

INTERESTING RECORDS FROM TORONTO, CANADA.

BY ERNEST E. T. SETON.

As a result of the examination of numerous small collections in the city of Toronto I am able to make the following more or less extra-limital records. In every case I have examined the bird myself, and though in most instances debarred by sealed cases from taking measurements, etc., I am satisfied that the identifications are correct. Several occurrences of doubtful authenticity are omitted. Some of those given are specially interesting from their showing the tendency of many species to push farther and farther to the north. The nomenclature is that of Coues's 'Key,' first edition.

I take this opportunity of thanking the gentlemen named below for their courtesies in placing their specimens at my service.

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER. *Polioptila cœrulea*.—A male in full song was taken by myself at Toronto, May 9, 1885.

EVENING GROSBEAK. *Hesperiphona vespertina*.—The Rev. John Doel, of Toronto, showed me a fine female specimen of this rare bird, taken at Toronto on Christmas day, 1854. Mr. Doel observed a flock of five or six feeding on the berries of the mountain ash, on Yonge Street. Two of these he secured, but one was too much mangled to be kept.

About Christmas, 1870, he observed another small flock but failed to secure any.

LAPLAND LONGSPUR. *Plectrophanes lapponicus*.—Individuals of this species have occurred in company with *P. nivalis* almost every winter as far back as the records here extend.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD. *Xanthocephalus icterocephalus*.—This species has been taken a number of times, in company with the Red-winged Blackbird, by Mr. Wm. Loane, who describes it as the Californian Blackbird. The specimen I examined was taken by that gentleman; it is now in the possession of Mr. Jacobs of Centre Street, Toronto.

COMMON CROW. *Corvus americanus*.—Three albinos of this species were observed in the country east of Toronto, about three years ago. One of these was secured and is now in the

possession of Mr. C. A. Hirschfelder. It is pure white. No data.

CANADA JAY. *Perisoreus canadensis*.—In the winter of 1836 and the spring of 1837, according to Mr. Doel, this bird appeared about Toronto in great numbers. It was previously unknown in the district, and has not since been observed.

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO. *Coccyzus americanus*.—I have examined several specimens taken in the vicinity of Toronto. It appears to be a rare but regular summer resident.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER. *Centurus carolinensis*.—A female was taken at Toronto, May 19, 1885.

Colaptes auratus (hybrid with *C. mexicanus*).—This remarkable specimen was shot by Mr. Burton, just outside the City of Toronto, in September, 1883. The following is its description.

Sex? Length, 34 cm.; wing, 16.5; tail, 11.5; bill, 3.5; tarsus, 3; middle toe and claw, 3. Color: Above as in the male *auratus*, but darker and more pronounced. The purplish-gray of the throat is very rich and has a glaucous gloss. Pectoral crescent and black maxillary mark very large. Spots on the breast large and unusually numerous. Breast and sides tinged with yellow. First four primaries with shafts and under side red; the next two shade into yellow in the terminal third. The last two secondaries are as in *mexicanus*. The rest of the quills as in *auratus*. The under coverts are pink. The tail-feathers are as in *mexicanus*, but towards the middle are more and more tinged with yellow. Otherwise this specimen resembles a large male *auratus* in very high plumage.

I have nothing but descriptions and my memory for making comparisons with *mexicanus*, and suspect that the red on the quills is not quite so deep as in the typical bird. Yet this need not invalidate the description of the specimen, which is evidently a fine hybrid, and chiefly remarkable for having been taken at Toronto. This specimen is in the possession of Mr. Cross, taxidermist.

? **SNOWY PLOVER. *Ægialitis cantiana*.**—A specimen of this bird was shot here by Mr. J. Forman, May, 1880, and is now in the rooms of the Toronto Gun Club. It was at the time in company with some Piping Plovers (*Æ. meloda*). This specimen (sex?) answers in general, to the description in Coues's 'Key' and fully in regard to the bill; it differs in being much lighter in plumage. It is as follows: Pure white, with crown and back slightly tinged with gray, and showing dusky touches; the black

bar on the crown is strongly marked. No bar on the breast, but there is a dark patch just before each wing-band, fading away towards the back; a dusky patch on each ear; primaries dusky; the three central pairs of tail-feathers are touched with dusky near the tip. I had no opportunity to make measurements, but in the same case were *meloda* and *semipalmata*, and comparison with these makes me almost certain that it is *cantiana*. The bill is noticeably long, black, and slender. I never met the bird before, and have no material to aid me in settling the point.

