I am quite satisfied now, that *Tringa alpina* var. *americana* Cassin, B. N. Amer., p. 719 (1858), *Pelidna pacifica* Coues, Pr. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philad., p. 189 (1861), and the much earlier *Scolopax sakhalina* Vieillot, N. Dict. d'Hist. Nat., III, p. 359 (1816), are only synonyms of *Tringa variegata* Tilesius, Atlas Krusenstern. Reis., Pl. LXXXIV (1814).

I think that Tilesius's name must be accepted for the Pacific Dunlin,[1] as *Tringa variegata* of Gmelin (Sys. Nat., I, p. 674, 1788) is not a *Tringa* at all, but (being a synonym of his *Tringa virgata*, ibid.) a type of quite a distant genus of waders: *Aphriza* Audubon (1839). But those who consider that Gmelin's *Tringa variegata* invalidates Tilesius's name must accept Vieillot's name and call the Pacific Dunlin *Tringa* (*Pelidna*) *alpina sakhalina* (Vieill.).

I add to this note an accurate photograph (nearly 1 : 1.4 nat. size) of Tilesius's Plate.

1903, Oct. 7,
Russia, Esthonia, Wesenberg.

AN ABNORMAL BILL OF *MELANERPES PORTORICENSIS.*

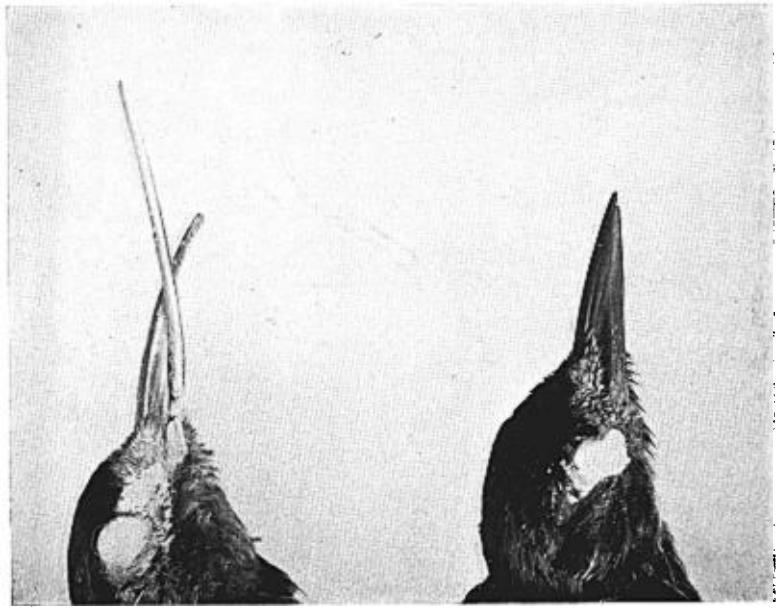
BY B. S. BOWDISH.

Plate XI.

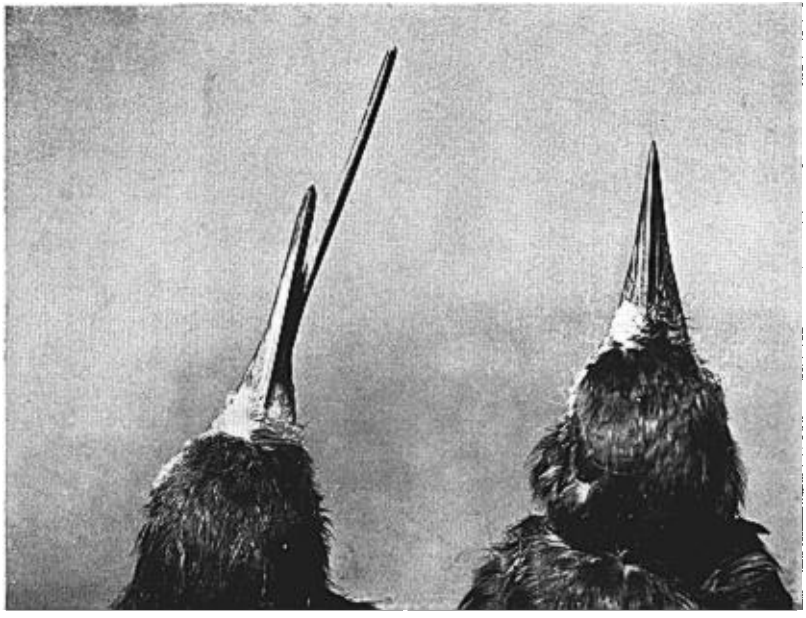
ON June 27, 1901, I shot a male *Melanerpes portoricensis* from a tree in a coffee plantation on a hillside near Mayaguez, P. R. The specimen is No. 177842 of the National Museum collection and was loaned to me for the purpose of making illustrations and measurements.

