Bubo virginianus

Attacking men (notes by Mr. Hardy)
Food - Call notes

I find that the Great Horned Owl besides eating hares, skunks, cats, muskrats, crows and so forth, as everybody knows, occasionally catches ducks, mink and Barred Owls. Louis Kitchin, the noted half-breed guide, and an old friend of mine, a few years since saw one carrying something in its claws. After following it some distance he shot it and found its burden to be the skeleton of a Barred Owl nearly cleared of the flesh. I have shot one with a full grown rabbit in its claws and twice have seen one seize a rabbit near by me. I also shot a ball through a large partridge which an owl helo in its claws, but the owl escaped. I

large bones never could have been ejected. How the bird can get rid of such a mass I am at loss to imagine. Mr. C. E. Aiken once told me that he ~~knew~~ had seen an account in a Colo. paper of one of these owls ~~to~~ seizing a long bearded man by the face. I have known of several such instances. In 1859 while lying out rolled in a blanket at the head waters of the St John I was suddenly awakened by having my head roughyly seized and raised from the ground. On getting fairly awake I found that I had been seized by an owl which had set all his claws deep into the sides of my head. Probably my hat must have been off and I suppose he must have seen me turn over and mistook

Bubo virginianus.

Concord, Mass.

1898. Following the old wood path we presently reached the top of

May 1. the hill (in Lawrence's big woods) where ~~a most~~ an interesting experience awaited us. As we began rambling about through the fine old woods I noticed, every few steps, large pellets of fur and bones scattered about under the trees. I had just remarked to Purdie that a Great Horned Owl must have been living in the neighborhood and that it was probably the same bird which I had heard several times this spring near Ball's Hill when, raising my eyes, I saw what I took at first to be a dead sheep lying at the foot of a large pine about thirty yards off, but on approaching nearer we discovered that the whitish-looking object, very conspicuous on the russet-brown surface of the ground, was two young Great Horned Owls huddled close together. They were three-quarters grown and already well-feathered although enough down still adhered to the tips of the feathers to give them a generally whitish appearance. One of them opened its pale yellow eyes wide and stared at us with dull curiosity but the other kept its eyes tightly closed. We did not go near enough to disturb them seriously and we saw nothing of their parents. They had probably fallen from a nest about as large as a Crow's nest which we could see in a fork of the pine directly over our heads and about forty feet above the ground. By them lay the skin of a Rabbit (L. sylvaticus)

Concord, Mass.

1898. May 1. (No.2). apparently nearly entire and freshly torn off. The pine stands on level ground on the top of a ridge bordering the river meadow. The woods are at present about six acres in extent and are almost wholly composed of large, old white pines.

May 2. In the afternoon I visited the young Great Horned Owls. They were in the same place but they ~~they~~ had moved about one quarter around the trunk of the pine evidently, as I thought, bacause the wind had changed for yesterday, when it was north, they were on the south side of the tree and to-day, when it was S.E., on the N.W. side.

While I was looking at them standing about 20 yards away, one of the old birds began hooting in the pines behind me; presently it appeared and flying from tree to tree moved around me in a half circle keeping just beyond gun range and behaving in the most curious manner. Alighting close to the trunk of a pine, at a height of 30 or 40 feet above the ground, it would follow the branch out nearly to the end walking steadily and at times rather quickly, ~~its~~ the body horizontal, ~~its~~ the wings wide-spread and flapping slowly like those of a big butterfly, ~~its~~ the head lowered considerably ~~lower~~ below the line of the back, ~~its~~ the horns slightly raised and ~~its~~ the eyes glaring fiercely. It hooted every half minute or so in low cooing tones. Its mate also

Concord, Mass.

1898. May 2. (No.3).

hooted in answer but soon afterwards flew off to another piece of woods. The moment he showed himself in the open he was discovered by a Crow whose excited cawing brought others of his kind from every direction until within the next few minutes a dozen or more assembled and mobbed the Owl after their usual fashion.

I wonder why the Crows do not mob the young Owls. They must certainly be aware of their presence. The rabbit skin still lay by their side but it looked much smaller than it did yesterday and I think they have devoured part of it.

May 3.

Starting at about 9 A.M. we (W.Faxon and I) walked through the dripping, mist-enshrouded woods to Lawrence's pines, where we found the young Bubos squatting side by side in the same place where we left them yesterday. The rabbit skin had wholly disappeared. One of the old birds, the female I think, began hooting almost as soon as we entered the woods and when we approached the young she came circling around us taking short flights and behaving in much the same manner as yesterday. Sometimes instead of walking out on a branch she would crash noisily into the midst of a cluster of dead twigs and either stand there or fall through the twigs beating her wings feebly. Faxon agreed with me that this was a ruse to

this was probable

Concord, Mass.

1898. May 3. (No.4). draw us away from the young and that it was essentially the same trick that so many of the ground birds practise. This Owl hooted incessantly to-day and also made several other sounds which I shall describe later when I have had an opportunity to study them more carefully.

May 4. In the afternoon sailed down stream to Lawrence's woods taking my 5 x 7 camera and exposing a dozen plates on the young Great Horned Owls. When I first came in sight of them they were standing up a yard or more apart and a little distance from the tree. One of them repeatedly opened and stretched its wings but the next moment they discovered me when they at once toddled to the pine and crouched close against its trunk, touching one another. As I advanced the camera to within about two yards of them they shrank back still closer to the tree and began snapping their bills but while I was taking the photographs they lay perfectly motionless. I saw no food and no pellets near them but the surface of the ground around the pine was white with their chalky excrement.

Before I got near the young the old birds began hooting and the male presently started off taking the same course as on May 2nd and again attracting a mob of Crows the moment he left the shelter of the woods. The female came about me in a half circle as usual but for the first time she neglected the

Concord, Mass.

1898. May 4. (No.5).

tactics which she had hitherto adopted and contented herself with taking short, restless flights alighting high up in the trees and sitting erect and motionless when perched. This change of behavior interested me greatly. I interpret it to mean that she discovered it to be useless to try to lead me away from her young by pretending that her wings are injured. Certainly I must have caused her much greater anxiety than on any previous occasion but possibly the very fact of my near approach to the young and the erection of the camera nearly over them convinced her that nothing that she could do would be of any avail (as they were completely at my mercy). She was much more noisy, however, than heretofore and I was deeply interested in the variety of sounds that she uttered. At first she hooted the usual night strain but in subdued and muffled tones. Then she changed to a hoot which, if I am not mistaken, was identical with that of the honking Owl that sometimes visits our camp at Pine Point and which I have never before suspected could be a Bubo. She used this form of hoot during the latter half of my stay near the young. I noted it carefully on the spot as follows:-Hoo, hoo, hoo-hoo-hoo, hoo-hoo, hoo given very rapidly and smoothly in very soft, low, cooing tones. Besides the hooting she uttered a barking wah or wangle very like the bark of a dog (sometimes doubling this

Bubo virginianus.

Concord, Mass.

1898. cry to wah-wah) and a rather prolonged squealing or whining

May 4. outcry similar to that of a hen Partridge with young.

(No.6). The old Owls evidently spend the day in the densest part of these pine woods about 100 yards from where the young lie.

May 7. In the afternoon I paddled down to Lawrence's woods taking my camera. The young Owls were gone and at first I neither saw nor heard either of the old birds but one of the latter began hooting presently and I think I must have started the other at about the same time judging by the way the Crows gathered and clamored in the woods by the river into which the male Owl usually flies when disturbed. Two Red-shouldered Hawks also appeared over these woods screaming incessantly for ten or fifteen minutes their shrill voices adding materially to the din kept up by the excited Crows. All the while one of the Owls remained near me in the tops of the pines hooting at short, regular intervals, using always the ordinary night hoot:-hoo, hoo-hoo-hoo, hoo, hoo but giving it in subdued tones.

But where were the young? I first examined the ground about the foot of the pine with great care. It was strewn with huge pellets of fur and bones and reeking with excrement among which dung bettles were groping about after their usual stupid fashion. There was an unmistakable but not very strong smell

Concord, Mass.

1898. May 7. (No.7).

of skunk mingled with the more offensive odors but I failed to find any skunk hair or others remains. The ground was strewn in every direction with scraps of Rabbit skin and all the pellets that I dissected were composed wholly of Rabbit's fur and bones. There were no feathers of Partridges or other birds. Besides the Rabbit remains (representing a dozen or more of the poor bunnies I should say) I found nothing identifiable excepting a Green Frog which had one side of its head torn open but which was otherwise unmutilated.

My heart sank when I discovered a sort of trail of down evidently that of the young Bubos, clinging to the tops of the low blueberry bushes and leading straight away from the pine for a distance of several yards. But after I had followed it to its termination and was looking ahead for further clues my eyes were suddenly arrested by a yellowish patch on the end of a fallen trunk that was raised four or five feet above the ground and to my great delight I found that it was one of the young Owls. He was crouching so very flat and he lay so still as I approached that I feared at first that he was dead but he proved to be all right and I spent the next half hour photographing him, exposing ten plates in all. I did not succeed in finding the other young bird and I think it probable that he has bden carried off by either a Dog or a Fox but of course he may have been hidden somewhere in the

Bubo virginianus.

Concord, Mass.

1898. neighborhood and the trail of down may have had no real mean-
May 7. ing for the wind may have blown it into the tops of the bushes.
(No.8). The old Owl kept hooting all the time I was near the young bird but she did not once change her position or show herself.

May 18. While in Lawrence's woods (this morning with W.Deane) I looked carefully and persistently for the Great Horned Owls. The old birds could not be found but to my great delight I at length discovered both the young perched side by side on the branch of a big pine nearly fifty feet above the ground, one standing erect, the ~~concealed~~ other crouched lengthwise on the limb like a big Goatsucker. It is little short of a miracle that both should have escaped the dangers which surrounded them. One looked much larger than the other. Both still retained a good deal of down through which the mature feathers were beginning to show everywhere.

May 22. I saw once more this forenoon the two young Great Horned Owls one in the same pine (but not on the same branch) as on the 18th, the other rather low down in the next tree. They still looked quite downy. The head and a strip of skin from the back, of a Skunk hung from a twig near by (a few feet only above the ground) and the whole neighborhood smelt skunky.

Bubo virginianus.

Concord, Mass.

1898. Pat told me yesterday that Davis (the marketman) had a
June 2. young Great Horned Owl that had been given to him alive by
(No.9). Lawrence! I asked him to make further enquiries and to-day he brought word that Lawrence had found two young Owls in his woods by the river. One he caught, the other escaped. Davis was kind enough to send me the captive bird which I shall restore to its native woods as soon as it can fly well. It is the larger of the two and looks much as it did when I last saw it in the tall pine. I hope that it is true that the other young escaped.

June 21. It is time to take up the history of the young Great Horned Owl that I had of Davis. Shortly after getting him I saw Henry Lawrence who told me that he found the two young sitting side by side on the branch of a tall pine in the woods by the river. As he approached the larger one flew and he shot it breaking its wing. He did not molest the other young bird but he fired at and, as he thinks, wounded one of the parents.

I kept this young Owl in a cage in the woods near the cabin for upwards of two weeks. Like all of its fierce race it was surly and untamable threatening every one who approached it closely by snapping its bill and making quick thrusts with its formidable talons. It finally learned to tolerate Gilbert

Bubo virginianus.

Concord, Mass.

1898. however, and took raw meat from his fingers thank~~fully~~lessly enough

June 21. but without much active resentment. At intervals of from one

(No.10). to five minutes during the night and occasionally by day, as well, it uttered a short, harsh, penetrating cry which was not unlike the poop of Chordeiles and which, no doubt, is a variation - perhaps characteristic of very young birds - of the Jay-like cry that I hear every autumn at Lake Umbagog. I suspect that by means of this cry it finally attracted the attention of one of its parents for early one morning a number of Crows began making a great outcry in the oaks over the cage and Gilbert who went out to investigate the cause of the disturbance found them mobbing a large Owl which sailed off through the trees as he approached.

