

the identicalness of the Yellow Rail and the 'Kicker' did not impress him after reading Mr. Ames's article for two reasons: first, that the Yellow Rail's notes were heard in the autumn, and second, that it uttered its cries when disturbed or irritated by the presence of persons in the room or by the light of the lamp. He also says, "nothing is more certain to my mind than that what I have heard is the spontaneous love song of the 'Kicker,' and that it is uttered chiefly if not solely during the season of reproduction. Assuming (what is quite possible, of course) that it may be occasionally produced in autumn, I do not consider it likely that it would be ever given under conditions such as Mr. Ames describes."

In discussing the probable identity of the 'Ornithological Mystery' Mr. Brewster dismisses the Yellow Rail with the statement: "There are no good reasons for suspecting that the Yellow Rail ever breeds in any part of New England." However, now that it has been found in Massachusetts at a corresponding date to some of the 'Kickers,' and under conditions which may possibly indicate its breeding in the vicinity, it may at least be considered in determining the identity of the latter. Theoretically it seems hardly probable that two different species of birds could utter exactly the same notes, regardless of season. This combined with the fact that the notes of the Little Black Rail as heard in the south, where its calls have been identified, do not bear a close resemblance to the notes of the 'Kicker' would seem to point towards the Yellow Rail as a solution of the mystery.

With the exception of gunners, few persons have met the Yellow Rail, and comparatively little is known of the bird during the breeding season. Mr. Edward A. Preble has described their notes in 'North American Fauna' (No. 22, page 93) and has written me as follows about the birds which he heard near York Factory, Hudson Bay: "The notes I heard were a succession of chips or clucks somewhat similar to the alarm notes of a Brown Thrasher, but less sharp. Stated in 'kiks' it would be 'kik-kik, kik kik kik.' Sometimes an additional 'kik' was given, making the last bar consist of four instead of three notes. I did not hear the 'crow' alluded to by Mr. Brewster, but it is quite possible I did not hear the full song, as my observation covered only a part of one day. In spite of this discrepancy I have been of the opinion that the notes described by Mr. Brewster were those of the Yellow Rail."

The secretive habits of both these Rails as well as the difficulty of observing or securing them in the spring makes one record at this season of exceptional value, and the above instance seems worthy of some consideration until more is known of the breeding range of *Porzana noveboracensis*.— F. B. McKECHNIE, *Ponkapog, Mass.*

**The White-rumped Sandpiper in Wayne Co., Michigan.**— I added the White-rumped Sandpiper (*Actodromas fuscicollis*) to the county list by securing a specimen May 20, 1906, on P. C. 50, Ecorse Township. This was badly shot and could not be saved so I returned June 3 and

saw about 40 of the birds. They were in two flocks and flew in such a compact body that it was impossible to pick out a single bird; consequently one discharge of the gun brought down seven. Despite the scarcity of records this is really a common species in eastern Michigan, according to my experience. For six years, beginning with 1897, my autumn vacations were spent on the lake shore near Port Austin, Huron County, and here this sandpiper was present in unvarying abundance and long after all other waders had retreated south with the exception of the Sanderling and Black-bellied Plover.—J. CLAIRE WOOD, *Detroit, Michigan*.

**An Eskimo Curlew Captured at Sea.**—It may be of interest to note that when the S. S. 'Baltic' was about half way between Ireland and Newfoundland, on May 26, 1906, an Eskimo Curlew (*Numenius borealis*) came on board. To be more accurate, at noon on that day the ship's position was Lat. 49° 06' North, Long. 27° 28' West; the bird came on board at perhaps 2 or 3 p. m. It gave evidence, which was noticed by at least one other passenger, of having eaten within a few hours. Being evidently fatigued, it was finally caught by one of the steerage passengers, and confined in a cage roughly made from a soap box. It was fed on chopped beef and chicken, and ate heartily, but died a short time before we reached the Sandy Hook Lightship — possibly from too much food and too little exercise.

This curlew finds its way to the British Isles with sufficient frequency to be mentioned in the English handbooks as an occasional visitor.—ROBT. BARBOUR, *Montclair, N. J.*

**Contents of the Crop and Gizzard of a Young Ruffed Grouse** (*Bonasa umbellus*).—The following is the result of the analysis made by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, of the contents of the crop and gizzard of an immature specimen of this species, captured July 18, 1906:

"3 percent of the food is animal, consisting of the following:

1 Carabid beetle	1 Tettigoniid
1 <i>Leptura vibex</i>	8 <i>Camponotus pennsylvanicus</i>
8 <i>Plagioderma armoricæ</i>	1 Snail
1 <i>Pyropyga nigricans</i>	

"97 percent is vegetable matter made up as follows:

About 105 seeds of touch-me-not (*Impatiens biflora*), 22 %.

About 1750 seeds of blackberry (*Rubus* sp.), 31%.

8 seed pods of violet (*Viola* sp.) containing approximately 25 seeds each, together with 114 free seeds, making in all about 514 seeds of this species, 14%.

About 100 seeds of ground cherry (*Solanum* sp.), 2%.

About 462 seeds of sedge (*Carex* spp.), twelve being in perigynia, 4%.

2 pods of *Juncus* sp. with many seeds, 1%.