

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### Molt of the Ruff.

Editor of 'The Auk':

In the April number of 'The Auk' Mr. Rodolphe Meyer deScheuensee believes (p. 217) that *Creatophora carunculata* presents "the first instance known of a bird which has a bare head at one season of the year, and is able to produce feathers upon it at another, and then shed them again."

That is not the case. A well known Palaearctic wader—having also more than 75 years standing on the American list—*Pavoncella pugnax* (L.)—presents, in the males only, the same peculiarity. In autumn and winter all Ruffs are distinguishable from Reeves [their females] by their larger size only, and are like all middle-sized Sandpipers (they are not Tattlers, be it said in passing) all the head is feathered, legs of all specimens are of the same dark olive-green coloring.

But in spring and early summer the males have long and variously colored "ruffs," and "ears," their legs are also of different colors. Among birds shot at the same place on the same day you can find legs nearly black, olive-green, neutral gray, pale flesh-color, pale yellow, orange, and rosy-red.

Feathers of all the fore part of the head are shed and the skin of the forehead, lores and cheeks becomes carunculated and presents different colors sometimes but rarely identical with the leg coloring of the same specimen, but mostly quite different.

I may add that females in spring differ somewhat *inter se* in coloring of their legs and the feathers of the mantle, very much more than do any other waders but far less than do their males.

After breeding time is over the males molt their "ruffs" and "ears" and grow the usual feathers on their faces while their legs (and bills) resume their usual winter coloring.

These birds were very common on the shores of Matzal and Iapsal Bays of the Baltic, on the middle Volga, on Kolguev and on the delta of Kolyma and I observed and shot them during the last 43 years hundreds and hundreds of times and had about two hundred in my collection so that I can be sure of the facts.

Yours truly,

SERGIUS A. BUTURLIN.

*Moscow, Russia, May 26, 1928.*

### Correction.

Editor of 'The Auk,'

In the notice of Luther E. Wyman's death, on pages 266 and 267 of the April 'Auk,' the statement is made that he "attended Knox College at Galesburg, Illinois, where he was graduated in 1893." Having become