

**Names of the Snowy Owl.**—The specific names *scandiaca* and *nyctea*, both of Linnaeus (*Systema Naturae*, ed. 10, 1: 92, 93, 1758), have been used for the Snowy Owl, and Einar Lönnberg (*Ibis*, 13th Ser., 1: 306, pl. 12, 1931) calls attention to the page priority of the former term.<sup>1</sup> He was correct but the factors concerned, some puzzling, have not been reviewed in English. The treatment of the owls in the *Systema Naturae* traces directly to that in the *Fauna Suecica* (1746, pertinent pages 16, 18). In both works, Linnaeus divided the owls into "eared" and "smooth-headed" sections and had a large, whitish owl in each group, based on pictures by his preceptor, Olof Rudbeck.

The "uneared" bird (*nyctea*) is the Harfång of the Swedes, so-called to this day; the other (*scandiaca*) was consistently described, in the works referred to, as "*S[trix] capite auriculato, corpore albido.*" In the earlier *Fauna Suecica*, its "eared" condition was thus further emphasized: "*Similis Noctuae 54 [i. e. nyctea] ni supercilia aurita adessent in hoc Bubone.*" Thus, from the texts alone, *nyctea* was a "hornless," and *scandiaca* a "horned," owl—a difficulty not resolved by Lönnberg's article in *The Ibis*. The fact that there is no normally whitish, horned owl in Scandinavia is not conclusive, as an albinistic *Bubo* could have been involved and, in fact, such a bird was described by M. J. Brisson (*Ornithologie*, 1: 486, 1760) as *Bubo laponicus* (Grand Duc de Laponie).

It is, therefore, gratifying to have the following elucidation of the puzzle adapted from a letter of March 15, 1947 kindly prepared by Dr. Ulf Bergström of the Naturhistoriska Riksmuseet, Stockholm. Olof Rudbeck, Jr. made two pictures of whitish owls. One, No. 27, represents an old female of the Snowy Owl; it has no "ears," and was labelled by the artist, "*Noctua Scandiana maxima ex albo et cinereo variegata. Största svenska Uglan!*" [Greatest Swedish Owl]. The Latin part of this wording was quoted by Linnaeus in the description of *Strix nyctea* in the *Systema Naturae*. Rudbeck's picture, No. 30 (reproduced in the *Ibis* article) illustrates an apparent Snowy Owl, which, however, has indications of "ears." From the legend of this picture, the name, *Bubo scandianus*, was quoted by Linnaeus in the *Fauna Suecica* to which account he refers in the *Systema Naturae* under the name *Strix scandiaca*.

From Linnaeus's notes on Rudbeck's lectures on birds, it is evident that Rudbeck failed to recognize that the two plates represented the same species. Thus Linnaeus, who had no personal experience with the bird, founded his descriptions entirely on Rudbeck's pictures and words and perpetuated his teacher's misconception of the case. "In fact," writes Doctor Bergström, "the feathers above the facial ruff are elongated although the bird does not raise them as does a *Bubo* or an *Otus* with their considerably bigger tufts." To sum up: Rudbeck pictured two specimens of the Snowy Owl, one with the vestigial "ears" visible (reproduced in the *Ibis* contribution) and another with a smooth head. Of Linnaeus's descriptions based on these pictures, that referring to the bird as "horned" and otherwise less satisfactory, has page priority and under nomenclatorial practice the name, *scandiaca*, it defines must be adopted.<sup>2</sup>

As a digression, it would seem that the feathers developed into plumicorns (a term of Coues who makes the same point) in some species are present in all owls, differing greatly in degree of expression. As they arise above the eyes, they should not be

<sup>1</sup> Page priority is not recognized by the International Rules of Zoological Nomenclature.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Nilsson, *Orn. Svecica*, 1: 56, 1817 pointed out the Rudbeckian origin of both names and their identity, and adopted the name *nyctea*, but his action is uncertainly acceptable as that of a first reviser since he ascribes both names to Linnaeus's 'Fauna Svecica,' not the 10th edition of the 'Systema Naturae.' Various later revisers who accepted the synonymy but adopted *scandiaca* used the 12th edition as a basis. It may well be that Lönnberg (*Fests. Uppsala Univ. minnef.* : 220, 1930) will prove to be the true first reviser of the 10th edition names.—ED.

called ears, aurae, Federohren or the like, indicating a lateral position or origin.—W. L. McATEE, *Chicago Illinois*.

**On type localities of Catesby.**—It is disappointing to find that Aldrich in his recent review of the races of the Bob-white (Auk, 63: 498, 1946) has followed the fourth edition of the A. O. U. Check-List in designating South Carolina as the type locality of *Tetrao virginianus* Linnaeus. Linnaeus based his name on the bird which Catesby (Natural History of Carolina, etc.) called the American Partridge, *Perdix sylvestris virginiana*. The action of the Check-List Committee was in part based on error, as they cite Catesby's name for the Bob-white as *Perdix sylvestris americana* (Check-List: 88). Catesby spent seven years in Virginia. Aldrich implies that Catesby did not include observations made during this period in the 'Natural History' but cursory examination of its pages reveals that he frequently mentions Virginia in giving the ranges of birds. Of the Baltimore Oriole he writes that it is found in Virginia and Maryland but not Carolina. On the same plate with the Bob-white, Catesby figured a lily which he called *Lilium narcissus virginianensis*. Everything considered, there is no reason whatsoever to make the confusing decision that Virginia should not be the type locality of *Tetrao virginianus*. Since this name directly designates a type locality, we are free to disregard attempts to change it to Carolina and to follow Peters (Check-List Birds World, 2: 47, 1934) who has correctly indicated Virginia.

There are enough genuinely confusing situations in nomenclature without multiplying them needlessly. So far as Catesby's work is concerned, one very unfortunate example of the latter type of activity was the restriction of the type locality of the Blue Jay in such a way as to require the renaming of the northern subspecies (Oberholser, Auk, 38: 83, 1921). Coues had long before named the southern subspecies. Since Catesby mentioned no locality, it would have been a simple matter to continue to use *cristata* for the northern Blue Jay, with or without a designation of a more restricted suitable type locality. Ridgway [U. S. Nat. Mus., Bull. 50 (pt. 3): 351, footnote, 1904] thought that on the basis of both size and color the best dividing line between the northern and southern Blue Jays occurs at the northern base of the peninsula of Florida. Stone (Auk, 46: 447-454, 1929) in a discussion of type localities based on Catesby, made the sensible proposal that the decision of the first reviser for each species concerned be accepted. If this suggestion is followed, *cristata* can be used for the northern Blue Jay and *florincola* for the southern. Oberholser himself (The Bird Life of Louisiana: 419) recorded the northern Blue Jay from as far south as Louisiana. It probably occurs in South Carolina. If so, it can be claimed that Catesby's description *might* have been based on the northern subspecies. In Opinion 107, The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature has stated as a general principle that "a name in current use is not to be supplanted by an earlier but rarely adopted or an unadopted name unless the argument is unambiguous and unless the premises are *not subject to difference of opinion*" (italics mine). Rigorous application of this sensible opinion will prevent many attempts to change established names on the basis of difference of opinion as to the subspecies represented by old types, or on similar pretexts.—DEAN AMADON, *American Museum of Natural History, New York, N. Y.*

***Sarcocystis* (*Aspergillus*?) in wood warblers.**—On August 9, 1944, near Columbus, Ohio, one of us (G. H. B.) collected an immature male Black and White Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*). Upon preparing it as a study skin, the bird was found to be heavily infected with *Sarcocystis*. This experience was repeated with an adult male Mourning