

in a maple swamp, not more than twenty yards from where the specimen of the previous year was secured. The other was shot September 15, in a dry blueberry heath, on a pine tree, where it seemed to be feeding. To make certain in regard to their identity I have just shown the three skins to Mr. Brewster, who pronounces them undoubtedly *Oporornis agilis*. —JOSEPH L. GOODALE, *Cambridge, Mass.*

**The Brown Thrush laying in the Nest of the Wood Thrush.** — As the present season has proved to be prolific in birds laying large sets of eggs, I was induced to look into a nest of a Wood Thrush, from which the female was with difficulty driven off, when, in addition to her own clutch of four eggs I was very much surprised to see two typical eggs of the Brown Thrush, which, I believe, is the first record of the kind. The nest was placed in a maple, about three feet from the ground, in a quite thick ravine very seldom frequented; so this occurrence cannot be placed to the pranks of some boy. Again, the Brown Thrush is not common in this vicinity, and its nest is quite a rarity, so that any boy of 'birds-eggs-collecting proclivities' would have been more apt to keep the eggs than to place them in another nest, which might not have been the case had the species been a Robin, Catbird, or some common bird. Near the spot where this nest was found a Brown Thrush was heard singing, but all efforts to find its nest were fruitless. The eggs of the Wood Thrush proved to have been incubated about seven days; those of the Brown Thrush not over two or three days. This unique set was taken June 5, 1886, and is now in the collection of the American Museum of Natural History, New York. —H. B. BAILEY, *South Orange, N. J.*

**Capture of Three Rare Birds near Hartford, Conn.** — *Ardea egretta*. AMERICAN EGRET. — A bird (sex unknown) of this species was shot in this vicinity Aug. 14, 1883. Two or three more were reported seen near here in the same month, but I can vouch for the authenticity of only the one mentioned above.

*Charadrius dominicus*. AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER. — I have a young male of this species in my collection which was shot Oct. 24, 1885, as it was flushed from a stubble field in this locality. The bird was alone, and in skinning it I found that it was in good condition.

*Phalaropus lobatus*. NORTHERN PHALAROPE. — I shot a female about a mile below Hartford, Sept. 27, 1886. It appeared quite tame and was flushed from the water with considerable difficulty. The plumage was perfect but on dissection it proved to be in very lean condition. — WILLARD E. TREAT, *East Hartford, Conn.*

*Piranga rubriceps* and *Tringa fuscicollis* in California. — I have just received a specimen of *Piranga rubriceps* from Mr. W. G. Blunt, of San Francisco, which he shot at Dos Pueblos, Santa Barbara Co., Cal., and mounted at the time, which was about 1871, he thinks. The bird has not since been out of his possession. It was alone when shot.

Mr. Blunt assures me that there is positively no doubt of the fact.

In looking at a case of his birds this specimen at once attracted my attention as a strange looking Tanager, different from any I remembered to have seen, and on inquiry I learned its history, as above given.

As far as I can learn this is a bird new to California, and also to the United States. If so it seems worthy of record. (No. 2697. ♂, Coll. of W. E. B.)

In 1884 I took east with me a specimen of *Tringa fuscicollis*; it was so named by some good authority, Mr. Ridgway I think. By the A. O. U. Check List it appears that it has not been found in California. It was a solitary individual, shot by myself on the marsh near Oakland, Cal. No. 1080. ♀, Oct. 8, 1883. Iris dark brown, feet and legs yellow. Coll. of W. E. B. — WALTER E. BRYANT, *Oakland, Cal.*

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## CORRESPONDENCE.

[Correspondents are requested to write briefly and to the point. No attention will be paid to anonymous communications.]

### Scarcity of Adult Birds in Autumn.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE AUK:—

*Sirs:* Between the first of September and the twenty-second of November of this year I collected 367 bird skins; 258 during the month of October in Colorado, and the remainder in Kentucky. Of this aggregate of 367, 348 were birds of the year. The question at once presents itself, whence this glaring discrepancy? Where were the adult birds? I made no effort to secure young birds (in nine cases out of ten the young fall bird is indistinguishable from the adults by external characters), but 'took them as they came.' It may be asked how I determined the birds in question to be 'birds of the year.' For several years I have noted that nearly all the birds shot by me in the fall had skulls that were more or less incompletely ossified, and in 1885 I began to systematically examine the skulls and other skeletal parts with the view of determining the relative age of the birds, assuming that those individuals exhibiting a soft or incompletely ossified skull, must have been hatched during the immediately preceding breeding season.

Of the nineteen adult birds collected between the dates above given, *eleven* of them were species resident where collected.

Apparently the only legitimate inference from the above facts is, assuming my method of determining the relative age of birds correct, that the adults migrate as soon as they are relieved of the care of the young birds, and that the latter form the great bulk of the autumnal migration stream. Opposed to this theory we have the *negative* evidence that ex-