

## THE NEW ENGLAND GLOSSY IBISES OF 1850.

BY F. C. BROWNE.

THE history of the first positively known appearance of the Glossy Ibis in Massachusetts and the second in New England (Linsley, Connecticut. 1843, being first) has been but imperfectly written, the latest and fullest account being that by Dr. Coues in Stearns and Coues's 'New England Bird Life.' Having memoranda made at the time on all the five examples then taken, and two of them having passed through my hands soon after they were shot, it seems to rest specially with me to supply the details that are lacking.

I was at that time in the junior class at Harvard College, and an active member and Curator of Ornithology of the Harvard Natural History Society, then a wide-awake students' society, under the presidency of Storer, son of the well known ichthyologist, Dr. D. H. Storer of Boston.

To avoid confusion I will number the specimens 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, and from notes made at the time, from memory, and from subsequent inquiries, tell their story.

No. 1. The Cambridge, Mass., bird.—Entry in note-book: "May 8, 1850. Had the pleasure this morning of examining a fine specimen of a rare bird, the Glossy Ibis (*Ibis falcinellus* of Aud.). It was shot at Fresh Pond in this town by classmate E. Brown, from a flock of three. He will present it to our Society, a valuable acquisition. Audubon says, 'of exceedingly rare occurrence in the United States, but abundant in Texas'; and adds that he knows of but four shot in the United States. Nuttall says, 'a specimen occasionally exposed for sale in Boston market.' *The color of bill varies materially* from Audubon's description. He has it, 'bill black'; in this fresh-killed specimen it is very nearly clay color, with a tinge of green. Nuttall says 'greenish black,' which is nearly as far out of the way."

As Curator of Ornithology the bird came into my charge, and I took it to Ogden, then the leading taxidermist of Boston, for mounting. The older bird-men will remember Ogden's den in the attic of the old Tremont Temple, with the magnificent moose in the passageway. The building was burned soon after, Ogden losing everything.

“May 11. Meeting of the H. N. H. S. I announced the donation of the Ibis, with a few words as to its rarity, etc. Much satisfaction expressed. After the meeting Storer, Ball (a leading member), and self, talking the matter over, came to the conclusion to propose to the society that we present the Ibis to the Boston N. H. Society, as of great value there from having been obtained in the State, and as it would there be less liable to possible injury or loss.”

“May 24. Meeting H. N. H. S. Exhibited the Mounted Ibis. President introduced the matter of presenting it to the Boston Society, giving the reasons therefor; some opposition was naturally manifested, but it was voted so to do.”

“May 25. Delivered the Ibis to Dr. Cabot, Cur. Orn., B. N. H. S. He informed me that the specific name *falcinellus* was incorrect, our bird being two inches longer than the African species, with corresponding difference throughout. Donovan, he said, had named it *guarauna*.”

“Nov. 10. More light on the Ibis. Dr. Cabot said at a recent meeting B. N. H. S. in correction of a previous statement, that Bonaparte, in his ‘List’ of 1838, had separated our bird as *Ordii*.”

This example is still in good condition in the Boston Society’s collection.

No. 2. The Concord, Mass., bird.—This must have been shot at about the same time as No. 1. The first intelligence of it is entered “May 25. Mr. Thoreau tells me of a Glossy Ibis shot on the river in Concord by Mr. Melvin, and that he has given it to Mr. Holbrook, who has stuffed it.” I went up to Concord a few days after (that being my home at the time), identified the bird, and bought it of Holbrook. Took it to Ogden to be set up in better shape, and, as I had not then commenced a collection, gave him permission to dispose of it, if wanted. He soon after sold it to Dr. J. N. Borland, of Boston. Inquiring lately of Dr. Borland as to whether he still held it, he informs me that a few years ago he presented it to the Boston Natural History Society.

