

regularly there, few Surf Scoters frequent this stream.—ARTHUR T. WAYNE, *Mount Pleasant, S. C.*

Early Date for the Ruddy Duck.—On Labor Day, Sept. 5, 1910, a single Ruddy Duck was seen in Oldham Pond, Pembroke, Mass., by Mr. A. B. Gardner, who assures me that it was not a cripple, and had not been about the pond before that date. There can be no mistake as to the identity of this bird, as Mr. Gardner is perfectly familiar with the species and paddled to within a few yards of this individual.—J. C. PHILLIPS, *Wenham, Mass.*

A Wood Ibis Record for Michigan.—June 19, 1910, a Wood Ibis, *Mycteria americana*, was taken near Monroe, Monroe County, Mich. (on the west shore of Lake Erie), by Mr. J. A. Peterson of that city who brought it in to the shop of Mr. L. H. Eppinger to be mounted, where I examined it in the flesh. It was a juvenile bird, so shot as to be of indeterminate sex. As a matter of record, a photograph of the mounted bird was made and preserved. The species has been in the hypothetical list for this State for some time but this appears to be the first fully authenticated record for it within our Michigan boundaries.—P. A. TAVERNER, *Highland Park, Mich.*

The Nuptial Plumes of Bitterns: A Correction.—In the last number of 'The Auk' (Vol. XXVIII, Jan., 1911, p. 100) I quoted, from an article written by Agnes M. Learned and published in 'Bird-Lore' (Vol. X, No. 3, May-June, 1908, pp. 106-108), a paragraph relating to the white nuptial plumes of the American Bittern. This I characterized as "rather curiously incomplete," failing to notice that it is led up to and made perfectly intelligible by two or three lines which occur above it on the same page in the midst of matter not closely kindred. They run as follows: "Here we saw, one perfect Sunday morning in June (the 9th), the Bittern; but not as we had seen him before, for on his back he wore two clusters of beautiful white plumes that fluttered softly in the morning air."

I trust that Miss Learned will forgive me for overlooking this essential and gracefully worded passage. How I could have done so is difficult to understand for I read her article no less than three times — as I thought, with care. Apparently my eyes see Bittern plumes better in Concord bogs than in printed text; but then light within doors is no longer what it used to be, as every oldish person knows.—WILLIAM BREWSTER, *Cambridge, Mass.*

Nesting of the King and Virginia Rails (*Rallus elegans et virginianus*) **in Philadelphia County, Pa.**—KING RAIL. In 'The Auk,' Vol. XXV, p. 218, I reported having found two nests of this species at Bridesburg, in the northeastern part of this county, where it is a very rare breeder, and now desire to place on record the discovery of two subsequent nests.

The first of these, found on June 12, 1908, situated in a small bulrush marsh, contained 11 half incubated eggs; the other nest, in a different part of the meadows, held 9 eggs (all fresh) on June 13, 1910, and was placed in a thick cattail marsh. Both sets were collected and are now in the writer's collection, and identification was obtained by seeing the birds at the nests on both occasions.

During the summer of 1909, I failed to find any nests or birds in the meadows, where I searched thoroughly for them, but the foregoing nests and birds rewarded my diligent searches during the years of 1908 and 1910, so the King Rail is still to be regarded as a rare breeder in Philadelphia County — at least in the northeastern part.

VIRGINIA RAIL.—This rail seems to be increasing in northeastern Philadelphia as a summer resident. I stated in 'The Auk,' Vol. XXV, p. 219, that I had only found two nests prior to 1908, but my persistent searches during the past two years have been rewarded by the discovery of several nests at Bridesburg, and two sets of eggs were collected. A set of 10 fresh eggs was taken on June 10, 1909, and another clutch of 9, highly incubated, on May 27, 1910; both of these sets are now in the writer's collection.

Of the other nests found, two were empty and were apparently never used, being probably deserted on account of being discovered before any eggs were laid, and a brood was raised in a third. In another part of the meadows, in July, 1909, a brood was raised in a marsh, where the young were seen numerous times by different persons.

Mr. Edwin C. Axe, a local taxidermist, tells me of having seen four young rails, undoubtedly of this species, at Point Breeze, a locality on the Schuylkill River, to the south of the city, in the summer of 1905 (?), and of his failure to capture any of them.—RICHARD F. MILLER, *Aramingo, Philadelphia, Pa.*

Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa hæmastica*) **in Massachusetts.**—During the latter part of the summer, more especially during late August and early September, there was quite a flight of Hudsonian Godwit along the coast. Though this bird is not distinctly very rare within the borders of this State it is so uncommon that but very few are seen or shot in any one season. This summer and fall there were more birds than there have been for a number of years. The total of those I could get definite reliable records of show 25 shot on 17 different dates. There are also records of more seen, some of which are authentic while others are questionable. The latter I have carefully excluded from the list but mention them later on. A reliable gunner at Chatham, who has been shooting for about twenty years, informed me that he had not in his experience seen or heard of their being so many around. All my records are from localities south of Boston, for I found none for the northern part of the State. It may be of interest to tabulate these below:—



Miller, Richard F. 1911. "Nesting of the King and Virginia Rails (*Rallus elegans* et *virginianus*) in Philadelphia County, Pa." *The Auk* 28, 256–257.

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