

1876

## Report on Ornithology

P. L. Hatch

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## REPORT ON ORNITHOLOGY.

BY P. L. HATCH, M. D.

January 4, 1876.

Two years have passed since my first report was published. Since that time my notes have embraced several species previously unobserved, and the habits of others at that time placed upon my list. In the prosecution of my work, I have had very serious difficulties to overcome, such indeed as no one can appreciate until he assumes the same task. I therefore take pleasure in acknowledging the kindness of those who have aided me in any degree by permitting me to examine their collections, and to note their observations, of whom are Mr. John Roberts and his son T. S. Roberts, W. L. Tiffany and G. W. Tinsley. Many others have sent me an occasional bird for identification, and a few have given specimens of those considered rare, which I have had mounted for the Academy. Of these are T. B. Walker and Major G. A. Camp, of this city, a Snow Goose each; G. J. Merritt, of Crystal Lake, a Snow Owl; O. C. Thurber, of Milwaukee, a Log Cock. Beside these, several have been tendered too imperfect for preservation.

Fragmentary reports made at the monthly meetings from time to time, are herein embodied.

As a list of the birds of our state observed since the publication of the Bulletin of 1874 has been published in the *Forest and Stream*, by Mr. T. S. Roberts, it seems best to state that some in his list have been reported and of a few others so included, that in printing the list of 1874 the compositor omitted severally the Log Cock and Tennessee Warbler, collected by myself in 1868-9, and the Yellow-bellied Woodpecker, Harris' Finch, and the Golden-crowned Wren, collected by Mr. VanDenberg in 1870.—The inexorable demands of professional duties at the time the manuscript was in the hands of the publisher, forbade comparison of the proof

with the manuscript, and hence the omission.—These explanations given, I proceed to the record of my supplementary list.

RICHARDSON'S FALCON—*Falco richardsoni*, Coues. Obtained in September 1875. Quite frequently seen for three or four weeks. Habits essentially like *F. columbarius*.

GYRFALCON—*Falco gyrfalco var labradora*, Forster. Although on the former list I re-introduce it with the description sent to Mr. Ridgway at the time of its discovery, as the specimen was then in his possession. Form robust, compact, entire upper parts brownish ash, scarcely lighter on the rump, plumage above margined with hoary, a partially concealed nuchal and occipital band of white, the latter disappearing over and a little in front of the eye, and the former slightly interrupted in the middle and again on the side of the neck; a blackish maxillary stripe involving the lores; wings long and pointed, second quill longest; first  $75/100$  of an inch shorter and decidedly falcate; third,  $15/100$  less than second; fourth,  $15/100$  less than first; tail long and broad with about 12 transverse dottings, like bars, of white on both vanes of the feathers and coverts; a round subterminal spot  $25/100$  of an inch in diameter and tipped with white, except the two middle feathers which also have no subterminal round spots. Legs and feet pale blue; tarsi  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches, finely reticulated and feathered half way to the feet, except behind; middle toe same length as tarsus; outer  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch less and equal; claws long, strong, circular, sharp and horn-color. Bill pale blue, tipped with horn-colors; troch curved from head to point; upper mandible conspicuously toothed; nostrils circular with central tubercle; irides reddish yellow. Under parts white; chin immaculate; otherwise strongly marked with broad lines of dark brown, slightly paler on the tibial feathers which are long and dense; under tail coverts with the central markings narrower and the tail showing the transverse spots of white more distinctly than above; except on the tail there is not the slightest tendency to transverse bars; length 24 in.; wing, 16; tail, 10; tarse,  $2\frac{1}{4}$

The belief expressed in my former report that this was the first individual of this *variety* found within the United States has been confirmed by letters from both Mr. Robert Ridgway and Prof.

Spencer F. Baird. That others will be obtained I have no doubt.

