

to fly, serve as guides to bring other birds into the ponds. These wild birds if not trapped leave the pond at dusk, but return for food the next day, bringing others with them, so that in the height of migration great numbers come into the ponds. For nine months of the year no one but the trainer is allowed in the enclosure and training is kept up daily. Some of the Mallards breed, long vase-like nests woven of straw being provided for them, but the other species do not breed when wing-clipped and kept in the ponds. Regardless of the minor feature of Mallard breeding, the duck ponds can scarcely be termed propagating places for wild ducks; rather they are essentially duck traps.

Holland being in the main path of migration for the waterfowl of western Europe is admirably located for the operation of duck decoys. Thousands of the birds come into the ponds during migration and catches of from four to five hundred birds per day are not uncommon. At one of them it is said that more than 4400 Widgeon were taken in a week. Authentic statistics recently published (*Ardea*, 20, 1931, pp. 152-169) show that nearly half a million birds have been captured in a single season by the 145 duck decoys known to be in operation in Holland. Enthusiastic advocates of decoys allege that 3,000,000 wild ducks are trapped in them annually. Whether a half million or more it needs no saying that Holland is reaping a much larger duck crop than she is entitled to, that is to say one out of all proportion to the number of ducks that are actually hatched and raised in the country. Not only are wildfowl produced in other countries thus caught wholesale, but the breeding stock of those countries also is reduced by the numbers of birds that are retained in these ponds and thus rendered non-productive during the breeding season. These duck ponds, while a source of revenue to their proprietors and to Holland, are almost wholly destructive from the standpoint of wildfowl conservation and are certainly not devices to be invited in countries now fortunate enough to be free from them. Any moves to establish them in the United States should be stamped out forthwith.—W. L. McATEE, *U. S. Biol. Survey, Washington, D. C.*

A New Genus for *Rallus poeciloptera*.—In working on the rails for the second volume of my 'Check-list' I have come across a number of cases wherein I cannot agree with the arrangement used by Sharpe in the 'British Museum Catalogue' and later adopted by him in his 'Hand List.' Most of these cases are questions of difference of opinion as to the validity and limits of certain genera, but in only one case has it not been possible to accomplish a rearrangement either by "lumping" genera or transferring species.

The genus *Eulabeornis* Gould as constituted by Sharpe consists of

- E. castaneoventer* Gould (type of the genus)
- E. woodfordi* (Ogilvie Grant)
- E. poeciloptera* (Hartlaub)

A simultaneous examination of the three species clearly shows that the

continuance of Sharpe's arrangement is not possible, since *castaneoventer* bears no close relationship to the other two species. Indeed *castaneoventer* in spite of its unusually long (for a rail) tail and somewhat shorter and stouter tarsi recalls *Aramides*; *poeciloptera* and *woodfordi* look as though their affinities might be nearer to *Habroptila*.

Since there is no other genus in which they can be placed and no generic name available I propose

Nesoclopeus Gen. nov. *Type, Rallina poeciloptera* Hartlaub.

Characters.—Moderately large, heavily built Rallidae with stout bill and legs; nasal sulcus wide and deep; tail about half as long as wing; wing with fifth (from outside) primary longest, or slightly exceeding third, fourth and sixth; primaries exceeding secondaries by more than half the length of the bill; tarsus longer than middle toe without claw.

The two species will stand as follows:—

*Nesoclopeus poeciloptera*¹ (Hartlaub).

*Nesoclopeus woodfordi*² (Ogilvie-Grant).

Remarks.—The diagnosis given above applies to both species, but there are several other points in which they differ so markedly from each other that there is no possibility of considering the two birds as representative geographic races.

In *woodfordi* the coloration is nearly uniform black; the plumage is lax with the tips of the feathers noticeably decomposed; *poeciloptera* on the other hand is olive or reddish brown above, gray below; wings distinctly barred with black and reddish brown; plumage normal. *Woodfordi* has the bill decidedly shorter than the middle toe; *poeciloptera* has it slightly longer.

It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge the loan of skins of *castaneoventer* and *woodfordi* from the American Museum of Natural History and to thank Dr. Ernst Mayr who selected the material.—JAMES L. PETERS, *Mus. Comp. Zool. Cambridge, Mass.*

Purple Gallinule in Cape May Co., N. J.—On May 8, 1932, I examined a specimen of Purple Gallinule (*Ionornis martinica*) which had just been caught on the beach at Anglesea, N. J., by Harry Callahan of that town. The bird was confined in a box and was in perfect plumage. There are at least three previous records for Cape May County and others from farther up the coast of New Jersey.—WITMER STONE, *Acad. Nat. Sciences, Philadelphia*.

Purple Gallinule at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.—On April 14, 1932 Miss Eckenrode found an adult male Purple Gallinule (*Ionornis martinica*)

¹ *Rallina poeciloptera* Hartlaub, *Ibis*, 1866, p. 171 (Viti Levu, Fiji Islands).

² *Rallina Woodfordi* Ogilvie-Grant, *Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist.* (6), 4, 1889, p. 320 (Aloa, Guadalcanar, Solomon Islands).