AMERICAN SNIPE. *Gallinago wilsoni*.—A *white* specimen of this well-known bird was shot in Toronto marsh on the 3d of May, 1884, by Mr. H. Townson, in whose possession the bird now is. It was killed in company with two normal individuals of the same species. It is pure white, with the ordinary markings indicated in pale, creamy buff, the only dark shades being a few dusky touches on the scapulars, flanks, and subterminal tail-band. The legs and bill are yellowish flesh-color.

RUFF. *Philomachus pugnax*.—A specimen of this rare straggler was shot on Toronto Island in the spring of 1882. It is now in the possession of Mr. Young of Toronto. The bird was mounted in a sealed case, so that accurate measurements could not be made, but the general proportions and the large ruff were unmistakable. This specimen appears to agree with the maximum dimensions given in Coues's 'Key.' The ruff is not fully developed, and the face is still feathered. The color is as follows: Head, nape, hind-neck, and upper part of ruff gray with black pencillings; wing-coverts and scapulars black with light edges; chin, belly, crissum, and tail-coverts white; quills dusky; tail-feathers gray with black bars; throat, breast, and most of ruff glossy, greenish black.

GREAT WHITE EGRET. *Ardea egretta*.—A magnificent specimen of this beautiful Heron was shot at Lake Nipissing in 1883. It is now in the museum of Mr. C. A. Hirschfelder.

HYBRID MALLARD AND DUSKY DUCK (?).—In the rooms of the Gun Club there is also a supposed hybrid between these two species. Certainly it answers the description of no Duck ever found in this region, while it combines, in a remarkable degree, the characters of the two mentioned. It is known to the sportsmen here as a 'Brewer.' It was shot in this locality. No data.

BARROW'S GOLDENEYE. *Bucephala islandica*.—A fine male specimen of this Duck was killed here by Mr. Charles Pickering

on the 18th of April, 1885. This I examined in the flesh. It is the only one ever taken in this locality.

BUFFLEHEAD DUCK. *Bucephala albeola*.—An albino of this species was killed about thirty miles east of here, and is now to be seen in the possession of Mr. Jos. Taylor of Toronto.

HARLEQUIN DUCK. *Histrionicus torquatus*.—A female of this species is now in the rooms of the Toronto Gun Club. It was killed here in the fall of 1881, by Mr. Wm. Loane, who claims also to have taken a pair in the spring of 1861.

GLAUCUS GULL. *Larus glaucus*.—A fine specimen of this Gull was killed in Toronto Bay in the spring of 1884, by Mr. George Guest of this city.

ANALECTA ORNITHOLOGICA.

Sixth Series.

BY LEONHARD STEJNEGER.

XXIX. *Jacana* CONTRA *Parra*.

Linnæus, basing his diagnosis upon Edward's pl. 48, in the 10th edition (1758), p. 152, described a *Fulica spinosa* as "F. fronte carunculata, corpore variegato, humeris spinosis, digitis simplicibus, ungue postico longissimo. Habitat in America australi." Description and plate apply with equal pertinency to the young Brazilian Jaçana, commonly called *Parra jacana* Linn. The latter name, as we shall see presently, dates from 1766, and *spinosa* will, therefore, have to stand, as already indicated by Ridgway (*Water Birds*, I, p. 175).

As will be remarked, Linnæus included the Jaçana in 1758 in the genus *Fulica*. Brisson, with his usual excellent judgment of generic distinctions, made in 1760 a separate genus for this bird, describing the different plumages as different species, however. This genus, which he called *Jacana*, he characterized by the extremely lengthened claws, thereby excluding all the Charadriidæ with frontal lobes and wing-spurs, referring them to his