

birch, with a sparse lining of straw and feathers. In it were two eggs, which proved far advanced toward incubation; they measure 1.94×1.50 and 1.95×1.51 , and are very similar in shape and markings to those described by Dr. Brewer; though I have failed to detect any of the yellow and purple tints mentioned by that writer. The ground-color is of a grayish or dirty white tint, heavily and irregularly marked with blotches of reddish-brown. On one of these eggs is a patch of dark chocolate brown, with blotches upon it of a still darker shade—almost black. This patch measures over one inch in length, and, at its broadest point, three-quarters of an inch in width. On the other egg the blotches and splashes are smaller, lighter in color, and chiefly gathered upon one side. Under a glass all these 'markings' appear on the surface of the shell; the deeper tints are formed by accumulated layers of light color; an occasional blotch of dark brown, however, exhibiting none of this accumulating process. Much of the 'dirtiness' noticed on the ground color is the effect of splashes of pigment under the surface.

The male parent was sitting on the nest at the time I approached it, and, when I began to climb the tree, he flew to a bough some seventy yards off, where he was shot. His stomach contained the partially digested remains of three unfledged Thrushes.—JAMES W. BANKS, *St. John, N. B.*

Note on *Zenaidura yucatanensis* Lawr.—In the 'Proceedings' of the Zoölogical Society of London, 1883, part iii, p. 458, Mr. Salvin states his inability to distinguish this bird from Cuban and Jamaican specimens of *Zenaida amabilis*. This has led me to reëxamine the type, with special reference to the question of identity with *Z. amabilis*, and as the result I must say that the difference is very great. In fact, as stated in 'History of North American Birds' (vol. iii, p. 382), *Z. yucatanensis* is exactly intermediate, both in form and coloration, between *Zenaidura carolinensis* and *Zenaida amabilis*, but has 14 rectrices, as in the typical species of the former genus. These facts lead me to suspect that Mr. Salvin has examined specimens of true *Z. amabilis* from Yucatan, which supposition if correct, would render my surmise (l. c.) that *Z. yucatanensis* may be a hybrid between *Zenaidura carolinensis* and *Zenaida amabilis* more worthy of consideration.—ROBERT RIDGWAY, *Washington, D. C.*

***Bernicla brenta nigricans* in Massachusetts.**—In the spring of 1883, a specimen of this variety was sent to Mr. C. J. Goodale, of 93 Sudbury St., Boston, to be mounted. It was claimed that it had been killed at or near Chatham, Mass. The bird was perfectly fresh when received.—C. B. CORY, *Boston, Mass.*

Night Herons and Rails in Dakota.—I have just returned (Sept. 15, 1883), from camp, near Wall Lake, Dakota. I found many birds moving towards their southern homes, but none so pleasing to me to see as the Night Herons (*Nyctiardea grisea gnævia*).

Perhaps this may seem strange, but in all my experience in this section I have seen but very few of these birds. I have heard them many times, after nightfall, but previous to last week never shot but one. My first I shot out of a flock of about a dozen, two years ago, but a little later than this date; and last week in one day I shot seven. We were camped on Wall Lake, not far from Sioux Falls, and as I walked along the water's edge, they would fly out over the water giving me an excellent shot.

A couple being wounded started back to shore by swimming, and that quite rapidly, until met by my retriever, who, in turn, was pecked at savagely by the wounded birds. All that I shot were young ones. In the evening, when the sun was about an hour high, a flock of some twenty came from the high prairie north of the lake, and flew directly over it, going to the south and disappearing, still upon wing. In this flock were a few old ones. Of those seen during the day around the lake, none were old ones, and the number must have reached eighteen or twenty. At night, we were greeted by the same squawk I had heard in the fall of 1881, 140 miles west of Winnipeg; in 1880, at Skunk Lakes, in Dakota; in 1880, near this city; and last spring, some eight miles from this city. At the latter place I saw two, and one was shot by a friend and brought to me for identification, having first been examined by a majority of our best hunters, none of whom had ever seen the bird before.

Dr. Coues, I believe, did not meet with this bird in this (Missouri) region, except in the Red River country, and since I have only found it as above stated, I do not think the bird is common in this section.

By the way, *Porzana carolina* is getting quite common; in going up the Vermillion River bottoms last week I saw a great many of them. Last spring I saw four Red-breasted Rails (*Rallus elegans*), and one was shot and presented to me. Thus far I have not seen or heard of any others.—D. H. TALBOT, *Sioux City, Ia.*

Occurrence of the Royal Tern (*Sterna regia* Gamb.) at Tangiers in Morocco.—This species, which has been previously recorded in Irby's 'Ornithology of the Straits of Gibraltar,'* as having been once obtained at Tangiers by M. Favier, a French collector, formerly resident there, has again occurred at that place, two specimens, both males—one a bird of the year and the other nearly mature—killed in the Bay of Tangiers on 10th December last, having been recently sent me. The former is still in my possession and the latter is now in that of Mr. Howard Saunders of London. These specimens, along with thirteen others, were killed from a flock of about thirty, by a resident naturalist, all being shot from a boat without moving from one spot. This Tern has not been observed in Europe, but has occurred several times on the Gold Coast of Africa, chiefly in spring.—JOHN J. DALGLEISH, *Edinburgh, Scotland.*

Buffon's Skua in Western Vermont.—I have lately examined a specimen of *Stercorarius buffoni* which was shot at West Castleton, Vermont, in

* There recorded in error as *S. bergii*. Vide P. Z. S. Lond., 1876, p. 655.