KRIDER'S REDTAILED BUZZARD—*Buteo borealis*, var *krideri*, Hoopes. A hawk in a very remarkable plumage was obtained in the autumn of 1875 by G. W. Tinsley. The most careful examination of its anatomical characters led me to conclude it was the Redtailed Buzzard in an entirely new plumage to me. Being nearly white, albinism suggested itself but the absence of certain other associate characters led me to look amongst the young of this species for the solution of the problem. According to modern systematists five varieties of this hawk are found provincially restricted, *borealis* to the eastern, *calurus* to the middle and western North America, *lucanus*, Cape St. Lucas, *costaricensis*, Central America, and *Krideri* to the longitudes of the States along the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. Beside these five distinct varieties the young of each have presented variations which will give us some idea of what such men as Coues and Ridgway and Allen and others are doing for ornithological science to make it possible for those of us with no series before us for comparisons and generalizations to identify such apparently nondescript specimens of birds as occasionally fall into our hands. So my "rara avis" proved to be the young of variety *krideri*.

The first individual was obtained three or four years since in Minnesota. It has also (according to a letter I have from Mr. Ridgway) been found to range "over the prairie country from Texas northward." A full description of this beautiful white hawk was given in a special communication to the Academy sometime ago which cannot be reproduced here on account of our limited space.

SWANISON'S BUZZARD—*B. swainsoni*, Bon Mr. Tiffany's report to me of a hawk he found in a small collection at Faribault so long ago as 1869 had made me anticipate its assured presence in our State but as he with characteristic modesty acknowledged a possibility of mistake, I did not before give it as even a probable hawk of this section. I am now able to say that several have been obtained and well identified. It is evident however that it is not abundant.

It has been seen most frequently in the northwestern part of the State. Dr. Coues says it "is very abundant in northern Dacotah." According to the same author its habits make it a hawk that should be *protected* instead of indiscriminately *slaughtered* as are all hawks by our otherwise "gentlemen sportsmen" as well as ungentle "pot-hunters." He says, "those that I shot after midsummer all had their craws stuffed with *grasshoppers*." Here is a hint on economic ornithology worth remembering in this grasshopper-cursed State. We will have more about Swainson's Buzzard hereafter.

COOPER'S HAWK—*Accipiter cooperi* Bon. Mentioned in 1874 as quite rare has been much more common during 1875. Arrives from the first to the fifteenth of April and soon builds its nest. My young friend T. S. Roberts obtained a specimen with the eggs on the 13th of May, 1875. I found several nests during the breeding season.

LOG COCK OR PILEATED WOODPECKER—*Hylatomus pileatus*, Bd. Rather common in the forests but difficult to observe or collect.

YELLOW-BELLIED WOODPECKER—*Sphyrapicus varius*, Bd. This beautiful scansorial bird first collected by Mr. Van Denberg in 1870, in immature plumage came under my notice on several occasions last spring when I had my double barreled *field glass* but not my *gun* with me. Mr. Roberts collected one in mature dress about the same time. As none were observed beyond a few weeks at that time I was left to presume that they passed further north, but I have strong circumstantial reasons for believing that it nests here, which have recently come to my notice. Coues found them "breeding commonly along the Red River of the north."

<sup>b</sup> OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER—*Contopus borealis*, Bd. Notwithstanding the fact that this flycatcher was originally found some 45 years ago on the Saskatchewan it has eluded me for 18 years until my little son, R. W. Hatch, collected a specimen in May 1874, which I reported to the Academy in June of that year. During the past year I have seen several.

WILSON'S THRUSH—*Turdus fuscescens*, Steph. This thrush arrived about the 10th of May in 1875 and remained into October. Common in restricted localities adapted by dense undergrowth

amid some large forest trees, to the purposes of their incubation. Neither the Messrs. Roberts nor I were able to procure the nest although we searched dilligently for it.

GOLDEN-CROWNED WREN—*Regulus satrapa*, Litch. This little kinglet first showed his golden coronet to a "reporter" on the 17th of October 1870. By some means he slipped my notice since my return from the Pacific in 1873, until last spring I found him very abundant in parties of 40 to 60 along the banks the Mississippi from April 5th to May 10th. None remained with us as I can learn. They were again observed in autumn.

BLUE GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER.—*Helminthophaga chrysoptera*, Cab.—Obtained by Mr. Roberts. Doubtless breeds here as Dr. Hoy has frequently found its nest in Wisconsin.

TENNESSEE WARBLER.—*H. peregrina*, Cab. Originally collected in May, 1869. As it was frequently seen in 1875; during the nesting season, I presume we shall yet obtain the nest which has been taken on Lake Superior.