On June 14th* Gilbert, by my orders, liberated the young Owl in Prescott's pines which are within about five hundred yards of the place where it was born. It was unable to fly and was left sitting on the ground under the trees near the wood road at the foot of the hill. During the remainder of the week Gilbert visited and fed the bird daily. It shifted its position several times and finally crossed the road but no one of these journeys was more than a few rods in length and the bird was always found either on the ground or on a stump or log.

* June 14th was on Tuesday.

Bubo virginianus.

Concord, Mass.

1898. June 21. (No.11). I directed my steps towards Prescott's pines this evening for the express purpose of looking up the young Owl and as I approached the place I saw something yellowish which I took to be the bird but which proved to be a sheet of brown paper. A moment later I heard some Blue Jays screaming excitedly on the hillside about sixty yards off. Walking quietly along the path I came nearly under them and scrutinizing closely the trees around me I at length made out the form of a Great Horned Owl perched on the topmost spray of a green and vigorous young pine, sitting erect and motionless, gazing off over the woods towards the west as if absorbed in watching the sunset. Against the strongly lighted background of sky his figure stood out in bold relief. He was a small but fully adult male bird and no doubt the father of the young which were reared this spring in Lawrence's woods. His coloring was very light and grayish, his "horns" unusually long and prominent. He had probably found and was caring for the young bird which Gilbert had left at the foot of the hill.

As I stood watching him, peering up through a small opening in the pine branches which concealed me very effectually, the Jays (there were but two of them and they were doubtless the pair whose nest Gilbert found a week or more ago near the place where he turned out the young Owl) attacked him

Bubo virginianus.

Concord, Mass.

1898. June 21. (No.12). repeatedly and with much spirit dashing past him within a foot or less and striking at his head with their bills, screaming all the while, of course. He paid little attention to them but once, when one of them came over him suddenly from behind, he ducked his head nervously. At length I moved slightly and he at once discovered me, fixing his great eyes on me for a moment and flying off over the woods in the direction of Ball's Hill. Altogether it was an interesting experience to have in these Concord woods. I did not see the young Owl, however.

Bubo virginianus.

Concord, Mass.

1898. Oct.16. In the afternoon Almy and I took a long walk in the woods. Small birds were scarce apparently but we started several Partridges and a Great Horned Owl. The latter we found first in the Prescott woods, but we saw it afterwards on Davis's Hill and Benson's pine ridge. It was as shy as any Hawk starting out of gun range and taking long flights although the afternoon was bright and clear. At about 7 P.M. either the same bird or another visited Ball's Hill and called for several minutes in one of the trees on the ridge directly behind the cabin. It gave the short, choking cry, peculiar, I believe, to young Great Horned Owls. Gilbert thought this note very cat-like. We both wondered whether or no the bird was the same that we nursed here last spring and afterwards liberated in the Prescott woods. It must have been one of the pair reared in Lawrence's woods.

1899. Oct.12 to Oct.31. Evidence, the remains of a Crow.

On the 29th I found the remains of a freshly-killed Crow under a large pine on the western edge of Davis's Swamp. The head, wings and legs were intact and attached to the skeleton of the body from which practically every morsel of flesh had been removed. The ground close around the carcass was white with the chalky excrement of some bird of prey and a pellet of the very largest size showed beyond question that the mur-

Bubo virginianus.

Concord, Mass. Evidence, the remains of a Crow.

1899. der had been committed by a Great Horned Owl. One fact es-

Oct.12 pecially interested and to some degree puzzled me: viz. that
to
Oct.31. the pellet, which lay within less than a yard of the remains,

(2). was composed entirely of the feathers and bones of a Crow. It seems hardly possible that the pellet could have been formed and ejected within less than two or three hours after the Owl had finished his meal but he may have passed the interim sitting on the ground by the remains of his victim or he may have returned for a second feast; or still again the feathers and bones composing the pellet may have belonged to another Crow. The bird which I found was probably caught while roosting in the pine under which it lay but I could discover no real evidence that such had been the case.

Bubo virginianus. Concord, Mass.

Concord Mass.
May 27—1900

Mr Wm Brewster
Dear Sir.

I had a very interesting experience with a Great Horned Owl yesterday. which I thought perhaps you would like to hear of

I was paddling along close to the woods, the water now being very high, just above Carlisle Bridge when a large bird flew from just over my head with ~~with~~ something apparently in its claws, and as it alighted on the ground

Bubo virginianus. Concord, Mass.

only a short distance ahead, I thought it had some prey that was to heavy to carry far, and as I got a little nearer I saw that the bird was a large Owl, which as it flew again, I saw ~~that it~~ had a steel trap fastened to its foot instead of having anything to eat.

I landed from the canoe and taking camera & paddle I went in search of him! I soon started him, and after following and starting him several times more he began to get tired so that I could get quite near to him. I took several snap shot of him, both on the ground and on low branches of trees; he finally became so tired, after I had taken all the pictures that I wanted that he would not attempt to fly from the ground, and placing the flat of the paddle upon his breast as he lay on his back on the defensive I removed the trap from his outside toe on left foot. It had probably been on some time as the blood had all dried and I should think he had carried it for a week or more.

He would not get out his feet of his own accord, and I had to place him in a sitting position, and after being forced he finally hopped off about ten feet, and took to his wings, when he was at once surrounded by crows.

I am in hopes to get some good pictures out of the lot but the light was none of the best in the woods. The partridge

Bubo virginianus. Concord, Mass.

Was still setting on the Ten Eggs. at Lea Davis' hill which I found two weeks ago Sunday and which I Assume Gilbert told you of. I tried to describe the location of it to him so that you could find it.

I saw one Black Duck over in the Bedford swamp. So I guess there is a nest around somewhere near.

I also saw a Black & White Duck just below Hunts Pond that flew along on the surface of the water much like a mud Hen for a short distance and hid among the trees & brush.

Yours Respt
S. H. Holden

Summer Birds of the Cobalt Mining Region, Nipissing District, Ontario. by Frederick C. Hubel. Auk, XXIV, Jan 1907

p. 50.

14. **Bubo virginianus.** GREAT HORNED OWL.—A Frenchman in Cobalt secured three young from a nest near by and put them in a cage. The parent birds visited the cage every night.

Birds within Ten Miles of Point de Monts, Can, Comeau & Merriam

58. **Bubo virginianus.** GREAT HORNED OWL.—A rather common resident.

Bull. N.O.C. 7, Oct. 1882, p. 237

Last Dates Migratory Birds observed by E. D. Wintle, Fall 1885, Montreal, Can.

Oct. 18. Great Horned Owl, occasionally seen throughout the winter here.

O. & O. XI. Mar. 1886. p. 44

Breeding Dates of Birds in Kings County, N. S. Watson L. Bishop.

Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virgianus*). March 25, 28, fresh.

O. & O. XIII. Mar. 1888 p. 45

Summer Bds. Restigouche Valley, N. B. July, '83. J. Brittain and P. Cox. Jr.

Bubo virginianus. GREAT HORNED OWL.—Several young ones just on the wing were observed. They were very tame.

Auk, VI. April, 1889. p. 117

Summer Birds of Sudbury, Ont. A. H. Alberger.

375. Great Horned Owl. Tolerably common.

O. & O. XV. June. 1890, p. 87

Some Winter Birds of Nova Scotia. By C. H. Morrell.

8. Bubo virginianus. GREAT HORNED OWL.—Once seen and frequently heard. Auk, XVI, July, 1899, p. 251

Newfoundland Notes. A Trip up the Humber River, Aug. 10 - Sept. 24, 1899.

24. Bubo virginianus. GREAT HORNED OWL.—Common.

Louis H. Porter, New York City.

Auk, XVII, Jan., 1900, p. 72.

Birds of Toronto, Canada, by James H. Fleming, Part II. Land Birds Auk, XXIV, Jan., 1907, p. 74-75

145. **Bubo virginianus.** GREAT HORNED OWL.—Winter resident, October 10 to March 30, usually common; a rare summer resident, a nest was taken in Vaughan Township March 25, 1889, and one at Scarboro, April 2, 1897.

The resident form in Southern Ontario is remarkably constant in color; the plumage is dark in tone, with comparatively little tawny or ochraceous; rufous birds are rare. Among those that visit us in winter there is an endless variation of color; one specimen is ashy gray.

Flight of Horned Owls in Canada.— The article by Mr. Arthur W. Brockway in 'The Auk' (Vol. XXXV, No. 3) upon the 'Large Flight of Great Horned Owls and Goshawks at Wadlyme, Connecticut' has prompted me to revert to the subject in connection with the phenonenon here. Any occurrence of this nature is particularly interesting and especially so among the Raptores of the North.

His information regarding the early November flight in Canada is perfectly correct; vast numbers having appeared at that time throughout the country. Mr. C. W. Nash, of the Provincial Museum, Toronto, informed me that hundreds of Great Horned Owls were noted in that region and in every locality that I have visited the same news of excessive numbers of these birds has reached me.

During the latter part of October, 1917, and the fore part of November I was in the wilderness northeast of Lake Superior. During my entire time there, I never once heard an owl, although they are frequently heard in wilderness camping. I remarked on the apparent absence of the species at the time, and often sat alone on the quiet shores of the lake at night, listening for the voice I had learned to enjoy, but not once did a lonely "hoot" disturb the silence of the solitude.

Every one there also remarked on the scarcity of the Varying Hare, as compared with the numbers usually present. After the first fall of snow I noted occasional signs, and also procured a specimen, but their numbers were negligible. Grouse too, were scarce.

The significance of the whole thing dawned upon me when on November 7, the first day after my return to Southern Ontario, I noted several Horned Owls, which was an uncommon occurrence. The day previous a friend had observed three. These birds were lazily perched in the open hardwoods enjoying the sunshine, and quite apparently oblivious to their surroundings. This is contrary to the usual secretive habits of the birds when here.

Continuously throughout November these owls were frequently observed and many were shot for taxidermic purposes. After this month their numbers were reduced but signs of their killing, usually a luckless Cottontail, was noted with greater frequency than is usually the case.

Personally, the ingress of Goshawks was not noted as exceptional, although greater numbers may have prevailed in other localities. Each fall sees a certain influx of these destructive birds, with their bold propensities for domestic fowl, much to the vexation of most poultry-men.

To reiterate: The point of interest lies in the fact that the Horned Owls were apparently absent from the north country at the time of my trip October 20–November 6; common on my return to Preston, Ont. November 7, and apparently so at other points in southern Canada; with their subsequent invasion of the northern States, which I assume immediately followed as indicated by Mr. Brockway's communication to 'The Auk.'— J. Dewey Soper, *Preston, Ont.*

Auk XXXV. Oct. 1918. pp. 478-479.

Birds of Upper St. John.
Batchelder.

Maine

81. **Bubo virginianus** (*Gm.*) *Bd.* GREAT HORNED OWL. — "Very common" at Houlton. Mr. Orcutt said it was rather common at Fort Fairfield.

Bull. N.O.C. 7, July, 1882, p.150

Shelburne, N. H.

Bubo virginianus

1884.

July 29 Heard one hoot twice times in succession about noon. The day however was dark and lowering with occasional showers.

Winter Birds of Webster, N. H. by Falco.

Great Horned Owl, (*Bubo virginianus*).

O. & O. X. Jan. 1885. p. 14

Birds of Hillsboro Co. N. H. June 27, '92
Arthur M. Farmer, Amoskeag, N. H.

Great Horned Owl, three observed.

O. & O Vol. 17, Sept. 1892 p. 136

The past Winter a very fine specimen of the Great Horned Owl was brought to me, which was strongly scented with black-and-white. After keeping it in Hemlock for ten days, I mounted it, and in due time returned it to its owner, who placed it in a close, unoccupied room. He recently informed me that sometimes upon first entering the room he could detect a little scent, but usually nothing.

C. C. Tracy, Taftsville, Vt.

O. & O. X, May, 1885. p. 80.

Summer Bds, Mt. Mansfield, Vt.

6. * Bubo virginianus. GREAT HORNED OWL. — Resident.

by Arthur H. Howell. Auk, XVIII, Oct., 1901, p. 340.

