

Abnormal Plumage of a Pine Grosbeak.—On the 30th of December, 1895, I took a specimen of the female Pine Grosbeak (*Pinicola enucleator*) at Shelburne, N. H. On looking the bird over carefully I noticed an unbroken ring of feathers, like those of the upper back in color and texture, extending over the left shoulder, where the band measures .75 of an inch in width, and continuing across the breast and terminating on the right shoulder, its width having decreased .20 of an inch. The band is composed of thirty-three feathers, that is, beginning to count as soon as they are out of their normal position on the back, and are of much deeper slate color than those above or below them; the centre of each feather is tinged with chrome yellow and they are longer than the surrounding ones, standing out almost like a ruff. The flesh of the neck was perfectly normal and the bird apparently had never been injured. I have the specimen now in my collection.—REGINALD HEBER HOWE, JR., *Longwood, Mass.*

The American Crossbill at Sea.—Early on the morning of February 26, 1896, an American Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra minor*), a female or dull-colored male, was found on the deck of the steamer 'Trinidad' bound for New York from the Bermudas. I saw the bird, which was in an exhausted condition, at eight o'clock, and was told that it had come aboard some time before that hour. The American coast must then have been about three hundred miles distant.

When the 'Trinidad' left Grassy Bay, late in the afternoon of February 24, there was little wind, nor was there much until noon of the day following, when it began to blow from the northeastward, freshening constantly, and developing into a gale before the bird came aboard.—JOHN CLIFFORD BROWN, *Portland, Me.*

Harris's Sparrow in Spring Dress in Autumn.—While out shooting on Nov. 1, 1895, I shot a Harris's Sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*) in full spring plumage. It is a male bird of the year. It was in a large flock of Harris's Sparrows, but was the only one in spring plumage, all the others being in fall dress.—SIDNEY S. WILSON, *St. Joseph, Mo.*

A Brown Thrasher (*Harporhynchus rufus*) in Massachusetts in Winter.—On December 15, 1894, I discovered a Brown Thrasher in Arlington, Mass. I made my identification as sure as possible without shooting the bird, because I knew that the middle of December was later than this bird usually remains in Massachusetts. A few days after I first saw him, Mr. Walter Faxon, to whom I had reported my observations, again found the bird in almost exactly the same spot.

From Dec. 15 until Christmas, the bird was visited regularly, and he seemed to be able to supply himself with food; but on Dec. 27, there came the first heavy snowstorm of the winter, covering the ground with from four to five inches of snow, on top of which was a crust strong

enough to bear a man's weight. With this snow on the ground, it seemed probable that the Brown Thrush would be unable to get food enough to keep alive. Consequently, from Dec. 27 till March, we took food to him regularly, at least as often as twice a week. We gave him yellow corn meal soaked in water or milk for his staple diet. This food we sometimes varied with bread, pieces of meat cut fine, meal-worms, etc. He always ate whatever we gave him with a good appetite, as soon as we were a few yards off. By March 5, the snow had melted sway in many spots, and we saw the bird for the last time on that day.

When at rest, he carried his left wing lower than the right. For this reason we supposed that he had been wounded in the wing, and so prevented from making the long autumnal migration. Whether or not he would have been able to take care of himself without outside help we have no means of knowing: but he ate what we brought him so eagerly, and so soon after we offered it to him, that it seemed probable that he got very little other food after the first heavy snowfall. — ARTHUR SCOTT GILMAN, *Cambridge, Mass.*

A Few Notes from Maine.—*Accipiter velox.*—On Aug. 17, while at Jackman, Me., I noticed a large flock of at least 150 Sharp-shinned Hawks flying southwards. The birds composing the flock were distributed over an area of perhaps three miles, and were not flying steadily along when seen. Some were flying, while others would light on the tops of trees along a roadside which ran in the general direction in which they were flying. After resting a few minutes they would resume their flight, passing other members of the flock that were resting, so that some of the birds were constantly on the wing. As it was very difficult to count them, I am sure that I underestimated rather than overestimated their numbers. It seems odd that they should have been flying southward so early in the season, and in such a large body.

Pinicola enucleator.—The Pine Grosbeaks are at present to be seen daily in the vicinity of Bangor, Me., and I believe they are present this winter in even greater numbers than were here three years ago in 1892–1893. The proportion of red males seems to be about one to every ten dull-colored birds. What is remarkable is the extremely early date at which I saw the first birds this fall. On Oct. 26, while hunting at Mud Pond, about ten miles from Bangor, I saw a flock of ten or fifteen Grosbeaks. To make doubly sure I shot two of them, but found, on coming to skin them, that they were moulting, and their feathers were so loose that it was impossible to save the skins. On dissection they proved to be young males. Their stomachs contained a mass of fir buds and seeds. They were next seen on Nov. 10, near Orono, about nine miles from Bangor, and presumably belonging to a different flock, as they were about five miles from the locality where the birds were previously seen. After this they were seen every few days, but I did not see any in the city of Bangor until the last week in December. From that time up to the present date, Feb. 17, I have