

JAMES H. BOWLER.

ISAAC H. MERRILL.

OFFICE OF
Bowler & Merrill, Bankers

AND PROPRIETORS OF THE

Bangor Safe Deposit Vaults.

Bangor, Maine. Feb 8th 1883

Mr. William Brewster
 Cambridge Mass

Dear Sir: I am again in

pursuit of a little information, and trust
 you will pardon me for again troubling
 you -

Is the Glaucous winged Gull found
 on our Atlantic coast? - I notice that

Baird & Bonaparte give its habitat as N.W. coast of N.A.

- Also that the late Ridgway (1851) Catalogue
 pronounces the Grey winged Gull (*L. chalcopterus*)^(Linn) as identical
 with *Larus glaucescens* - The habitat of *L. chalcopterus*

was given in 1859 as Bering's straits & Greenland

My reason for making this inquiry
 is that I have lately received a Gull from
 Grand Menan, which appears to me to be this
 bird (*L. glaucescens*) - size of *argentatus* - blue
 of back about same shade - The outer webs
 of the first 4 primaries show the ashy gray
 and are tipped with the round white spots.

I am not familiar with the

perfect adult plumage of the White winged Gull
but believed that bird to be lighter on
back - and as not showing the grayish color
& white spots on wing =

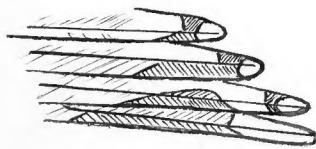
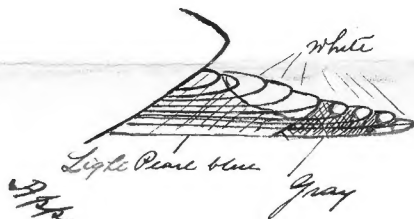
In regard to the Crested Gube(?)
I wrote you about some time ago - the
gentleman who informed me about it & who
had owned it - informs me he had presented
it to the York Institute of Saco Me -

I am inclined to believe it
a Red-necked Gube - and request him to have
it looked up - which he promised to do.

At first he was very positive that
it was a Crested Gube - but on my second
interview he was less so - and I incline
to the belief that it was a case of mistaken
identity

Sincerely Yours

Harry Merrill



Detail of 4 outer
feathers

(Darker shading represents the Gray)

N.B. I am not an artist !!!

Harry Merrill
Feb 5, 1883

OFFICE OF
Bowler & Merrill, Bankers

AND PROPRIETORS OF THE

Bangor Safe Deposit Vaults.

Bangor, Maine, Feb 25th 1883

W^m Brewster Esq

Cambridge Mass

Dear Sir - Thinking that the enclosed measurements of my specimen of *Larus glaucus* (♂) might have some interest to you I enclose them

Length $23\frac{3}{4}$ - wing (closed) $17\frac{1}{2}$

(Bill measurements)

(Culmen) tip to farthest point to which bill can be exposed; $2\frac{1}{4}$ "

tip to anterior end of nostril $\frac{46}{50}$

tip to eye $3\frac{1}{4}$

depth at angle $\frac{22}{32}$

width " " $\frac{11}{32}$

Posterior end of nostril to apex of feathers on side of bill $7\frac{1}{32}$

Tarsus $2\frac{3}{8}$

3rd $2\frac{5}{16}$

Sincerely Yours

Harry Merrill

Henry Meade

Feb. 26, 1883

Memoranda of Leaves
~~Present~~

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Bangor Safe Deposit Vaults.

Bangor, Maine. Apr 23^d 1883

William Brewster Esq
 Cambridge Mass

Dear Sir:— Your favor of 16th inst
 duly received. — I am very well acquainted
 with the *Hammatts* — as well in fact as with
 any one in our city.

I have some more facts
 of interest relative to *L. glaucescens*. Soon after
 I obtained my specimens. Mr Everett Smith of
 Portland — was in the city & I showed it to him
 — he was much interested in the capture as he is
 publishing a list of Maine Birds in Forest & Stream.

He was of the opinion that he had
 seen similar Gulls taken near Portland — but had
 never recognized them as different from *L. argentatus*.

Last week he sent me a young
 bird for comparison with my specimen — it is
 in nearly adult plumage. — and I'm of the belief
 it is a *L. glaucescens* — the gray on the Primaries
 is a trifle darker than mine — The general
 measurements of Smith's birds are smaller than mine.

