

GENERAL NOTES.

Concerning the Occurrence of the Western and other Gulls in Southeastern Alaska.— In reviewing my recent paper on Alaskan birds in 'The Auk' (July, 1916, p. 335) the editor has found my notes on certain species of gulls to be indefinite. This is unfortunate, and it therefore seems desirable to present the facts in detail that the record may be clearly understood.

When we steamed out of Puget Sound, the ship was followed by a large straggling flock of gulls composed of four species; the Glaucous-winged, Western, Herring, and California Gulls. During the time we were in the Inside Passage and until we reached Ketchikan individuals of all these species were present. The birds were very tame and not only followed us but often flew abreast of the ship at about the height of the deck and within 20 or 25 feet of us, and frequently rested on the yards or davits. During these days much time was spent on deck watching and photographing them and their identification was made certain beyond any reasonable doubt, although no specimens were shot.

After the second day some of the Western Gulls began to drop behind and continued to do so until only four were left. These four remained with us until we anchored at Ketchikan. It is probable that some of the other species also left us, but this is not easy to prove as their places were taken by others, so that the total of our attendants did not vary much. As we neared Ketchikan a number of Ring-billed Gulls appeared and joined the others.

During the trip we occasionally passed other vessels, each of which had its following of gulls. It therefore appears probable that these birds pass up and down this coast more frequently than the limited number of records from the region seems to show.— F. SEYMOUR HERSEY, *Taunton, Mass.*

A Note on the Mottled Duck.— I want to correct a statement made by me in 'The Auk' (1912, p. 297) in which I compared a series of *Anas fulvigula maculosa*, from Brownsville, Tex., with a large series of Florida Ducks (*A. f. fulvigula*) and remarked that I could find no distinct difference between the two forms. In January, 1914, while paying a visit to Mr. E. A. McIlhenny, at Avery Island, Louisiana, I was able to collect a series of seven of the Mottled Ducks from the Vermilion Bay region. There are six adult males and one female. Taken as a whole this Louisiana series is even darker than the Texas series; the breasts of the males are very dark, glossy chestnut, and the ground color of the cheeks and chin is distinctly more rufous than in the Texas series or in the Florida series. The cheeks are also quite heavily streaked, and this streaking extends in all cases far below the superciliary stripe; in the Florida ducks the streaking of the cheeks is finer and does not extend so far ventrally on to the chin,

while the lores are plain buff and the chin itself is paler in all cases. The piliu of the Mottled Ducks from Louisiana is more solid black and less streaked black than is the case with the Florida birds; if anything it is darker than in the Texas birds. On the upper surface of the Louisiana series and the Texas series the light edges of all the feathers (back, scapulars, rump and tail) are darker and richer brown, but especially is this so in the Louisiana birds. The speculum character noticed by Sennett does not seem to me to hold good. It was said to be more green and less purple in *fulvigula* than in *maculosa*.

To sum up, I should say that the only character which seems important in distinguishing *A. f. maculosa* and *A. f. fulvigula*, aside from the generally darker tone of the former, is the coarser and more consistently striped head and neck of *A. maculosa*. In all cases the feathers bordering the sides of the culmen, the lores, are dotted with black in *maculosa* and plain buff in *fulvigula*. I believe the richer and more ruddy ground color of the head and neck of *A. f. maculosa* from Louisiana is partly due to the color of the water and mud in the Vermilion Bay region. These Vermilion Bay ducks are certainly more highly colored than ducks from the Brownsville region of Texas. The form *A. fulvigula maculosa*, therefore, will probably remain as a valid race.—J. C. PHILLIPS, *Wenham, Mass.*

An Overlooked Specimen of the Trumpeter Swan.—When Mr. H. K. Coale was compiling the data on the Trumpeter Swan (*Olor buccinator*) for his paper in 'The Auk,' 1915, p. 82, I informed him that there were no specimens in the collection of the Philadelphia Academy. I recalled an old mounted specimen which was on exhibition when I first became connected with the museum but as no trace of it could be found I presumed that it had been wrongly identified. Recently, however, it has come to light having been boxed up with some other unmounted specimens. It is a typical adult specimen but unfortunately without data. The chances are, however, that it came from Delaware or Chesapeake Bays, as it bears evidence of having been mounted at the Academy.—WITMER STONE, *Acad. Nat. Sci., Philadelphia.*

Egrets (*Herodias egretta*) in Van Cortland Park, New York City.—Three individuals arrived on July 16 and have taken up their constant abode in the pond at Broadway and 242nd Street for the past week. They are attracting attention and admiration.

Great numbers of Kingfishers and Little Green Herons are also sharing the good fishing.—S. H. CHUBB, *American Museum Nat. Hist., N. Y. City.*

The Black Rail (*Creciscus jamaicensis*) at Chicago, Ill.—A fine male of this species was shot May 30, 1916, while collecting at Hyde Lake, South Chicago, Ill. The skin is in the Harris Extension collection. The specimen was first flushed in a small cattail growth, and flew rather strongly