

that mentions any difference in the size of the sexes of this species and therefore believe it worthy of note.—REGINALD HEBER HOWE, JR.,
Longwood, Mass.

The 1898 Migration of the Golden Plover (*Charadrius dominicus*) and Eskimo Curlew (*Numenius borealis*) in Massachusetts.—I have little to communicate this year regarding the movements of these birds going south. Their scarcity here for a number of years past is most discouraging. During the migrating period weather favorable for their landing occurred several times, notwithstanding which only scattering birds have been noted. Personally I have not seen any flying. As far as I am aware the first Golden Plovers seen on Nantucket this season were four birds on August 12. On August 18, a flock containing about twenty-five birds, was reported to have been seen, two of which were said to be Eskimo Curlews. (As far as I know these two birds were the only ones seen during the entire season.) On August 28, three Golden Plovers were seen at the extreme west end of Nantucket Island, one of which was killed. On September 1, twelve were seen flying south on migration; on September 12, wind northeast and cold, a flock of Plovers estimated to contain sixty birds, were said to have been seen at the north side of Nantucket. On this same date eleven Plovers were killed from a flock of sixteen on Tuckernuck Island. These birds were sent to me; ten of them were young, the other was an adult. On September 15 seven young Plovers were seen at the eastern end of Nantucket, two of which were shot. On September 16, thirteen young birds were shot at the eastern end of the island. On Marthas Vineyard I have heard of but two Plovers being taken, one a young bird too emaciated to eat; no Eskimo Curlew seen. I have made enquiry of several of the large game dealers in Faneuil Hall Market, Boston, and have only learned of a stray Golden Plover or so, and not any Eskimo Curlew. The spring shooting of both these birds in the West, as also of the Bartramian Sandpipers, is to be greatly deplored.—GEORGE H. MACKAY, *Nantucket, Mass.*

Hybrid Grouse.—A hybrid *Dendragapus obscurus fuliginosus* × *Phasianus torquatus* was recently shot near this city and is at present on exhibition in one of the local gun stores. I could gain very little information as to the history of the specimen, save that it was alone, and was regarded as a freak, of more or less common occurrence. The bird was evidently a young male of the year, and had just begun to take on the fall garb, traces of which show through the young plumage. Above the bird shows the Grouse parentage more strongly than the Pheasant, the plumage being slaty black, somewhat barred with gray and buffy. Tail slaty, central feathers mottled, and lateral more or less edged with grayish brown. Central rectrices tipped with same. The tail is longer than in *Dendragapus*, and the central feathers show some tendency to extend

beyond the rest, and all are similar in shape to those of the Grouse, though showing the Pheasant character in being much narrower at the ends.

Below the characters of *Phasianus* are more pronounced. The chin, throat and upper neck are white, lower neck and breast black, sides buffy. The bare space about the eye is somewhat restricted, but similar to that in the young Pheasant. Tarsus about midway in length between the two genera, feathered for about three quarters of an inch below the tibia with whitish slaty. The spurs are present as small knobs only.

The bird being mounted, measurement was difficult, but it had every appearance of being larger than either of its parents.

Since writing the above I have learned of three other specimens, all similar to the one above described. Though I do not know the locality from which two of them came, the third, which was shot at Salem, could not have been from the same brood. All of these four specimens were shot within the last two months (October and November, 1898), and the report that such crosses are not uncommon would seem to have some foundation. The imported Pheasant often crosses with domestic fowls.—A. W. ANTHONY, *Portland, Oregon.*

The Number of Rectrices in Grouse.—In my recent paper on the Feather-tracts of North American Grouse and Quail (Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., XXI, pp. 641-653), under the genus *Lagopus*, I made the statement that the rectrices are always 18. Mr. Manly Hardy of Brewer, Maine, has very kindly written me that his experience proves the statement to be an error. He says that in the last 20 years he has shot 15 or 20 Ruffed Grouse having 20 rectrices, and, he adds, "I have in every case found those having 20 rectrices to be exceptionally large males. While I cannot prove it, still it is my belief that none have this added pair until they are several years old. I well remember shooting three old 'drummers' in one afternoon in November, two of which had 20 tail-feathers. . . . One weighed 31 and the other 32 ounces. . . . Old cocks usually weigh from 24 to 26 ounces." It seems to me that these facts are of great importance in helping us to decide whether the Gallinæ with 12 rectrices are in that respect nearer the ancestral form than those with a larger number. At least they indicate that the number of rectrices may be *increased*, as well as *decreased*, and admit the possibility that increase in number of rectrices may be a form of specialization.—HUBERT LYMAN CLARK, *Amherst, Mass.*

The Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) in Somerville, Mass.—Mr. F. H. Hosmer (who assures me that he knows the bird well) informs me that he saw three Turkey Buzzards, very high up in the air, in Somerville, Mass., on Sept. 25, 1898. They were headed south. On the 24th strong southwest winds prevailed in this vicinity, previous to which there had been high winds at the south.—GEORGE H. MACKAY, *Nantucket, Mass.*