

afield. They are all difficult; but an observer who is thoroughly familiar with the various plumages in properly identified museum skins can distinguish many birds in the field. On the other hand, some species (*hammondi* and "*oberholseri*", for example) I am quite unable to distinguish afield, unless they sing; nor do they sing on migration, in my experience.

In the hand, one of the most important characters of Wright's Flycatcher is its very rounded wing. The outer (tenth) primary is normally *shorter than the fourth*—a fact that I do not find recorded in our literature. In the Gray, it is usually longer than the fourth but shorter than the fifth; in Hammond's, it is about equal to the fifth, or a little longer. In the last species, therefore, a measurement of the difference (fifth primary minus tenth) will seldom exceed one or two millimeters; in "*oberholseri*" it will be much greater, and I do not think any overlapping will be found (excluding, of course, specimens in molt). Unfortunately, I do not now have access to my notes, so cannot give exact measurements. Lengths of bill and tarsus are, of course, also of great value in determining specimens of *hammondi*.

Through the courtesy of the authorities of the U. S. National Museum, I was enabled to reexamine the type specimen of *Empidonax wrightii* Baird in the summer of 1941, after I had affirmed this new wing-formula character. In this specimen, the wing-tail difference is so nearly intermediate that I would prefer to withhold judgment on that basis; but Moore (Auk, 57: 357, 1940) states that the specimen is, on that basis, a Gray Flycatcher. At any rate, the type is a perfectly typical Gray Flycatcher in every other respect (wing formula, bill shape and color, outer web of outer rectrix, etc.).

Regardless of whether field studies should show the desirability of calling the Gray Flycatcher a northern race of *E. affinis*, I certainly do not consider Wright's Flycatcher conspecific with that or any other series.

Current literature assigns Wright's Flycatcher a more southerly winter range than the Gray, but the difference, if any, is very slight. It has been shown that Wright's Flycatcher winters north to southern Arizona (Monson and Phillips, Condor, 43: 109, 1941); and I have previously noted (Auk, 59: 427, 1942) that Guatemalan records are in error—the birds are mostly atypical specimens of *hammondi*.

The breeding range of Wright's Flycatcher, being more boreal zonally (as well as differing associationally) than that of the Gray, is thereby enabled to extend farther north and west. To the south and east, the limits of their breeding ranges nearly coincide. On migration in Arizona, the Gray Flycatcher seems to be an earlier migrant in spring than Wright's; fall data are not yet very satisfactory.—ALLAN R. PHILLIPS, *Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff, Arizona.*

*Anser gambelli*.—In the *Revue et Magazin de Zoologie* (Ser. 2) 4 (1): 7, January, 1852, Dr. G. Hartlaub gave comparative measurements for three specimens of White-fronted Geese from Texas and the southern part of North America and based upon them the new specific name, *Anser Gambelli*. The specific name is capitalized, as is the only other one in the paper (*Kaupii*) apparently dedicated to an individual, but nothing is said as to its significance. American ornithologists have assumed that the form was named for William Gambel, and Coues asserts this to be the case in his Check-List (Second Edition, 1882, p. 111). There he spells the term with one 'l' in the text and with two in a footnote indicating its pronunciation. In the A. O. U. Check-Lists we find the spelling *gambeli* in both the

main entry and in the references in Edition 1 (1886, p. 126) and Edition 2 (1895, p. 61). In the Third Edition (1910, p. 85), one 'I' is used in the standard name and two in the citation of the original description, while in the Fourth Edition (1931, p. 40), 'II' appears in both places.

From the study the writer has made of the matter, it appears that there is no published evidence that the bird was named for William Gambel. Possibly Coues had correspondence to support his remark. In any event, if the goose name was derived from that of Gambel, it should be spelled with one 'I' and the original spelling regarded as a typographical error. On the other hand, if the spelling *gambelli* is retained as an arbitrary combination of letters, no claim should be made that the form was dedicated to the American ornithologist, William Gambel. Under present limitations of knowledge of the term, the latter of the two alternatives is correct according to strict taxonomic procedure, though the former seems more natural and preferable.

For the form called *Anser albifrons gambelli*, the A. O. U. Check-List (Edition 4, 1931, p. 40) notes: "breeding range unknown . . . Winters in the Sacramento Valley, California." This treatment follows that of Swarth and Bryant [Univ. Calif. Publ. in Zool., 17 (1): 209-222, October, 1917], but is it not obvious, if the Tule Goose, as defined by them, is restricted in winter to the Sacramento, that it should not bear the name *gambelli*, originally applied to geese from Texas and the southern part of North America? Swarth and Bryant cite Hartlaub's name correctly but chiefly employ the spelling '*gambeli*.' Under a one-letter rule this name could be regarded as distinct from *gambelli*, but, being often preoccupied, would not be available for the Tule Goose, whatever its status. There is an ascriptive, zoological, and nomenclatorial tangle here that can only be straightened out by much further historical and taxonomic research.—W. L. McATEE.

**Song Sparrow turning white within a month.**—On September 26, 1941, I banded in normal plumage an Eastern Song Sparrow (*Melospiza m. melodia*) 41-45328 at North Andover, Massachusetts. The sparrow was recaptured for the first and only time on October 24, 1941.

During this short interval of twenty-eight days its plumage had become noticeably albinistic. The head, nape, and upper tail-coverts were almost entirely white, and the back, scapulars, and rump about half white. The fourth and fifth tail feathers from the left had lost all pigmentation, while the remaining rectrices were normal. The flight feathers were unchanged except for one mostly white tertial on the right wing. The primary and greater upper coverts on this wing were mainly white, while the median and lesser coverts were about one-half white. On the left wing the primary and greater coverts were all tipped with white, as were a few of the median and lesser coverts. The streakings of the breast persisted but were subdued by many white feathers in the breast. The rest of the under parts appeared normal except for the under tail-coverts which were largely white. Eyes, bill, legs, and feet contained normal pigmentation, indicating that this bird was not a true albino.

Forbush ('Birds of Massachusetts and Other New England States,' 3: 93, 1929) indicates that the molting season of the Song Sparrow is at the exact period covering the two dates of capture. Hence some molt undoubtedly took place at this time, characterized by absence of pigment in many areas of the new plumage, resulting in an incomplete and asymmetrical albinism.—OSCAR M. ROOT, *Brooks School, North Andover, Massachusetts.*