* Fide Mrs. Carrie E. Straw of Stowe, Vt.

Mass. (near Concord) 1887

1887
April 7 *

June 4!

* hooting

Bubo virginianus
Mass (Winchendon)

1887
June 25 A pair heard hooting this evening by Bailey. The bird is very common he says.

Bubo virginianus.

Early this Spring "J. M. W." brought to us a fine specimen of the young of the Great-horned Owl. It is now doing well.

Owls in confinement.

O. & O. VII. Oct. 1882. p. 163.

The number of Owls shot in Greenfield and vicinity since May. 1st 1884. ~~one~~ is

one Horned Owl.

a few Horned Owls in the woods and swamps.

S. W. Leonard's, Greenfield, Mass.
O. & O. X. Mar. 1885. p. 47.

Boston Notes by H. B. W.

During Augst. These were followed by a few Great Horned. Owls.

O. & O. X. Dec. 1885. p. 192.

Winter Notes from Taunton, Mass.
J. C. Cahoon.

Several Great-horned Owls were seen and shot in January.

O. & O. XI. May. 1886. p. 77

Birds of Bristol County, Mass.
F. W. Andros.

Bubo virginianus (Gmel). Great-horned Owl. Resident, rare. Breeds.

O & O. XII. Sept. 1887 p. 139

Birds Known to Pass Breeding Season
nr. Winchendon, Mass. Wm. Brewster

14. Bubo virginianus.

Auk, V, Oct., 1888. p. 389

General Notes.

Summer Birds of Central Berkshire Country, Mass. ~~Francis H. Allen.~~ Ralph Hoffmann. Ralph Hoffmann.

14. **Bubo virginianus.** GREAT HORNED OWL. — Nest with young found in Stockbridge, April 8, 1893.

Auk XII. Jan. 1895 p. 88

Mr. Brand also found on the same date a Great-horned Owl's nest in an immense White Pine tree, about fifty feet up. The nest contained two young about one week old. Mr. B. had harried this pair for three years in succession, but was always too late. Each season he found them with young.

Mar. 19. J. Irving A. Brand. Norwich, Conn.

O.&O. VII. Aug. 1882. p 148

GREAT-HORNED OWLS.—Have just had another Great-horned Owl brought in alive. Caught in a steel trap. He (or she) and my old bird take kindly to each other, and so you see I expect to be able to supply the trade with eggs the coming season, about the middle of February. Orders received; first come, first served—look lively—Dec. 25, 1882, W. W. Coe, Portland, Conn. Mr. Coe has had such remarkable luck that he can well afford to throw a joke at the rest of us. We hope they will lay in confinement and disappoint him.

O.&O. VIII. Feb. '1883. p. 14

Winter Birds.

Owls were unusually abundant last winter and I mounted

one Great-horned Owl.

J. N. Clark.
Saybrook Conn.

O. & O. VIII. Oct. 1883 p 80.

Am 1884 Hawk List.

BUBO VIRGINIANUS: February 27, set of two. Quail-trap Meeting-house. J. M. N. Norwich, Conn.

O. & O. X. Feb. 1885. p. 25

Large Flight of Great Horned Owls and Goshawks at Hadlyme, Connecticut.— Under date of December 29, Mr. Edward H. Forbush of Massachusetts wrote me that early in November, he had learned from Canada that probably because of the great dearth of rabbits in the north a great flight of Horned Owls and Goshawks was coming south.

In November and December many Goshawks appeared at Hadlyme, also many Great Horned Owls; the latter being very commonly heard and seen until into February. The game keeper of a pheasant farm at Hadlyme trapped and killed during the fall and winter up to March 10: 91 Great-Horned Owls; 25 Barred Owls; 15 Screech Owls; 9 Long-eared Owls; and 84 Goshawks, and from September 1916, to March 10, 1918, 74 Red Shouldered Hawks; 60 Cooper's and Pigeon Hawks; and 35 Sharp-shinned and Sparrow Hawks.

The keeper placed eight Horned Owls in a wired enclosure and kept them for some time during the month of January until they began killing and eating each other. This was kept up until only two remained. They were well fed all of the time they were in captivity on dead pheasants killed by other hawks and owls, and Starlings were also shot for them

The Great Horned Owl has been fast nearing extermination in Connecticut as a permanent resident.— ARTHUR W. BROCKWAY, *Hadlyme, Conn.*

Auk xxxv. July 1918. pp 351-352.

Birds of the Adirondack Region.
C. H. Merriam.

118. **Bubo virginianus** *(Gmelin) Bonaparte.* GREAT HORNED OWL. —Common resident.

Bull. N.O.C. 6, Oct, 1881, p. 232

Birds Tioga Co, N.Y. Alden Loring

45. Great Horned Owl. Not rare. Breeds. This bird likes the dense woods and underbrush. A friend, J. J. Loveless of Smithboro, N. Y., told me that he was coming home from butchering one evening when he noticed one of these owls flying along over the tree-tops of the woods. It would have passed over him but seeing Mr. L. he turned and charged on him. His first thought was to catch the owl if he came again, but remembering the scar on his leg which was caused by one of these birds several years ago he quickly changed his mind and began searching for a club. All this time Mr. Owl kept charging, which made Mr. Loveless hustle to avoid a collision. Finally after making five or six unsuccessful dives the owl went off as if it were a common occurrence to catch a man every day for supper. He supposes the bird smelt the blood on his hands. O. & O. XV, June, 1890, p.85

Nesting Habits of the Great-horned Owls.

We have found three nests of this species during the past few years near the river St. Lawrence. The first some years ago in a small tamarack tree, which in May held two young just able to fly. This nest had previously been a Crow's. The second in 1892, in a second-growth white pine. It was a disused squirrel's abode, and on the 25th of April contained two young about a fortnight old. The young were not molested, but this year there were no signs of Owls in those woods. This year we found a nest in a white birch on the 11th of April; it contained two eggs; incubation advanced. The same nest last year and the year before was tenanted by the Red-shouldered Hawk, which is our most common Hawk in this locality. This is all I know of the habits of *Bubo Virginianus*, except that we have kept one in confinement for several years, in fact since it was a nestling. I have it still.

C. J. Y.

Leeds Co., Ont.

O. & O. Vol. 18, July, 1893 p. 103

Birds of Dead River Region, Me. F. H. C.

81. *Bubo virginianus*, (Great Horned Owl.) The most common Owl of the forests, where it occurred commonly at all seasons. Its hootings were heard every night in June, while in the woods, and several specimens were secured, one of which was in exceedingly light plumage, almost savoring of albinism. These Owls would come about the camps in search of food, being attracted by the grouse, fish, etc., which we would suspend from some convenient sapling, and many a contemplated breakfast was spoiled ere we were aware of the nature of our thieving midnight visitors. Their raids on the poultry were of a serious nature, and they were an especial object of hatred to the farmers. The nesting of this Owl in the Maine forests has several times come under my observation. All nests were built by the birds and placed at a great height in the spruce trees, and near the edge of the forests, not in the interior as theorists would suppose. I have never found an excess of two eggs in any set.

O. & O. XI. Dec. 1886. p. 177

March 23, found nest of Great-horned Owl in a thick fir, with top broken off about twenty feet from the ground. On this stump was placed the nest, which reminded me of a Heron's in shape and texture.

It contained two eggs, nearly fresh, which seemed to show these Birds did not breed quite so early as in the more southern New England States.

Northern Maine.

F. H. C. O. & O. IX. Jan. 1884. p. 9.

Jo (my man) came into camp one night and reported that he had found an Owl's nest, and that the Owl was the largest he had ever seen. Comparing it with skin of the Great Horned Owl, he said it was lighter plumaged and had not any horns. Thinking it might be a Barred Owl, I inquired if the eyes were black. "No, they were black and yellow." As the nest contained no eggs, only two young, I did not take the time to examine, but it has since been a question with me whether that was not the nest of the Great Grey Owl.

Northern Maine

F. H. C. O. & O. IX. Jan. 1884. p. 9.

Wanderings. No. 2.

A PERFECT DAY.

Through many years of collecting in the woods of the Old Bay State, it has been one of the greatest ambitions of my life to take a nest and eggs of the Great Horned Owl, and many hours have I spent and many miles have I travelled in a vain attempt to gratify this desire. A year ago, I rode forty-five miles and back and spent three days in a vain search, although a set was taken later on from one of the very nests which I visited, and this year I determined to undertake the journey again. Accordingly, one afternoon early in March, I, with my usual comrade, started for the same locality, and after a tedious ride of one and a half hours in a slow-going "Huckleberry train," stopping at every cross-road, about dark we alighted from the cars in the old town of Plymouth, and found the team, which we had previously engaged by mail, awaiting us.

A few moments occupied in putting our "duffle" into the carriage, and we were off for the woods. A ride of two hours, and at nine o'clock, we alighted at the door of "mine host" Douglass, of whom you have heard before; and we were soon discussing the merits of a cranberry pie.

I never could understand why "the old lady's" cranberry pies always taste good, for I abominate them in the city, but my mouth will water whenever I think of those.

We arose the next morning to find a cloudless sky and a warm wind, one of those perfect days, only to be found when spring is just awaking from her nap.

Our objective point was the nest from which the eggs were taken last season by my friend, but we thought that before starting for it we would take a stroll over the old island, which occupies the centre of the pond. Accordingly we launched a boat, and rowing over, were soon enjoying the familiar spots, and bringing back reminiscences of past seasons.

Here was, last year, the nest of a Parula Warbler, and here a set of Downy Woodpecker's eggs.

And, while looking at an old nest from which two sets of the eggs of Cooper's Hawk had been taken, an Owl Great Horned rose before our very eyes, and disappeared. Only a few minutes were needed to take us both up to that nest, and there, on their couch of downy feathers, lay the two long-wished-for eggs. To say that we were delighted would be drawing it mildly, and we immediately began to prepare them for transportation. While writing down a description of the nest, I was attracted by a shadow, and looking up, I saw the female sitting on a branch not more than six feet from my face, gazing very intently at some crows who were worrying her.

I transferred my pencil to my left hand, and slid my hand toward my hip-pocket for my "Smith & Wesson," but slight as was the motion, Mrs. B. caught on and turned her eyes in our direction. It was probably the first time she ever met the *genus homo* face to face, and, judging from her looks, she never will want to again. She did not say anything, and "she waited not upon her departure, but went at once," and we saw her no more. She probably thought "discretion was the better part of valor."

The eggs were laid upon a lining of feathers from the breast of the bird, are pure white, and measure 2.19 x 1.88 and 2.20 x 1.86 inches. They now lie before me, on the same bed, that is the feathers, but different surroundings.

The other nest, previously mentioned, panned out nothing, and no signs, as did all other places which we visited, but we had a glorious time, and glory enough for one day.

The next day brought me back to my desk, but as I look upon those eggs, I feel amply repaid for the ninety miles' travel necessary to procure them.

F. A. Bates.

O & O. XIV. Apr. 1889 p. 55

Raptores, Bristol County, Mass.
Hilton B. Read.

Great-horned Owl ,(*Bubo virginianus*). A rare resident, and not known to breed at present though it may do so. A series of their eggs, personally examined in the collection of Mr. F. H. Carpenter, comprises eleven sets of two eggs each, the result of a single pair of birds. The nest in this instance was made by the owls and placed in the forks of a tree which was half blown down but had caught in the branches of another. The usual period of obtaining the first set was between Feb. 27 and March 8, the two dates being the earliest and latest on which fresh eggs were found.

O. & O. XII. Aug. 1887 p. 118

O. & O. XV. Apr. 1890. p. 56

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Another F

As our birds h
ance in the spring
fall, so at least
arising and retiring, if we might use the term as applied to the *genus homo*. If this habit is not of enough importance to command an extensive treatise, it is surely of interest enough to call for momentary notice, in the every-day experience of the average ornithologist, giving as it does an insight into another of the specific characters of our feathered friends.