The most marked difference is in the bill - that of Smith's (Portland) bird - being less heavy than mine. In Smith's bird the lower mandible tapers considerably from angle to base - while my specimen does not - as shown in the following measurements



(Smith)



(Merrill)

My birds measure is as much in depth of bill at point of feathers as at angle

I suggested that Smith send you his bird for Examination

This capture shows your conclusions in re this birds being found in N. E. & strengthens my belief that my collector had previous acquaintance with the bird under name of Jay Green

Very Truly

Harry Merrill

Edw. Lawrence

Apr. 23, 1853

Harry Merrill

OFFICE OF
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Bangor, Maine. June 1 1889

William Brewster Esq
 Cambridge Mass

Dear Sir:- Your valued favor of
 28th ult. was duly received - and read with
 great pleasure - particularly as your reference
 to the Gull endorsed my position with regard
 to it, with Mr Smith - etc. (Mr S.) was
absolutely positive that the bird was not *Larus*
glaucescens = that *L. glaucescens* was not
 a good species - He has written to different
 papers comparing the typical *L. glaucescens* (of Pacific)
 with *L. argentatus* - tho' he has told me he never
 saw but one specimen - that in the Boston Mac. Hist. Soc.
 - a young one I believe(?) -

As I was opposed to the
 idea that under the present status of things
 this bird could be *L. argentatus* (as he considered it)
 I was very anxious he should send it to you
 for examination & am very glad I was successful

in inducing him to do so

I will send you my specimens
the first of the week - I shall not be
able to find time to pack it before then
- Meanwhile - I remain

Sincerely Yours
Harry Merrill

Harry Merrill
June 1, 1873

OFFICE OF
Bowler & Merrill, Bankers

AND PROPRIETORS OF THE

Bangor Safe Deposit Vaults.

Bangor, Maine. June 7th 1883

Wm Brewster Esq
 Cambridge Mass

Dear Sir:- I send you
 my "Gull" tonight by express (prepaid). I
 have found time to box it before today -
 trust the delay has not inconvenienced you

I hope you may be able to
 find material enough to come to a satisfactory
 conclusion in regard to its correct position

My reference to Mr Smith's article
 were based on a communication to the Chicago "Felds"
 (i.e. "American Felds") wherein he draws comparisons
 between the American Herring Gull found in our coast
 in summer (= breeding time) & ~~the~~ "more northern race"
 which occurs as a winter migrant - which he says
 can be readily distinguished. "Especially by a
comparison of their bills" - The bill of the

Northern race approaches that of L. leucosternus of the Atlantic coast, he says, "and yet closer to that of the North Pacific gull described as L. glaucescens"

His note in his list of Maine Birds wherein in speaking of L. argentatus he refers to certain specimens showing gray tips & which he believes to be the phase called (by Lawrence) Chalcopterus - was written with reference to my specimen - his own - & after his attention has been called to its being probably L. glaucescens

My particular reference however was to letters he had written me on the subject in which he takes very decided ground (without it seems to me sufficient knowledge on the subject)

In a recent letter to me he says

"I would not wish anything I have written to you in private correspondence quoted to others, at least as regards my opinions as thus expressed in unguarded - perhaps too extreme terms"

Hence - I do not feel at liberty to quote him;

Particularly - as this was written just after sending you his specimen & I believe his remarks were with particular reference to yourself - I will say however that from

my conversations & communication with him on this topic I do not think he has had sufficient acquaintance with the typical ^(Pacific) species to write on it "as one having authority" - And it was with this belief

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Bangor, Maine. ... 188

(2)

that I wrote you as I did in my last letter

He was in Bangor shortly after I obtained my bird & then had never seen or apparently heard of *L. glaucus* - & I believe his knowledge on the subject is as limited as my own.

In regard to *L. leucosternus* I would state that in my somewhat limited experience I have not found them common - In fact I have never obtained an adult specimen - but have secured three or four young birds that I considered referable to this species - These from Grand Menan in every case.

Trusting you will pardon this extremely long epistle I am

Sincerely yours

Harry Merrill

Harry Merrill
June 7, 1883
Harris Lancaster

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Bangor, Maine, Feb 19th 1885

Wm Brewster Esq
Cambridge Mass

Dear Sir: Will you kindly inform me as to the correct color of eyes of the Sandhill Crane - I notice that most of our authorities give them as Red in adult (- Maynard says also Yellow in Young) - Have lately received an adult specimen and the collector says "eyes Yellow".

I have a very badly torn up specimen of what I have supposed to be a Connecticut Warbler - Same was given a note in the Bulletin a few years ago as the 2^d capture for this state - My opinion was verified by Dr. Brewer - and also by J. A. Allen to whom it was sent by Dr. B. - Our friend Correll Smith doubts its identity - and A. C. Brown was I believe inclined to question its correctness but

Harry Merrill
Feb. 19 - 1885

finally agreed with Dr B^r others that it
was the *O. agilis*

Mr J. explained the
statement of Dr B^r & Mr Allen - by saying
that the specimen I sent them was probably
the bird in question, ^(i.e. a Com. Nest) - but by some error

they had returned another skin to me

— This is very ^{ingenious} - but absolutely
incorrect --- The specimen, ^{I now have} is the same that

I shot at Ebene Lake - and the question of
identity stands or falls on this skin now
in my possession. —

Would you be so kind
as to examine the remains and give me
your views in relation thereto? If so I
will mail it to you.

