—depending apparently much upon the degree of anger to which the bird has been excited by its tormentors. My captive behaved much in the same way when held up by the legs in front of another person, and one had to exercise great care to avoid its quick and well-delivered thrusts. At the end of three or four days, it having eaten nothing up to that time, nor drunk any water, I offered it a live medium-sized frog to try its appetite. It promptly laid out that poor batrachian by a few telling stabs given with its beak, sending one home every time the animal moved a limb. Immediately after killing it, it was picked up with the bill, and throwing back its head the bird attempted to swallow the morsel. In this it failed after several trials, and finally abandoned it for good and all. This Bittern lived twelve days without ever having eaten a single thing or swallowed a drop of water. It passed several thin, cream-colored evacuations from the bowels every twenty-four hours, and died, apparently without any pain, in a squatting position, absolutely unruffled in plumage, on the evening of the twelfth day—a plucky fowl to the instant of its death.

There is one very interesting point to observe here, and it is the fact that the lower the position a bird occupies in the system the greater the length of time it seems to be enabled to go without partaking of any nutriment whatever. Gannets and Cormorants will live nearly a month without either eating or drinking anything, while on the other hand any of the small Passeres will succumb in a few days to such treatment. In this connection it is important to note that many lizards will live several months without consuming a morsel of food or a drop of water. This may be another particular in which the lower birds approach their reptilian kin.

While dissecting this Bittern with the view of saving its skeleton, and observing what else I could in its anatomy, I found that it possessed a peculiar arrangement and modification of the vertebræ and certain muscles in the upper third of the neck, much as we find it in *Plotus anhinga*, and in a less marked degree in Cormorants, the Gannets, and Pelicans. This modification, which is associated with the power of the birds mentioned (especially the Darters and Bitterns) of giving a quick thrust with the beak, has been well described by Garrod, a paper among his 'Collected Scientific Memoirs,' and by Donitz, and is well worthy of close study and comparison. Garrod does not mention having observed it in *Botaurus* and its allies.—R. W. SHUFELDT, *Takoma, D.C.*

Tringa alpina on Long Island, New York.—On Sept. 15, 1892, I secured a European Dunlin at Shinnecock Bay. During a week's trip I secured only one *T. a. pacifica*. The specimen was identified through the kindness of Mr. F. M. Chapman of the American Museum of Natural History. Coues says of this species, "A straggler to Greenland"; Ridgway, "Accidental or casual in eastern North America (west side of Hudson Bay)." Its occurrence in the United States has heretofore seemed doubtful.—CURTIS CLAY YOUNG, *Brooklyn, N. Y.*