During the vernal and autumnal migrations, the restless warbler hosts are apparently constantly on the move. While the winter months last the Snowbird (*Junco*) may be seen astir as soon as it begins to get fairly light, followed very soon by the Crow, Bluejay, Chickadee and Nuthatch consecutively. But the best and most comfortable time to watch the daily appearance and disappearance of the birds is in the spring or
residents have m
At this time the
As the last not
upon the air and
the eastern hor
heard, soon foll
if he was loudly
sleepy neighbor
turns to crimson
stirs the leaves, the Oriole begins to talk to his mate, while from the depth of the woods comes the cry of the Bluejay, followed, as the sun lights the tops of the tallest trees, by the Brown Thrush, as he tunes up preparatory to putting to shame the Song Sparrow, which is trying his vocal organs as he stands perched on yonder fence. Suddenly now as the sun spreads its beams over the whole landscape, the Pewee, from the barnyard, the Kingbird from the orchard, the Red-eyed Vireo from the wood, the Catbird from the roadside thicket

Raptores, Bristol County, Mass.
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O.&O. XII. Aug. 1887 p.118

Great Horned Owl.

Mr. Preston further writes in answer to the statement in the same article, that it is doubtful if more than three eggs of the Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*), have ever been found in one nest, that he took four eggs of this bird from a nest on March 1st, 1881. They were laid in an old crow's nest. The present writer cannot think otherwise, however, than that two or three are the ordinary number; and that these were but the exceptions which prove the rule in both instances. O.&O. XI. Apr. 1886. p. 53.

The Number of Eggs Laid by Hawks and Owls.

The number of eggs laid by birds of the Order *Raptores* has been subject to more mis-statement than any others. The tendency seems to have been to exaggerate their number, rather than to understate it, though errors in this direction have been frequent. Thus the Great Horned Owl, (*Bubo virginianus*), is said by many writers to lay from three to six eggs, while the real number is only two or three; and it is doubtful if more than three have ever been found in one nest.

O.&O. XI. Jany. 1886. p. 11.

GREAT-HORNED OWL'S EGGS.—Another visit to the Great-horned Owl's nest, March 1, 1885, favored us with two eggs. The nest was found in the first tree that we rapped and we had a splendid shot at the female, and afterwards saw the male and female together. The nest was about seventy-five feet up and lined with snow and feathers. The eggs were of a dirty white color, and slightly incubated.—*S. W. Comstock, Greenfield, Mass.* O.&O. X. Apr. 1885. p. 64

GREAT-HORNED OWLS EGGS. On the 15th of March three of us went hunting Owls nests. In a very large pine tree we saw a nest resembling the Crows. After clubbing the tree with the climbers, an Owl flew off the nest and as she did so an egg dropped, and a large young one was seen. On going up to the nest, one egg and the bones of an animal were found. The nest was eighty-five feet from the ground. We saw the Owl three times, and could have easily shot her. The broken egg was mended and the set is complete.—*S. W. Comstock, Greenfield, Mass.*

O.&O. IX. Apr. 1884. p. 48.

Collection of Raptores Eggs. J. P. N.

Great-horned Owl.	4-2, 5-3,	9	23	

O.&O. XV. Apr. 1890. p. 56

Great Horned Owls' Nests and Eggs.

W. W. Coe, of Portland, Conn., secured still another set in his long series of Great Horned Owls, Feb. 27th, his earliest record being Feb. 22d.

March 12th, I startled a *Bubo* from an old nest under which I had been twice in February and seen no sign. Fragments of shells and a wad of wet feathers were on the ground, and the nest held one Owl but a few hours from the shell. There was no quarry or food in the nest and the parent, which flew swiftly out of range, was a bird of the small dark male type. Now, if the period of incubation of *B. virginianus* is as given by writers ("all guess work" says Dr. Wood), or if it approaches in duration the long incubation of the *Buteos*, of which I have some data, then the egg which produced this chick must have been laid at an earlier date than any present record of the breeding of this species in Conn.—*J. M. W., Norwich, Ct.*

I have been serenaded all winter by the harmonious sub-bass of a pair of Great Horned Owls from Cedar Swamp, some three-fourths of a mile away, and as I listened I whispered to myself, "just you wait till next February and then see." They waited till about the middle of February, when the serenading suddenly ceased, and I listened for it in vain night after night. And right here let me ask the question of those acquainted with this bird's habits, if they do not cease "hooting" for a time after they commence to breed? I have observed this same ominous silence through the latter part of February before. After listening in vain night after night till into March, I gave them up, remarking to a friend that my great expectations had turned to disappointment, when the suggestive question above was put to me, and sure enough one evening my ear was saluted again by the old serenade all the evening long, and the next morning it was continued until 8 o'clock. When night came again, the serenade again commenced, and I started off in the twilight to trace them out. Reaching the limit of my intended trip, I heard the Owl, apparently about a mile further on. I listened as it repeated its note and at each repetition it seemed nearer, till presently it resounded from a grove quite near me and I heard a strange noise, a rapidly repeated ha-ha-ha-hey-e-e coming back, and my inference was that the male was treating his mate to a supper. It was only a little grove, but I well knew of an old Cooper's Hawk's nest built two years ago in it, and there, when I paid a visit by daylight, were the erect horns and a partial glimpse of the great eyes staring down at me. A smart rap on the tree started her off and I arranged for a climb. It was not a difficult tree—a maple forty-seven feet from the ground to the nest—and I soon had the much prized set in my hands—two pure white eggs very nearly round. Incubation had proceeded probably about a week or ten days. I do not think the Owls had added any building materials to the nest, but the setting bird must have nearly denuded her breast of feathers for lining, as the inside was well matted with them. This was on March 13th, and incubation was unusually late

GREAT-HORNED OWL.—On a postal card before us Dr. Wm. Wood states that he once took five eggs from the nest of a G. H. O. Will the Dr. please give us the history of this find. O. & O. VIII. Feb. 1883. p. 15

GREAT-HORNED OWLS' EGGS.—The average size was about 2.10×1.80. The set of four was somewhat smaller than any of the others, the measurements being 2.08×1.68, 2.08×1.76, 2.10×1.78, 2.12×1.80. The largest set measured 2.25×1.85, 2.28×1.88, 2.30×1.88. The pores of these eggs are very large. In blowing with one of Howland's blowers it was noticed that the moisture came out of every pore and stood in drops like sweat.—*E. A. S.*

O. & O. VII. Nov. 1882. p. 174

COE'S STRAIN OF OWLS.—W. W. Coe, Portland, Conn., has again opened the season, but we will let him tell his own story, for he does it so well even if he is a little tantalizing. He writes: "At my right hand, on the billiard table in a cigar box, half full of cotton, I see two Great-horned Owls' eggs—beauties—fresh—clean—taken from an old Red-tailed Hawk's nest, in a big chestnut sixty feet from the ground, at 2.30 p. m. this day. Whoop-la! Why don't you get up some morning and open the season? Let's see—my first record is March 2, 1872; this last, March 4, 1883, eleven years without a break. I engaged another set from the old gal, to be ready about the first of April.

[How about the white owl?—ED.]

O. & O. VIII. June. 1883. p. 45

Great-horned Owls.

Noticing "Coe's Strain" of Great-horned Owls leads me to speak of another strain. Your readers in Eastern Mass., will remember in the Fall of the year 1869 we had a "September gale" which prostrated many forest trees. Early in the spring following my father in looking over a piece of heavy wood which had suffered considerably, noticed in an immense chestnut tree which had fallen against another about two-thirds to the ground, a Great-horned Owl. He started for it, when it flew. Turning about to leave he glanced up, when he noticed peering at him from a heap of leaves thrown together with a few twigs in the crotch of the tree an immense head illuminated by a pair of great staring eyes. On coming home he told his discovery. I did not lose much time in going to the tree. Climbing was easy and in a few moment's time I had the set of two white and fresh eggs safely stowed away in my collection box. Those only who have made like finds can imaginge my feelings of exultation. I would not have exchanged my seat on that old mossy tree by that Owl's nest, for any King's throne. Such was my first Great-horned Owl's nest, March 3, 1870. For eleven years I annually at nest, and never once did they t me. My earliest set was Feb. atest for first set March 8. In g of 1875 I did not take the I was determined to settle the guess work theory of their incubation. I found it as follows, March 3, fresh; March 16, all right; March 25, do.; March 29, two little Buteos a day old. A second set was always laid each year when I took the first. On March 2, 1882, I started for the well known nest, but alas! for vain expectations. On reaching the summit of the hill which overlooked the woods, I found that the woodman's axe had laid prostrate the forest home of my Owls and only for a pair of high circling Buteos lamenting the destruction of their retreat, all was still. As I turned away with my now empty box I felt as though one of the joys that make this life of ours worth living was lost, and often as I look on those ten sets of white beauties it carries me back to those crisp winter walks when the collecting season was opened by taking my set of Great-horned Owl's eggs.—*F. H. C., Rehoboth, Mass.* O. & O. VIII. Sept. 1883 p. 68

E. A. Lewis, while at Plymouth, Mass., March 11, found a nest of the Great Horned Owl. It measured 18 inches in diameter outside, and 8 inches inside; was lined with feathers from the breast of the Owl. Buried in them were two eggs, both measuring 2.25 x 1.94.

O. & O. XIII. July. 1888 p. 117

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The Number of Eggs Laid by the Great-Horned Owl.

BY DR. W. S. STRODE, BERNADOTTE, ILL.

After reading Charles F. Morrison's article in the O. AND O. for April, on the number of eggs laid by the Great-horned Owl, it occurred to me that my experience with this interesting bird during this season of 1887, might be of interest to the readers of this journal, and also throw some light on this subject at least for the "Spun River Region" of Illinois.

January 26th. Took first set of *B. virginianus*; number of eggs two, incubation fresh. Nest forty feet high on large limb of a white oak tree, close to body, and apparently built by the owls.

February 27th. Took another set of two from same birds. Nest a half mile from first, and in a red oak, about thirty feet up in forks, and also built by the owls. Each nest being a low flat structure, composed almost entirely of sticks and a few leaves and feathers on the inside.

February 1st. Found a Bubo's nest in a white oak, containing one fresh egg. The lay apparently not completed. Both birds were present and gave me a fine serenade as I was making the ascent.

February 18th. Found a nest in an old red oak snag, about thirty feet high. Could see the bird's ear tufts above the cavity. The climb a hard one, but with the aid of a good pair of climbers I succeeded in getting up, and found three very nice eggs, slightly incubated.

March 8th. Found this same pair nesting in the hollow top of a large white oak, about fifty feet high, and about two hundred yards from the former nesting place. Going up I found one fresh egg. Coming that way again on March 12th and 15th the old bird flew out on rapping.

March 20th. I again ascended the tree and found three more eggs, in which incubation had commenced, these appearently being a completion of the set. I have this prolific pair under observation for the third time, thinking possibly I might even get a third set.

March 8th. A boy brought me a set of two that he had found in a nest which the birds had probably built.

March 22nd. I located this pair nesting in the same woods; the nest about forty feet high, in the forks of a small elm. Going up I found two fresh eggs. The nest was a pretty neat structure, and built by the owls.

February 21st. Found a nest in an old red oak snag, about twenty-five feet high, containing two eggs slightly incubated.

March 13th. A boy brought me one fresh egg that he had found in a nest in a tree. Probably an incomplete set.

This comprises the eggs taken this season, but I found other nests.

March 13th. Found an owl on a nest about seventy-five feet from the ground, and away out on a limb. The tree was a red oak, three and a half or four feet through, and forty feet to a limb. A tremendous climb. But tying up my horse, I strapped on my climbers and went up, up, up, until I neared the nest. The parent

Notes on the Nesting of the Great Horned Owl.

(*Bubo virginianus.*)

BY THOMAS H. JACKSON, WEST CHESTER, PA.

Within a few years this bird has become a rather scarce resident of this section of Eastern Pennsylvania. The destruction or thinning out of the larger tracts of timber, together with the increasing demand of this fine bird for the taxidermists' art, have left but few pairs to breed in the vicinity. In a recent number of THE ORNITHOLOGIST AND OÖLOGIST I notice that a writer takes exception to the large number of eggs usually accredited in sets of the *Raptores*. In his experience with those of the Great Horned Owl I fully coincide. In thirteen nests of the bird that have come under personal notice, twelve contained two eggs or young, and only one contained three eggs.

