

A Record of the Ruffed Grouse from the Pleistocene of Maryland.¹

—The Cumberland Cave, found several years ago in making a railroad cut through a limestone spur near Corriganville, Maryland, under exploration by Dr. J. W. Gidley, Assistant Curator of Mammalian Fossils in the U. S. National Museum, yielded a considerable collection of vertebrate remains principally of mammals. In recent examination, there has come to light a single bird bone, the only one found in the entire collection. This on critical comparison proves to be the distal half of the left humerus of a Ruffed Grouse, *Bonasa umbellus* (Linnaeus), identical in size and form with the modern phase of this species that ranges in the eastern states.

The site of the find is in Alleghany County, about one-half mile south of the town of Corriganville. The remains occurred in a cave or fissure at a depth of about one hundred feet from the surface, and include several hundred specimens. The species associated, as at present identified, include a crocodilian, and nearly forty forms of mammals among which may be mentioned an extinct eland, three species of giant peccaries, and a number of others not yet described. Of especial interest is the presence of a varying hare, a cony (*Ochotona*), a jumping mouse (*Napaeozapus*), a lemming mouse (*Synaptomys*) and several other forms whose existing representatives are found only at a considerable distance from this locality. It now is supposed that the deposits were accumulated somewhere about the middle of the Pleistocene.

In published records the Ruffed Grouse has been reported from the Pleistocene of Potter Creek Cave in Shasta County, California, by L. H. Miller² while in the eastern states I have identified it from the Pleistocene of the Frankstown Cave in Pennsylvania.³ The present specimen has importance in establishing the species at another eastern locality at a comparatively early date.

The specimen is preserved in the collections of the U. S. National Museum (Catalog number 11,690, Division of Vertebrate Paleontology).—ALEXANDER WETMORE, *U. S. National Museum*.

Renaming of the Venezuelan *Odontophorus guianensis canescens*.—As pointed out by James L. Peters in a recent number of the *Auk* (Vol. XLVIII, p. 542, Oct. 1926), the name *Odontophorus guianensis canescens* Osgood and Conover (Field Mus. Pub., Zool. Ser., vol. XII, p. 27, Aug. 28, 1922) is preoccupied by *Odontophorus parambae canescens* Chapman (Amer. Mus. Novit., No. 18, p. 4, Sept. 22, 1921). Apparently this misfortune was due to the appearance of the latter paper after the manuscript of the former was prepared and submitted for publication. The Venezuelan bird may be called *Odontophorus guianensis polionotus*.—

¹ Published by permission of the Acting Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.

² Univ. Calif. Publ. Geol., vol. 6, Oct. 28, 1911, pp. 397, 400, and vol. 7, Oct. 12, 1913, pp. 71, 113.

³ See Peterson, O. A., Ann. Carnegie Mus., vol. 16, March 18, 1926, pp. 254-255.

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Nesting of the Harpy Eagle (*Thrasaetus harpyia*).—One of the most interesting results of an expedition to northeastern Brazil, taken by the writer in conjunction with Mr. Rodolphe M. de Schauensee during the late winter and spring of 1926, was the discovery of a nest of the Harpy Eagle (*Thrasaetus harpyia*), about three miles from the little settlement of "Patagonia" on the Bragança Railroad, some forty miles east of Para. The nest was found by a native who attached but little importance to his discovery and it was by mere chance that the writer heard of it. By April 22 the Eagle was reported to be sitting, but we were unable to visit the nest until April 27. The birds had selected an enormous mahogany tree, standing in deep virgin forest, not far from the headwaters of the Rio Inhangapy, and the nest was placed on the lowest branch against the trunk of the tree, about a hundred and ten feet above the ground! Climbing the tree was naturally most difficult and dangerous, but after a strenuous effort the nest was reached and the egg it contained secured. On May 9 the nest was again visited and a second egg taken. The writer deserves no credit for the climb which was accomplished by a young half breed, whose daring eventually proved fatal, for a month later while collecting on the Rio Paru, he was drowned when attempting to swim some difficult rapid.

While we were at the nest, one of the Eagles, presumably the female, would occasionally fly leisurely over the nesting tree, but most of the time remained perched high up in a nearby tree, at times looking down at us with crest raised, at times giving vent to a loud, wailing, "Wheeeeo-o-o-o-o-o." No doubt we could have succeeded in shooting the Eagle, but somehow we did not feel the desire to kill such a splendid bird, so we confined our collecting to lesser prey of which there was an abundance.

The nest itself was large and nearly flat and had evidently been used on previous occasions. It was composed of sticks, some of considerable size, and a great deal of sloth hair served as a lining, presumably the remains of feasts of former Eaglets. Incidentally, Mr. de Schauensee, who secured a living Harpy Eagle at Manaos, tells me that his bird though visibly unperturbed in the presence of a monkey, became almost frantic when confronted with a sloth! No feathers were found in the nest, but a primary feather was picked up at the base of the tree. The first egg was fresh, the second slightly incubated. Both, but particularly the second, are badly nest stained, and though probably unmarked, Mr. Joseph Parker Norris, in whose collection the eggs now are, is of the opinion that they may be spotted. The first egg taken measures 2.80 x 2.35, and the second 3.02 x 2.25. It would seem that the two eggs comprise the set.

Finally, a word as to the nature of the surrounding forest might be of interest. The jungle was much less swampy than about Para or along the rivers Guama and Capim, and a surprising change was noted in both bird and insect life, which made the locality a splendid collecting ground.