This bird, which was in company with an apparently quite nor-

[1] And it should stand as *Tringa* (*Pelidna*) *alpina variegata* Tilesius, as it is only subspecifically distinct. I must add, that I see no reasons for even subgenerically dividing Dunlins, Knots, Purple and Curlew Sandpipers, etc.



1. 2



3. 4.

BILL OF PORTORICAN WOODPECKER.
Figs. 1 and 3, deformed; figs. 2 and 4, normal.

mal female, possessed a beak abnormally developed in a most interesting manner. An injury near the base of the lower mandible, partially breaking it away, as a shot might do, seems to have caused this growth.

The theory that I have evolved to account for it, is that as the wound healed the edges contracted, warping the mandible toward that side and tending to the corkscrew-shaped growth that the mandible exhibits. The bird was debarred from hammering by the weakened and misshapen bill, and the growth which normally would have replaced wear, abnormally prolonged both mandibles, though why the lower so much more than the upper I cannot readily understand.

The measurements of this bill are: length of upper mandible, (exposed culmen), 1.33 in.; lower mandible from symphysis, 1.85 in.; width at base, .34 in.

The extent of the abnormal growth can be better appreciated by a comparison of a table of measurements of bills of nine specimens in my collection:

Sex	Date.	Upper mandible.	Lower mandible (from symphysis).	Width.
♀	Aug. 27	.80 in.	.50 in.	.30 in.
?	Dec. 1	.85 "	.57 "	.30 "
♂	Aug. 25	.98 "	.60 "	.35 "
♂	Sept. 6	1.00 "	.62 "	.32 "
♂	Jan. 31	1.10 "	.70 "	.33 "
♀	Sept. 25	1.96 "	.60 "	.34 "
♂	Feb. 10	1.10 "	.68 "	.35 "
♀	Dec. 28	1.06 "	.72 "	.33 "
♀	Aug. 14	1.02 "	.65 "	.36 "

This table shows the average length of the upper mandible to be about 1.00 in.; length of lower mandible, .67 in.; and the width of bill at base .33. Thus it will be seen that in the specimen under consideration, while the width of the base of bill is about normal, the upper mandible is a third of an inch longer than the average, and the lower *nearly three times* the average of these nine specimens.

The illustrations show very well the form of the beak. It will be noticed that the lower mandible makes a half turn, so that what should be its lower surface is, at the tip, the upper; while

slender it is not characteristically sharp pointed. The upper mandible is much more curved than normally, probably from lack of the support of the lower mandible, and in place of the normal sharp, chisel-shaped point, the tip much more resembles that of a snipe's bill.

Where the edges of the mandibles meet at the crossing they are worn to a slight notch.

It would be interesting to know whether this bird subsisted entirely on fruit and seeds, which normally form a large percentage of the food of the species, or whether it was fed by the mate, with insects. Obviously this bill was not adapted to obtaining insects for itself in the usual manner. Unfortunately the bird's stomach when procured was empty. The stomach of the female contained the remains of a dragonfly.

SOME NOVA SCOTIA BIRDS.

BY SPENCER TROTTER.

THE peninsula of Nova Scotia has a ragged coast-line; the land is deeply invaded by the sea through many fiord-like inlets. Four rocky headlands, scarred and worn, alternate with stretches of sand and shingle; bowlder-strewn ledges fringe the shores and submarine banks reach far seaward. These sands seem to have impressed the early French explorers who gave the name "Sable" to the southern cape of the peninsula, as well as to a river and also to a group of low islands which lie at some distance off the eastern coast. The edge of the great Atlantic fog bank hovers over these shores, and creeping in with the southerly wind wraps the land in its gloomy mists, often for days at a time.

Back of this coast the voyager along the southern shores sees a land of pointed trees — spruce and balsam fir — rising into a low ridge that is succeeded inland by other similar ridges; a vast, unbroken stretch of evergreen wilderness from shore to shore