Upon one occasion I replaced the Owl's eggs taken from a nest with those of the common hen, and upon visiting them at the expiration of three weeks, found that both the latter had hatched and had fallen from the nest, about twenty feet from the ground, and that the owls had deserted the locality.

All the nests referred to above were placed in branches of trees, and were generally those of Crows or Hawks renovated or enlarged. Occasionally a hollow tree is used for this purpose.

The Great Horned Owls are liberal providers for their young. I have frequently found full grown rabbits lying in the nest beside the young, and scarcely a nest visited did not have a strong odor of the skunk, while bones and feathers were scattered around, attesting to the predaceous habits of the proprietors.

The hooting of this owl in the lonesome recesses of the forest is not an attractive sound to the belated traveler who knows not the source whence it comes, but I have often listened with pleasure to their solemn signals as they answered each other from different points in the silent forest. The notes of the sexes are quite different. One of them (I cannot say which) utters deep deliberate hootings, while the other answers in short quick tones very easily distinguished, and as I have always heard these notes in the vicinity of a nesting place, I have taken it for granted that they are distinguishing traits in the sexes.

O. & O. XI. Jun. 1886. p. 85.

birds came quite near, snapping their bills and keeping up a continual hooting. Imagine my disappointment after this perilous climb to find the nest occupied by three downy young of different sizes, and a half of a rabbit's carcass!

March 24th. Found a family of three young *Bubos*, in the downy plumage, in a hollow, soft maple. This nest also contained a half-eaten rabbit.

March 30th. Found two nests of young owls, one of three in a hollow elm, about fourteen feet from the ground. The other of three also in a nest in a white oak forty or fifty feet high. Did not disturb any of those young.

SUMMARY FOR THE SEASON.

Number of eggs found,	19
" young Owls,	12
Total,	31
" sets containining 4 eggs,	1
" " " 3 "	1
" " " 2 "	5
" " " 1 "	2
" nests built in trees,	8
" " " cavities,	5

From this summary it would appear that the usual number of eggs laid is two or three; but as the set of four shows the rule may be varied from, even in this latitude.

[Dr. Strode's experience as to the number of eggs laid by this bird agrees with that of collectors from all parts of the country, with the exception of Mr. Charles F. Morrison's phenominal sets of six. Perhaps, however, the latter gentleman fed the birds on "Bird Invigorator" to make them lay a large number of eggs!

In one particular, however, Dr. Strode is in error. He found one egg (fresh) on March 8th and removed it. He tells us that he again visited the same nest on March 20th, when he found three more eggs, in which incubation had commenced. He then calls the four eggs one set! This is incorrect. The first egg having been removed, the birds commenced to lay a second set, which consisted of three.—J. P. N.]

O.&O. XII. Aug. 1887 p.125 – 126.

Nesting of the Brown-headed Nuthatch.

BY C. S. BRIMLEY, RALEIGH, N. C.

Previous to this year my experience in regard to the nesting of this bird was very limited, only one nest having come under my observa-

The Number of Eggs Laid by the Great-Horned Owl.

BY DR. W. S. STRODE, BERNADOTTE, ILL.

After reading Charles F. Morrison's article in the O. AND O. for April, on the number of eggs laid by the Great-horned Owl, it occurred to me that my experience with this interesting bird during this season of 1887, might be of interest to the readers of this journal, and also throw some light on this subject at least for the "Spun River Region" of Illinois.

January 26th. Took first set of *B. virginianus*; number of eggs two, incubation fresh.

Notes on the Nesting of the Great Horned Owl.

(*Bubo virginianus.*)

BY THOMAS H. JACKSON, WEST CHESTER, PA.

Within a few years this bird has become a rather scarce resident of this section of Eastern Pennsylvania. The destruction or thinning out of the larger tracts of timber, together with the increasing demand of this fine bird for the taxidermists' art, have left but few pairs to breed in the vicinity. In a recent number of THE ORNITHOLOGIST AND OÖLOGIST I notice that a writer takes exception to the large number of eggs usually accredited in sets of the *Raptores*. In his experience with those of the Great Horned Owl I fully coincide. In thirteen nests of the bird that have come under personal notice, twelve contained two eggs or young, and only one contained three eggs.

Upon one occasion I replaced the Owl's eggs taken from a nest with those of the common hen, and upon visiting them at the expiration of three weeks, found that both the latter had hatched and had fallen from the nest, about twenty feet from the ground, and that the owls had deserted the locality.

All the nests referred to above were placed in branches of trees, and were generally those of Crows or Hawks renovated or enlarged. Occasionally a hollow tree is used for this purpose.

The Great Horned Owls are liberal providers for their young. I have frequently found full grown rabbits lying in the nest beside the young, and scarcely a nest visited did not have a strong odor of the skunk, while bones and feathers were scattered around, attesting to the predaceous habits of the proprietors.

The hooting of this owl in the lonesome recesses of the forest is not an attractive sound to the belated traveler who knows not the source whence it comes, but I have often listened with pleasure to their solemn signals as they answered each other from different points in the silent forest. The notes of the sexes are quite different. One of them (I cannot say which) utters deep deliberate hootings, while the other answers in short quick tones very easily distinguished, and as I have always heard these notes in the vicinity of a nesting place, I have taken it for granted that they are distinguishing traits in the sexes.

O.&O. XI. Jun. 1886. p. 85.

Nesting Habits of the Great Horned Owl.

It appears to be generally believed by ornithologists and oologists that the Great Horned Owl will occupy the same nest for a number of years, even after being frequently molested. Although my experience is somewhat limited, owing to the scarcity of that specie in this locality, as only five nests have come under my observation, it does not establish the fact to the contrary, and yet it has been my misfortune in every case to find it otherwise.

My first was an open nest in a large beech tree, and contained three young Owls when found. They were left in the nest to mature unmolested, with the hopes of collecting a set of eggs there the following season. The next spring I visited the nest frequently, but no owls appeared in that locality.

My second was an open nest in a beech tree and contained two young Owls, about half grown when found. They were allowed to mature in the nest unmolested, and in the following spring the nest was unoccupied.

The third and fourth were both open nests and found by Albert and Elmer Durfee.

From one of these nests they took a set of three eggs and the other contained young birds, which were left in the nest undisturbed.

I visited both of these nests the following spring and found them unoccupied, and no Owls could be seen in the woods.

The fifth nest was found by myself, situated in a hole in the side of a basswood tree, from which I took a set of two fresh eggs on March 20, 1892; and up to the present date, March 24, 1893, there is no appearance of the Great Horned Owl occupying the same cavity this spring.

I should like to hear from other collectors with more extended experience on this subject, so that we might be able to ascertain what proportion of Great Horned Owls' nests found, have been occupied the following season. *James B. Purdy.*

Plymouth, Michigan.

O.& O. Vol.18, June,1893 p.92-93

Great-horned Owl in Iowa.

The 17th of February (1883) was cold, but being clear, we decided, in the afternoon, to take a short tramp through the woods north of the city, notwithstanding the snow was quite deep, rendering walking rather laborious. Entering the woods, we passed several large sycamore trees, from one of which flew a large Owl. As we thought it a little too early for eggs, we gave it no further consideration, but crossed the river. An hour later we returned, and stopped beneath the same tree. On looking up to an opening in the trunk some forty feet from the ground, we were greeted first by a pair of large black horns, followed by two great yellow eyes. A few seconds later, away flew the Owl, which we immediately recognized as a Bubo. The ascent of the tree occupied but a few minutes. When within ten feet of the opening, the female left the tree. The hollow I found to be about three feet in diameter and the same in height. It had three entrances: One—a small one—facing the southeast; one at the top; and the third, the principal one—and the one from which both birds flew—was a few inches from the bottom, and about a foot from the nest—if it could be designated as such, for it was merely a shallow depression in the soft decayed wood, that formed the floor of the cavity—containing two pure white eggs. Blowing showed that incubation had just commenced.

Scattered about over the bottom of the cavity were numerous bits of rabbit's fur, a portion of a cranium of a rabbit, a dozen or more tail feathers of the Owls, the foot and leg bones of a large raptorial bird, and numerous other bones. May 2d, while passing through the woods several miles west of the city, we started a Bubo from a nest on a large limb of a white oak. Ascending it, two young Bubos fluttered out of the nest to the ground. These I secured and carried home, and have them still in confinement, (Dec. 31, 1883.) About the middle of June the horns began to appear, and by the first of August they were fully developed. Rats, mice, birds and beef (fresh) form the principal part of their diet.—*Ch. R. Keyes, Des Moines, Iowa.*

O.&O. IX. Feb.1884. p 17

The Number of Eggs Laid by The Great Horned Owl.

BY CHARLES F. MORRISON, FORT LEWIS, COL.

It has been with some amusement that I have read, from time to time, the statements of some writers in the ORNITHOLOGIST AND OÖLOGIST as to the number of eggs in a clutch of the Great Horned Owl, (*Bubo virginianus*). On page 11 of Vol. 11, I find this statement: "Thus the Great Horned Owl is said * * * * to lay from three to six eggs, *while the real number is only two or three.*" To me, this idea of any one saying that the "Hooter" *shall not* lay more than three eggs is simply ridiculous, and would be to any collector that had spent years in the field in all parts of the United States and British America. Such statements should only come from closet oölogists whose field work has been limited to certain localities.

That this bird lays but two or three eggs as a rule, I will admit; and in the states east of the Mississippi River and along the Pacific coast, evidently does lay but that number; but, in the northern range of the Rocky Mountains and its numerous spurs, it deposits from *two to six* eggs. I make this statement from six year's experience in that section. The first nest of this species I ever found was in 1880, on the North Platte River, one mile north of Fort Laramie, Wyoming Ter.; contained six eggs, and on the same day, and one mile up the river, I found another nest containing four eggs. A few days later I found, down the river, two nests from which I took nine eggs; one set of five, and one of four.

During my collecting trip through Wyoming, Southern Montana, Western Nebraska, portions of Utah and Idaho, I found but one nest of two eggs, which was less than a mile from Fort McKinney, Wyoming, on Clear Creek, and near the foot hills of the Horn Mountains. This nest was empty but I secured two young birds from the lower limbs of a small tree not twenty yards from the nest. This was on May 28th, 1884, rather a late date for this bird.

During the winter of 1885-86 I happened to be travelling over a larger part of the United States, and on March 1886, I found myself at Hannable, Mo., where I took two sets of two eggs each. These are the only sets of two eggs now in my collection which I secured myself. I was never so fortunate as to find this bird in New England and my Hannable sets are my most Eastern finds. I was therefore much surprised at the several statements in the ORNITHOLOGIST AND OÖLOGIST, and being asked by a personal friend of mine who knew my experience differed, to give my side of the story, I turned over my old note books with the above results.

Now, why can't we look deeper into these things, and see if the "Hooter" does not come under influences in different localities which change its breeding habits as well as its plumage. If the plumage and song of birds are changed, why might not this affect their egg laying to some extent? Ornithology is yet in its infancy, notwithstanding the long strides made in the past ten years.

As for others of our *Raptores* I am not at present able to speak, but I think that time will show that more eggs are laid to a clutch in some species. I shall devote the coming season to *Raptores* especially, and will make the result known. In the meantime I invite correspondence as regards *B. virginiarus*, and would be especially pleased to hear from collectors from the North River region upon this subject. No one man can learn all, it is only by many working and comparing results that the truth is brought to light.

O.&O. XII. Apr. 1887 p. 59.

Auk, XIV, July, 1897, p. 318.

