

One interesting sidelight of the early nesting season in 1952 was the observation, at guzzler D-16, of three adult males (one a tagged transplant released at this site on December 13, 1950) paired to nearly fully grown class IV females. There was no evidence that this "pairing" was any more than a short-lived companionship.—GORDON W. GULLION, *Nevada Fish and Game Commission, Elko, Nevada, January 14, 1956.*

A Fossil Guan from the Oligocene of South Dakota.—It is of much interest to record another fossil species of the strictly American family Cracidae of the order of gallinaceous birds, especially since this record extends the historical distribution of the Cracidae back into the Upper Oligocene. The specimen, while only a fragment, is typical in the form of the condyles of the humerus and in their relation to one another. Dr. James D. Bump who collected the type informs me that it was found alone without association with other fossils. The characters shown in the bone are of such a nature that it does not fall within the limits of the genera previously known. Its detailed description follows:

Palaeonossax new genus

Characters.—Distal end of humerus similar to *Ortalis* Merrem, but with entepicondyle reduced in size, and with more definite separation from internal condyle; internal condyle relatively smaller; external condyle relatively shorter and slightly broader; entire distal end more delicate, less swollen.

Type.—*Palaeonossax senectus*.

Palaeonossax senectus new species

Characters.—Distal end of humerus (fig. 1) similar to that of living *Ortalis vetula* (Wagler), but less inflated; internal condyle smaller, more rounded; external condyle slightly shorter and definitely broader; other characters as indicated in the generic diagnosis.

Type.—Distal end of right humerus, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, Museum of Geology no. 457, from Upper Oligocene (Upper Brule formation): Protoceras Channel Sandstone, 5 miles south of Scenic, South Dakota.

Measurements.—Transverse breadth across trochlea 11.1; smallest transverse breadth of shaft 6.3 mm.

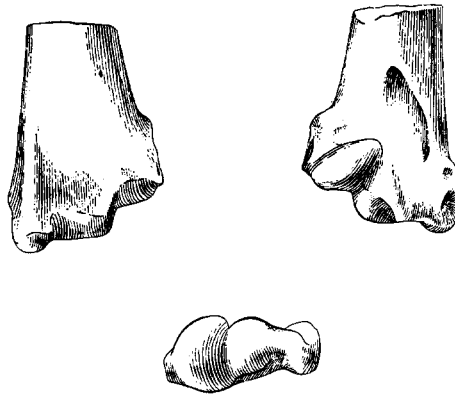


Fig. 1. Distal end of right humerus of type of *Palaeonossax senectus*, $\times 2$.

This specimen, although fragmentary, is definitely representative of the family Cracidae in the order Galliformes and is the most ancient record of this group that has been found. The 11 genera of living forms range from the lower Rio Grande valley in Texas and northern México south through Central America and South America to northern Argentina. Four fossil species have been described previously from Tertiary deposits in Nebraska, South Dakota, and Florida, as follows: *Ortalis phengites* Wetmore, Lower Pliocene, Nebraska; *Ortalis tantala* Wetmore, Lower Miocene (Lower Harrison beds), Nebraska; *Ortalis pollicaris* A. H. Miller, Lower Miocene (Rosebud beds), South Dakota; *Boreortalis laeslei* Brodkorb, Lower Miocene (Hawthorn formation), Florida.

There are records also for the group from Pleistocene cave deposits in Brazil, which however are identified only to genus: *Crax*, a curassow, and *Penelope*, a guan (identity apparently not certain). There should be mentioned also the related *Gallinuloides wyomingensis* Eastman, from the Middle Eocene (Green River formation) of Wyoming, which is placed in a separate family, the Gallinuloididae, but in the same superfamily, the Cracoidea. The Cracidae as a whole are known only from the western hemisphere and from present evidence may have had their center of development in North America. It must be pointed out, however, that little is known yet of the Tertiary avifauna of South America and also that most of the 45 or more living species, including the more specialized kinds, are found in or near the great Amazon-Orinoco basin of that continent. Cracids are most abundant in the tropical zone, but they range also into the subtropical and even the temperate zones in the mountains. The living species are arboreal, living and nesting in trees, and when found casually on the ground immediately take refuge in higher cover above.