NASHVILLE WARBLER—*H. ruficapilla*, Bd., before barely noticed, has been obtained during 1875 by Mr. Roberts and others; no nests yet.

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER—*Dendroica blackburnia*, Bd. The collection of this exquisite little warbler was one of Mr. R.'s triumphs last spring in migration, as was also the

CAPE MAY WARBLER—*D. tigrina* Bd. Obtained on the 15th of May, which assures us that the doubts of eminent Ornithologists about its northern migrations are no longer necessary. And another, the

CANADA FLY-CATCHING WARBLER—*Myiodioctes canadensis*, and has been honored by falling into the same hands, during May, 1875.

BEWICK'S WREN—*Thryothorus bewickii*, Bon. Common in some portions of the State, but less so in this immediate locality.

SHORT-BILLED MARSH WREN—*Cistothorus stellaris*, Cab. Abundant and breeds here every where.

RED-BELLIED NUTHATCH—*Sitta canadensis*, Linn. Omitted (as

before mentioned) in the former list is not uncommon, and a permanent resident.

YELLOW-WINGED SPARROW—*Coturniculus passerinus*, Bon. Identified by Franklin Benner who collected several specimens during the summer of 1874. Messrs. Roberts found it common in 1875 in the open prairies where it is usually overlooked among other sparrows on account of its humble note.

HARRIS FINCH—*Zonotrichia querula*, Gamb. This interesting sparrow has been noticed by collectors in Dakota several years ago, but was first collected here in May, 1870 by Mr. Van Denberg. Several specimens were obtained last spring. It is reported abundant in the Missouri region.

BLACK-THROATED BUNTING—*Euspiza americana*, Bon. Common in 1874—exceedingly rare in 1875.

CARDINAL GROSBECK—*Cardinalis virginianus*, Bon. As is the case with many other species of birds, the cardinal has only recently begun to extend his migrations to our State, but is reporting himself in several localities. Mr. T. S. Roberts secured a good specimen in the vicinity last fall.

GREAT-CRESTED FLY-CATCHER—*Myiarchus crinitus*, Cab. Recorded in my first report as "barely identified," has been observed to be rather common; breeds just out of the city limits. I have a fine skin in my possessions presented me by Mr. T. S. Roberts, who also has several of the

ORCHARD ORIOLE—*Icterus spurius*, Bon. I refer to this familiar species as well as the last, to correct the error into which Dr. Coues has been betrayed by his negative inferences from Mr. Trippe's list of our birds, as well as the rejection of my report of 1874.

The Orchard Oriole is a common species from about the 20th of May till September 1st, the nests of which are often found in our yards. If, as the Dr. supposes, it is rather a southern species it is highly probable that this may approximate its northern limits of migration.

CANADA GROUSE—*Tetrao canadensis*, Doug. Within the past two years this grouse has been found to be rather common in the northern portions of the State.

WILLOW GROUSE or WHITE PTARMIGAN—*Lagopus albus*, Aud. Further observations corroborate my previous notes. I think it not very rare in the winter in the northern counties and is occasionally found here in summer.

SANDERLING—*Calidris arenaria*, Ill. A single individual obtained by W. L. Tiffany in the vicinity is all I can report of this marine species. Hope to see him again.

ESQUIMAUX CURLEW—*Numenius borealis*, Lath., is found to be abundant in season in some parts of the State especially the north-western.

KING RAIL—*Rallus elegans*, Aud. Several of these elegant birds have fallen into my hands through the courtesy of my nimrod friends. Mr. Tinsley, who collected a fine specimen of this species, assures me that it breeds on the bottoms of the St. Peters river, as he saw the young if I mistake not in August 1875.

FLORIDA GALLINULE—*Gallinula galeata*, Bon. Mentioned formerly as rare it has been found quite frequently for the past two years.

LONG-TAILED DUCK—*Harelda glacialis*, Leach. A considerable number seen and several obtained last fall near Big Stone Lake.

GADWALL DUCK—*Chaulelasmus streperus*, Gray. Not common but more so than I had supposed in my first report. Fairly represented in last fall's migration.