Peculiar Nest of the Great Horned Owl.—While returning from a short walk in the woods during a recent afternoon (March 14), I found a nest of *Bubo virginianus* which was quite remarkable. I had left the woodland and was crossing a meadow; in this there stood perhaps a half dozen elms and maples, none of them over six or eight inches in diameter at the base, the nearest timberland being three hundred yards away, across a creek. In one of the largest maples there was an old nest of the Crow, only twenty-four feet from the ground; this was occupied by a pair of Owls and one of the parent birds was upon the nest. Repeated heavy blows upon the trunk did not effect her flight; she remained until I shook a sapling which brushed the nest with its tips. Ascending, I found three eggs; in and about the nest were sixteen field mice, a hind leg of a rabbit and a wing of a Downy Woodpecker. There was also in a tree at no great distance the half-eaten body of a Pinnated Grouse. Upon preparation of the eggs I found them addled; incubation, which was equal in all, had advanced for three or five days, when the process had stopped, probably through the eggs becoming chilled. Evidently the bird had continued to set upon the eggs for a week thereafter.—FRANK H. SHOEMAKER, *Hampton, Iowa.*

Nesting of Bubo virginianus.

BY C. R. KEYES, DES MOINES, IOWA.

The Great-horned Owl is a rather common resident in the heavily timbered portions of this region, and is, perhaps, with the exception of *Megascops*, more familiar generally than any other member of the *Bubonidae* found here. The nest, as is usual with this species, is a cavity in some forest tree, though sometimes a deserted hawk's nest is occupied. Nidification commences earlier in the season with this than any other species breeding locally, and even though the weather at this time is severely cold as is generally the case, the full complement of eggs is laid before the 16th or 17th of February, and it is not of uncommon occurrence to find a broad band of ice encircling the impression in which the eggs are deposited. The eggs are usually two, sometimes three in number, but personally they have not been found to exceed the latter. A typical nest examined on the 17th of February, 1883, was in a gigantic old sycamore tree, situated at the entrance to a deep ravine at Devil's Gap, near Des Moines. The cavity, about fifty feet from the ground, at the base of two immense branches, was three feet in diameter and about the same height. There were three entrances: the one used by the owls, on a level with the bottom of the cavity, and which had been formed by a large branch breaking off close to its point of origin; a smaller opening on the opposite side; and the third at the top, a long irregular slit four or five inches in width. A few inches from the first of these entrances were the two eggs in a shallow depression in the decayed wood that formed the floor of the cavity. Scattered around the nest were a dozen or more tail feathers of the owls, the skull, and bits of fur of a rabbit, the big bones of a large raptorial bird, besides many bones of smaller birds, and the body of a common pigeon recently killed.

The following season, from the same nest a set of three eggs was taken, and in April, an egg and a young owl about a week old were found; the inference being that where disturbed, this species deposits a second set. Certain it is, however, that even when disturbed, this bird will continue to occupy the same nest year after year, and though this is personally the only case in which a nest, after being once examined, has received a second visit the same season, it is quite probable that when the first set is taken, a second one is deposited.

About the first of May the young are fledged, and six weeks later the "horns" are noticeable. A pair taken from the nest was kept confined for nearly three years in a barn, when a protracted absence from home necessitated the disposal of them. They were fed on fresh meat from the butchers' shops, and occasionally rats and mice, the latter they usually captured for themselves.

O.&O. XIII. June. 1888 p. 93

New Eng. Raptores. Number Eggs in a set. F. H. Carpenter.

Great-horned Owl, (*Bubo virginanus*).
34 sets of 2

O.&O. XII. Oct. 1887 p. 168

A Philadelphia Collection of Eggs of the Raptores.

Bubo virginianus. Great Horned Owl. Five sets of three, four sets of two. Total: nine sets, twenty-three eggs.

O.&O. XIV. Mar. 1889 p. 45

A Collecting Experience with Great Horned Owls and Swainson's Hawk.

Three miles north of the village of Bernadotte lies about a half section of enclosed timber and brush land, so rough and cut up by hills and hollows that the former owners have not considered it worth the outlay of labor required to clear it up for agricultural uses. All the large timber has been cut down and removed, except where it is growing in deep hollows. This locality is a favorite collecting ground of mine, and from it each season I obtain two or more sets of hawks' or owls' eggs.

Having previously, in my night rides, heard owls hooting in these woods, I started on a search for nests late in the day of February 8, 1888. There was a keen north-west wind full of flying snow, with the thermometer registering close to zero.

Knowing the natural inclination of the *Bubos* to occupy the same nesting place or locality for several seasons, I went straight to a nest in a leaning white oak tree, from which in 1887 I collected a set of three Great Horned Owl's eggs. As I came to the brow of the hill, the nest far below was at once seen to be occupied. The tree on the upper side was covered with a thick coat of ice, but, with the aid of a pair of sharp climbers, the ascent was made without much difficulty, except very cold fingers. The owl did not leave the nest until one-half the distance to it was climbed, which led me to suspect young birds. But this fear luckily was not to be realized, for in the nest were found three eggs very much stained and soiled. Although the female remained near by hooting and snapping her bill, the male did not put in an appearance.

The eggs were put in a mitten to which a cord was attached, and lowered safely to the ground. On blowing, they were found to be about one-half incubated, and by a thorough application of soap and warm water the stains and dirt were removed, until they were as white and handsome a set as one would wish to see.

Returning to these woods on March 14th, I set to work searching for *Buteos*' nests, having a few days previously located a pair flying about over the locality. After getting fairly on the collecting ground, a twenty minutes' search located the nest, the bird occupying it. It was situated on a side hill, about eighteen feet up, in a scrub white oak.

The female left the nest as soon as I discovered it, and flew across the creek bottom to a dead tree three hundred yards away, where she was immediately joined by the male. I quickly discovered from the appearance, flight and action of the birds that they were not the *Buteo borealis* which I had expected to find, and a little later when they came flying around close overhead I recognized them as *Buteo swainsoni*. The male was the handsomer of the two, smaller and more trimly built. The band across the throat and breast was much brighter, and he was also much more active and aggressive than the female.

The climb was an easy one, and in the nest were found three eggs, fresh and clean. They are greenish-white, with flakes of brown and umber, appearing as though these markings had been brushed over, making them indistinct.

The nest was a bulky affair composed of sticks, weed stalks, grass leaves, corn husks and a few feathers. After noting down a description of it in my collectors' book, the eggs were put in a mitten and lowered safely to the ground. The action of the male during this interval was interesting and novel.

From the dead tree across the valley he would start toward me as straight as an arrow from the bow, screaming fiercely every few seconds. But just when an attack seemed inevitable, and I had prepared to duck my head behind the nest, his courage would suddenly fail, and veering off he would return to his mate on the dead tree, only to repeat the performance after an interval of a few minutes. Two or three times the female started with him, on the assault from the dead tree, but after flying a short distance would return.

Having watched them as long as I could, and it beginning to grow dusk, I returned to the ground and secured the eggs, and the owl tree being but a short distance away I concluded to make a quick run to it, not, however, with much hope of making a second find. Going over the ridge that intervened between the hawk's and owl's nest, the latter came in sight, and I saw at once by the ear tufts appearing over the edge that it was occupied, and as I came nearer the big yellow eyes looked down at me as though they would say: "What! you here again!" Without waiting for an invitation to do so, she left the nest, and I fancied that I could see despair and disgust in her every movement. Quickly running up to the nest I again found it contained three eggs. This time they were clean and fresh.

Bernadotte, Ill. *Dr. W. S. Strode.*

Nesting of the Great Horned Owl.

It seems a pity that such a beautiful bird as our Great Horned Owl is becoming so rare, especially in and around our more populated districts, for we, as lovers of birds, feel it more, perhaps, than anyone else, but such is the fact, especially in this vicinity. I must confess there can be no harder temptation placed before a naturalist than to see one of these fine birds within gun-shot and not try to secure him, especially if one has no specimen already; but, on the other hand, if we were better at resisting these temptations we should not witness the decrease of our birds so fast.

Often have I heard my father tell how common the "Hoot Owl," as they were called, used to be around here, and in those days it was no uncommon thing to hear two or three of them answering each other from the different woods around, especially just before a severe storm. Those days are past and gone, however, never to return with us, I fear.

To my personal knowledge there is but a single pair of these birds that breed in this locality, although there may be others who find them, but I have seen no records given. This pair is located about five miles from this city, and my first acquaintance with them was during the winter of 1887.

I had often heard a near neighbor (who is quite a hunter) say that he had often seen these birds in a large swamp of hemlocks and mixed timber, not far from my old home, but I was not familiar with that locality, and therefore did not venture there alone, for I had always heard of it as a place in which one could get lost very easily; but finally I determined to go there, so I made arrangements with a young fellow who was tolerably well acquainted with the woods to go with me to have a hunt for them.

On March 15, 1887, we started on our first visit to see what could be found, and we had a long and hard hunt, but we got there at last, and secured two eggs, but it was a close call, for if we had been a few days later they would never have got into my cabinet. After a tedious process, however, I managed to make good specimens of them.

I visited the place during the following winter and hunted my best, but could not find the birds, and since that time I have not had the time to get there again until March 5, 1891, when we paid them another visit. This time the nest was in the open woods and was not so hard to find, but the bird was very shy. We could see her for a long distance, as she was sitting on the nest, but she left it before we could get up very close. This nest contained two eggs, and was a very odd set, one being of the usual size, the other much smaller. They measured: 2.32 x 1.86 and 1.98 x 1.64. These were badly incubated but not nearly as bad as the first set.

This year I determined to be there early enough if possible, so on February 18th I gave the woods a good looking over, but could not with certainty locate the nest, as there were so many old Hawks' and Crows' nests around, but I saw unmistakable signs of the Owls, so I determined to try them again. On February 27th I went the second time and was in luck. I saw the male fly from near the nest, and the female stuck close to her eggs, but after three or four good raps on the tree she flew off. This nest contained three eggs, which is the largest set yet taken by me. They were slightly incubated and measured 2.30 x 1.88, 2.23 x 1.88 and 2.21 x 1.84.

The nests were very rudely built, and in this case not very substantial. It was a rickety affair, made of a heap of rubbish on a foundation of sticks, with scarcely any hollow in them; and they are lined with strips of bark, grass and a few feathers from the parent bird.

Two of the nests were placed in hemlock trees, the other in a chestnut, and they were from forty to fifty feet from the ground. It is a mystery to me how the bird got on and off of this last nest without rolling out the eggs, for it was so fallen over on one side that I did not dare to take out the eggs one at a time for fear the rest would roll out, but probably they know their own business much better than I did. *H. W. B.*

Bridgeport, Conn.

O. & O. Vol. 17, April 1892 p. 57

rel's. Can any one tell me what it is?"

Bubo Virginianus?

O. & O. IX. Jun. 1884. p. 76.

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Bird Enemies.

Of all the enemies that beset small birds, the small boys are the worst. And right here let me say that some who have reached mature years destroy, annually, more birds and nests than all other enemies combined. Do not let me be understood as speaking against "scientific collectors," for they destroy but a small percentage of what are destroyed, for no earthly purpose but to take the sweet life that God has given.

The law endeavors to protect the birds from being wantonly destroyed; how well it is enforced I am not to say.

It is with the other enemies that I have to deal. The order of birds known as *Raptores* are freest from enemies of all the orders. But they, in turn, are great enemies of the smaller birds. Their depredations are confined mostly to adult birds, and eover all seasons of the year.

The American Crow (*Corvus americanus*) is among the greatest destroyers of small birds. He will not only catch and eat adult birds, but he will destroy every nest that he may chance to see. In 1888, Mr. Walter B. Barrows, assistant ornithologist of the U. S. Bureau of Agriculture, undertook to find out the amount of this bird's depredations. Of the three hundred and fifty persons who sent replies to Mr. B.'s enquiries, two hundred and seventy-eight attested to the vast work of destruction done by this bird. Over twenty-five species were mentioned as being subject to his attack, among these being the Blue Jay and Purple Grackle, birds, that in turn, destroy large numbers of small birds. The greatest depredations were upon the Thrush species, Robins in particular.

The Shrikes are the most merciless of all the assassins but, thanks to the "All-wise Creator."

On March 15, 1887, we started on our first visit to see what could be found, and we had a long and hard hunt, but we got there at last, and secured two eggs, but it was a close call, for if we had been a few days later they would never have got into my cabinet. After a tedious process, however, I managed to make good specimens of them.