The present specimen, as the oldest record for the family, adds definitely to our knowledge of the group. In its study I have made comparison principally with *Crax rubra*, *Mitu mitu*, *Penelope purpurascens*, *Penelope superciliiaris*, *Ortalis vetula* and *Ortalis canicollis*.—ALEXANDER WETMORE, *Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., November 15, 1955.*

Occurrence of the Aleutian Tern and Rustic Bunting in the Aleutian Islands.—During a 14-month tour of duty on Adak Island in the Aleutian Island chain, from August, 1950, to November, 1951, I compiled notes on the birds seen on weekly trips over a route including Kuluk Bay, a large salt water lagoon (Clam Lagoon), the Bering Sea front, the slopes of Mount Moffett, Mitt Lake, and several small unnamed fresh water lakes (for localities, see Taber, *Condor*, 48, 1946:272). One significant observation made was that the Aleutian Tern (*Sterna aleutica*) does in fact breed in the Aleutian Islands. Bent had stated (*U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull.*, no. 113, 1921:265) that "the name Aleutian tern is a misnomer, based on an erroneous theory that it would be found breeding among those islands; but none of the various explorers who have visited that region [has] succeeded in finding it." Clark (*The Aleutian Islands: Their People and Natural History*, 1945:43) reports that "the so-called Aleutian tern . . . has not been found in the Aleutian Islands proper, though Mr. Murie has a record of its nesting on the eastern border of Unimak."

On Adak I found the Aleutian Tern arriving on May 20 in company with Arctic Terns (*Sterna paradisaea*). The two species appeared to be completely integrated in their feeding on Clam Lagoon. This association had been noted by Turner (*Contr. Nat. Hist. Alaska*, part V, *Birds*, 1886:127) both in relation to nesting habits and procurement of food at Saint Michaels on Norton Sound on the mainland of Alaska. He reports the arrival of Aleutian Terns there on June 1. Nelson (*Rept. Nat. Hist. Coll. Alaska*, 1887:59) said they reach Saint Michaels from May 20 to 30, rarely earlier than the first date, and are found scattered along the coast in company with the Arctic Tern.

The Arctic and Aleutian terns on Adak numbered about 200. In spite of the obvious difference in the two species, it was difficult for me to distinguish them until they alighted. I took several hundred feet of colored film of these terns with a telephoto lens and on reviewing the film I cannot properly distinguish the birds in flight. In a mixed flock one can hear a harsh rasping guttural note that apparently is that of the Arctic Tern and a peeping note that probably is that of the Aleutian Tern. I think that both species nest on Adak as I saw them flying about carrying small fingerlings in their bills; however, I did not find any nests nor see any young birds. It seems unlikely that they stayed there all summer in large numbers and were non-nesting birds. The Arctic and Aleutian terns were last seen on August 12.

A second observation worthy of note was that of a flock of five Rustic Buntings (*Emberiza rustica*) on October 22 on a spit between the Bering Sea and Clam Lagoon. It is interesting that Bent (*Smith. Misc. Coll.*, 56, no. 32:19) saw two or three on Adak in 1911 and Alexander Wetmore collected one on Kiska in the same year. As far as I know, this is the second published account of this Asiatic straggler in North America.—WALTER M. WEBER, *United States Naval Hospital, Annapolis, Maryland, December 5, 1955.*

A Transitorily Albinistic Robin Produces Normal Offspring.—Albinism, like most other aberrations of coloration, is commonly thought to be caused exclusively by genetic factors. But an albinistic bird's reversion to normal coloration would seem to suggest the operation of some influence