

**Breeding of *Totanus solitarius* and *Otocoris alpestris praticola* in Western Pennsylvania.**—A single pair of Solitary Sandpipers remained to breed here through the season of 1890, frequenting a small pond and an adjacent stream. All attempts to discover their nest proved futile, although later on in the season they appeared accompanied by their young. The species is common in the migrations in spring and fall.

On June 10, 1889, while driving along a highway in Butler County, I saw a pair of birds running about in the dust some distance ahead which I did not at once recognize. Hastily getting out, I approached nearer, and, after a little manœuvering, was agreeably surprised to find that they were Prairie Horned Larks. I wished very much to kill them, but had unfortunately left my shotgun behind. The pair undoubtedly had a nest in the immediate vicinity, but at any rate their presence at such a date would be of itself sufficient to prove that they were breeding at the time. This instance, I believe, considerably extends the known breeding range of the species in Pennsylvania.—W. E. CLYDE TODD, *Beaver, Beaver County, Pa.*

***Falco islandus* L. in Labrador.**—We have received a specimen of this bird from Ungava Bay shot by Mr. Thos. Mackenzie in 1890. To make certain of the identification, I forwarded the bird to Mr. H. E. Dresser who along with me is under the impression that this is the first record from that district.—J. A. HARVIE BROWN, *Dunipace House, Larbert, N. B.*

**Protective Coloration in the Genus *Ægialitis*.**—To the protective colors which are usual among the shore birds I had always considered the neck and head markings of the genus *Ægialitis* a striking and curious exception. till a short time ago when looking at an *Æ. semipalmata*, which I had wounded, trying to hide by crouching in a hollow in the sand; and while admiring the perfect blending of its brown shades with the surroundings I saw in its white rings one of the commonest objects of the sea shore—the empty half of a bivalve shell. The white about the base of the bill was the 'hinge,' the collar the outer rim, and the top of the head the cavity of the shell, filled—as they usually are—with sand.

In the cabinet drawer the resemblance is not so noticeable, but such resemblances rarely are, and it was striking among the natural surroundings when I first observed it, and it is most perfect when the bird is crouching as it does in the presence of danger or when on its eggs. Not only are these shells found along the water's edge, but they are carried far above high-water mark by several agencies, and are common in such places as these birds breed in, their cavities discolored or filled with sand, their curved edges kept bright by exposure and friction. I now consider these beautiful markings a clear case of 'protective coloration.'—WM. V. PRAEGER, *Keokuk, Iowa.*

**A Peculiar Character Referable to the Base of the Skull in *Pandion*.**—As is well known, in all ordinary birds the anterior orifice or orifices of

the eustachian tubes open, mesially, at the nether aspect of the base of the sphenoidal rostrum, just in front of the basitemporal region. This common or double aperture is often underlapped by a lip of bone, while the walls of the tubes themselves are usually completely ossified. Now in some Accipitres these walls, anteriorly, are not completed in bone, but in the dried skull exhibit more or less of an open tract. *Pandion* is remarkable in having the anterior openings of its eustachian tubes *entirely closed*, and it will be interesting to know whether this at all modifies the sense of hearing in this bird. The character is present in three different skulls of adult specimens that I have examined, so it is presumably constant, and, at the present writing, so far as I am aware it stands unique among birds.

Since writing the above paragraph, Mr. F. A. Lucas, of the U. S. National Museum, has very kindly sent me the head of a recently killed specimen of *Pandion*, and I have had the opportunity of dissecting it while the parts were perfectly fresh. They confirm what I have written above, inasmuch as the anterior aperture or apertures of the eustachian tubes do not open in the middle line of the cranium above the anterior spine of the basitemporal. But the osseous antero-lateral walls of the passages in question are patulous, at some distance, upon either side, from the median line, and the *fleshy* parts of the eustachian tubes communicate therewith. By means of a fine bristle, I found either passage communicated, as usual, with the middle ear, and so there can be no question as to the functional status of those organs in the Osprey. The external auricular cavities, however, are small, and in either one I found a loose plug of some size, of a substance that had the appearance of a blackish wax, and this is sometimes seen in other large birds.—R. W. SHUFELDT, *Takoma, D. C.*

**Megascops asio macfarlanei**—A Correction.—Since the appearance of the advance sheets of my paper entitled 'Descriptions of Seven supposed new North American Birds,'\* I have been informed by Captain Bendire that Mr. MacFarlane's name is Roderick Ross MacFarlane, not Robert MacFarlane as given in my foot-note under *Megascops asio macfarlanei*. The mistake is to be regretted but I trust it will be excused in view of the fact that the name has been repeatedly, if not invariably, printed as R. MacFarlane, Robert MacFarlane, or Robert McFarlane. The form last named appears in the latest list of corresponding members of the American Ornithologists' Union (Auk, Jan. 1891, Supplement p. xiii).—WILLIAM BREWSTER, *Cambridge, Mass.*

**Scott's Oriole (*Icterus parisorum*) in Central New Mexico.**—The first of July, 1890, while in camp near the northern end of the Sandia Mountains, some twenty-five miles from Santa Fé, New Mexico, I saw a pair of

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