I visited the place during the following winter and hunted my best, but could not find the birds, and since that time I have not had the time to get there again until March 5, 1891, when we paid them another visit. This time the nest was in the open woods and was not so hard to find, but the bird was very shy.

Bridgeport, Conn.
Hawkers, O & O Vol. 17, May 1892 p 68-69.

On our visit to this place in early March we had found a nest of the Great Horned Owl, and we had entertained a faint hope that she might possibly lay another set of eggs, but we were more particularly after a nest of the Red-shouldered Hawk this time, for we had seen a pair of birds hovering around on our former visit, but the choppers had driven the birds out of this place, and, although the birds were still around we were unable to find the nest; so had to return to our team, when, after a drive of about half a mile, we left again for another woods, and did not have to hunt long before we discovered the nest. It was in a chestnut about seventy feet high and on a limb projecting about ten feet from the body of the tree, with the female bird on the nest. It was now quite dark and no amount of clubbing or shouting would persuade her to get off. We determined to start her, so I raised my gun and shot one barrel close to the nest to start her, and off she jumped. I let the other barrel go after her, but as I am no expert with a gun she continued on her way unharmed, so we were obliged to say good-by to her. Our next problem was, where is the fellow to climb the tree and get the eggs? I certainly was not desirous of the job, and my companion did not seem to favor the plan of his doing it, so we decided to let her rear her brood in peace, so away we started, and it was now getting pretty dark; and as we went stumbling along we suddenly came upon an old, tumbled-down stone fence. As I was in advance I put one

NEST TO BE IDENTIFIED. Albert H. Hawley, Garden City, N. Y., writes: "While out after Crow's Eggs, we discovered a large nest about thirty feet from the ground. My friend went up and pronounced it an old crow's nest, but soon found an opening, and supposing it to be a squirrel's nest, he removed from the top a pile of leaves and bark, finding at the bottom a white egg about the size of a hen's, or a little smaller, and the same shape. It was fresh. The nest looked like an old Crow's, inhabited by Flying Squirrel's. Can any one tell me what it is?"

Bubo Virginianus?

O. & O. IX. Jun. 1884. p. 76.

Boston Transcript

SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 1893.

OUT-OF-DOOR STUDIES.

To the Editor of the Transcript: I spent the 8th of April in a little village in southern Berkshire. It lies in a beautiful valley, but its charms have long been known, and the influx of summer visitors and the inroads of the farming lands have left little of the wild beauty which it must once have possessed. During my morning's walk I was reminded in a striking manner, by two incidents which befell me, of the difficulty of wholly exterminating the remnants of savagery.

My path led through some second growth at the base of a mountain, beloved by the inhabitants of the valley which it guards, and famous in Bryant's poetry. Nearly at the base of the mountain lies a shallow body of water. As I neared it, I heard the loud quacking of ducks and their vigoro[illegible] flashing in the water. There seemed to be a [illegible] flock of water fowl feeding and playing close [illegible] me in the pond. I thought of wild fowl, but recollecting that a farm lay on the other side of the water, I thought it more probable that the farmer's ducks had waddled down through the meadow to enjoy a more extended swim. Accordingly I crashed rather heedlessly through the undergrowth till I came within sight of the water. The open space was still bordered by ice, on the edge of which a long row of black duck were sitting, while others of the company were swimming, splashing and quacking in the open. They suffered a near approach, but as I emerged from the tangle of alder, they rose, one bunch after another, with loud protestations, and circled about, displaying their bottle-shaped forms and the silver lining on the under surface of their wings. It was a pleasant disappointment to find they were wild, the reverse of a former experience of mine. In a retired Nova Scotia inlet I once stalked a company of noble swans, only to see them all leave the water and march up the hill, transformed into domestic geese.

Crossing the valley in which the pond lay I came to the base of the main range of the Hoosacs. A trout brook runs along at the foot of the mountains. The hills opposite were once clothed with splendid pines, but their crowns are now for the most part shorn. Along the brook, however, there still stood a noble company of trees, into the depths of which I plunged.

Just as I was on the point of leaving them a nest caught my eye, about fifty feet up in a stout pine. As I turned toward it a large bird flew off. I started at once to climb the tree, expecting at most to find the eggs of a hawk. There were no live branches below the nest, but there were plenty of stout stubs, in the angles of which I was as safe as need be. As I was about half way up, the bird which had left the nest flew by and lit in full view in a neighboring tree. I saw at once that it was a great horned owl, a bird whose acquaintance I had long wanted to make.

The owl now began to make a dismal cry like the barking of a small dog, or the croak of a night heron. Waugh! Waugh! In a moment another bird answered a short distance off, and soon flew into view. Then the pair began to hoot. Hoo! Hoo! Hoo! Hoo! Hoo-oo! Sometimes they prefaced their hooting with the above-mentioned cry. The one which had come in answer to the call of his mate, I took to be the male, though I was not at all sure. At any rate it was with this one that I was particularly concerned. He was far bolder than the other, and soon began making unpleasant demonstrations on the limb of a neighboring tree. He spread his wings and, stretching out his head, glared furiously and snapped his beak. His yellow eyes were opened wide, and when he hooted his white bib showed plainly. Presently he flew past me, almost grazing my head.

I was in a difficult position at the moment, and I began to wonder just how bold the pair would be in defence of their nest. I had read of brave Scotch lads who had fierce battles in the clouds with eagles. I remembered how the rich Englishmen bought the young birds, and how the money saved the cow from the avaricious landlord. But I had no such incentive, and, moreover, the situation was now complicated by another circumstance. Yesterday's snow still lay thick on the ground, and it had been raining for some time. During the morning the sun had struggled through once or twice, and the mists had lifted off the mountains. This variety of weather would have satisfied any but the most capricious month of the year. Now, however, a distant rumble which I had heard for the last few minutes developed into a loud crash, and in an instant the pines, the owls and I were acting our little drama to an accompaniment of vivid flashes and loud peals of thunder.

The next swoop the owl made brought him into violent contact with my shoulder. This direct attack roused all the obstinacy in my otherwise gentle nature, and I lost no time in making directly for the nest. A second later I felt a sharp blow at the base of the head, which knocked off my hat and drew blood. But I had now reached the nest, and the bird for some reason gave up the attack.

The nest was a deep, firm mass of pine twigs resting on two limbs close to the trunk of the tree. There were two young birds in it, downy white masses, stretched out in the manner of ancient gryphons. On the edges of the structure lay the hindquarters of two Northern hares.

I descended without disturbing the nestlings and made for the nearest shelter from the thunderstorm. I was drenched and my nerves unstrung from the unusual exercise, but I was happy. I had found the most savage bit of bird life left in the valley, and I had seen a new bird. R. H.

Arlington, April 12, 1893.

Attacked by a Great Horned Owl.

On March 2d of the present year I started out on a tramp into the country to see how the migration of our birds was progressing, and to examine a few old hawks' nests, which I had reason to believe might be occupied by *Bubo virginianus.*

My supposition was correct, for in an old nest which was used by a pair of Redtails in 1887, and from which I took one addled egg and left two young, I found Mrs. Owl at home. The nest is in an elm tree about fifty feet up. From the ground I could not see whether it was occupied or not, but certain signs about the trunk of the tree made things look suspicious, and a few sticks thrown into the treetop started the bird off.

I felt very jubilant, and was counting on an addition to my collection. Laying my gun down and taking my gloves off I prepared for a climb. Fortunately, the tree was of easy ascent, and I made rapid progress. The owls, in the meantime, had approached to the nearest trees, and were making a great hubbub—hooting and snapping their bills. They looked the very picture of courage as they sat facing me in such an erect attitude.

When within eight feet of the nest something attracted my attention, and caused me to look to the right. It was well I did, for I just had time to throw up my right arm to protect my face, when I was struck a blow on the forehead by one of the owls with such force that I was dazed for an instant. The owl passed both claws through my hat, which was of soft felt, and cut my scalp. I recovered from the shock and surprise in an instant, and breaking off a dead limb prepared for battle. I was none too soon, for she was at it again. I struck her a blow which turned her course slightly; but I also received one, doing me no damage however.

The owl returned to the same tree each time, and would probably have been at me a third time, but I threw a stick with such good effect as to frighten both away. It is needless to say that the nest contained young birds, two in number, and for supper they had the remains of a rabbit and the leg of a black hen.

On reaching the ground I had a good look for my hat. The idea of going home bareheaded was not pleasant by any means, but I finally found it some forty or fifty yards off.

Jos. C. Gould.

O & O. XIV. Apr. 1889 p. 54 55

Bubo virginianus.
See Rep. Sci. 1892, pp. 313-328, under Syrnium nebulosum
Ways of the Owl.
Frank Bolles.

The Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) **in Confinement.**—There has been considerable written upon this subject, and yet my present pet has displayed several characteristics which I have not observed mentioned in any of the records I have access to, and which are rather interesting.

I took her (I am strongly impressed with the belief that the bird is a female) from the nest on May 21, 1882, and judged from the plumage that she was then some twenty days old. She and her nest mate were covered with a grayish down, and when I pushed them over the edge of the nest —a rough shapeless affair on the exterior, though comfortably lined with feathers, and built in the crotch of a birch tree some eighty feet from the ground—they made an awkward attempt at flying, but reached the ground all right. They snapped their bills as I picked them up, but allowed themselves to be carried off without making further remonstrance.

The parents did not interfere, though just before I climbed the tree one of them flew on to the edge of the nest and uttered a sharp and shrill cry, with a vibration similar to that produced by a 'pea' whistle (the same cry as my pet gives voice to when annoyed or angry), and then flew off. The nest, by the way, was in a rather odd situation, being on the outskirts of a heronry of the Great Blue Heron, and not a hundred feet from where a pair of Fish Hawks were putting in habitable condition a nest which appeared to have been used for many years.

I have given my pet the run of a large room, and had ample opportunity to watch her growth and habits. At four months the horns, or ear-tufts, began to be noticeable, and in six months the bird was in full feather. In April, 1883, when about a year old, she made two attempts at nest-building, but finally relinquished the idea and shortly after began to shed her feathers.

From my experience with this bird I cannot fairly say that I consider the species untameable, though I confess I have not made much headway in reducing her to submission; yet she will allow me to stroke her head, and makes very little fuss when I enter her apartment alone, in comparison to what she does when a stranger approaches her. But she is undoubtedly fierce, and thoroughly appreciating the value of her equipment of muscle and claw, and considering any infringement of vested rights a *casus belli*, soon teaches a meddlesome intruder that no liberties whatever will be tolerated.

At times she is morose and sullen, but not unfrequently assumes a more playful air, when she seemingly enjoys putting herself into grotesque attitudes, varied with hooting, and another sound which so closely resembles the creaking of the door-hinge of her apartment that I am inclined to believe she has imitated it. Once, while in such a mood, I introduced a full grown cock into the room, when lo! the whole demeanor of my pet changed *instanter*. The horns were thrown back flat against the crown, the eyes glared fiercely, and the stately bird of wisdom, and the humorous vendor of quaint sounds, gave place to the savage bird of prey. As she stood for a moment glaring down upon her victim, moving her head from side to side, as if calculating the distance and the best method of attack, she looked like a veritable fiend. Her first swoop was dodged by the cock, and she then made an attack on the ground. Approaching the now terrified bully of the barn-yard, quick as a flash one claw was thrust out, clutching his neck; throwing him over on his back she quietly held him there until all motion had ceased, which was much sooner than if his head had been chopped off.

Nothing in the shape of fresh fish or flesh is neglected by the Owl when hungry, though her choice is for wild birds, and she will take small animals in preference to beef or mutton. A rat or squirrel is always swallowed whole, and about every second or third day the fur and bones are ejected, rolled into a hard pellet as large as a Grouse's egg. Just before ejecting these pellets the bird's appearance is very distressing. The first time I observed it I thought she must be ill, but as soon as the pellet is out she immediately recovers. If any food remains after her hunger is satisfied, it is carefully hidden away, and if I approach the spot where it has been laid the Owl attacks me most fiercely; flying at my feet, and hitting at them with her wings and claws.