The skin is torn completely
in two the result of an accident in
the mails - but still it is all there

In much haste I am

Sincerely Yours

Harry Merrill

OFFICE OF

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Bangor, Maine. Feb 30th 1886

William Brewster Esq

Cambridge Mass. Dear Sir: your

valued letter of Feb 28th 1886. is at hand and contents noted - I am under great obligations for your kindness in settling the identity of the Warbler sent you. I will write to

the "Auk" retracting & correcting the claim to the 2^d specimen of *D. agilis* for this state. That I should have been wrong does not surprise me, but I am decidedly surprised that both Dr Brewer & Mr Allen should have been misled

The following is quoted direct from Dr Brewster's letter "Oct 26 (79) - "As well as I can make out one of your birds is the Connecticut Warbler, the other is an immature or female Black Poll - I will keep them and get some one more au fait in plumage than I to confirm or reverse my opinion" - Oct 30th he returned the skins and wrote "I have shown the inclosed to Mr Allen

and have his confirmation of my own impressions.
The agilis is rather an interesting specimen.

Under these circumstances I did not
question the correctness of the identification
and considered it settled beyond doubt. I
had not at that time any other specimens
of O. agilis - since then I have not
questioned its status and so made no com-
parisons.

Again thanking you for your
your kindness I am Sincerely Yours

Harry Merrill

Harry Merrill
Feb. 30. 1886

OFFICE OF

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The owner of the safe deposit vaults has received the following letter from a Mr. Patterson, Bangor, Maine. He says that he has shot a Great Gray Owl in the woods near his place. The bird was shot on the 1st of Nov. and he has it in his possession. He says that he has never seen one before and that he is sure it is a Great Gray Owl. He says that he has never seen one before and that he is sure it is a Great Gray Owl. He says that he has never seen one before and that he is sure it is a Great Gray Owl.

Wm Brewster Esq,

Cambridge Mass. - Dear Sir: - Believing that

unusual ornithological appearances are of interest to you. I would state that during the past month six (6) Great Gray Owls have been shot within a radius of 40 miles of this city and have been brought here to be mounted - and it is not unreasonable to think that many more may have shot and not preserved. These birds are very rare in this vicinity and since my interests in birds. I have not known (personally) of but one or two being taken in this state - and this flight seems rather remarkable on many accounts. Our winter has as a whole been very mild in this vicinity, although we have had some extremely cold days, which were however exceptional - Being cold weather birds and considering this very "open" winter, they can hardly have been driven south by the weather. As to food supply - that of course is problematical - It was noticed

Harry Merrill

however that Pine Grosbeaks arrived here in flocks
of considerable numbers - rather early in the fall,
of 1889. and it is possible that the Owls followed
the flight of small birds - who may have been
driven south by lack of food.

I would be much interested in
your theory of their appearance, if you have any

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 in particular)

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 north west, may have extended
across the continent into Labrador and by rendering
their living precarious have driven them to us in
this congenial (!) climate. This heavy snow idea
if true. might account for the appearance of both species
and also for the appearance, (as reported to me by
a professional taxidermist) of large numbers of Pickardson's Owls

Respectfully Yours

Harry Merrill

OFFICE OF

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Bangor, Maine. Jan 31 1889.

William Brewster Esq

Boston Mass. Dear Sir: Your valued

favor of 29th inst at hand and contents noted

I should be pleased to have you make such use of the information regarding Great Gray Owls as you see fit. as it was not my intention to publish anything regarding it.

I presume that any theory regarding their abundance this winter, would be simply speculation and inference and of course my suggestion regarding snow etc was nothing but guess work without any basis of actual knowledge - I only mentioned it as a possible explanation - and not as a theory which could stand on actual information

If any more specimens are brought in I will endeavor to ascertain the fact and inform you

Respectfully yours

Isaac Merrill

Harry Merrill.

Jan. 31. 1880.

OFFICE OF

Bowler & Merrill, Bankers

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Bangor Safe Deposit Vaults.

Bangor, Maine Feb 7th 1890William Brewster Esq
Cambridge Mass

Dear Sir - your favor of 5th inst
at hand and noted: Your previous letter which
you refer to - most certainly contained nothing
which I could by any possible means consider
"disrespectful", "intolerant" or expressed "too strongly"

It is my regret that I expressed myself so
poorly in my reply - that you could have supposed
I was in any way put out or hurt by your letter
- Most certainly I was not - and could not ^{be} with reason

In closing I would inform you that
since writing you, another Great Gray Owl has been
brought in - making a total of 7 (seven) so far
- will report any further captures that I know of

I believe that you or Mrs Brewster
are acquainted with the family of Mrs G. D. Bartlett

Harry Merrill

Feb. 7. 1890.

of this city - so I would mention that on Monday
last the wife of Chas. H. Bartlett ^(son of Mrs. D.) - (and a sister of
my wife) died under most sad circumstances
- she had been suffering for about a week with
the prevailing "La Grippe" - and Friday night gave
birth to a boy baby - Sunday night Pneumonia
set in, and she died Monday. She was one
of the most lovely & charming young ladies I ever knew
and her death, under such singularly sad circumstances
was a most terrible and unexpected blow to the
relatives and friends.

You will pardon this allusion
to a matter in a measure personal - and will
understand that I do so in the belief of your
family's acquaintance with Mrs. Bartlett's family - and
that it might have interest to you on that account

Most sincerely yours

Harry Merrill