SNOW GOOSE—*Anser hyperboreas*, Pallas. Exceptionally abundant last autumn. Principally immature birds, a share of which I may yet find were the young of the year, or the

BLUE GOOSE—*A. carulescens*, Vicill, which I have not been able to decide.

BLACK TERN—*Hydrochelidon plumbea*, Wil. My observations of the habits of this Tern do not accord entirely with those of Dr. Coues published in his Birds of the Northwest. He says, "the eggs in every instance were placed on masses of floating debris of last year's reeds where the water was two or three feet deep, in the midst of the slough. They had to be closely looked after for they were laid directly on the moist matting without any nest in any



instance," etc. Messrs. Roberts and Tiffany collected six nests, one of which with the eggs Mr. T. presented me, and which evinces considerable architectural skill. They were found on sheets of floating moss and *fresh* reeds in about three feet of water, and were regularly woven of swamp grass.

Mr. E. W. Nelson of Chicago, a field naturalist, and collector of large experience, whose notes on the birds of Utah, Nevada and California were published in the Proceedings of the Boston Society of Natural History, Vol. 17, Jan. 1875, says, in a letter to me recently, "I have seen the eggs of the *Sterna plumbea* deposited on a mass of floating weeds in several instances, but only for the *third* brood, the bird having previously built two nests and deposited the eggs in both, which had been removed by myself to ascertain how many they would lay. The result was almost invariably as follows: first nest three eggs, second nest two eggs, and the third one egg. In several instances I found the nests floating in  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 feet of water without the least sign of floating rushes in the vicinity, in fact there were no rushes or anything else except fine swamp grass growing anywhere near, and of this the nests were built." Further observations of the habits of this common species will be worth our while.

RING-BILLED GULL—*Larus delewarensis*, Ord. Obtained occasionally in migration at this point is common and breeds in the lakelet regions to the north of us, where also we have recently found

FRANKLIN'S ROSY GULL—*L. franklini*, Rich. As no nests have been obtained that I am aware of, I am left in doubt as to its breeding here.

FORSTERS'S TERN—*Sterna forsteri*, Nutt. A specimen of this bird was in a collection here and several in St. Paul, I believe, when my list was originally reported, but I had failed to see them or know the fact. I have no doubt of their breeding here as they do in northern Illinois, notwithstanding the expressed opinion of eminent authorities that they do not do so in the United States.

LEAST TERN—*S. frenata*, Gamb. Occasional in Spring migration, it eludes autumnal notice as yet, so far as I can ascertain.

DOUBLE CRESTED CORMORANT—*Graculus dilophus*, Gray. Not

uncommon of late. One specimen in the Academy's collection was taken on Nicolle Island, within the city limits. With this species I close my report, filled with gratification at the results attained, and enthusiasm for the future. If spared, with the accession of earnest assistance, I hope to do better still in the future. I am satisfied that a considerable number is yet to be added to be added to our catalogue of species, but not without close gleaning in some portions of the field already well worked.

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## NOTES ON ENTOMOLOGY.

BY R. J. MENDENHALL.

**CODDLING MOTH,** OR **APPLE-WORM**—*Carpocapsa pomonella*, Linn. Wherever the apple is grown, or to whatever distant region it is transported, there also appears its destroyer, the apple-worm. This omnipresent pest is a native of Europe, and was probably introduced into this country in fruit brought from there. It began to make its presence known in the orchards of the Eastern States, about the beginning of the present century, whence it has gradually spread westward until even the orchards of the Pacific States no longer enjoy immunity from its ravages. The moth, the parent of the apple-worm, is seldom identified by even the most experienced orchardists, owing to its nocturnal habits, and to the fact that it is not attracted to the light of lamps, or fires, like the majority of nocturnal insects. It is a very pretty insect, expanding about three-fourths of an inch. The forewings are crossed by alternate wavy lines of silvery gray and dark brown, and each has, on the inner hind angle, a large brown spot, with streaks of bright bronze or gold. The hind wings are silvery gray, darkest towards the outer margin. In common with other *Tortricida*, it rests with the wings folded, roof-like, over the body.

This insect hibernates in the larva state; and the moths appear in the spring, about the time that the apple trees are in bloom, and begin depositing their eggs in the calyx-end as soon as the fruit is