

the plate, it represents a Nighthawk, with the addition of strong rictal bristles, which may have been put there for better agreement with the text, where they are twice mentioned. Taking the whole combination, and giving text and plate equal weight, it may be appraised as about 45 per cent Nighthawk. Such is the basis of *minor* Forster, as it was also for the long-used *virginianus* Gmelin, in connection with which Whip-poor-will (Catesby) was openly cited and the statement made that it calls "wiperi-wip." Confusion as to this second species thus was running strong from the beginning.

It was not until Wilson's time (*American Ornithology*, 5: 71, 1812) that anyone got around to giving the Whip-poor-will a technical name of its own—the very appropriate "*vociferus*." In the way of mix-ups, it may be mentioned that in George Edwards's 'A Natural History of Birds' 1: 63, 1743) as in Catesby's work, the figure is of a Nighthawk while the text relates to the Whip-poor-will. Bartram (*Travels Through North and South Carolina*: 293, 1791) refers to the Nighthawk or Whip-poor-will, and Barton (*Fragments of the Natural History of Pennsylvania*: 3, 1799) transposes this to Whip-poor-will or Nighthawk.

Vieillot (*Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux de l'Amerique Septentrionale*, etc.: 55, 1807), writing of the Whip-poor-will, stated that it was called *payk* and *peesk* by Hudson Bay Indians. On both geographic and sonic grounds these names can apply only to the Nighthawk. On the next page (56) of the same work, then dealing with the Nighthawk, he wrote (in translation), "The name I give to this Engoulevant is derived from the cry it utters when perched—which has been expressed by the word Popetué." From the cadence of this word, one would suspect it of being an analogue of "Whip-poor-will" but other evidence on this point has not yet been forthcoming. Again one wonders whether it may have anything to do with the term "pope" which was recorded early enough for him to have seen it in a French translation (2: 197, 1790) of a work by Thomas Anburey (*Travels Through the Interior Parts of America*, 1923 edition, 2: 132; original ed., London, 1789). There, discussing the "whipper will," Anburey wrote: "it is also known by the name of the *Pope*, by reason of its making a noise resembling that word when it alights upon a tree or fence." "Pope," of course is the "boom" of the nighthawk in flight. Speaking of that bird as the "mosquito hawk," he exemplifies the general popular confusion of our Caprimulgidae by saying: "I . . . am apt to conclude, that the Mosquito hawk and whipper-will are the same bird." Anburey was a British officer on parole in Connecticut at the time, where the name "pope" appears to have been then current. Samuel Peters (*History of Connecticut*: 194, 1781) got the matter a little straighter, saying: "It [the whipperwill] is also called the pope, by reason of its darting with great swiftness from the clouds to the ground, and bawling out Pope!" The sound is made by vibration of the primaries as the wings are stiffly held in V-shape while the bird falls through the air, and by the Nighthawk, not the Whip-poor-will. Thus the confusion of Caprimulgidae in colonial times was not confined to the southeast nor is it now. Each of the three species here considered is called "Whip-poor-will"—the Nighthawk in four states, to my knowledge, and the others throughout their ranges. Each is called bullbat and mosquito hawk and, variously paired, two of them share such names as night bird, night hawk, and nightjar. Evidently their discrimination is too much for the public even at this day.—W. L. McARTHUR, *Chicago, Illinois*.

The correct name for the "Pauraque."—Witmer Stone in a note in *The Auk* in 1929 (46: 389) gives a short history of the name "Pauraque" and its variation "Parauque," indicating a preference for the first spelling, and quoting Major Allan Brooks to the effect that this is an onomatopoeic version, by the Mexicans, of the

bird's call. Edward R. Ford in 1930 (*Auk*, 47: 254) comments on Stone's note and on Spanish pronunciation, indicating his belief that Sennett in first writing the name transliterated the Spanish sounds as they sounded to his English ear, with resultant error.

While working in the south-Texas border country in the vicinity of Rio Grande City, in 1938, I had frequent occasion to discuss, in Spanish, the fauna of the area with the local Mexicans, who, although often American citizens, usually possessed only the scantiest fragments of English, and had mostly come more or less recently into this country from Nuevo León, Tamaulipas, and other Mexican border states. The people called the bird "Parruaca" which, in accordance with Spanish rules of pronunciation generally, and local usage in particular, is pronounced, "Pahr-r-r-wah'-kuh," the "r" being rolled rather strongly, the accented syllable "wah" cut rather short, and the final syllable "kuh," swallowed—that is, pronounced on an indrawn breath. As the "pah" part of the first syllable is also pronounced rather shortly, or not voiced distinctly, the general effect when heard is of the trilled "r" and the accented "wah," followed by a clean cut "kuh." The result as absorbed by the ear is not unlike our word "squawk," though softened by the preceding and following sounds. The spelling is in accordance with usual Spanish usages, as "Pauraque" and "Parauque" are not. These, though pronounceable in Spanish, give a distinct shock to the sensitive Hispanic eye. I believe that Ford's interpretation of Sennett's mistake is correct, so far as it goes, and that Stone's correction, while a step in the right direction, is in itself incorrect.

These birds were often observed flying at dusk in the brushy border country, and were seen to come to the local cattle "tanks,"—water containers standing five or six feet high above the earth, and ten to fifteen feet across—over which they were frequently observed to pass, leaving small ripples in the water behind their beaks, either while engaged in drinking on the wing, or catching insects just above the surface of the water.—RODGERS D. HAMILTON, *Museum of Zoology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.*

Those tall Sinai quails.—Dr. Joshua L. Baily, Jr., writing in *Herpetologica* (3: 41–48, 1946) says that Moses' statement that the quails of the Sinai peninsula stood two cubits above the ground (*Numbers*, 11: 31) strains the credulity of most readers and has led to at least one suggestion that these birds may have been herons or dodoes. (J. M. C. Plowden, *Once in Sinai*, Methuen & Co., London, 1940, p. 192).

Mr. Anthony Curtiss of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, has this to say in rebuttal in a letter dated: "1946, Friday, Eighth night of Dhul hijja approaching All Saints' Day. Your author is surely in error in saying that Moses related that the miraculous quails stood two cubits high. The Hebrew is not very explicit; it says: ' . . . and about two cubits above the ground.' St. Jerome's old Vulgate translation is most helpful in cases of this kind for it is based on fourth century Hebrew MSS, whereas the oldest Hebrew MS that we now have is a tenth century one. St. Jerome says that the quails flew at a height of two cubits above the ground. Indeed the Hebrew context indicates that to be the true meaning."

Mr. Curtiss' explanation seems to be a good one. The writer had thought that the birds referred to might have been bustards, similar to our present giant bustards.—CHAPMAN GRANT, *San Diego, California.*

American Raven nesting in houses.—For a number of years we have been exploring a wild canyon country in the Columbia Basin in eastern Washington. One of the surprising discoveries made on our trips into this area was the not infrequent