

CORRESPONDENCE.

Treatment of Hybrids

Editor of 'The Auk.'

In the Fourth Edition of the 'A. O. U. Check-List' Kumlien's Gull (*Larus kumlieni* Brewster) is very properly transferred to the Hypothetical List on the ground that it is "now regarded as a hybrid between *Larus leucop-terus* Faber and *Larus argentatus thayeri* Brooks." In this new edition, also, Brewster's Warbler (*Vermivora leucobronchialis* (Brewster)) and Lawrence's Warbler (*Vermivora lawrencei* (Herrick)) appear in the Hypothetical List because they are regarded as hybrids, being thus restored to the 'Check-List,' from which they had been entirely omitted in the Third Edition. The action of the Committee in the latter case, especially, which was doubtless taken after careful consideration, emboldens me to suggest to compilers of local and regional lists the desirability of following the 'Check-List' in this treatment of these three names. The matter was brought to my attention by a failure to find any one of them anywhere in the otherwise excellent list of the birds of Essex County, Massachusetts, contributed by A. P. Stubbs and S. G. Emilio to the 'Bulletin of the Essex County Ornithological Club' for 1931, though Kumlien's Gull is well known as a winter visitant on the shore of the County and has been taken there at least once, and if Brewster's Warbler has not been taken in the County, there is at least good evidence that it has been seen there. The point I wish to make is this: Here are three interesting forms (to use the word in an unrestrictive sense), three definite entities, the presence of any one of which at any place is a matter of some interest even if they cannot be recognized as species. The wisdom of omitting them entirely from faunal lists—with or without the names that have long distinguished them—is surely open to question. It does not seem to me, for instance, that Kumlien's Gull loses all interest for observers as soon as it is adjudged to be a hybrid. It should, indeed, be more interesting than the Iceland Gull because it is rarer. I am glad to see that Dr. Chapman includes it and also Brewster's and Lawrence's Warblers in the new revised edition of his 'Handbook of Birds of Eastern North America' and gives all three the prominence of actual species, though explaining their status clearly. His example, as well as that of the 'Check-List,' appears to be a good one to follow.

FRANCIS H. ALLEN,

West Roxbury, Mass.
November 15, 1932.

Dates in Pleske's 'Birds of the Tundra'

Editor 'The Auk.'

In my 'Birds of the Eurasiatic Tundra' (reviewed Auk, 1928, p. 388) in quoting dates from Mr. Buturlin's paper on the birds of the Lower Kolyma I considered only the English edition published in 'The Ibis' for 1906 and

in the absence of any statement to the contrary assumed that the dates were given in "old style," as in the original, and I consequently altered them to "new style." My attention has been called to the fact that this had already been done in the English translation so that all dates in my work quoted from Buturlin (pp. 220-311) should read thirteen days earlier than stated.

Faithfully yours,

TH. PLESKE,

Leningrad, June 1, 1932.

Correction.

Editor 'The Auk.'

In my article on the Dowitcher (Auk, January, 1932). I stated (p. 26) "Arnold has a colored plate of a Dowitcher from the British Museum collection taken in England."

Mr. H. F. Witherby has just informed me that the skin was not taken in England, but is merely out of the British Museum series of skins. I hasten, therefore, to correct this mis-statement. Arnold merely says that the skin was from the British Museum collection but his book being a work on British waders and the skin illustrated coming out of a British collection, I suppose, in the absence of a contrary statement I attributed the specimen to Britain without further thought.

Yours etc.

WILLIAM ROWAN,

University of Alberta, Oct. 23, 1932.