Nos. 3 and 4. The Middleboro’, Mass., birds.—Entry: “May 25. Calling at Ogden’s he told me that he had mounted two more Ibises, which came from Middleboro’, in this State.” There were *three* in this flock also, two being killed at one shot by a farmer living near Assawampsett Pond in that town, on May 6 or 7. They were purchased by Professor Jenks, then prin-

cipal of the Academy there, mounted by him and placed in his cabinet. On the subsequent appointment of Professor Jenks as Curator of the Museum of Brown University, at Providence, R. I., he transferred them to the collection of that Institution, where they now are. (Jenks, in lit., 1886.)

No. 5. The Middletown, Conn., bird.—The circumstance of being recently enabled to give the exact date of this specimen, till now unknown, or at any rate not recorded, led me to look up the materials for this article. In examining a packet of manuscript, etc., which had been undisturbed since my college days, I came upon a newspaper clipping giving the particulars of the capture, over signature, as follows:

“Middletown, Conn., May 16, 1850 [*cf.* N. E. Bird Life, II, p. 256—Dr. Coues’s surmise as to date thus shown to be well founded]. “A Glossy Ibis, *Ibis falcinella* [sic] was shot at this place May 9, time of a high flood. Length, 28 in., bill 5 in., stands 18 in. high. The man who shot it remarked how tame it was. It has been carefully preserved, and is now in my cabinet. By the papers we learn that a similar bird was shot in Cambridge, Mass., on the 8th. Very rare in the United States; this is the first to our notice in Connecticut. Bonaparte was the first to show that *Tantalus mexicanus* of Ord was the *Ibis falcinella* of Europe.—J. BARRATT.”

This is undoubtedly the specimen spoken of by Merriam as being now in the Museum of Wesleyan University, Middletown.

In review, the probabilities are that a flock of six of these birds arrived in Southeastern New England on or about May 7; dividing into threes, one trio alighted at Middleboro’, and the other at Cambridge. Five of them were ‘taken in,’ as above, during the ensuing week. It is probable that the Middletown bird was the survivor of the Middleboro’ trio, and that the Concord bird (the only one seen there) was one of the two that escaped at Cambridge, leaving one unaccounted for, which very likely was wounded when his companion fell at Fresh Pond, and perished somewhere unobserved. The distance between the two extremes, Middletown and Concord, is only about ninety miles.

With the exception of two instances (Southern New Hampshire, 1858, and Nantucket, 1869—both solitary birds as far as known), twenty-eight years almost to a day elapsed before the Glossy Ibis again appears in New England records. May 4 and

5, 1878, three specimens were obtained on Cape Cod. This is the last visit recorded to date.

The confusion in regard to the Glossy Ibises of the United States, as partially indicated above, has been cleared up only at a comparatively recent date. *I. falcinellus* (now *Plegadis autumnalis*) is the species occurring from Florida northward along the Atlantic coast and in the West Indies, and is identical with the Old World bird. *I. guarauna* (now *Plegadis guarauna*) is the southwestern and western species; and the supposed new species, *thalassinus*, has proved to be the latter in immature plumage.

*Note.*—References not given in the above may all be found in Stearns and Coues's 'N. E. Bird Life,' II, p. 255 et seq.

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## A LIST OF THE SUMMER BIRDS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL RANGE OF THE WHITE MOUNTAINS, N. H.

BY ARTHUR P. CHADBOURNE.

THE following list of the summer birds found in the Presidential Range of the White Mountains, New Hampshire, is based on numerous trips of from one to three days made during the summer of 1884, and on two weeks spent in the 'Great Gulf' early in July, 1886. The number of species observed is very small, but the mere fact that so few were found is of interest, and the absence of many birds which are abundant in the country below makes the summer fauna of the mountains stand out in much stronger contrast. The eastern and northern slopes of Mt. Washington itself were the most carefully worked up, though one or two trips were made to the 'Northern Peaks' (Mt. Madison, Mt. Adams, etc.) in September, 1884. The southern and western slopes were not visited, excepting a small part of the old 'Crawford Bridle Path.'

Mr. William Brewster, who was with me on two occasions in 1884, and Messrs. C. R. Lamb and J. L. Goodale, who camped with me in Great Gulf in 1886, have generously placed their notes