

Polysticta versus Stellaria — a Correction.— In the recent note on the generic names *Polysticta* and *Stellaria* (The Auk, XXXVI, No. 2, April, 1919, p. 277), there occurs a wrong citation, to which Dr. C. W. Richmond has kindly directed our attention. Lest this cause confusion it seems worth while now to make the necessary correction. We have cited the original place of publication of *Polysticta* Smith as "Illust. South Afr. Zoöl.," whereas it should be "Report Expedition Explor. Central Africa." The date, however, is correct as given — "June (or later) 1836." — HARRY C. OBERHOLSER, *Washington, D. C.*

Megalestris versus Catharacta.— Mr. G. M. Mathews has already indicated (Novit. Zoöl., XVII, No. 3, December 15, 1910, p. 498; Birds Australia, II, pt. 5, January 31, 1913, p. 489) that the name *Catharacta* Brünnich must be used in place of *Megalestris* Bonaparte, and in this he seems to be quite right. Some additional details, however, regarding this interesting and complicated case, about which so much has been written, may not be out of place from the viewpoint of American ornithology. The generic name *Catharacta* was originally proposed by Brünnich (Ornith. Bor., 1764, p. 32) for the following four species: (1) *skua* (= *Megalestris skua* Auct.); (2) *cephus* (= *Stercorarius parasiticus* [Linnæus]); (3) *parasitica* (= *Stercorarius longicaudus* Vieillot); (4) *coprotheres* (= *Stercorarius parasiticus* [Linnæus]); and its type was apparently first designated by Reichenbach (Syst. Avium, 1851, p. v) as *Catharacta skua* Brünnich. Dr. J. A. Allen, in discussing this case at considerable length (The Auk, XXI, No. 3, July, 1904, pp. 345-348), came to the conclusion that *Catharacta* was untenable on account of the prior *Catarractes* Brisson (Ornith., VI, 1760, p. 102; type by monotypy and tautonomy, *Aptenodytes chrysocome* Forster). This, however, was before the publication of the revised edition of the American Ornithologists' Union Code of Nomenclature, which provides that names differing in classical endings shall for purposes of nomenclature be considered distinct. Since this applies, of course, to the present case, the name *Catharacta* Brünnich becomes tenable, for it is not to be rejected on account of the previous *Catarractes*. The following species, together with their subspecies, will be affected by this change:

- Catharacta skua* Brünnich.
- Catharacta antarctica* (Lesson).
- Catharacta chilensis* (Saunders).
- Catharacta lomnbergi* Mathews.
- Catharacta maccormicki* (Saunders).

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Destructive Invasion by an Australian Rail.— Irregular migration of species of birds in large numbers is a phenomenon seemingly unknown in the United States since the days of the Passenger Pigeon; indeed such a happening is rare in any part of the world. Readers of 'The Auk' will