She is very fond of bathing, and during the warm weather will bathe regularly once a day; getting into the large basin I have provided and washing very much after the manner of a Canary. In winter she takes a bath about every three or four days.

I have proven that her hearing is remarkably acute, and that she can see distinctly in the day time, when out of the glare of the sun.

The 'hoot' is made with the bill firmly closed; the air is forced into the mouth and upper part of the throat, the latter being puffed out to the size of a large orange.—JAMES W. BANKS, *St. John, N. B.*

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Manly Hardy,
er of Nov. 7, 1889.

Auk, I, April, 1884. p. 194-195.

Bubo virginianus

Maine

Both the Horned and the Barred Owls hunt in the day as well as in the night. I have shot a Horned Owl in the forenoon with a Partridge in his claws. I have also shot one at three o'clock in the afternoon, with a full-grown rabbit in his claws . I have known a Barred Owl to have a Mink in the middle of the day, and once one dived at my head long before dark.----- Manly Hardy,

Latter of Nov. 7, 1889.

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The Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*).—Dr. Elliot Coues has described so minutely the habits of the Laniidæ in his account of 'Shrikes in a State of Nature' (Birds of the Colorado Valley, Part I, 1878), that very little is left in the history of the Shrikes for other observers to record. However, an unusual incident (to me) in the nidification of *Lanius ludovicianus* came under my observation last spring, which I trust will be of interest enough to ornithologists to warrant a place in 'The Auk.' On May 19 I discovered the nest of this Shrike upon the central fork of a thorn tree, and almost within reach from the ground. As the nest contained only one egg, I did not then take it, but returned seven days later to find that two more eggs had been laid. As I wanted a specimen, I shot the bird as it arose from the nest, and it proved on dissection to be a female. I tried in vain to obtain the male, but he kept beyond range, appearing much

This nest was sent, with the parent birds, to the Smithsonian Institution; the indentification was confirmed, and the nest deposited in the Museum.—ERNEST E. T. SETON, *Carberry, Manitoba.*

Auk, I, April, 1884. p. 194-195.

The contents of the stomach examined contained the following:—

— The hind tibia and middle femur of what was undoubtedly a specimen of some species of Lachnosterna, probably L. fusca.

— The anterior tibiae and tarsi, the middle femur, ~~and~~ posterior tibia and tarsi, portions of the elytra, ~~and~~ a large fragment of the prothorax, and fragments of the ventral segments of Liparus relictus. The ~~correctness~~ identity of these fragments seems to me beyond question for the femora, tibiae and tarsi were sufficiently well preserved to be compared with those of specimens in my cabinet, while the elytra and prothorax exhibited the same sculpture as is seen in the perfect ~~insect~~ specimens.

— A considerable amount of fragmentary matter which although to much digested to admit of any certain identification, presented a decided Scarabaeid appearance

Lachnosterna is the ~~genus~~ genus familiarly known as June bugs or Dor-bugs, our most abundant species being L. fusca.

The paper on Raptorial Birds by Dury is in Random Notes 1885 v. 2 p. 57–58. He mentions the dor-beetle (Lachnosterna fusca) as found in the stomach of the Great Horned Owl.

I thought he had a more extended paper in the Journ of the Cinc. Sc. Nat. History but I can not find it. I have not looked very thoroughly however.

Yours truly

Saml Henshaw

Dec. 17, 1886

The following Owls were collected by me last fall, five Great Horned,

O. & O. XIV. Apr. 1889. p. 57

Albert Dana.

...ed Owl. By H. B. Hurd. *Ibid.*

Oologist

By Ortyx [=C. J. Pennock]. Auk, VII. Jan. 1890. p. 83.

Young Oologist. 1557. *Nesting of the Great Horned Owl.* *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

Young Ool. 1519. *Great Horned Owl.* Editorial. 'The Young Oologist,' Vol. I, No. 1., May, 1884, p. 5.

1083. *Misplaced Confidence.* By F. Park, Jr. *Ibid.*, Apr. 16, p. 225.—A Great Horned Owl eats a Screech Owl confined with it in the same cage. For. & Stream. XXIV

1860. *Out-of-door Papers. IX.—Largely Personal.* By Fannie Pearson Hardy. *Ibid.*, Vol. XXXIV, Jan. 23, 1890, p. 4.—Contains notes on *Bubo virginianus* and *Nyctala acadica.* For. & Stream. XXII

905. *Owl and Steel Trap.* By A. H. G. *Ibid.*, p. 424.—*Bubo virginianus* with a steel trap attached to its claws. For. & Stream. XXIV

File under Bubo virginianus

The Oologist. 1569. *Vagary of a Collector.* *Great Horned Owls; Climbing Strap.* By Ortyx [=C. J. Pennock]. *Ibid.*, No. 2. March and April, 1886, pp. 19-20. Auk, VII. Jan. 1890. p. 83.

1221. [*The Great Horned Owl.*] By G. O. G. *Ibid.*, No. 18, Oct. 31, p. 416.—Notes on its habits. American Nat. XXIV

735. Great-horned Owl. By [illegible]. *Ibid.*, p. 68.—Eggs found in one nest for eleven successive years; the twelfth year it was found that the nesting-tree had been destroyed. O. & O. Vol. VIII

1762. *Nests of the Great Horned Owl.* By O. B. H. *Ibid.*, May 9, p. 315. For. & Stream. Vol. 32

1999. *Great Horned Owl Eggs.* By James C. Jay. *Ibid.*, p. 112. Bobolink Nature Hist. Vol. 1. No. 7.

160

~~Athene genus~~ The genus contains a very large ~~Ligypus~~ number of species, many of which are very difficult of separation.

Ligypus belongs to a different sub-family of the Scarabaeidae, i.e. the Scarabaeidae pleurosticti, yet it has considerable superficial resemblance to Lachnosterna. ~~From the relation~~

From the relative abundance of the fragments of the two species Ligypus seems to have afforded much the greater part of the meal. Nine heads were counted but they were too much digested to be referred to either genus.

Both species are night flyers, and are often found ~~together~~ in large numbers.

Nothing but the address to be on this side.

Mr. William Brewster
61 Sparks St
Cambridge
Mass.

Notes.

THE OWL HAD EATEN PORCUPINE.—Charles R. Coombs, taxidermist, of this city, in preparing to mount a Great Horned Owl last week found the owl's body full of porcupine quills. The flesh was literally packed full of them, as well as the roof of the mouth. The owl evidently had dined on hedgehog.—[Belfast Journal.

The owl was shot at Castine, Me. I found the flesh full of quills, some of them over two inches in length; I do not see how the bird could live.—[Chas. R. Coombs.

O.&O. XIV, Feb. 1889 p.29

Something about Owls.
O. O. Ormsbee, Montpelier, Vt.

Of the Great Horned Owl, found from Central America to the Arctic circle, and which seems to be the black sheep among Owls, one hundred and twenty-seven stomachs were examined. Of these, thirty-one contained poultry or game-birds, eight contained other birds, twenty-nine contained Rabbits, five contained Squirrels, and but thirteen contained Mice.

O.& O. Vol. 18, Oct. 1893 p. 138

Birds from Fort Churchill, Hudson's Bay, W. Eagle Clark. AUK, VII, Oct, 1890, p. 322

Bubo virginianus.—An adult.

389. *Great Horned Owls' Nests and Eggs.* By J. M. W[hipple] and J. N. Clark. *Ibid.*, pp. 125, 126. O. & O. Vol. VII

403. *The Great-Horned Owl in Texas.* By Edgar A. Small. *Ibid.*, pp. 142, 143. O. & O. Vol. VII

1016. [*Great Horned Owl appropriating the Nests of the Bald Eagle.*] By Frank H. Allen. *Ibid.*, p. 4. **Rand. Notes Nat. His. I, No. 8.**

Young Oologist. 1557. *Nesting of the Great Horned Owl.* By 'Ortyx' [=C. J. Pennock]. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11. Auk, V11, Jan. 1890. p. 81.

Young Ool. 1519. *Great Horned Owl.* Editorial. '*The Young Oologist,*' Vol. I, No. 1., May, 1884. p. 5.

1083. *Misplaced Confidence.* By F. Park, Jr. *Ibid.*, Apr. 16, p. 225.—A Great Horned Owl eats a Screech Owl confined with it in the same cage. For. & Stream. XXIV

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735. *Great-horned Owls.* By F. H. C[arpenter]. *Ibid.*, p. 68.—Eggs found in one nest for eleven successive years; the twelfth year it was found that the nesting-tree had been destroyed. O. & O. Vol. VIII

The following Owls were collected by me last fall, five Great Horned,

O.& O. XIV. Apr. 1889. p. 57

Albert Lamb.

following data in the hand of John Cassin: "Bubo subarcticus Hoy, Racine, Wisconsin. Original specimen described by Dr. Hoy and presented by him 1853. J. C." The description is in the 'Proceedings' of the Academy for 1852, p. 211, and evidently refers to the specimen in question.

This specimen at once struck me as being much lighter in color than any examples of *subarcticus* that I had examined; in fact it seemed nearer to the description of *arcticus* as given in the books. Not having any specimens of undoubted *arcticus* for comparison, and the figure of this form in 'Fauna Boreali-Americana' being still lighter than the specimen in hand, I let the matter stand until I had an opportunity to make direct comparison.

Recently I showed the specimen to Mr. Leverett M. Loomis, who agreed with me that it must be very close to *arcticus*. A few days later, while together in Washington, we examined specimens of *arcticus* in the National Museum Collection and concluded that the type of *subarcticus* was identical with them.

To make matters sure, however, I sent the type specimen to Mr. Robert Ridgway, on my return to Philadelphia, and after making a careful comparison, he writes me: "The bird is un-

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Auk, XIII, April, 1896, pp. 153-156.

A REVISION OF THE NORTH AMERICAN HORNED OWLS WITH DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SUBSPECIES.

BY WITMER STONE.

It is not a pleasant task to overthrow a scientific name long in use, but under certain circumstances it seems unavoidable, and the case of *Bubo virginianus subarcticus* (Hoy) is an instance of this kind.

Some years ago while engaged in cataloguing the Owls in the collection of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia I found the type specimen of "*Bubo subarcticus* Hoy." The bird was mounted, and on the under side of the stand were written the

Mass. Notes By Charles R. Lamb.

Bubo virginianus heterocnemis. LABRADOR HORNED OWL. About Dec. 22, 1917, at Marshfield, Mass., a male Labrador Horned Owl was taken by Mr. Wilbur Ewell. Mr. C. E. Shaw was at Marshfield on Dec. 26, 1917, and saw the recently taken specimen and was told by Mr. Wilbur Ewell that he shot the bird the latter part of the week before (he thought the 22nd), on Hen Island, near the edge of the salt marsh. I am indebted to Mr. Shaw for giving me the specimen in the flesh with the data. On dissection, the bird was not fat and there was nothing in the stomach. The specimen was identified by Mr. William Brewster, Mr. Charles F. Batchelder and Mr. Outram Bangs, being compared with specimens in Mr. Brewster's collection and later Mr. Bangs kindly compared the specimen with those in the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy.— CHARLES R. LAMB, *Cambridge, Mass.*

Auk Vol. XXXV. 1913. p. 234

saturatus

Birds of Toronto, Canada,
by James H. Fleming,
Part II. Land Birds,
Auk XXIV, Jan., 1907, p. 75.

147. **Bubo virginianus saturatus.** Dusky Horned Owl.— Among the horned owls taken here in winter are a few very dark birds, usually of large size and apparently referable to the form *heterocnemis* of Oberholser.

subarcticus

Birds of Toronto, Canada,
by James H. Fleming,
Part II, Land Birds,
Auk, XXIV, Jan., 1907, p. 75.

146. **Bubo virginianus subarcticus.** Arctic Horned Owl.— Of recent record here; there are none in old collections. I have examined four well marked birds since 1893; of these two were typical, the others rather more heavily marked, but none approached *occidentalis*, there being comparatively little ochraceous underlying the white.