

The Stilt Sandpiper,—a Correction.—On August 13, 1902, I took what I then thought to be a Stilt Sandpiper (*Micropalama himantopus*) on Matenic Island, Knox Co., Maine. The record as such was published in 'The Auk,' January, 1903, p. 65. Upon a more recent examination I find I am in error, and respectfully ask that the same may be corrected.—
HUBERT L. SPINNEY, *Seguin Light Station, Popham Beach, Me.*

The American Rough-legged Hawk Breeding in North Dakota,—a Correction.—In the October number of 'The Auk,' 1901 (Vol. XVIII, p. 393), I recorded a supposed instance of the breeding of the American Rough-legged Hawk in Nelson Co., North Dakota. Soon after the publication of this note I examined a series of Ferruginous Roughlegs, in the melanistic phase, and became convinced that my record was erroneous. I should have published more promptly a correction of my error, except for an interesting question, raised by Dr. Louis B. Bishop's experience with some young Roughlegs, as to whether the black Roughlegs were not worthy of recognition as a distinct species, rather than as a mere color phase of *Archibuteo ferrugineus*.

On June 17, 1902, he found, near Lake Washington in North Dakota, a nest of black Ferruginous Roughlegs with four young. He killed the male parent bird and kept the four young alive until July 26, 1902, when all four were in melanistic juvenal plumage. A male and a female were then killed and the other two, also a male and a female, were left with our guide, Mr. Eastgate, to be reared to maturity in captivity. In December, 1902, the female killed and devoured the male; and on August 2, 1903, she was killed and preserved, after she had completed a moult into an adult melanistic plumage. This experience naturally suggested the idea that melanism is hereditary and, if it could be proven that the melanistic birds always breed true, there would be good grounds for supposing that these black hawks might eventually prove to be a distinct species. Pending further investigation and more evidence I postponed the matter; but during the past season we obtained sufficient evidence to overthrow our theory. We secured two young Roughlegs from a nest in Saskatchewan and reared them in captivity, with the interesting result that one developed into a melanistic bird and one into a bird of normal plumage. Whereas a vast amount of evidence would be necessary to prove the validity of a distinct species, this evidence seems to me conclusive as to the correctness of the color phase theory. I am therefore satisfied that the nest I reported in 1901 belonged to a pair of Ferruginous Roughlegs, and I must apologize for my error in recording it.

By way of additional evidence, I might mention another case which came to our notice this past season in Saskatchewan. We found a nest of young Ferruginous Roughlegs on June 27 and saw both parents plainly, one of which was melanistic and one normal. Dr. Bishop visited this nest again on July 24 and flushed from beneath the nest one black and one or two normal young. I am indebted to Dr. Bishop for the use of his notes

in this connection, which I felt that I ought to offer by way of explanation.
— A. C. BENT, *Taunton, Mass.*

The Pigeon Hawk in Wayne Co., Michigan.— Mr. Herbert Spicer secured a Pigeon Hawk (*Falco columbarius*) on P. C. 671, Ecorse Township, Sept. 15, 1906. As an illustration of how easily a rare bird can be disregarded, this hawk was perched on the dead limb of a solitary hickory tree in the center of a buckwheat field and was indulging in a sun bath with wings and tail partly spread. We were passing on a road about 200 yards away. Mr. Spicer thought it a Sharp-shinned Hawk, but I insisted it did not have tail enough and was a female Sparrow Hawk. He was not satisfied; so I waited while he stalked the bird and secured it. I prepared it for my collection and found it a female with stomach empty. I see a hawk or two every year that I consider of this species but do not care to record them as such. The only other positive record is a female secured by me September 13, 1890, in Ecorse Township. The bird was flying across the Detroit River and when first seen was on the Canadian side.— J. CLAIRE WOOD, *Detroit, Mich.*

The Goshawk in Montgomery Co., Virginia.— A week of cold weather early in November last, with the mercury down to 22°, culminated in a blow, and a six-inch snow. During this snowstorm, a Goshawk (*Accipiter atricapillus*) was shot near Blacksburg and sent in to the College to me on Nov. 19, 1906. It was an adult female, in fine blue plumage, a trifle under size, and was quite fat. It is now No. 1362 of my collection. The Goshawk has been recorded from Virginia before, though I know of no very definite record as to time and locality. Dr. Rives, in his 'Catalogue of the Birds of Virginia,' merely says, "Very rare winter visitor," and quotes Coues and Prentiss as to Washington, D. C., occurrences of the species. This record, therefore, may be of some interest.

Every winter for the past sixteen years, I have looked for Crossbills to come here; it was therefore with some satisfaction that on the 16th of January, 1907, I heard and saw a solitary male *Loxia curvirostra minor*, on a small spruce, about twenty feet high, on the campus. It was entirely alone, was feeding on the cones, and uttering its call, and allowed me to walk up to the tree and all around it, to get a good look at it, and I left it there feeding when I was satisfied of the identification. I thought it unnecessary to kill it merely for the record, particularly as the bird ought to be found here every winter. I also have a large series from Yemassee, South Carolina, in my collection.— ELLIS N. A. SMYTH, JR., *Blacksburg, Va.*

The Barn Owl in Massachusetts.— A Barn Owl (*Strix pratincola*) was taken at Weston, Mass., Nov. 14, 1906, by Mr. Charles Merriam. The specimen is now in my collection.— JOHN E. THAYER, *Lancaster, Mass.*